



The **COLONEL**

Number 119 Summer 2015



THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE COLONEL STEPHENS SOCIETY
*for enthusiasts of the standard and narrow gauge light railways of
Colonel Holman F. Stephens*

THE COLONEL'S STORES

Subscriptions *The Colonel* is distributed to members of the Colonel Stephens Society only. Membership of the Society costs £10 annually in the UK. Joint membership for two people, one *Colonel*, same address, is £12. Overseas membership is £15. Applications to our Membership Secretary (address on p.31).

An up to date Index of *The Colonel* is available on our website (see below).

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www.colonelstephenssociety.co.uk

Editorial

Well I think we all had a very enjoyable AGM weekend thanks to Mark Bladwell and his helpers. We had an AGM that finished on time, and two well organised and fascinating trips to two lines of which most of us knew little.

As the Society reaches its 30th anniversary the number of members has dropped slightly but we still have a membership in the high 300s. The 38 or so members attending the AGM were on average quite elderly. I would guess the average age as over 70.

However many of the committee have been members for nearly 30 years too and are now also getting elderly. The chairman Les Darbyshire wishes to stand down next year when he is 80, and three other

members of the committee have had serious health issues in the past 12 months. Ross has resigned as Publicity Officer because of ill health but so far we haven't found a replacement. The other committee members with health problems have volunteered to carry on at least for another year. Also we need somebody to organise next year's AGM and so far no volunteers have appeared. Unless we get some new blood in the committee and society organisation the future of the Society as we know it looks very uncertain within a few years.

I know this problem is facing virtually every Society and organisation but it doesn't mean the problem will go away. In the end it is the members who volunteer that keep the wheels rolling. Hopefully we can get some more members to help before we have to either reduce the scope of what we do or close down the Society as nobody wishes to run it. This does however mean that somebody needs to volunteer to join the committee and be prepared to take on one of the jobs. Is there anybody out there? (*Albyn Austin*)

Front cover: Society members enjoy their reserved carriage on the Lynton and Barnstaple Railway as the train approaches Woody Bay. The beautifully restored coach 7 is unique in having a central open Third Class compartment. Leaning out of it are from l to r: Treasurer Nigel Bird in green, trip organiser Mark Bladwell and Chairman Les Darbyshire. The wooden seats in Third Class must have been a bit uncomfortable for the hour and half it took to travel the twenty miles from Lynton to Barnstaple. (photo Bruce Hunt)

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A Radial at Shepherdswell

Just in case some members are looking forward to buying one of the 4mm Adams Radial 4-4-2Ts promised by at least two manufacturers this year, it's probably a good idea to look at the history of East Kent Railway No.5. It was the only Adams Radial owned by a Stephens railway. The most complete story of this locomotive appears in volume 2 of 'The East Kent Railway' by M Lawson Finch and S R Garrett (Oakwood Press, 2003). I have relied almost entirely on this book for this brief description. If you want to know more about this elegant loco, especially on its service on the EKR, you need to acquire or borrow Finch and Garrett.

The Adams Radials, so called from their trailing radial axle, were originally the 415 class built between 1882 and 1885 by various firms for the London & South Western Railway's suburban traffic. No.488, which became EKR No.5, was built in 1885 by Neilson & Co of Glasgow. It was put on the duplicate list in 1914 and withdrawn from service in that year, due to suburban electrification. Saved from the scrap man by the war, it was overhauled, painted dark green and sold to the Ministry of Munitions in 1917 for use at the RN salvage depot at Ridham, near Sittingbourne. (Others of the class were sent to help out "The Highland Railway", overwhelmed by the need to service the fleet in Scapa Flow, though quite how useful they were must be debatable.) The Ridham loco was advertised for sale in August 1920. Stephens bought it from the Disposal & Liquidation Commission in 1923 for £375, according to EKR records, on the last day before the board was wound up and the loco scrapped. Finch and Garrett comment that "if the EKR was looking for a sturdy workhorse it seems to have found a retired racehorse instead".

Upon delivery to Shepherdswell, No.5 was patch painted to show 'EKR' and '5'. Later photos show these insignia with faint traces

of lining. After just over ten years of not very intensive use, it was laid aside at Shepherdswell in 1934. It was said to be 'under repair' in October 1935 but, since it was nowhere to be seen, was assumed to be at Ashford. By 1936 it was back on the East Kent and undergoing a complete repaint in lined green in the SR style of the time.

As Finch and Garrett say, it is curious that the only location at which No.5 appears to have been photographed is Shepherdswell, with few showing it attached to a train, although some show it clearly in steam. Their assumption is that No.5 was mainly employed on shunting duties at Tilmanstone. It was only used on the coal trains between there and Shepherdswell when the usual steed, the massive Kerr Stuart "Victory Class" 0-6-0T, EKR No. 4, was having its boiler washed out or under repair. In fact the other EKR locos such as the various ex SECR O or O1 Class 0-6-0s or the ex LSWR 330 Class 0-6-0ST seem to have been preferred to the Adams. The Adams couldn't handle nearly as many wagons as No. 4, or even the alternative locos, so was never popular with the crews as it meant extra trips to Tilmanstone.

One such trip is recounted in the book. No.5 was hauling a train from Tilmanstone to Shepherdswell with the maximum permitted load of 14 loaded wagons. The normal operating practice was for the train to halt once it had cleared the Eythorne to Shepherdswell section. The brakes would then be applied to enough wagons to hold the train. The engine would then be uncoupled and then run down into the engine shed siding. Once clear the points would be reset and the train, with its brakes released, would roll down by gravity into the transfer siding to await delivery to the Southern. Even if you didn't know, you probably can guess what happened next. The points had not been reset and the wagons pursued No.5 into the shed road. "No.5 was swept into the shed and clean out of the back

into the orchard beyond.” This was apparently not the only such occasion.

However, No.5 continued in intermittent use until its very last run on the East Kent on 23rd May 1943. The Directors resolved to sell it (and No.2). They hoped to realise £450 from the sale of No.5. This was very optimistic because it had not been sold by November 1945, although Ward’s had offered £61 and Geo. Cohen £80, both for scrap. The Directors decided to ask the Southern for advice on a fair price. But instead of advice, the SR offered to buy the loco for £120. The offer was accepted and it left Shepherdswell on 14th March 1946 for Eastleigh via Ashford.

As is well known, the Southern gave EKR No.5 a thorough overhaul, in order to use it on the Lyme Regis branch. Re-numbered 488 it joined fellow radial tanks 3125 and 3520; they were the only locos found to be suitable for the sharp curves on the line. They lasted until 1961 when the curves were eased and Ivatt 2-6-2Ts replaced them. Of the three Adams Radials left, only 488 survived, purchased by the Bluebell Railway,

where it remains today, unfortunately not in working condition, and with a Drummond boiler rather than the Adams boiler used in its EKR days [though it had a Drummond chimney].

Not many engines have celebrated the centenary of their first brush with the scrap man or have been saved from him four times in their lives.

Les Darbyshire produced a drawing of the loco in EKR days in the old Model Railway News, June 1971, Light Railway Modelling No. 26. Copies of the drawing are available from our Sales Officer, see page 2.

Both Hornby and Oxford Rail, a new division of Oxford Diecast Models, have announced the production of 4mm models of Adams Radials. The Hornby version will appear as LSWR No.488 and BR Nos. 30854 and 30852. Both Adams and Drummond boilers will feature. Meanwhile Oxford Rail say, “We will be able to produce the different versions of the Class throughout its working life.” Short of a complete repaint, the best option for modellers would be to wait for a version in SR Maunsell livery and Adam boil-



Former EKR No.5 on the Bluebell on 23rd August 1963 in LSWR livery. (R Shimmon)

er to be issued and then change the chimney, lettering and numbering. Alternatively, one of the retailers which specialise in commissioning might be persuaded to issue a version as EKR No.5. (**Ross Shimmon**)

[Let's hope these Adams' Radial models don't follow in the footsteps of the proposed Wrenn model that was illustrated in their 1974 catalogue but which never materialised. Editor]



EKR No. 5 Shepherdswell June 1936 by Ron Jarvis (Midland Railway Trust)



EKR No. 5 at Shepherdswell in March 1937 by Jim Jarvis (Online Transport Archive)

NEWS & EVENTS

Colonel Stephens Museum Wins Award

Completely out of the blue, the museum were honoured with the Heritage Railways Association's 2014 BEST MUSEUM award [technically the Morton's Media (Heritage Railway Magazine) Interpretation Award] for 'the continuing magnificent highlighting of a unique dimension of British railway history'.

Doug Lindsay, a member of the Museum Committee, received the award on February 7th on behalf of the museum at an HRA ceremony at the Manchester Museum of Science and Industry. A worthy recognition of the Museum Team's efforts over many years." (*Ross Shimmon*)



Doug Lindsay, on the left, receives the award in Manchester with museum artefacts screened in the background

Doug commented: "The ceremony was part of the HRA AGM weekend and took place at a typical Awards Dinner on the Saturday evening, a grand affair with some hundred plus seated for dinner followed by the presentations. A stage with a large backdrop of video screens was in place and our award was the first one to be given. A short video show with suitable music preceded each presentation, and in our case several pictures of the museum exhibits and the



Brian James holding the award outside the Colonel Stephens Museum at Tenterden

KESR were shown, whilst 1920s style music played. Nick Piggott, Editor of Railway Magazine, presented the award, photos were taken, and the ceremony then swiftly moved on to the next award. Time precluded the opportunity to say anything as there were many other awards to get through."

"The evening started with speeches by Lord Faulkner and the new Director of the Science Museum Group, Dame Mary Archer, followed by the dinner and ceremony. The Master of Ceremonies for the event was Paul Lewin, General Manager of the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways, who was an excellent host."

"The following day, Sunday, a series of visits had been arranged for participants. We were taken by vintage buses (one of which was a London Transport RM!) to The Peoples History Museum, The Museum of Transport, Greater Manchester, The Heaton Park Tramway and finally the East Lancs Railway, though I missed this latter one to catch my train home."

A New Exhibit for the Museum

Stephen Hannington, a former Editor of the Colonel, donated to the museum a super model of 'Hesperus' and train on 19th March.

Steve emailed: "The models are all to 4mm scale, EM gauge. The loco is K&ESR

No.8 Hesperus, originally built by Manning Wardle, and is scratch built to a drawing by Les Darbyshire. The motor, flywheel and Branchlines Multibox gearbox are completely enclosed by a slide-on boiler and tank assembly. The first coach is the ex-LSWR royal coach of 1851 and is also scratch built in laminates of plastic sheet, following a drawing by Richard Jones [see The Colonel **116** (27)]. Its construction was described in an earlier edition of The Colonel [TC **32** (10) & **33** (10)]. The other coach is ex-GER brake third No. 20, with etched brass sides and ends from a Peter K kit, see The Colonel **11** (19) & **31** (6). All were originally built for my Rye Town layout.”

“Stephen wrote a very nice article about scratch building the loco in TC **64** (Autumn 2001). A description of the prototype locomotive appeared in TC **45** (8), with some further notes in TC **47** (10), while Les's drawing appeared in TC **46**. The drawing is of course available from Kerry.” (Ross *Shimmon*) [*See colour photo in centre, Ed*]

Ross also reports the museum has just acquired a KESR hand lamp at auction. A photo will appear in our next issue.

Kent & East Sussex Railway

During the K&ESR February Members' Day, about 300 people joined a five carriage train at Tenterden Town, topped and tailed by USA 0-6-0T No.65 and the Class 14 0-6-0 diesel. It stopped at Rolvenden to give members a chance to see the brand new carriage shed which will provide protection for the equivalent of 20 Mark 1 coaches, both operational ones and those awaiting restoration. There was also an opportunity to visit the locomotive works and the yard. The train then travelled the length of the line to Bodiam. For this special occasion the train was able to go along the extension to Junction Road to experience this recently re-laid section. On arrival back at Tenterden, members could visit the carriage & wagon works to inspect several vehicles under repair and restoration. It was a fitting prelude to the new operating season.

Over Easter Terriers 32678 and 32670 were in service to celebrate 75 years since 32678 last ran on the line when hired in from the Southern Railway. The other Terrier, 32670, was bought by HFS for the line in 1901. The M7 0-4-4T from the Swanage railway also visited the line.

Brian Janes informed the Society AGM that a completely revised book on the K&ESR will be released soon. It includes much new information with a revised section by Laurie Cooksey on the locomotives.

“Inside Motion” FR & WHR

The March edition celebrated 50 years since the “deviation” spiral at Dduallt began. The Tanygrisiau pumped storage scheme had flooded part of the old route of the Ffestiniog and so a spiral was built to raise the track level. The new route including a tunnel constructed to link up with the old trackbed enabling the railway to reach Blaenau Ffestiniog eventually. A celebratory train for the former volunteers: “The Deviationists” is to be run on 20th June.

3 top-up training courses for 50 people a time were held for guards and footplate crews looking at topics such as avoiding clinker, vacuum brakes, signalling and yard working.

A 1941 letter from George Cohen was illustrated looking for customers to buy “splendid flat bottom rails” and other items including two steam locos from his contract to lift the Welsh Highland Railway.

There were some visitors from Rumania hoping to reopen a 7km narrow gauge line for steam from Cornatel to Hosman and keen to learn from Ffestiniog experience. There was an obituary for long term volunteer Peter Tweedale, and details of the on-going book auction.

“Megabash 2015” saw 80 volunteers descend mainly at Harbour Station to carry out many different tasks from cleaning grubby light switches to erecting new outside lighting.

Volunteers have been busy relaying tracks and removing various storage trailers and sheds at Minffordd to clear the site for the new buildings.

The April edition reported a visit by volunteers to the German narrow gauge Harz mountains railway. Work continues at Minffordd yard to a tight schedule. A surplus "Bobby Box" pointsman's shelter is to be re-erected at Minffordd where one used to exist. It was used at Harbour station until the station was rebuilt. The London group of the FR celebrates 60 years in June, but is then to disband due to all the members being very elderly.

The May Bank Holiday weekend included many special events to mark 150 years of passenger services. These included visits to Boston Lodge works. A new bunker built for one of the WHR Garratts was on show



Palmerston crosses the cob with a rake of 1920s liveried four wheelers. (P Collins)

plus the new coach 21 under construction, a replica of the original Ashbury one. The Saturday and Sunday of the four day event were pretty wet and miserable but the attached images showing some of the Colonel Stephens era green stock in use might be of interest to members, (Patrick Collins)

Other events are planned throughout the summer. A Classical night at Tan y Bwlch station will take place on the evening of 4th July for instance but must be pre-booked.

Rother Valley Railway

The railway was linked to the main rail network at Robertsbridge on 27th March, enabling trains to run onto and off the main railway network. Work continues tarmacing the new platform, laying drains for the water crane, and improving the car park. Ross Shimmon reports that the Highways Agency have written to the local council expressing no objection to the proposal to cross the A21 at Robertsbridge with a twin barrier level crossing, providing that it is not used on weekdays between 09.00 and 11.00 and 17.00 and 19.00, and only used a limited number of times per day. This will aid the RVR obtaining planning permission for the extension to join the K&ESR as it was the main cause for concern raised by the council. (Ross Shimmon)

New Display Board and Path WC&PR

The Weston, Clevedon & Portishead Railway Group are hoping to erect another display board at Worle Station near Weston. There are also proposals to turn the WC&PR trackbed from Weston to Clevedon into a footpath/cycleway.

New Life on The Weston Point Railway

The surviving stub of the Weston Point Light Railway, engineered by the Colonel in the 1920s, at Runcorn has carried little or no traffic for some years. This has now changed with the building of a new rail served waste incinerator beside Folly Lane Sidings. The sidings, all that now remain of the WPLR, handle 2 or 3 container trains



DBS Class 60 with caustic soda tanks waits for signals at Runcorn Station (Ed)

of waste a day, usually worked by a Freightliner Class 66 locomotive. There is also (most weeks) at about 11 am on a Tuesday a short train of container tanks containing caustic soda leaving the sidings. The line joins the remains of the docks branch which connect with the mainline at Runcorn station, (see timetable details for all UK trains on the “real time trains” website: www.realtimetrains.co.uk). These caustic soda trains are worked by DB Schenker [previously EWS] with a Class 50 or 66 Loco. (*Albyn Austin*)

The Shrewsbury Railway Heritage Trust

This organisation restored the former Shropshire and Montgomery station buildings at Shrewsbury. Sadly one of the directors, former Col. Stephens Society member, Russell Mulford has died and their chairman Mansel Williams has just had a major operation for a brain tumour. Sadly he won't be able to continue in post. Replacements are sought. An EGM was to be held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 3rd June in the United Reform Church Hall, The Gyrotory, Shrewsbury. (*Ross Shimmon*)

The Talyllyn Railway will have three of the world's most iconic narrow gauge locomotives in steam together for the first time during the 150th Anniversary gala 3rd to 5th July. Special guest will be the Ffestiniog Railway's locomotive 'Prince'. Built in 1863 by George England, 'Prince' represents the earliest 2ft gauge locomotive currently in steam.

The TR 1865 & 1866 'Talyllyn' and 'Dolgoch', both now in what is thought to be their original maroon livery, will also be in steam. Both were built by Fletcher Jennings at Parton near Whitehaven on the Cumbrian Coast. 'Dolgoch' hauled the first train ever run under the auspices of a railway preservation society on 14 May 1951.

'Talyllyn' and 'Dolgoch' were officially launched in their special 150th anniversary liveries at 'The Quarryman Experience' gala week-end 2nd to 4th May.

The “Narrow Gauge Railway Museum” at

Porthmadog's Talyllyn station (website: narrowgaugerailwaymuseum.org.uk) contains an amazing collection of locos, wagons and artefacts from narrow gauge railways. This includes various items of interest to Colonel Stephens enthusiasts including several of the nameplates from the Ashover Light Railway locomotives and signs from the Ashover and Snailbeach District Railways as well as artefacts from the FR, the WHR and their predecessors.

Pier Railways & RVR in Rlwy Magazine

The May issue of the 'Railway Magazine' has a nice feature on pier railways with a large, colour photo of a two-car Drewry set running alongside the inevitable O2 on the Isle of Wight. The Society decided earlier this year to donate £250 towards the restoration of one of these cars by the Isle of Wight Steam Railway. They were similar to the small Drewry which ran on the WC&PR. Once restored it will offer the closest we will get to experiencing a ride in that vehicle. The RVR news reported elsewhere in this Colonel is also reported. (*Ross Shimmon*)

Nigel Bird reports that he now has an improved search facility on his website. Search over 4500 books by author, price, latest additions, etc. http://www.nigelbirdbooks.co.uk/html/how_to_buy.html or just ring (01974 821281) or email him with your wants.

The East Kent Railway



Ride the Colliery Line from Shepherdswell to Eythorne

Booking office: 01304 832042

www.eastkentrailway.com

SOCIETY NEWS

A New Grant to Aid Replica Ford



Colin Shutt has been progressing with his replica Ford rail lorry and the committee has agreed to give him a grant of £500 to help fund the rail wheels for this machine. The original one ran at Selsey and on the Shropshire and Montgomery back to back with a railcar. It may have been the lorry that Stephens used to inspect the works during the construction of the North Cornwall line. Colin plans to run it back to back with his railcar replica.



The original Ford Rail Lorry back to back with a Ford Railcar on the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway at Llanymynech in the 1920s. (Colonel Stephens' Railway Museum)

Snailbeach Engine Shed - Help Needed

Secretary David Powell, advises that our Society has been approached by the Shropshire Mines Trust to find out if there is scope for any of our members to become involved with Snailbeach Railway Engine Shed.

Currently, many visitors to the mine site, which includes the loco shed, are railway enthusiasts. The Trust is now considering if the shed should focus on railway exhibits; however, if this should be the way ahead, the SMT feel that they are not the appropriate body to master mind this element of the site. They are wondering if there are CSS members in Shropshire and the Midlands who would like to become involved with such a project. The SMT has a very detailed website, see -

www.shropshireminestrust.org.uk.

Possible volunteers should contact Mike Shaw at m-j-shaw@lineone.net.

AGM NEWS

Just under 40 of us assembled in the Castle Rooms Barnstaple to drink tea or coffee and nibble biscuits before the meeting. Several regular attendees sent apologies including three committee members. Archivist Chris Jackson was exhibiting his layout Rye Town at Expo EM, Sales Officer Kerry Baylis was at an O Gauge Guild Event and Publicity Officer Ross Shimmon had cancelled due to having a heart attack, though he is recovering.

The AGM minutes from the previous



WC&P No2 "Portishead", ex LBSCR "Terrier" Gypsy Hill, at WC&P Broadstone halt, 1933. Note Guard Jack Riddick climbing down from the coach. The loco seems stationary so perhaps he is going to check the road for traffic or open the gates if Broadstone had them. My thanks to Howard Carey and Christopher Redwood for information. The photo is incorrectly labelled 1943, when of course the line was long since shut and the guards wore trousers. Photo: Collection of Mike Christensen.

AGM were approved, there were no matters arising not to be covered later.

Highlights of Officer's Reports

Full copies of all the Officer's Reports are available either electronically or in print to members on contacting a member of the committee.

The chairman, Les Darbyshire, said this year was the 30th anniversary of the Society. Les said the Society was founded by Andrew Emery and Jon Clarke. Andrew had soon disappeared from the Society and we have lost track of him, despite attempts to find him. Jon happily is still a member. The com-

mittee have decided to award him Honorary Life Membership in recognition of his efforts in getting the Society under way. Les gave a brief history of the Society and the Colonel's railways over the last 30 years which will be in the next issue. Summarising he said it had been a momentous 30 years for both the Society and the lines. He wondered what the next 30 years had in store for them.

He concluded by saying that he was prepared to stand for only another year as chairman. He would be 80 in 2016 and thought it was time that some younger blood took over the reins. Volunteers please !

Subs to remain the same this year:

Treasurer Nigel reported that income was nearly the same as last year. A small reduction in subscriptions was almost made up by an increase in donations. Expenditure was just below income and included the £1020 made in three donations by the Society last year. We also have £1600 worth of stamps purchased by Alan and Mary Garner before the last Royal Mail price increase saving the Society a considerable sum of money. We had considerable cash available for donations to good causes and applications for donations would be welcome.

He also thanked Alan and Mary for distributing the Colonel, which they've done for about 29 years, except for a very brief period.

Membership Down: Membership Secretary Keith reported that the current membership was 371 compared to the record 388 last year and 384 in 2013. 15 new members have joined, but more failed to renew, at least 4 having died.

Keith also asked members to check that any membership forms they dish out have his address and the £10 a year subscription. The Society has plenty of the new membership forms if required.

Mixed Year for Publicity: In Ross's absence Les read his report. It had been a mixed year for publicity. The greatest success was the splendid coverage given for the Society, the museum and several Colonel inspired layouts in *Railway Modeller*, especially the article on the museum in the 2015 *Railway Modeller Annual*. Also Robin Gay's splendid "Rolvenden" was featured in *Model Rail* 209, June 2015.

Our ad is now included in "Narrow Gauge & Industrial Railway Review" and "Fine Scale Model Railway Review". However the recent death of the editor and publisher of these magazines Rob Barlow on May 15th may put their future in doubt. The Rother Valley Railway magazine "Phoenix" and the East Kent Railway magazine carry our ads on a contra-deal basis.

Reviews of our Christmas Cards were disappointing this year despite sending electronic and physical examples to all the major railway and modelling magazines. Only the *Railway Modeller* came up trumps once again—many thanks. A volunteer has been found to pay for an original painting of the WC&P loco *Hesperus* with "US" style coaches. The Garners have once more volunteered to post



on the card packs. More details in the next issue.

We have good stocks of our revised membership and "Fascinating Facts" leaflets, available to members either electronically or in paper form.

We have two sets of display boards: one based in the "South" and one in the "North" with Kerry; that are available for members to display at exhibitions or events.

Given Ross's poor health he said he would be very happy if somebody volunteered to take over the post of Publicity Officer. Nobody volunteered at the AGM. Is there anybody out there willing to take the job on? Please discuss with Ross if interested.

Ross has also taken over from Les as our representative on the Colonel Stephens Railway Museum Committee. The main news was the museum winning the "Heritage Railway Magazine Museum Award" reported elsewhere. Visitor numbers were down again by 10% on last year to just under 5,000. The CSS helped produce a colour flyer for the museum for distribution at KESR stations and by ticket inspectors on the trains to help publicise the museum.

The museum has had a good year for acquisitions: the major ones having been reported in the Colonel. Several displays have been improved. Laurie Cooksey has completed a superb diorama of Ashover Butts. New plans are to have three vintage phones by the displays which will provide more information on the Pre-Raphaelites, the Colonel's Office and business, and the working of Northiam booking office. It is also planned to print a mural of the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway on the roller doors behind Gazelle. Work continues on cataloguing the vast collection of paperwork and photos the museum possesses, and on gaining museum accreditation. Tom Burnham has produced a paper on the desirable features of a future museum building.

The Website

Bruce had transferred the entire website

to a new platform, which had taken a lot of time. The old one was shutting down. The new one is more flexible and can accept pdfs and other file types. There were 63,000 visitors last year, about 50% up on the previous year.

Any Other Business

Mark Bladwell outlined the weekend programme and checked members had received their booklet and souvenir tickets. The meeting thanked Mark, his helper Steve Park and everybody else who had helped to provide us with a very interesting weekend which had required a lot of effort and organisation.

Several suggestions were made for next year's AGM and Colin Shutt had offered his railway in Yorkshire. However some members thought a more southerly location would be preferable. A volunteer organiser was needed. Any offers? The matter was left open as was the date, though it will be in mid-May between the two public holidays.

Allen Morgan was thanked for listing all currently available model railway kits for Stephens' prototypes. The list is now on the website. Possible donation suggestions were requested. The EKR engine shed and the RVR water tank were both likely candidates.

The committee were to consider providing a third set of display boards for the south-west area leaving the one set for the south-east, and the other to be shared by the north and midlands.

The Editor said that since the last issue the printers had requested a change in the form in which the Colonel was

submitted for publishing. It was now a 32 page pdf document that could easily be attached to an email. This electronic Colonel was being offered to overseas members as an experiment instead of the paper version. It would be a quicker and cheaper alternative to overseas postage, enabling their subscriptions to be reduced to the UK rate. Any overseas members not yet contacted by the membership secretary, or any UK member who really would like to see an electronic copy, please email the editor who will send one for you to see. There are no plans to replace the printed copy for the vast majority of members at present.

Electronic payment systems had been considered again as possible alternatives to cheques etc, again primarily for overseas members. It would be possible to pay subscriptions using the BACS system if members also sent the Membership Secretary their membership number. Please contact the Membership Secretary if you'd prefer this to the current arrangement. Other systems were too

complex or expensive for us to run.

Ned Williams asked for **HELP** by members to run the **Society Stand at Warley on 22nd November**. Email ned-williams1944@gmail.com



North Devon & Cornwall Junction Railway, ND&CJR, where the Marland Clay Pits sidings branched off to the left of the post in the middle of the photo prior to closure in 1982. The trackbed is now part of the Tarka Trail Cycleway. Members visit the site during the afternoon "rail replacement bus" tour of the line after the AGM. (Editor)

BOOK REVIEW

The Bryngwyn Branch by D Southern and the late John Keylock.

Published by The Welsh Highland Railway Heritage Group 2014, 70pp Ills. incl. much in colour, several maps, and an amazingly detailed study of the short, 2 mile branch to Bryngwyn and Moel Tryfan. High quality printing, highly recommended for all fans of the WHR and Colonel Stephens! Card covers, NEW copies £15.00+ £2.50 p&p UK from Nigel Bird.

Thanks to Nigel's prompt and courteous service, "The Bryngwyn Branch" arrived on my doorstep earlier today. Although an easily persuaded Colonel Stephens Railways literature kleptomaniac, this book is a real treat and a wonderful testament to a former CSS member, the late John Keylock, as well as Dave Southern and David Allen who saw the book through to publication. Highly recommended and well worth every penny (or should that be pence?). (David Powell)

THE COLONEL 119



Group photo of the members attending the AGM posed on the surviving platform at Watergate Halt, ND&CJR. (Bruce Hunt)

Left: 4mm model of “Hesperus” and KESR train donated to the Col. Stephens Museum by former Colonel Editor Steve Hannington, see page 7. (S Hannington). Left Below: DB Schenker loco 60092 backs onto caustic liquor tanks in front of a domestic waste container train and the new waste incinerator at Weston Point Light Railway Folly Lane Sidings, on 28th April. (A Austin)



Above: The Editor's wife Sheila assures the Guard she has a 1st Class Ticket in restored Brake Composite 17 at L&B Woody Bay Station. (Editor)

Left: Society Chairman, Les Darbyshire, presents a cheque to help restore L&B Chelfham Station. (Bruce Hunt)



Left above: Meeth Halt, ND&CJR, with Nigel Bird in thoughtful mood. Right above: Chelfham station, L&BR, with the ugly 1960s extension. Left: The restored Chelfham viaduct with some of its seven arches. (All photos Editor)

MODELLING NOTES

List of Colonel Stephens Models

Allen Morgan has updated the list of CS models & kits currently available on our web site. He plans to add extra information in all the scales and gauges for all CS lines during Stephens' and Austen's managements, i.e. up to closure or takeover by BR or preservation.

He says that while finding locos, RTR and kits is not too difficult could he make an appeal for information to make it as comprehensive as possible. This is particularly towards wagons that ran in company livery or Private Owners based on the line (such as the EKR wagon from Dapol/Walmer MRC in Colonel 117). Also RTR or kits of main line wagons and coaches obtained second hand. Replies should be sent to: allen.morgan@blueyonder.co.uk subject CS models [to ensure the reply is not lost].

Steam and Things

Robert Kosimider of Steam and Things has decided to cease advertising in the Colonel for the time being. We thank him for his contribution to the Society's costs over many years. Of course all his etched kits, transfers etc. are still available, please see his website or his ads in previous issues. He is not planning to introduce any more items off his own bat but would be happy to discuss producing etches for any prototype that members requested via his website or via snail mail. He has a UK bank account so payments are very straightforward.

Bryn Y Felin and Ryedown Lane at Pewsev in August

Bryn y Felin, Matthew Kean's 009 Colonel era Welsh Highland layout is due to appear at the 009 Society's Member's Day

at Pewsev, Wiltshire on August 15th.

Pictures of the layout appeared in The Colonel 115 & 116.

Patrick Collins is also going to be there with 009 Stephens based layout Ryedown Lane, now with an additional board featuring a typical Stephens style station, Winterbourne Road. So there should be even more to interest any CSS members who can make the journey to Pewsev.

Model Rail for June Features Rolvenden

Society member Robin Gay's iconic P4 layout Rolvenden is featured in Model Rail 209, June 2015 in a super 11 page article.

May Gauge O Guild Gazette Features Building a Selsey Peckett 2-4-2T

The May issue of the 'Gauge 0 Guild Gazette' has a detailed, illustrated article by our very own Allen Morgan on building the Selsey Tramway Peckett 2-4-2T 'Selsey' from an Agenoria kit bought at the Members' Sales stand in a part-built condition. It looks very nice. It's just a pity that whoever wrote the heading for the article spelt Stephens with a 'v'!

In the same issue there is a little more information about the 7mm Dapol Terriers which are said to be imminent - as the item says, four years after the initial announcement.

Railway Modeller Annual for 2015

Just a note to remind members that this year's annual contains an article by Ross Shimmon on the Colonel and his railways as well as an article on the usefulness of the Colonel Stephens Railway Museum as a source of information for modellers. Plus



Winterbourne Road Station on Patrick Collins' 009 Ryedown Lane layout. (P Collins)

lots of other goodies of course.

Bexley Charities Summer Toy, Train and Postcard Fair Wed 12th August

Falconwood Community Centre, 32 Falconwood Parade, The Green, Welling, Kent,

The Society Visit to the ND&CJR

Bang on noon Society members boarded our rail replacement coach for a trip along narrow lanes in the wilds of North Devon to explore the North Devon & Cornwall Junction Railway, ND&CJR. Mark Bladwell had prepared an excellent booklet on the line's history together with a map.

A Brief History of the ND&CJR

The 20½ mile long line was engineered by Stephens. After many years gestation, the Colonel's determination and a Treasury grant ensured sufficient finances. The start of construction was delayed by the First World War. Use of unemployed men, unused to building railways, prolonged construction. It finally opened without ceremony in 1925. It was the last standard gauge branch line to be built in the UK and remained as a nominally independent light railway though worked by the Southern until Nationalisation. Its purpose was to replace the existing 3 ft. gauge industrial tramway carrying China Clay from the pits at Marland to the existing railhead at Torrington, connect to new pits at Meeth and

DA16 2PG.

Wednesday 12th August 2015, from **6.30pm to 9.30pm.**

Refreshments and ample flat parking
Organiser Alan Bone 020 8310 5018

Model Railway Journal Christmas Quiz

Our very own Chris Jackson has won the fiendishly difficult Model Railway Journal Christmas quiz! This involved you as a 1950s train controller sorting out a loco failed on the climb to Talerddig on the single track Cambrian line. All communications with the crews of trains via signal box telephones. A real challenge of logic and knowledge of operating procedures. Ross and myself both gave up on trying to sort it out but not Chris. Well done!



provide a westwards exit for clay bound for loading in ships at Fowey. A passenger and goods service was provided but this was always secondary to the clay traffic. The first 5½ miles followed the track of the

3 ft. gauge tramway.

Memories of a junior engineer on the line during construction, Humphrey Brandram Jones, appear in pages 157-60, of "Colonel Stephens: Insights into the Man & his Empire", Philip Shaw & Vic Mitchell, Middleton Press, 2005.

As the line passed through nowhere of any size, being two miles or so from any hamlets, and the only large village, Hatherleigh, passenger traffic was never going to be large.

Passenger trains were all mixed and there were three a day each way for many years. Connections at Torrington and Halwill Jcn were generally poor. There were also one or two goods trains each way per day.

The line enjoyed a quiet existence as traffic never developed as much as was hoped. Road traffic soon began to take over. Passenger trains were generally only a single coach and

apart from carrying clay pit workers other passengers were scarce. Magazine accounts of trips over the line often mention that the author was the only passenger.

The line was best known for its locomotives. The Southern had no suitable locomotives except for the former PD&SWJR 0-6-2Ts that were already in use on that line. However the



Class E1R loco on ND&CJR train at Torrington in early Southern Railway days. (Les Darbyshire Collection)

An Ace Museum with a nice light railway attached

*When you travel on the K&ESR, leave time to visit
the Colonel Stephens Railway Museum*

- See the Great Man himself in his reconstructed Tonbridge office
 - Get up close and personal with the repainted 'Gazelle'
 - Study the many artefacts of the Colonel's lines
- Examine the latest exhibits on the light railway in war time, workshops activities, the Colonel's collection of railway passes
- Improved exhibits include the Selsey and Rye & Camber displays
 - Admission free to Colonel Stephens Society members

*Open from 12.30 to 4.30 on days when the K&ESR is running until
2nd November, visit www.kesr.org*

Tenterden Town Station, Tenterden, Kent TN30 6HE
www.hfstephens-museum.org.uk

ex-LBSCR Class E1 0-6-0T locos were being withdrawn and were of a suitable power but were short of bunker capacity. Some of these locos had their bunkers extended and a trailing wheel added to convert them into 0-6-2Ts. They were known as E1Rs. They worked the line for many years until replaced by ex-LMS Class 2MT 2-6-2Ts in BR days.

An armoured train was run on the line for a few years during the Second World War when it was feared that the Germans might invade North Devon. Its sandy beaches were similar to the ones in Normandy. This train was similar to ones used in Kent and East Anglia. It had an armoured ex-GER 2-4-2T with armoured wagons fore and aft each equipped with a former First World War tank 2-pounder gun in an armoured shield at the front and rear of the train.

Amazingly passenger services clung on to 1965 and for the last few months were even worked by single-car diesel units. Passenger services lasted in fact until the lines from Oakhampton to Padstow and Bude were closed too. The western part of the line was then cut back from Halwill Jcn. to Meeth Clay Sidings. Clay traffic lasted until 1982. The existing wooden bodied wagons had become worn out and it was not considered worth replacing them. Traffic transferred to road and the line was then lifted.

The line made an end-on junction at Torrington with the existing standard gauge rail head and by a crossover at the remote Halwill Junction where the Bude and Padstow lines diverged. It climbed overall from about 77 ft. above sea level at Torrington to 400 ft. at Halwill Jcn. Most of the course of the line is now a cycle route: The Tarka Trail.

A Brief Account of Our Trip

We began our tour at Torrington Station where the ND&CJR made an end-on junction with the existing LSWR branch. The town itself was half a mile up a steep hill from the

station. Some members walked over the nearby river viaduct, the only major bridge on the line, while others availed themselves of the eating and drinking facilities provided for cyclists.

There was also the Tarka Valley Railway preservation group in a Mark I coach who also



Marland Clay Works loco under restoration at Torrington Station. (Editor)

exhibited the diesel shunter from the clay pits and a selection of wagons in the station. They hope to run trains over a short length of track next year and eventually reach Bideford.

Next we had a proper lunch stop in Great Torrington for more tea and cakes (or beer if that was your choice). We then visited most of the halts or station sites in turn. The line followed a tributary of the Torridge up out of its deep valley through rolling Devon countryside with green fields containing cattle, occasional farms and woods in the deserted valley bottom. Very pretty but thin pickings for railways.

The first stop was Watergate Halt, a concrete platform with only an odd farm or two within a mile of the halt. Mainly used apparently to supply timber for the clay pits. From there we visited Yarde Halt which had a row of clay workers' cottages near another concrete platform. It also had a café where more tea and cakes were consumed. We were now well behind schedule but it was a nice day!

The line then climbed over a summit and dropped into another valley where the clay



Yarde Halt

pits were located. We visited Dunsbear Halt and walked along the trackbed a quarter of a mile to where the siding to Marland Clay Pit had once been. Just a concrete post with trees on either side remained, see photo page 15. The post had supported the gate for the line into the clay works. How things had changed in 33 years!

Our next stop was Petrockstow where the station site had two platforms for a passing loop. The small goods yard was a Council depot. We then went a mile or so to the village of Petrockstowe [with a final e] for a refreshment stop at the village pub. We motored along the ridge where we could see the clay pits in the distance. We then descended to visit Meeth Halt where the platform shelter is still used as a bus shelter and the trackbed is



Hole Station

now a roadway to the closed clay works.

We skipped Hatherleigh due to the narrowness of the road but called in at Hole. The old station building is a home. The goods yard has a large shed that once was a grain store and a useful source of traffic for the line. The lady owner was most helpful and allowed us to enter her garden to photograph the front of the station and the old coach body in the garden—a former Norwegian teak sleeping car! She also had a nice set of photos showing what the station had looked like in the mid 1960s—50 years ago now! Finally we drove on to Halwill Junction where the station site is a housing estate with an aptly named Beeching Close.

We were over an hour late returning to Barnstaple where the fitter members partook of a very pleasant social in a real ale pub with a traditional skittle alley and some of the Lynton and Barnstaple volunteers in attendance too.

Our Visit to the Lynton and Barnstaple

On the Sunday morning we again all assembled at the former Barnstaple Town station at the far end of Castle Street. It is now a nursery school but retains its buildings though now extended. The site of the L&B bay platform was pointed out where the foundations of one side of the terminal buffer stop were still visible. The 2 ft. gauge L&B closed 80 years ago on 29th September 1935, just 10 years after the ND&CJR opened! The railway followed the

estuary for about ¼ mile until it turned inland to follow the River Yeo which joins the estuary here. About ¼ mile further on was the site of Pilton Yard, now a car park. This once held the loco, carriage sheds, offices and stores buildings of the railway. Two posts for the level crossing survive and also a sliding door in a wall that may have been the back of a store, but that is all. A block of Victorian shops and warehouses may have been used by the railway for offices but nobody was sure.

From Pilton the trackbed is now mainly built on but the railway followed the Yeo Valley.



Snapper Halt

After about 2 miles we came to the site of Snapper Halt, just below the main road. This is now owned by Exmoor Associates, a sister company to the preservation group, who buy up parts of the trackbed for future use as they come on the market. Between the two organisations they now own about 20% of the 20 mile route. About ¼ mile of trackbed is open to the public here at the rebuilt Halt. Two volunteers maintain the site cutting grass etc. and could do with some more help! This was the resting point of coach 15 which was complete with bogies. It was rescued by the Ffestiniog in 1959 and became "The Snapper" buffet car, their coach 14. [Continued on page 29]

DISPATCHES

Letters and Emails to the Editor

What Did Stephens Want with a Pile Driver in 1922?

I came across this small ad in the 'Western Morning News' for Thursday 20 April 1922.

"WANTED a MAN, used to pile driving and scarfing piles; about three months' work. Fare paid. - Send references and say pay required to Col. H. F. Stephens, Tonbridge."

I wonder what was on hand in 1922 that needed three months' work pile driving? Labour for building the North Devon & Cornwall Junction Light Railway was recruited by the contractors, P. & W. Anderson. Wick St Lawrence Wharf, maybe? Tom Burnham, Staplehurst

Pickering K&ESR Crane Truck

Looking at the photo of the K&ESR hand crane in the last issue it appears that the crane wagon had two brake shoes and the runner truck one brake shoe. This is the arrangement you would expect as the crane truck is much heavier than the runner wagon. I checked the specs and can confirm that they list one brake on the crane truck but

two on the runner, so maybe this is an error or Stephens requested a change.

Also I found some minor mistakes in my transcription as follows:

Crane Truck: In the General Description delete the bit about "divided into tackle"

Underframe: Soles should be 12" by 4 1/2" with 1/2" steel plate, [not 5" as stated]
Headstocks should be 12" by 5" not 4 1/2" with 1/2" steel plate.

For the Runner Wagon:

Underframe: Side Rails are 5 1/2" by 4" not 4 1/2" by 5"

Apologies, Albyn

Association of Minor Railways Links

None of the published obituaries for Allan Garraway, save for my brief notes in FR Heritage Group Journal 120, have made any mention of Allan's revival of the Association of Minor Railways, a Col. Stephens initiative originally.

The organisation eventually became the Heritage Railways Association and Allan gave a great deal of time, both while FR GM and after his FR service to the organisation(s)

on both engineering and safety matters.

I find this rather sad. The HRA is an important, and effective, organisation for all modern heritage railways and, IMHO, Allan's contribution deserves to be recognised. In the context of this Group and our Society the link back to the Colonel is also relevant and important.

Allan also played a pivotal role in the establishment of the Great Little Trains of Wales marketing organisation - another important aspect of his railway life completely ignored by every obituary, except my notes, and this also saddens me.

Adrian Pound

Still More About Aldwyth

It is possible to trace a very tenuous Stephens connection with Aldwyth. Manning Wardle 865 of 1883 was one of two K class locos delivered new to the contractors Lucas and Aird at Maidstone. They were then building the Maidstone and Ashford Railway for the London, Chatham & Dover. At

about the same time (I haven't yet established the exact details) they also had a contract to build the Tovil Goods branch for the rival South Eastern Railway. The photo shows a Manning Wardle K class, probably the one that became Aldwyth, crossing a rather rickety looking temporary bridge over Church Green, Tovil, with the buildings of Allnutt's paper mill visible through the bridge.

The Tovil Goods line was part of the line authorised by the Loose Valley Railway Act of 1877. If Stephens' Maidstone and Headcorn Junction Light Railway had come to fruition, it would have reached Maidstone West station over the Tovil Goods branch, which included a very substantial girder bridge over the Medway. Thanks to Andy Hardy and Ian Bull for supplying some of the above information via the SeMG e-mail group.
Tom Burnham



Is this the future Aldwyth crossing Church Green, Tovil, Kent ?

John Brenchley & The Colonel

I was pleased to see the photos of the Edge Hill Light Railway incline in the latest "Colonel". John Brenchley is the figure illustrated standing on the right in the view on page 18. *[A photo perhaps taken on the same day shows him on the footplate of "Sankey" at the top of the Edge Hill incline plus details of his work there on pages 43 – 44 of Volume 1 of Stephen's Oakwood Press books on the East Kent Railway. (Editor)]* He had a long association with the Colonel's railways. On 11th February 1907 Jimmy Ashworth, one of the Salford Terrace outdoor staff, noted that "Brenchley was drowned out of the well at Tenterden yesterday the water coming in faster than it could be got out." The well in question was being dug to provide a water supply for the Tenterden wind pump and it appears that Brenchley was a "jack of all trades" on the Kent & East Sussex. There is another mention of Brenchley in Jimmy Ashworth's notebook : "March 14th 1907. I went with Brenchley to look at the engine shed roads & decided to slew the crossing and lift the roads on Sunday." Not very remarkable in itself but it does show that Brenchley was a track man as well as a holes man.

In 1911 Brenchley took on the laying out of the Eastry to Wingham branch of the East Kent Railway as a sub-contractor to Stephens. Unfortunately the shortage of funds for this work and the problems this caused with the workforce seem to have led to Brenchley suffering a breakdown in 1913 after which he took the less worrying role of ganger in charge. By 1922 he was working on the construction of the Edge Hill Light Railway. When the line's regular driver refused to drive the small 0-4-0ST "Sankey" up the incline Brenchley undertook the task himself. The locomotive was attached to the winding cables and counter-balanced by two wagons but worked its way up the in-

cline under its own steam. Possibly the winding mechanism was not fully operational at this stage. The caption to the photographs in "The Colonel" would suggest that Brenchley was still employed by the East Kent at this time.
Stephen Garrett

Replica Ford Lorry

I would like to thank all the members and the committee for the donation from the Society for the construction of the dished rail wheels for the rail lorry I have been constructing for some time. I attach an image of the original and latest state of play with the re-built cab and the radiator that the society funded some time ago. Things have started to come together quite quickly of late.

Also I have acquired a Wickham trolley from the soon to be publically launched "Rail Trolley Trust" for restoration. The details of its history are:
Works No. 7516
Wickham Order – 61682
Engine – Ford 10hp No. C903290
Shipped from Ware – 24 October 1956
To – BR (WR) Shrewsbury, Shropshire
Running Numbers during it BR Career -
B 25 W, PWM 4313, DM 965567,
DX 68060.



The Trolley was later allocated to Aberdovey. It was well photographed however when it was allocated to the Holyhead Breakwater railway where it worked along-

side the last two Class 01 0-4-0 Diesel Mechanical shunters on BR:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/mrc31176/4378599187/>

And: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/taffytank/3244031161/>

Finally it was allocated to Llanrwyst to assist in flood damage repairs.

It was sold from Bangor to the Gloucester-

shire and Warwickshire Railway in May 1982 and moved from there to Long Marston some years ago.

Do any members have any photos of it at Shrewsbury? Apparently it spent some time at the Hookagate transfer sidings so it may have an S&M connection. (*Colin Shutt*)

PRESS DIGEST

Our regular round up of the railway press

There's a nice photo of the entrance to **Callington** station, PD&SWJR, taken from the outside, in the March edition of '**Steam Days**'. I have not seen a picture taken from this position before. *Ross Shimmon*

Today's Railways (Platform 5 Publishing, Sheffield) may not be required reading material for those of us more interested in the railways of an earlier age. However, in addition to that publication's usual news of heritage traction and preserved railway matters, a couple of Colonel Stephens themed articles caught my eye.

In the March 2015 edition, **Issue 159**, there is a comprehensive history of, and detailed look at, the present day **East Kent Railway**, and likewise in April 2015 **Issue 160**, we are treated to an in-depth look at the **Kent and East Sussex** line.

These are well researched, well written and illustrated articles, highlighting the Colonel's involvement and legacy lasting into the British Railways era and subsequent re-openings as heritage railways. It is hoped that these articles will encourage more of their general readership to visit these lines, thereby enhancing their financial support.

Sadly, the CSS does not get a mention, but the museum at Tenterden certainly does.

Incidentally, in Issue 159, there is a detailed look at the Parry People Movers. I rode in their narrow gauge 'Heritage' PPM when it visited the W&L some years ago. It was a surreal experience – almost silent travel with the hint of a rumble coming from a large flywheel rotating somewhere under the floor.

Now there's an idea that the Colonel would have picked up and run with! *Keith Patrick*

The Spring 2015 **East Kent Railways News** records their AGM and their accounts. Their 2014 income was approximately the same as the previous year. They record the death of one of their directors and keen volunteer Bob Smith. An account of progress on the restoration, mainly by a two man team, of a Midland Railway style brake van is given. The brake van came from the Royal Navy Armaments Department.

The back siding has been relaid with better quality sleepers and a point fitted to access a future engine shed. Again the work has been done by a small team with help from ARC running training courses. The footbridge is also progressing with welding work and painting of one section, mostly down to a single volunteer.

Little progress has been made on the trolleybus over winter due to the weather but there is a map of the places which had trolley buses in the UK and the time periods they were in use. Some systems had shut before the war and the pace of closure accelerated in the 50s and 60s. Bradford was the last to close in 1972. They remark that many systems were built by towns and cities on coalfields to use local coal rather than imported oil.

2015 events on the EKR are listed as: 21st June– Multiple Unit Day, all 3 in action. 18th & 19th July- Summer Gala with Die-

sels, Beer, Family Attractions.

30th & Mon 31st August Miniature Trains with both miniature lines in action and visiting miniature locos.

5th & 6th September EMU Gala Weekend with EPB and COR units running.

25th & 31st October, 1st November Halloween Train of Terror.

8th November– 40 Shilling Special– travel the line for £2 return.

5th, 6th, 12th, 13th, 19th, 20th, 23rd & 24th December Santa by Train.

The EPB group will be running their electric stock on the Gala and EMU weekends and also on 17th, 24th May, 14th June, 12th July, 1st & 2nd August, 13th September.

'Heritage Railway' reports that work has begun to establish a cycle path between **Weston-Super-Mare and Clevedon**, following the railway's route. Echoing the Colonel's characteristic slogans "The shortest distance to ...", the article states "The path is intended to shorten the distance between the two town centres by about four miles for walkers and cyclists." *Ross Shimmon*

Making Tracks, Issue 91, Autumn 2014, the Mid Suffolk Railway's magazine has been sent to me by Ian Dack. It has become almost an honorary Stephens line as it has enchanted several members who've visited and we hope to have an AGM on it one year soon.

They had a very successful autumn steam gala with 3 engines in steam, all small industrial tank engines. Problems with their planning application to extend the line have re-

sulted in delay.

There is an article about former "Middy" driver Alec Boag who left the GER after being involved in an accidental collision when 3 people were killed due to Boag misjudging his position in fog and being unable to stop in time at Bamby.

There is a new website and a new limited edition wagon for "Pendal" of Ipswich. There is a story about the Royal family and the "cutting the first sod" ceremony for the line. Also there are some nice photos of the line in its last few days.

If the "Middy" magazine can get a mention I guess I can add the **Bishop's Castle Railway Society Journal**, Issue 87, Winter 2015. [The BCR was a line even the Colonel decided not to take on.] The cover shows the decaying remains of the weighbridge and stable block at the former Bishop's Castle Station, which still cling precariously to life. Obituaries of two stalwart members with interesting lives and a society rail trip are followed by a transcription of the "The Bishop's Castle Defence Committee" report for Jan 1904.

This explains the background to the numerous legal cases over the railway. Most of the land for the railway was never paid for but rents were eventually agreed following court cases. However for many years these rents were often never paid either. By 1900 modest surpluses were made and legal cases held to decide who got the money: the first debenture holders (5% twenty-five year mortgage), who'd never had a penny of interest or capital; or the landowners for arrears of rent. The

MEET THE COLONEL!

Visit the Colonel Stephens Railway Museum at Tenterden

- See the Colonel in his reconstructed Tonbridge office
- Get up close and personal with the famous 'Gazelle'
 - Study the many artefacts of the Colonel's lines
- Latest exhibits include the Light Railway in War Time, workshops activity and improved Selsey and Rye & Camber displays

*Admission free to Colonel Stephens Society members
Open from 12.30 to 4.30 on days when the K&ESR is running*

debenture holders (and all the lawyers of course) won; and the landowners threatened to repossess their land.

However the defence committee of local worthies pooled money to pay the rent arrears, and buy the land. They then paid modest interest on the sum invested using the rent money. This secured the railway's future. [Of course the second debenture holders, the several classes of shareholders, and the numerous other creditors never ever got a penny.]

'The Welsh Highland Heritage Magazine No.66 March 2015 has an interesting piece by Richard Maund on the involvement of HFS with the Welsh Highland Railway's route through Beddgelert.

According to one source he persuaded the promoters to abandon the original very steeply graded route, remains of which can be seen at the end of the Aberglaslyn Pass, for the longer but much less steep one that was used. The route was changed before he formally joined the WHR.

Stephens knew those involved but there is no proof he was the one who first suggested the new route.

There is also an article by Dick Lystor on 'Staffing Beddgelert' during the period HFS was in charge. In 1922 when the WHR opened there were 25 staff, 18 being ex North Wales Narrow Gauge Railway staff. By 1933 there were only 5 full time and 3 part time. Thus staff rapidly came and went at Beddgelert.

Following the takeover of the line by the Ffestiniog, for its last three years until it shut in 1937, the young Miriam Roberts was employed as stationmistress at Beddgelert during the summer seasons. She is well known from contemporary photos as she met the trains wearing the traditional Welsh costume. She gained the railway a lot of publicity her photo appearing in several national newspapers. For this full time job she was paid the princely wage of 5/- a week. *Ross Shimmon*



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Why not contact me for your railway book

Our Visit to the Lynton and Barnstaple

[Continued from Page 23] So impressed were the Ffestiniog with the design of the ex-L&B coach that this became the basis for their new-build coaches. This was a great boon when the old L&B coach bodies were rebuilt as they are mounted on L&B style bogies and underframes built by Boston Lodge!

About ¼ mile beyond Snapper Halt we glimpsed Collard Bridge where the gradient steepened to 1 in 50. About two-thirds of the line was on 1 in 50 gradients, often with sharp curves. With the exception of Chelfham viaduct the line climbed almost continually from Collard Bridge to reach 900 ft. at Blackmoor.

2 miles further on was the 7-arch viaduct 70 feet above the valley floor. It was restored in 2002 and is now owned by the Highways Agency. The adjacent Chelfham Station (2 miles from the village) is now owned by the L&B Trust and open to the public. The station is gradually being returned to its original form, having been rebuilt with an extension in the 1960s. The station platforms are nearly rebuilt and work on the station well advanced. Tea, biscuits and loos were provided. So impressed were we with the keenness of the team, their progress so far, and their kind reception for us that an ad hoc committee meeting decided to donate them a cheque for £500 to help pay for the specially produced replica doors they require for the station.

Our coach followed the course of the railway through the village of Bratton Fleming



Replica Ground Frame Hut under Construction and the 1960s extension to Chelfham Station behind (Ed)



Blackmoor Station, much extended, with water tank base rebuilt as a hut and a relocated signal (Ed)

Station located well below the village in a valley and inaccessible to the coach. Next stop was Blackmoor Gate 12 miles from Barnstaple on Exmoor and located at a busy crossroads, though nowhere near any other habitation.

THE ROTHER VALLEY RAILWAY

— ∞ —
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The much extended station, similar to Lynton and Woody Bay in design, is now a pub but still retains some railway relics. It is in the process of being acquired by the preservationists to run as a pub. The railway, when rebuilt, will pass below it to enable the line to tunnel under the roads.

From Blackmoor Gate the railway descended at 1 in 50 to the inaccessible village of Parracombe, by-passed by the main roads. The line then climbed back onto the moor at 1 in 50 to reach a second summit at just over 1000 ft. just beyond Woody Bay station, about 4 miles from Blackmoor. A 2 mile section from Woody Bay is now relaid for steam trains.

Woody Bay itself was a failed Victorian holiday resort, 3 miles and 1000 ft. lower than the station! It is now a deserted cove with the base of a pier and the hotel, now holiday cottages. The only car park is 700 ft. above the bay.

The L&BR Society, established in 1979, decided to buy Woody Bay Station when it came on the market in 1995. It was virtually unchanged from 1935. It was very run down and had no electricity or running water. It opened to the public in 2002, train services began in 2004 and have gradually been extended to a 2 mile run. 4 restored L&B coaches are in use and 3 steam locos are available for 2015 - an 0-6-0T Kerr Stuart "Joffre" of 1915 built for trench railways, and two post war Bagnalls from South Africa—an 0-4-2T and a 4-4-0T. A replica L&B Baldwin 2-4-2T is under construction and a replica L&B Manning Wardle 2-6-2T is currently based on the Ffestiniog. It is hoped to extend to both Blackmoor and also the nearly 5 miles to Lynton if £30 million can be found!

Mark had arranged for us to partake of an excellent buffet and then ride in Coach 7, an all-third with a unique central open compartment. A visit to the engine shed was followed by a second round trip, some of us riding in Coach 17, the bogie composite used for winter services as the sole passenger vehicle. After tea and cakes we rode on to the site of Caffyns Halt and

then onto Lynton.

Lynton station has been extended and is now used as holiday cottages. It is at 700ft., over half a mile and 300ft. above the town. The town itself is 400ft. above the seaside resort of Lynnmouth to which it is connected by a 125 year old Cliff Railway. Time prevented us sampling this delight as several members had to catch a return train at Barnstaple Junction Station, reached in good time. Many thanks to Mark, his wife, Steve Park and everybody else who made this AGM so memorable. I can now appreciate why the L&B has a touch of magic to it and was so missed by enthusiasts when it shut in 1935.

A Short History of the Line

The line began building in 1895, before the Light Railway Act, and so was fully signalled with manned level crossings etc. It opened in May 1898. It was financed by the wealthy publisher Sir George Newnes and his friends to prevent the Great Western building a standard gauge line to the resort and turning it into another Minehead or Ilfracombe! The idea was that a narrow gauge line from Barnstaple would have limited capacity and if the station was built well out of town it would not be visible to Sir George and discourage all but the hardest of day trippers! Sir George did try to increase traffic for a while by running a bus service, the first railway bus service, from Blackmoor to Ilfracombe in 1903, but soon gave up because the drivers were fined too often for exceeding the 8mph speed limit.

The line was a keen supporter of Stephens' Association of Minor Railways which campaigned for minor lines to remain independent at the grouping. However bus competition soon persuaded the L&BR management to merge with the Southern Railway in 1923. The Southern invested heavily in bogie freight wagons for instance but to no avail as traffic dwindled leading to closure after the 1935 summer season. Sadly the line was paralleled by roads all the way to Lynton and with poorly sited stations.

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Deadlines for 2015/16

Copy for *The Colonel* should be submitted to the Editor by the following dates:

120: Autumn 2015: 10th August
121: Winter 2015: 9th November
122: Spring 2016: 8th February
123: Summer 2016: 9th May

These are final dates, but we much prefer earlier receipt if at all possible. •



Above: Laurie Cooksey's New Ashover Butts Diorama, Colonel Stephens Railways Museum, Tenterden. (Ross Shimmon)



Left: Woody Bay Station from the entrance side. (Ed)

Below: Kerr Stuart 0-6-0T of 1915 "Axe" and Train of Restored Lynton & Barnstaple Coaches approach Woody Bay Station, 17th May 2015. (Ed)

