



# Vintage Carriages Trust

## Members' Newsletter: April 2010

We commence this *Newsletter* on a day when Spring does seem to be upon us and hopefully we have seen the last of the cold and snow during which Ingrow Yard could have been the venue for "Dancing on Ice". We are amazed and thankful for the resilience of staff, volunteers and visitors who braved all to reach us. Hopefully this weather is now behind us and we can look forward to a busy and successful year ahead.

We are delighted to show you this photograph of 1921-built Great Northern Railway "N2" locomotive No. 1744 hauling our two Great Northern Railway carriages and our three Metropolitan Railway carriages on its recent visit to the Worth Valley Railway.



The date was Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February – the first day of the Worth Valley Railway's three-day Spring Gala Weekend, and the only day on which this locomotive would be hauling both of the Trust's Great Northern coaches – six wheeler No. 589 of 1888 and bogie coach No. 2856 of 1898. Our three Metropolitan coaches were added for extra interest and to provide lots of seats. This was definitely a "Red Letter Day" in the history of the Trust. What a marvellous sight, so much enjoyed by those VCT and Worth Valley members who were able to be present and to take advantage of their membership to ride in these coaches behind this locomotive.

Our dedicated membership Secretary Jeanette Achilles and her team were on hand to greet members and hopefully recruit new ones. Jeanette spoke with members who had travelled in some

cases quite some distance to see this train, and also view the locomotive *Nunlow* in action. *Nunlow* is owned by our friends and neighbours the Bahamas Locomotive Society. Photographers massed in Ingrow Yard as the carriages were pulled from the Museum and once out on the line there was a lot of "carriage hopping" throughout the day. (Ed: a new sport for the next Olympics?) Jeanette reports that five new members were gained on the day.

*One slight problem: we thank the photographer who kindly gave us a print of this fine photo and said "use it as you like" (which we have, thank you!). Unfortunately he didn't leave his name – so if you are the photographer and if you read this, please let us have this information, so that in the next issue we can appropriately acknowledge your work.*

## VCT Chairman's Day: Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> June

All members are invited to join us for this day, which promises to be full of interest. We would like you to view the Museum and the Workshop, see work in progress and be present at the official opening of our newly refurbished sales area. There will be short presentations on various areas of the Trust's activities and plans. A light buffet will be provided with tea and coffee also available.

In the afternoon we link up with our neighbours the Bahamas Locomotive Society as their locomotive *Nunlow* draws some of our coaches from the Museum. Then it's up to Ingrow Station to join this train for a 3.30 pm departure towards Oxenhope for two round trips, with our special train open only to members and invited guests.

Times and further details are on the leaflet you should find within this *Newsletter*. Just in case this is missing – the Museum will open at 10 am, events start at 12 noon with tea and coffee available, and should you wish to travel on the train the first round trip gets you back to Ingrow at 5.06 pm and if you wish to stay for the second you should be back at Ingrow at 6.35 pm.

## No Appeal?!

Not only are members invited to a Chairman's Day but also in this *Newsletter* there is no Appeal! Yes, that's right there is no Appeal, and what's more we are giving you something. Enclosed you will find a voucher giving Complimentary Admission to our Museum of Rail Travel for up to five people, valid for more than a year.

What we would like you to do is to decide upon a deserving recipient – someone in your family, a fellow enthusiast, a work colleague or a friend, the choice is entirely yours – and invite them to visit the Museum, free of charge. Why not come along with them, and act as a personal guide? Hopefully, many of your guests will begin to appreciate why we are all so enthusiastic about railway carriages. The more that we do collectively to increase visitor numbers, the stronger the Trust will be.

So: Over to You!

## "Sad news and new beginnings"

This was the title of the Vintage Carriages Trust's report in the latest edition of the Worth Valley Railway's members' magazine *Push & Pull*. The title summed up our feelings back in December when that article was written. The sadness came on the news of the death of Bob Stott, our long time shop manager. In the last *Newsletter* it was mentioned that Bob was absent due to illness, the reasons for which were being investigated. However, just before Christmas it came as a great shock to receive the news of his sudden death. An appreciation of Bob will be seen elsewhere in this *Newsletter*.

Sad endings do often have new beginnings and we are delighted to welcome one of our very long-standing volunteers Keith Pitts. Keith has recently retired and has now taken up the task of looking after our shop and the Museum at Ingrow for four days each week. As well as this work, Keith is also to be found looking after the shop and welcoming visitors on the third Saturday of each month – a tradition which he has upheld for many years, dating back to Haworth Relic Shop days. He is also to be seen around Haworth and the Railway, usually with his camera in use. Keith also tends the viewing gallery and garden overlooking Haworth locomotive

yard. Next time you pass on the train, drag your eyes away from the steaming locos and wave to Keith, beavering away in what he has made to be an attractive little garden area.

Mike Halcrow as a relatively new volunteer member of the Trust has kindly volunteered to cover the remaining midweek day, looking after the shop and the museum. He was persuaded by his former work colleague Ian Smith to give volunteering with the Trust a go following his retirement, and has quickly become very much part of the team. We wish both Keith and Mike well as the Spring and Summer brings visitors to the Museum, the new shop and the magazine room. We take pride in the professional way we try to run our Trust and are pleased that Keith and Mike have fitted in so quickly. The aim of the activity in the sales area is of course to raise money for the continued care, conservation and restoration of our Collection and the upkeep of the workshop and Museum.

If you are interested in volunteering in any capacity please do get in touch with us, either by letter or by email on [admin@vintagecarriagestrust.org](mailto:admin@vintagecarriagestrust.org) and we will welcome the opportunity to find you a niche somewhere.



## “The Railway Children”

The “Red Letter Day” of the N2’s visit in February was a prelude to what will be the major event for 2010: the celebration of the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the filming of EMI’s *The Railway Children*.

The film starred Dinah Sheridan, Jenny Agutter, Sally Thomsett, Bernard Cribbins, Gary Warren and William Mervyn and has maintained its popularity over the years. The railway scenes were of course filmed on the Worth Valley Railway, and were centred on Oakworth Station. A digitally remastered version of the film has been prepared for release also as a DVD, and was premiered as the final event of this year’s Bradford Film Festival on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> March, with several WVR and a few VCT members present – as were Jenny Agutter, Sally Thomsett and Bernard Cribbins who between them provided an hour’s fascinating discussion before the film was shown. Extra material within the DVD will include interviews with again several WVR and a few VCT members who were involved in one way or another with the original filming, 40 years ago – albeit in one case “just” as a railbus driver!

Celebratory activities run from 2<sup>nd</sup> April to 5<sup>th</sup> September. Notably, the Railway’s main event will take place over the May Day weekend (1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> May) for which the present intention is that for what may be for all three days our three Metropolitan Railway carriages will once again be out behind “The Green Dragon”, Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway 0-6-0 No. 957. (As always, please check before travelling).

As Trevor England reports: “Five of the original carriages from the film are based at the Museum of Rail Travel, together with the steam locomotive *Lord Mayor*, which appeared on the sleeve of the film soundtrack LP record.

It is only fitting that we should join in the celebrations and there will be special displays in the Museum to complement the Worth Valley’s promised events. These will be in place at Easter and will continue over the Summer period.

The Midland six-wheeler has been painted into the two-colour scheme carried by most carriages in the film. It and the Great Northern coach No. 589 are now placed immediately behind *Lord Mayor*. The loco has been suitably trimmed with bunting and flags, the whole being a cross between a look alike of the “Green Dragon” and an Award ceremony.”

Jim Shipley and Christine Cashman have mounted an interesting display of *Railway Children* memorabilia in one of the Museum’s display cabinets. A fine wooden model of locomotive No. 957 as *The Green Dragon*, one of the stars of the film, has been loaned to the Trust by David Smith, who made it many years ago as a sit-on ride for his

children. As shown in the photo, this has taken centre stage in the display.

A smaller display elsewhere in the Museum shows the *Railway Children* filming as reported in various contemporary periodicals.



We will be adding further children’s activities to our well-established “Hunt the Helper” search, with drawing and colouring materials available and a “Look and Find” based on *The Railway Children*, with a small prize draw at the end of each month.

A new publication *The Making of the Railway Children* was launched at the end of March with great acclaim. This fascinating book was compiled by Jim Shipley (VCT member, and also WVR administrative officer). It draws on the recollections of the many who were there, helping or just observing. It opens with Bob Cryer’s recollections, written shortly after the film’s release. The whole is extremely well illustrated, drawing on official and personal photos of those who were there. 48 pages, card cover, A5 format. Published by the KWVRPS and available from any of the Railway’s sales outlets at the price of £4.95 – or from the VCT Shop at £4.95, or £5.50 including post and packing: VCT, c/o The Railway Station, Haworth, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD22 8NJ. (KWVRPS price by post may vary).

## Carriages and the Workshop

In the December edition of this *Newsletter* we wrote of the Railway's **DMU vehicle** (Class 101 Driving Brake Motor Second No. 51189), in our workshop for Chris Smith's attention to the bodywork, to be followed by re-painting and lining and lettering. In the event the work required was rather more extensive than originally envisaged, with the Contract with the Railway twice being extended. This extra work included Chris working on one of the two engines to such an extent that he was able to start and run it – this was for the first time in some ten or eleven years!

The Railway was well pleased with the final result, which indeed is a credit to the Trust – and especially to Chris and the others who worked on this project in one way or another. These included Bill Black, Ian Gibbs, Mike Holmes, John Holroyd, Stuart Mellin, Mike Tarran and Ian Wild.

Unfortunately, the extra time taken by the work on this DMU had its effect on other work we had hoped to do. Having the DMU in our workshop meant that our **Southern Railway** built (but South Eastern & Chatham Railway designed) "**matchboard**" **carriage No. 3554** was by agreement housed in the Railway's Carriage & Wagon workshop at Oxenhope. Complications featuring Santa presents meant that it had to be moved a few weeks before Christmas to be within the carriage shed – under cover, but not in a secure building. The DMU was not out of our workshop until mid March, at which time the Railway's C&W Department were very keen to bid farewell to the Chatham coach, to provide space to be able to put carriage sets together ready for the busy time of Easter. Further complications involving a shortage of Worth Valley diesel motive power and in particular a shortage of available appropriate diesel drivers meant that the necessary shunt didn't take place until Maundy Thursday – and therefore involved also making up the carriage sets at

Oxenhope. Not a lot of time to spare before the Easter deadline! Incidentally, the six people who made up the crew for this shunt were all VCT Members – except one: but he is our Independent Examiner!

The casualty of all this was our **Great Northern Railway bogie coach No. 2856**. We had hoped

to have sufficient time between the DMU vehicle departing and the Chatham coach returning to use the available space in the workshop to run out the Oxenhope end bogie of No. 2856 to check for and if necessary rectify a possible misalignment of the bolster beam. Unfortunately sufficient time was not available. Until this job can be done No. 2856 will not be available for service.

Progress with the **Bulleid coach** has taken a great leap forward in that in February we managed to put the second bogie back into position. This was with motive power provided by the Bahamas Locomotive Society's diesel locomotive *James*: our thanks go BLS and in particular to Martin Harper and to John Tait for making this possible. The actual change of bogie went remarkably easily – it's just very unfortunate that for quite a number of reasons we hadn't managed to achieve this much earlier.

This one action has moved final completion of the Bulleid coach much closer, in that Chris Smith can now get on with preparing the coach's exterior for final painting – the inevitable stressing of the body as the coach was lifted off the temporary bogie and then lowered on to the restored bogie could have damaged any near-complete paintwork. Otherwise, Robin Bannier is now well on with the second corridor bellows connector, also with making and fitting the roof vents for the toilets. Elsewhere, minor outstanding items of the interior are being caught up with: panelling the interior of the six external doors is in hand: and the two toilets are approaching completion. It's still too early to guess a target finish date, as there are too many minor problems to resolve, any one of which may need quite a bit of time. However, progress is positive and as they say "the end is in sight".

As previously mentioned, the **Midland six-wheeler** No. 358 has again been repainted. This time the change to *Railway Children* livery was

simple, involving only painting cream the individual upper panels and the droplights. The rest of the body stayed the same "Midland Maroon" as previously. Chris Smith attended to this immediately before Easter. The photo (by Paul Holroyd)



shows this coach, together with the decorated *Lord Mayor*, about to be moved into its position for the Summer, at the front of the Museum.



## Robert (Bob) Stott: died 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2009

Bob joined VCT more by accident than design. The fact that he would still be there over 18 years later as the manager of the Museum of Rail Travel shop and the familiar week-day face on the front desk for visitors and volunteer alike was a matter of chance.

He came to the Railway as an unemployed person who was advised to go out and find volunteer work. He ended up in the Railway's Haworth Office where Michael Cope found him looking very bored with some repetitious task he had been given. "Follow me" said Michael and took Bob down to the Museum building at Ingrow. This was long before the sideways extension produced a nice warm pleasant shop area, and long before the Heritage Lottery Fund helped the Trust to build a backwards extension and other facilities. Bob may not have known, nor particularly wanted to know, much about railways in those early days, but his sharp mind and natural practicality soon found him dealing with many different facets of the Trust's activities. He started by trying his hand at upholstery restoration in the Bulleid coach. He then turned to selling tickets to folk who came to visit, moving for the purpose to the little glass booth which then served as the Museum's ticket office. One memorable day he managed to drive a rather large rat into the office and close the door. As he stood looking through the window at the rat it cleaned its whiskers and looked at Bob. Who out-stared whom we never found out but the removal of livestock (roosting birds and mice for example) from the Museum building became one of his life's missions.

Bob Stott was very much part of the on-going development of the Vintage Carriages Trust and it is sad that due to his untimely death Bob will not be able to enjoy the newly refurbished sales area. There is no doubt that there will be many regular customers who will perhaps not notice the new surroundings but will enquire after Bob's welfare and be sad at his passing.

## Locomotive news

Our 0-6-0 well tank *Bellerophon* (built at Haydock Colliery in 1874) and our 0-6-0 Manning Wardle saddletank *Sir Berkeley* of 1893 are both currently "in ticket" and are regularly in operation. They are too small to work regularly on the Worth Valley Railway. So, *Bellerophon* is currently based at the Foxfield Railway in Staffordshire, with *Sir Berkeley* at the Middleton Railway in Leeds.

Our third locomotive, Hudswell Clarke 0-4-0 saddletank **Lord Mayor**, is on static display at our Museum. *Lord Mayor* is part of our *Railway Children* exhibition, coupled to our 1886-built Midland Railway six-wheeled carriage No. 358. As noted above, the links with the *Railway Children* film are modest for *Lord Mayor* (it appeared on the sleeve of the record of the sound track of the film), but much greater for the Midland carriage, which appeared as part of the train in which Mother and the Children travelled to Oakworth. Philip Walton has reinstated the sound presentation usually referred to as "Nay, Lad!" on *Lord Mayor*. This is now entirely solid-state and therefore should now give much better quality and reliability.

*Ian Smith reports:*

**Bellerophon** (seen here in operation in Foxfield Winter snow – photo by Andrew Civil) is going on his holidays in July, to the historic Derbyshire town of Wirksworth, where he will be operating on the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway.

Trevor England and myself visited Wirksworth on 20<sup>th</sup> March and were very impressed with the facilities there – one of the tidiest railway sites we have ever seen! The engine will be operating a push/pull service between Wirksworth



and Idringhay, about three miles away. The line is very scenic indeed and the prospect of *Bellerophon* steaming there is one not to be missed! Whilst on site, the engine will be crewed by Foxfield volunteers, with our Trust probably sending an Owner's representative.

Note the dates: Saturday and Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> July and 1<sup>st</sup> August, and Saturday and Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> August. Production of your current VCT Membership Card should give you free admission on this occasion.

*Meanwhile, Andy Hardy of the Middleton Railway writes:*

"Things have been a little quiet with **Sir Berkeley** of late. The loco was not used during any of the Santa season here at Middleton, which incidentally is probably a good thing considering the weather we had. During our "closed" season the locomotive was drained, emptied of coal etc and dismantled prior to a washout. After this the annual boiler inspection was carried out followed by reassembly and an in-steam test carried out by the boiler inspector, which the locomotive passed ready for another season in traffic. The locomotive has recently been given a good clean and placed in the museum at Moor Road. It is currently a standby locomotive for MSC No. 67 until the weather is a little better when the locomotive will see more regular use during the summer months."

We said "our three locomotives" – but this should read four steam locomotives. The fourth is the 3½-inch gauge live steam model built now a good many years ago by the late Mick Todd, who until his untimely death was very active in looking after the Trust's full-size locomotives. This is a superb model of Standard Four No. 75039 and is now again operational, following some work done on it by our Engineer Chris Smith. This will be in operation at the Marley Fields running track of the Keighley & District Model Engineering Society and elsewhere (possibly to include the Isle of Man!) on selected Saturdays during the Summer. If you would like to see this locomotive in operation, please contact Chris at our Museum any weekday (01535 680425) or write to him c/o VCT, the Railway Station, Haworth, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD22 8NJ.

## Membership matters

Have you paid your 2010 subscription? Jeanette reminds you that if you have not yet renewed your membership would you please do so as soon as possible.

We are pleased to welcome the following new members:

Mr F Croft (Leeds), Mrs D Grech-Baxendale (Eccles), Mr T Sigouin (Edinburgh), Miss S Seabrook (Stevenage), Mr & Mrs L Howarth (Thirsk), Mr G Findley (Ware, Hertfordshire), Mr G Wolstencroft (Burnley), Mr C Cordner (Haworth), Mr P Marshall (Nene Valley), Mr M Smith (Hebden Bridge), Mr P Brown (Haworth), Mr A Carter (Haworth), Mr M Florey (Ripon).

Fraser Croft and Sheila Seabrook have already become working volunteers, being involved with the shop and the magazine room. Sheila very kindly arranged for the donation in the memory of her partner and long time VCT supporter Peter Bartrum be given to the Trust.

We have had news of two other members of the Trust who have died in recent months. We send our condolences to the family of Peter Warburton, who was a generous member of the Trust for many years.

## VCT jumpers/ties etc

Dave Carr, our Honorary Secretary, reminds us that he will shortly be placing another order with the manufacturers of our smart VCT clothing. Jack Procter, our Magazine Room supreme, has been waiting for more of you to order items to make up the number required for an order. The trouble is they are such good quality that they do not wear out easily!

We have in the past bought polo shirts, sweatshirts, fleece jackets, V-neck sweaters and smart shirts with the logo on the pocket. Our iconic Manchester,

Peter was a very active volunteer in the locomotive department on the Worth Valley Railway. Only his recent illness caused him to lay down a leading role in the Railway's Council and on various committees.

Keith Gullen also died recently. His initial interest in the Trust concerned the links formed with the Glider Pilot's Association whose regimental emblem is Pegasus - the winged horse in Greek mythology given to Bellerophon to tame and to ride into battle. Keith over the years kept this link alive and has been a very supportive member.

A salutary tale, whilst writing of new members. One regular Worth Valley volunteer was pressed into service at short notice (*very* short notice) to operate the Keighley limits signalling system on the Friday of the Spring Gala weekend. He felt underdressed for duty without a tie and sent a £10 note along to the station with a request for VCT to send a tie to him. The £10 note made its way to our Chairman Trevor England with the name of the man but no message – with the result that it was assumed that the man wanted to join or renew membership of the Trust: £8, plus a small donation. He now has ties with the VCT, but perhaps not the sort that he really wanted!

Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway carriage logo is, of course, embroidered on the left breast of the garments; and apart from the waterproof jacket and the smart shirts, everything comes in our chosen corporate colour, maroon (the nearest to Midland Red we can get).

If you are interested and would like more information and to check prices, sizes and availability please ring Dave Carr on 01759 304176. or e-mail him at [davecarr\\_228@fsmail.net](mailto:davecarr_228@fsmail.net)

## The future VCT?

*Ian Smith's 'blue sky' thinking on the future of the Trust as outlined in the last two Newsletters has brought a number of comments, most of them positive and supportive of his ideas. One who actually put his thoughts down as a letter (which you can read below) is Sheffield-based long-time VCT member David Smith. If you have any comments on David or Ian's thoughts please do contact us by letter or e-mail. We look forward to continuing the debate, which will we hope lead to some concrete ideas for the future. David writes:*

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the question of the VCT's Collection and its future. My starting point is to ask what do we mean by the term 'Vintage' in terms of the Trust's title and constitution, how this translates in terms of our exhibition of carriages and smaller objects, and what does the term mean in relation to the 'Vintage Trains' that are such a welcome feature of Summer Sundays on the KWVR.

Taking the latter point first, the Vintage Trains normally operate with Pre-Grouping (pre 1923) coaches, and it seems that there is little reason to depart from this policy. I can't imagine that the Bulleid coach would be included in a Vintage Train, for example. Perhaps this confirms that the Bulleid coach is not really a vintage coach as such. On the other hand, perhaps the coach can be displayed in the museum as an example of 'Big Four' coach technology, demonstrating how far design had moved over the previous century. Indeed the internal design might be regarded as superior to the majority of coaches currently operating on the British railway network!

It would be good to see the Bulleid coach in operation on service trains, but would this be on a regular basis or an occasional one? If it is on a regular basis then I guess it is more logical to keep the coach at Oxenhope. In which case it might then be possible to transfer one or two of the other vintage coaches at Oxenhope to Ingrow to enhance the collection (perhaps the NER director's saloon with its Railway Children connection and/or one of the L&Y coaches). Equally we could consider bringing down one of the locomotives to Ingrow such as 5775 or 45596 to 'front' our exhibition.

Looking at the nine coaches in VCT ownership then we have at least one coach to represent each decade from the 1870s through to the 1940s with the main exception being the 1930s. The gap between 1924 and 1949 is actually quite large. Similarly if we look at the origin of the nine coaches then three are Metropolitan, an independent company but which had close associations with the GC and LNER. We have three coaches that became part of the LNER (one MS&L and two GN), two Southern coaches, leaving just one coach, the Midland coach, to represent the LMS and its pre-grouping constituents. Clearly this also represents a substantial gap in the Collection bearing in mind the history of the KWVR branch and who operated it. Fortunately there are five L&Y coaches on the railway plus two, albeit sadly neglected, LMS coaches. The L&Y coaches are very well looked after though not always on display. To my mind it would be great if we could work with

the L&Y Society to enlarge the 'Museum of Rail Travel' bringing all the vintage coaches on the railway under one roof - what a magnificent collection that would make. This leaves the two LMS coaches, which I consider are a crucial part of the KWVR's collection of coaches. If they are not to be restored by the KWVR as a matter of some urgency then I would hope that the VCT would take them on. Perhaps the KWVR house magazine might at last live up to its title?

As I have previously mentioned, if we are looking to bring more historic coaches to the railway then I think there is only one contender, and that is a three coach rake of Stanier LMS coaches of the type that could be seen on the Worth Valley in the 1950s. There are quite a few such coaches in existence - the Severn Valley has a marvellous rake of them and possibly one or two spare - Foxfield has one, there is one in the NRM collection currently being restored, and I can well remember one on the KWVR in the early 1970s which I presume is at Aviemore - but is it in use?

I have reservations about extending the collection to anything that is post 1950 - I don't think it fits in with our policy/constitution. Nor does there seem much point in duplicating something that is already represented and in normal service on the railway. So I don't think that the DRB is a logical part of the Collection, for example. A small van could be acceptable, though it probably wouldn't show much more than can be seen in the SECR guard's compartment. A really old coach might be acceptable though I don't think it would be much different to the MS&L, and it probably couldn't be used on the Vintage Trains.

In conclusion I think the 1930 period is the most neglected period within the VCT collection, and the lack of any LMS coaches or its constituents, (other than the one Midland coach), makes the Collection unrepresentative of the KWVR branch line. The means to do something about this lie on our own doorstep. Let's do something about this, sooner rather than later. As for the wider issue of whether museums should be about being representative of their local area and local history or whether they should include unusual but unrepresentative items because they might add extra interest, then my preference is to pursue the former policy. This is all the more important because we want to see our carriages in service on the KWVR, and other places, and it really does add value to see them working with the right locomotive in an authentic setting.

Best Wishes, David Smith.



## Museums at Night: 1

As an Accredited Museum the Trust makes every effort to take part in “museum” initiatives over the year. One such event is “Museums at Night” which this year will be held on the evenings of the 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> May between 6 pm and 10 pm. The timing allows those who perhaps cannot get out to

## Museums at Night: 2

*Trustee Jim Pickles has reason to particularly remember what the museum looks like at night – as he now describes:*

The invitation to “Museums at Night” does allow people to visit the Museum of Rail Travel outside of usual opening hours. This invitation does not, however, extend to self-arranged visits when no members of staff are around. As the first snows of winter were falling, our alarm response company were called to the museum and on arrival found the entrance roller shutter forced and the window in the door broken. Noting fresh footprints in the snow, the security company immediately phoned the police and the Vintage Carriages Trust key holders and requested both to attend, so between 10:30 pm and midnight the museum was carefully checked, the broken window boarded up and the roller shutter repaired sufficiently for it to be secured over night. The following morning, members were back in attendance to make sure that nothing was

*Jim was called out to this incident. We do well to remember that he is a volunteer who holds down a demanding job during the day and can well do without night-time excitements. So thanks Jim for your time and commitment to the Trust. It was not a “Museum at Night” experience you particularly wanted!*

see museums during the day to do so in the evening. We at the Trust will be taking part in this weekend with guided tours of the Collection: so do come along and take this opportunity to see things in a new light.

touched, as the police forensic service were due to attend and a check was made to see what, if anything, had been stolen. Forensics duly arrived and dusted for fingerprints, after which the shop was tidied and repairs to the door started. The closed circuit television system was then investigated and good footage of the break-in was found. This was copied and given to the police. Over the following few days statements were given and the matter was left to the police. Fortunately, the good quality of the CCTV footage led to one of the perpetrators being identified, arrested, charged and convicted. The damage caused was quickly repaired and only the most assiduous of visitors would know that anything, at all, had happened. Looking back at the CCTV images, however, makes one realise just how disturbing such break-ins are.

## Other Notices

Our twinned French body is AJECTA, the “Association de Jeunes pour l’Entretien et la Conservation des Trains d’Autrefois”. Opening times for their depot at Longueville and railtour information is on their website [www.ajecta.org](http://www.ajecta.org) Longueville is close to Provins, at the outer extremity of the Paris suburban rail network.

Contact information: AJECTA, Dépôt des Machines, Rue Louis Platriez, 77650 Longueville, France. E-mail [contact@ajecta.org](mailto:contact@ajecta.org). Tel: (00 33) 1 64 08 60 62, or try the Provins Tourist Office on (00 33) 1 64 60 26 26.

**VCT Working Saturdays** take place on the Saturday of the second *full* weekend of each month. Otherwise, if you are able to join us to work at other times including midweek (any day, but Tuesdays for preference) please ring – normally we can find something you might like to tackle!

**Every Saturday and Sunday** we need volunteers to look after our sales counter, and our visitors.

If you can help even if it is only occasionally do get in touch: please ring 01535 680425 or email us on [admin@vintagecarriagetrust.org](mailto:admin@vintagecarriagetrust.org)

**Data Protection Act.** VCT is registered under this Act. The Trust’s Membership records are included within this registration. VCT Membership records are not made available to any outside bodies.

**CAF ‘Give as You Earn’ Scheme.** Those taking part in this Charities Aid Foundation scheme can make one-off or regular gifts to the Trust by quoting ‘Vintage Carriages Trust’ and our Registration Number 00230500 on your Choice Form or Coupon. Your support in this way is very much appreciated!

**Gift Aid.** If you haven’t as yet completed a Gift Aid form in favour of the Trust and if you pay United Kingdom Income Tax, would you please consider doing so – please contact our Membership Secretary, Jeanette Achilles, for the necessary form.

**Giving through your Self-Assessment Income Tax Return.** If you pay Income Tax through the Individual Self Assessment scheme, you may now nominate a Charity to receive any tax repayments as a donation. Should you wish to support Vintage Carriages Trust in this way you may do so by quoting the Trust’s unique code, which is: FAC78RG. So, if you are self-assessed, please note this number and please consider using it to support our Trust.

**Donations:** Please keep your donations coming! As well as financial contributions we welcome items either for the Museum or for sale – everything that’s “railway” is of interest: railway magazines, books and especially model railway equipment for selling through our shop and the website.

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