

Vintage Carriages Trust

Members' Newsletter: December 2003

It's subscription time again! If you are a Life Member or pay by Standing Order, you should find your Membership Card enclosed. Otherwise would you please complete and return your Membership Renewal form, which should be enclosed.

This *Newsletter* brings you news of the Annual Meeting and of the continuing activities of our Trust: so, read on! It brings you also not one but TWO appeals. Both are of importance to the future wellbeing of the Trust. Details of these follow (and are on the enclosed leaflet). If you are able to support either (or both!) of these, we should be very grateful for your support.

This *Newsletter* comes at the end of a typically busy year for the Trust. Thank you to all our members for the support you have given in so many ways.

As noted above, Subscriptions for 2004 are now due – you should find either your Membership Card (if you are a Life member or pay your Subscription by Banker's Standing Order) or a Renewal form enclosed with this *Newsletter*. The Annual Subscription for 2004 is £5 per year, with Life Membership available for £150 (or 6 monthly payments of £25, should you prefer).

You will find also enclosed with this *Newsletter* the Minutes of our Annual General Meeting, held at the Beeches Hotel, Keighley, on 25th October last. The

Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended March 31st 2003 were presented to, and accepted by, the Meeting. The Trust's membership continues at well over 550 and finances are sound. The main concern continues to be the low number of members able to take an active part in our activities, by helping look after the Shop and Museum, or by working on our carriages and locomotives, or otherwise.

If you would like a copy of these Annual Report and Accounts please send a large (A4) stamped addressed envelope to our correspondence address of:
Vintage Carriages Trust, c/o The Railway Station,
Haworth, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD22 8NJ.

Membership Subscription Rates

One of the major items on the Agenda of the annual Meeting was consideration of the Subscription rates for 2004. Malcolm Clark, our Membership Secretary, reports:

"Members who attended the AGM in October agreed to raise ordinary subscriptions from £4 to £5 for next year, with a corresponding increase in life membership rates from £120 to £150.

It will be eight years since the last increase in subscriptions was made and, when your Committee looked in detail at the figures, we found that the £4 subscription barely covered the cost of administering the membership. The actual costs of such items as the *Newsletter*, postages, membership cards and other stationery came to over £3.50 per member. Membership administration should also pay its share of other costs such as heating and electricity – in the winter time, I do put the radiators on in the office to stop me freezing to death, for example, and I can't work in the dark so the lights go on as well! This means that there is nothing left from the subscriptions to contribute to the work of the Trust – supporting the work of the Trust is why we all pay our subs, isn't it? It only needs another increase in costs, postage for example, to mean that membership would have to be subsidised from the Trust's other income, and this is something no-one would want to see.

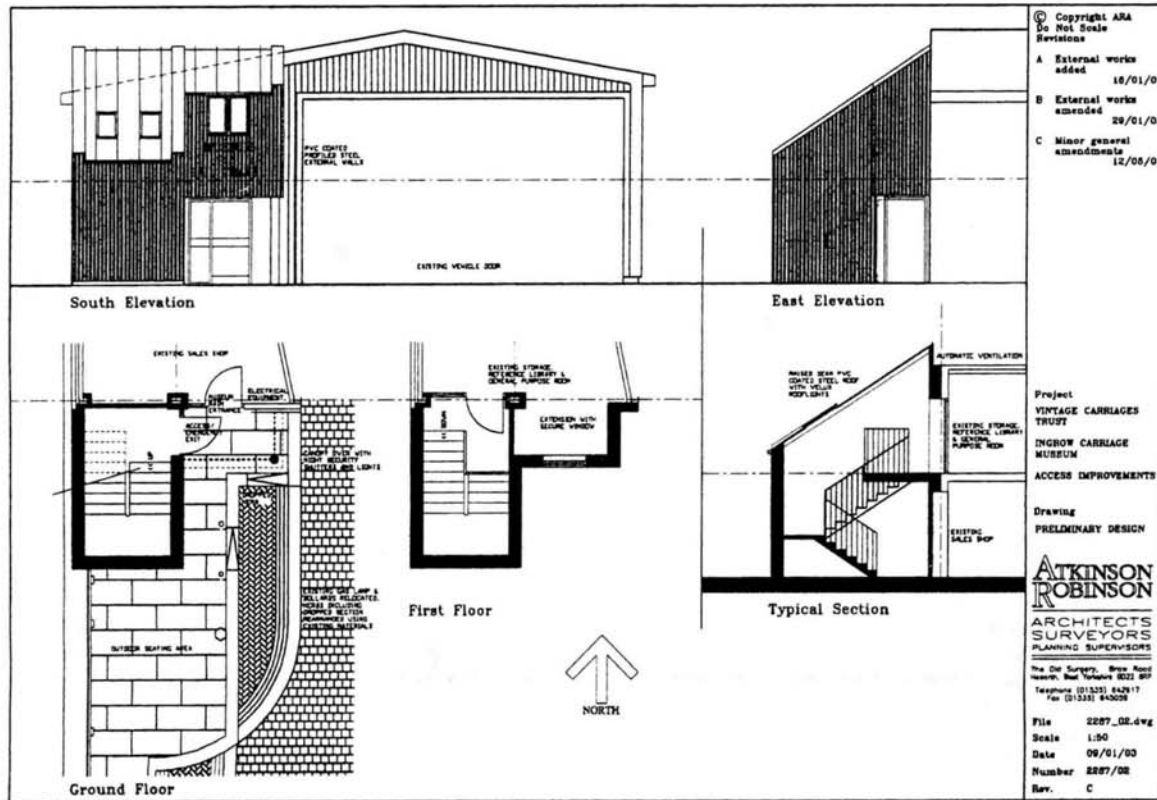
£5 still represents amazing value for money, giving free admission to the Museum of Rail Travel and half-price travel on the Worth Valley Railway (but not on 'Special Events' days)."

The "Upstairs/Downstairs" Appeal

There are so many projects connected with the effective operation of the Museum which do not have the glamour of the restoration of coaches or overhaul of elderly steam locomotives. They are however vital to the Trust as a whole. One such project, which we are about to put into action, is the planned extension to the front entrance of the Museum, which will provide a much-needed second, or emergency, staircase to the upstairs room.

Members will know the Shop and Welcome area at our Museum, lying immediately beyond the entrance door. What is not obvious is that there is a room over the Shop, accessed by a narrow staircase from a door just to the left once one has entered the Museum. It is the only two-storey area in the Museum. This upstairs room is ideal for small meetings: a partitioned area gives office space, and there is a small Collection-focused research library. The room does however need a second means of escape in an emergency, further to the present narrow staircase.

Constructing a second staircase will affect the front of the building. Therefore, it was decided that the whole of the front of the shop/welcome area should be redesigned to accommodate not only the stairs but also a new entrance with a small additional covered area. This is shown – albeit on a rather small scale – in the drawing reproduced below:



The Trust has always been very aware of the needs of our visitors and volunteers with special needs. Consequentially, part of the project will be to make provision for those who cannot use the stairs by making an area available at ground floor level for those who wish to study books etc from the library and to use our computer facilities.

The cost of this work will be just over £27,500. This is quite a substantial sum, but we are certain that going ahead with this is an essential, and an inevitable, part of the Trust's work. We are therefore asking for your contributions towards this work – hence the Donation form enclosed with this *Newsletter*. Your support here would be very much appreciated: we look forward to hearing from you, please!

A new Patron

The Annual Meeting recommended to the Trust's Committee that **Guy Henderson** should join Peter Eastham, Vernon Smallwood and Chris Smyth as Patrons of the Trust. The Trust's Patrons are those who have very considerably contributed their time and their efforts into the making of the Trust, but for one reason or another are unable to be so actively involved today. The Committee agreed that Guy admirably qualifies as a Patron and was very happy to appoint him as our newest Patron.

Guy was involved from the earliest years of the Trust and continues as a Member. For some years he was the Trust's postal sales department, with his London address of 463b Kingsbury Road becoming very well known in the railway press small advertisements of the 1960s. No doubt the prices asked would fill today's collectors with envy. Nevertheless

this activity formed the backbone of fundraising within the Trust and was the financial basis on which today's successful activities are based.

Guy was also much involved in the long and eventful saga of the restoration of the Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire coach. Has sufficient time now passed for Guy to write a few paragraphs about this project? (For the moment, it suffices to say that we most definitely wouldn't do it that way today, and that we – and at least one of our Contractors of the time – learnt a great deal in the process!)

Guy was also much involved in restoring our "Chatham" coach, which was a somewhat less exciting, but very successful, undertaking.

Work on these coaches represented the first two of the Trust's carriages to be restored to exhibition standard.

The late Jack Rowell

We are very sorry to report the death of Jack Rowell, a very good friend to the Trust and a very well known figure on the Worth Valley Railway. Jack and his late wife Dora will always be remembered as the Worth Valley Railway's Father and Mother Christmas. For many years they were also almost permanent fixtures in the Railway's souvenir shop at Oxenhope. Jack had enjoyed a long and interesting life and had seen much of the world as a Merchant Marine Officer before taking a shore job and then retiring to Oxenhope,

taking up residence in the Station Master's house. In his later years he was to be seen with his dog Olly greeting people around the Railway and enjoying the odd pint in the on-train buffet. Increasing ill-health, accompanied by necessary amputation of first one and then the other leg, did not deter him from pottering around the village and the Railway in his electrically-powered chair. Thank you, Jack, for the happiness you brought to many lives.

New face; Visitors...

A new (and younger) face on the Committee is that of **Neil Shuttlewood**. Neil joined us as a volunteer some two years ago and has become very active in particular at our working weekends. He is not afraid of getting his hands dirty (to say nothing of his overalls). He has helped with the cleaning of the Nine-compartment Metropolitan coach's bogie and other "interesting" projects. We wish him well as he takes over the Caretakership of the Midland coach.

On November 13th we were pleased to again welcome **Richard Kilburn** of the Yorkshire Museums Libraries & Archives Council (YMLAC), together with **Terry Turner**, the Chief Executive of the East of England Museums, Libraries & Archives Council (EEMLAC). Terry has recently taken up this post at EEMLAC and was on a tour of our area, hosted by YMLAC. We are sure that he took away a good picture of the Trust and its activities.

Our Carriages

Great Northern No. 2856

To say "the end is in sight" would perhaps be a little optimistic. However, good progress is being made and we are reasonably confident of effective completion before the deadline of the end of this coming June, hopefully not too far from the budgeted cost. There are however likely to be a few items which will be "temporary" (in Museumspeak this could be some time!) – in particular, we just are not progressing with finding two contemporary toilet hoppers and so are likely to have to use an available two of these dating from the 1950s or thereabouts. We are also experiencing difficulties finding two drop-down washbasins of appropriate design. One of these has been on its way from Zimbabwe for many months past. At the time of writing we are fairly certain that it has now set off from Bulawayo – so we look forward to seeing it, also the accompanying bill! Sadly the political situation is such that there is now little chance of getting a second one from Zimbabwe, so we will be trying a South African source as suggested by David Pearson. If all else fails, we have two ex-BR sleeper drop-down washbasins and if necessary could do an "antiquing" exercise with these – but we really need the authentic article! If you have any suggestions as to the way forward, whether for the toilet pots, or the drop-down washbasins, or for replicating the handpumps we need to provide on top of each of the two (floor mounted) water tanks, we should be very pleased to hear from you! All this is as illustrated within the last *Newsletter* – please write or email if you might be able

to help and would like a further copy of this illustration. Meantime, the toilet compartments themselves are progressing very nicely. Strictly speaking, we should say "toilets compartment", as the diagonal divider between the two is yet to put in position. Within this (at present) single enclosure, all the panelling is now in place, with the multitude of small transfers in position and much of the varnishing completed. The teak for the diagonal divider has now arrived, which will allow Stuart Mellin to start building this divider within the next few days. Once this is in position we can complete the ceilings of what will then be the two separate toilet compartments and go ahead with adding the various "fittings and furnishings", as and when available! The photo shows one set of one of these furnishings – this is marked "42856", so dating it to LNER days. And yes, we've only one: so we need to make a second.



Stuart has also cut the mouldings for the four passenger compartments, so allowing the rather tedious job of sanding, priming and painting to go ahead before they are put in position and finish-painted.

Also now well in hand are the luggage nets. Here, the first has now been completed by Messrs Woodalls of Malton, with the rest now on order.

Sadly, we and our previous Upholsterer parted by mutual consent. As mentioned in the last issue, Terry Brown of Messrs A S Pickering of Bradford has picked up the Third Class upholstery. This is now complete and in position, and we are very pleased with it. The final choice of colour for the 'Smoking' compartment is a "Chieftain Traditional, Ox Blood" vinyl, which nicely picks up what we think is the feel and atmosphere of the original Rexine: present-day safety requirements are such that Rexine is now not available

'Bulleid' Open Third No. 1469

Michael Cope and Robin Banner recently visited the Bluebell Railway to look at other Bulleids and in particular at Bulleid semi-open Third No. 2526, currently under restoration there. This followed an earlier visit to the North Yorkshire Moors Railway to look at the Bulleid coach there (since moved to the Bluebell, as part of the 2526 project). The end result of all this is that we now have a very much better idea of just what is required to re-sheet our carriage. Chris Smith has now removed the existing cladding from half of one side. This is as shown in the photograph, taken when the Bulleid was briefly outside during a shunt. We have now been able to pick up the original cladding securing points and to further establish just what needs doing. Hopefully, Geoff Smith of Geoff Smith Fabrications will

for this use. The 'Non Smoking' compartment is in the same colour, but in cloth, and again nicely gives an appropriate atmosphere. Terry Brown is now working on the first section of the rather more complex First Class seating. We do not anticipate any significant problems and look forward to this being in position early in the New Year.

All the above will take time and effort. However, there's not a dramatic amount to do after that... ..other than the blinds (awaiting the fabric blinds themselves, which Terry Brown will attend to), the gas lighting system, the external emergency cords, minimal upholstery for the Guard's seats, door retaining straps: and doubtless many other minor but essential items which will crop up! Next time you pass by the Museum, please call in and view progress – and if you would like to join us in actually doing things on this (or any other) carriage, please let us know!

visit us before Christmas so that we can establish the way forward for correctly replacing this first piece of cladding as the first step towards attending to the whole of the exterior of the coach. If you would like to support this work (or would like to take part in this and other work on this carriage) please contact us. As yet we have no indication of the total cost, but we do not anticipate too many nasty surprises! In the meantime, Chris has completed many of the sliding window assemblies, and the necessary new luggage rubbing strips are in position in the "yet to be completed" saloon, together with most of the remaining varnished-wood trim around the saloon doors.

This is likely to be a long-term project, but we are certain that it needs doing and are determined to do it properly.



Metropolitan Railway Nine Compartment No. 465

The work on the underframe continues. John Heaton as its Caretaker probably likens it to the repainting of the Forth Bridge, but upside down. John has spent many "happy" hours underneath cleaning, then applying a coat of green primer and now coats of underframe black gloss. It is a mystery how John manages to arrive under the coach without anyone seeing him. He does not live under there but we are sure that sometimes he must feel as if he does.

Work on this carriage's second bogie continues very satisfactory, considerably helped by the work of Chris Smith as our now full-time employee. The bogie bare frame is now completely cleaned and repainted, as are most of the brake rigging and suspension components to be mounted on it. The general condition of this bogie was quite a lot worse than the other bogie for this coach, needing quite a lot of re-bushing and other work, capably carried out by John Adams.

There has however been a major setback, which brings us to our second Appeal! This Appeal is **"The Spring Appeal"**. This has nothing to do with the time of the year, but has everything to do with a broken bolster inner spring – as shown in the photograph. This spring was amongst the four bolster coil springs (two inner, two outer), eight suspension hanger coil springs and four suspension leaf springs sent to Messrs Owens of Sheffield for checking and refurbishment as necessary. This spring was well into checking and cleaning before what was obviously a very long-standing crack opened up, causing the spring to separate into two sections as shown.

This carriage cannot be returned into occasional operation until we have replaced this spring. It is made up of a flat strip coiled into shape – not the round section as applies to most springs. Replacing it by a round-section spring is not an option, as such a spring would lock solid on compression long before an equivalent flat-section spring. Making replacement springs (we need two, to avoid any risk of unbalancing the two bolster spring assemblies) is a specialised, and expensive, business. We are fortunate to



have found Messrs Morris Springs of West Bromwich, who can do this job – but at a price! This price is £995.65 each, for two: or £682.50 each for four. Plus VAT. Plus carriage. Whilst very expensive, we see no alternative but to go ahead and order these springs. At the time of writing we are debating whether to order four rather than just the two we need for this carriage. The reason for this is that we are very

much aware that the bogies of the Metropolitan Brake are in rather worse order than those we have dealt with thus far and we are fearful that when we get to this carriage we will again be in this position – paying the further £738.70 for two extra springs could prove to be a good investment!

So: we need to find quite a lot of money for these rather specialised springs before the Nine Compartment Met. can once again operate on

the Worth Valley Railway (or anywhere else). We would therefore very much appreciate your support to this "Spring Appeal" – not exciting, but fundamental to being able to again ride in this carriage, or to again see it in operation. Please consider what you can give, and then use the enclosed Appeal form for the purpose. Thank you for your support!

Metropolitan Railway First Class No. 509

We celebrated the 80th Birthday of this coach with a short ceremony at the Museum immediately following the Annual Meeting. A number of members returned to the Museum where our Chairman Trevor England had very kindly provided one of our now famous cakes, accompanied by a glass of champagne (or orange juice). Michael Cope has been the caretaker of this coach and has worked on its restoration for well over 25 years. It now looks very fine and is one of

Midland 6 wheel Composite No. 358

This carriage does not often see a mention in the *Newsletter*. However this may be about to change. The new Caretaker Neil Shuttlewood is very keen to see what can be done to take this interesting old vehicle forward. It was built in 1886 and is the only example of a Midland coach now present on the Worth Valley Railway. The Railway was of course a Midland

prides of our Collection. However Michael in his few words during the ceremony was quick to stress that restoration is never finished and we have here an example of this. The interior upholstery and the interior layout is still London Transport, which does not match the exterior which is Metropolitan Railway varnished teak. Perhaps some day it will be thought desirable to return to the project and consider putting the interior back to its original semi-open design.

Metropolitan Railway Brake No. 427

This carriage continues to be in demand for filming and for "Vintage Train" operation. It was in very successful use

Railway branch line and carriages very similar to ours would have seen extensive service on the branch.

This coach has suffered the indignity of a bogus livery courtesy of its last filming assignment. At least this gives the "experts" amongst our visitors something to discuss! We wish Neil well with his newly-found responsibility.

Manchester Sheffield & Lincolnshire Tri-Composite No. 154

This, our 'flagship' carriage, was the first to receive full restoration by the Trust way back in the dark ages of the early 1980s. We are very proud of this work – but it is often remarked in Committee and elsewhere that given what we now know "we would not have done it that way". Ralph Timmins, who with his father Bob Timmins at that time painted the exterior of the carriage, very recently looked at

together with the First Class Metropolitan carriage over the Railway's Autumn Enthusiasts' Weekend.

the present condition of the paint finish. Pleasingly, he said that this was in quite good order and suggested that all that was needed was a very good clean, minor touching-up, and a re-varnish. Hopefully we will be able to put this into action this coming year. Meantime, its Caretaker Mike Holmes is considering what other work needs doing on this carriage and when this should take place.

Great Northern Railway 6-wheeled Brake No. 589

Dave Johnson as Caretaker for this coach is steadily continuing the finishing touches to the Brake compartment,

with plans afoot for full restoration of this vehicle in the not too far distant future.

Our locomotives

Sir Berkeley

After a great deal of work, the application for a Heritage Lottery Fund "Your Heritage" grant has now been submitted.

This application covers a new boiler for *Sir Berkeley*, in addition to new tyres and very considerable work by our

Lord Mayor

There should be space in the Workshop for *Lord Mayor* from early in the New Year until just before Easter.

This will allow Dave Carr and Neil Shuttlewood time to prepare the locomotive for finish-painting in the poor days of Winter and then for this painting to take place in the hopefully rather better weather just before Easter.

Bellerophon

Bellerophon is reported as safe and under cover at Foxfield. A priority is an early visit to discuss with the Foxfield

friends of the Middleton Railway on the motion and the locomotive as a whole. It also covers display and interpretation of the present boiler itself. All we can do now is to await the HLF's decision, which should be with us within the next three months, and hope for success.

Lord Mayor will then return to his normal position ready for our Easter visitors.

Whilst *Lord Mayor* is in the Workshop, his place will be taken by the Nine-Compartment Met's bogie whilst awaiting the replacement flat-coil spring. This will present quite an "interpretation" challenge – but we should manage this!

Railway the way forward for the necessary ten-year overhaul of this locomotive.

Our Website www.vintagecarriagestrust.org

For some time now the VCT website has been the gateway to the Preserved Carriage Database. Unfortunately, there was an interruption to the service between September 13th and October 29th, caused by circumstances entirely outside VCT's control. Following a great deal of hard work by Philip Walton in the UK and his son Michael in the USA, the database has been transferred from the previous webspace provider to VCT's new provider. We are confident that this move will result in greater reliability and quicker response times. We also have four times as much available webspace than previously.

The way into the database is still via www.vintagecarriagestrust.org. As a result of the change of hosting service, each individual page now has a new URL. We have advised various other railway societies which were linking directly to individual pages of the carriage database. However, if we have missed anyone and you come across a link which doesn't work, please e-mail us on admin@vintagecarriagestrust.org and we will take the necessary action.

Richard Gibbon's Paper (including the score sheets) on the subject of Carriage Significance as presented first to the

Carriage Survey Group and then to the Spring FEDECRAIL meeting in Llandudno has been added to the VCT website. Provisional dates for next year's Vintage Trains on the KWVR are also listed.

Thanks to the efforts of Paul Holroyd and Bob Stott, the website is proving to be a valuable source of income through the "railwayana for sale" pages. The need for constant updating of this list as items are bought whether through the shop or on-line has resulted in ongoing co-operation between Paul Holroyd, who seems to enjoy getting to the Museum early before he sets off to his work, and Bob Stott who keeps a check on the coming and going of items and perhaps more importantly packs some very weird shaped and sometimes heavy objects. Posting a porter's lamp or the top from a milepost is not only an expensive affair (which is the problem of the buyer) but a difficult puzzle involving bubble wrap, boxes and polystyrene.

Not only hardware but also books and particularly magazines continue to be in demand. These requests include by letter, by phone, or via the web. Recent sales included a consignment of rather heavy back-number magazines for Germany!

Members' Trip to Cleethorpes

Dave Carr reports a very successful VCT outing to Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway, where a very warm welcome greeted the party:

"The invitation to visit our colleagues and counterparts on the Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway in the last *Newsletter* met with a good response. Mark Astley took a party of eight over to the East Coast by minibus, to meet up with a similar number of members who had travelled under their own steam from various parts of East and South Yorkshire.

The welcome we received was genuine and generous, with our hosts recognising the need to restore the inner man (and woman) with soup, rolls and sandwiches. We were then taken along the track to the workshops and sheds for a conducted tour of the Sutton Collection, whose preservation, in such good condition, is a cause for celebration.

Thereafter, we were invited to play trains, taking complimentary rides down to Kingsway Station and back;

and best of all taking turns to drive *Flower of the Forest* (from the Ratty) up and down the line, preceding the service train by about five minutes. This idiosyncratic little loco was very forgiving of our lack of skill, and kept going the length of the afternoon.

At the end of the working day, our hosts entertained us to a superb barbecue beneath the Lakeside Station train shed, where we were glad to shelter from a torrential downpour. To round off the evening, we took in "culture", in the form of a classical open-air concert taking place on land adjacent to the railway, at that favourite price of gratis!

A super day spent in super company! We look forward to the Cleethorpes members making a return visit, so that we can demonstrate the warmth of a Yorkshire welcome."

Filming and TV

"Inside Out"

At last our Trustee Paul Holroyd has achieved his lifetime dream. He has been "discovered". His initial starring role was seen (providing you didn't blink at the time) in the BBC TV's current affairs series, "Inside Out". (His son Graham recognised him immediately). "Inside Out" is a magazine programme where various subjects are aired in ten-minute segments. The BBC wished to do a feature regarding the two unidentified children who were killed in the collision and subsequent fire at Charfield, Gloucestershire on 13th October 1928. We were asked if we could provide two wooden bodied compartment carriages for the programme.

Unlike big budget feature films, filming was distinctly low key. Only eight filming people were present: the Producer, Phil the Cameraman, Programme Presenter Sophie Hull, and three adult and two child actors.

At Oakworth Station our Paul was roped in to assume the role of "Head Porter". A large black moustache transformed this usually reasonably good-looking Trustee into an extremely sinister-looking character – as demonstrated by the photo. Fortunately he was allowed to remove the offending item before leaving the set so he is still free to roam the streets and more importantly to deal with the various filming enquires which we receive sometimes in co-operation with the Worth Valley Railway. Paul is very happy to autograph his photograph for a small fee. Who knows, now he has been "discovered" his dream sequence with Gwyneth Paltrow or Tara Fitzgerald may become a reality!!



"He Knew He Was Right"

We have once again been involved in another BBC television drama. This time it is an adaptation of "He Knew He Was Right", written by Anthony Trollope in 1868. This involved three of our carriages travelling to the West Somerset Railway: the MS&L four wheeler, Midland 6 wheeler and GNR 6-wheel brake 589.

"Salvage Squad"

The Tate & Lyle Scammell Mechanical Horse has not been much in the news since its supposed high-speed tour around Bolton, later found to be a case of mistaken identity by the speed cameras of the Great Manchester Police. However, it recently had a very interesting outing into Ingrow Yard. John Downs, Chairman of the Mechanical Horse Club and friend of VCT, has been involved with one of the episodes of "Salvage Squad", a popular Channel 4 series in which various pieces of equipment are restored from near-dereliction to beautiful working order. This episode concerns

The filming took place at Williton station. For the filming, the carriages were disguised with Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway graphics.

The series is provisionally due to be transmitted in March or April, but do keep an eye on the television magazines or the VCT website in case it is transmitted earlier.

a 6-ton diesel Scammell Scarab, originally owned by Cadbury's of Birmingham. John was asked by the Film Company involved to take this almost beyond-repair load of scrap from a location in the south of England and transport it to Yorkshire. He was then to restore it with the 'help' of the "Salvage Squad". John arranged for the final completion ceremony to take place at the front of our Museum at Ingrow. A number of other vehicles from the Mechanical Horse Club, including our own Scammell, were also on parade. The episode will be shown sometime in March.

New Additions to the Museum Display

It is interesting that as the Trust becomes increasingly well known we are approached by individuals asking if we would be interested in acquiring or loaning items, both large and small. For example, long-time member David Smith has loaned the Trust a fascinating collection of postcards dating from the late 19th Century through to the 1940s. They all appear to be addressed to members of the same family and hold as much interest in their messages as they do in their pictures, not all of which are railways. This collection is now on temporary display in one of the Museum cabinets.

In November we were delighted to welcome VCT Member David Mark. David kindly presented the Trust with a number of LNER leaflets and brochures, collected by his father Mr Clifford Mark whilst travelling as an apprentice

engineer in the 1930s. The items include a timetable and information booklet for *The Silver Jubilee*, a timetable and information booklet for *The Coronation*, an afternoon tea tariff card for *The Coronation*, a timetable and information leaflet for *The West Riding Limited*, timetable and information leaflet "Notes for LNER passengers" dated September 1938, and menu cards for *The Coronation* and for *The West Riding Limited*.

A larger and much heavier item has been sold to the Trust for a very reasonable sum. This is a North Eastern Railway lamp post with original lantern. It is not in good condition but is rare and has the NER badge intact. John Stephenson can't wait to get started on its restoration, after which it will be installed somewhere inside the Museum.

Our next expected long term-loan is a 4-ft long model of an LMS railway carriage – but more of that in the next *Newsletter*.

If you have items which you think would interest and inform the public in railway matters and particularly on railway

coaches, do write or give us a ring. We cannot accept every item and reserve the right to say “no thanks” as we have only a limited amount of space: but we look forward to being asked!

Diary Dates for 2004

The Railway's **Spring Enthusiasts' Weekend** will take place on **February 21st and 22nd 2004**. Please note that at the time of writing it doesn't look as if there will be any involvement of VCT carriages.

However, the Railway will be operating three **Vintage Train Days** in 2004, on **18th April, 16th May and 6th June**. These will involve VCT carriages, selected from probably two of the three Mets and the 'Chatham'. There's a small possibility that Great Northern 2856 might be in use on 6th June.

The 'Chatham' coach is expected to attend the **National Railway Museum's "RAILFEST"**, taking place from **29th May to 6th June**. Worth Valley's working diesel railbus and possibly English Electric locomotive *Vulcan* may also be present. The RAILFEST is one of the principal events celebrating the 200th Anniversary of the world's first steam locomotive, Richard Trevithick's *Penydarren*, and the 100th Anniversary of *City of Truro* breaking the 100 mph barrier. We are very pleased that the NRM has invited us to display this coach at RAILFEST, which promises to be a major gathering of locomotives, carriages, and people. We will have a publicity and sales stall within the Chatham's Brake compartment, and will be looking for volunteers to help look after this. If you would like to help (and at the same time see everything else at RAILFEST), please contact VCT Secretary Michael Cope as soon as you like.

VCT, L&YRPS and the Worth Valley Railway will be jointly hosting this year's annual **Carriage Restorers' Weekend**, to be held on the Railway on **24th/25th September**. Further information will be available later.

Working Weekends take place at our Museum on the **second full weekend of each month**. So; dates for the first part of 2004 are: **January 10th/11th; February 14th/15th; March 13th/14th; April 10th/11th; May 8th/9th; and June 12th/13th**. There's always work for everyone: no special skills needed – so how about joining us for an hour or so (or more) on one (or more!) of these dates?

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!

And finally: Caption Competition time! Entries on a postcard please to your Secretary, who will award a very small prize to the entry he likes best. Left to right: Chairman Trevor England; Committee Members Neil Shuttlewood, Mike Holmes, and Dave Carr. *Lord Mayor* (behind) patiently awaits some activity....



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