



No. 65 approaches Horsted Keynes with a Golden Arrow service, 3 April 2023 Photo: David Cable

# The Bluebell Times

A Newsletter for Bluebell Railway Members, Staff and Supporters

April 2023

## IN THIS ISSUE

I've been a volunteer on the Railway for a little over 16 years, and still to a degree think of myself as the "new boy". But I guess 16 years allows a degree of perspective, and in my time, I cannot remember a period in which the headwinds felt so strong, with the triple issues of sharply rising costs, constrained supply chains (especially in catering) and tightening household incomes. Perhaps the struggles in the early seventies come close, following the financial strain of buying the line's freehold, but this time the pressures are not of our choosing, and sector-wide. I'm sure many of our readers will have seen the "survival" appeal put out by the Severn Valley Railway: if a line of that stature can be forced to appeal in such stark terms, then none of us can afford to be complacent.

To progress, we need to trade, and the year has already been busy with events: the key for households is to ensure we are seen as offering good value. The half-term was busy with Fenchurch proving its value for shoulder-season services, and the new "Dinosaurs" event was popular with families, which remain a key market. It is already planned to hold a similar event in the future. For nearly two weeks in March, the railway was abuzz with operations supporting a large film contract (hello 3am alarm clock to prepare an engine for 7:30am on set!). And on 21 – 23 April, we will have our great [Branch Line](#) event, with three visiting locomotives – have you [bought your tickets](#) yet? More events are planned for later in the year.

So oddly enough, I feel *more* optimistic now than for some time. Yes, times are still tough; and yes, there will be inevitable shocks ahead. But there feels more energy around the Railway. If we keep talking to each other, keep treating each other fairly, be cheerful and courteous to our passengers and respect a diversity of opinions (oh, and keep buying tickets!) then we can weather this storm as surely as we have weathered those before my time.

Tom James, Editor

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# Checking in with the Chair

By Paul Churchman, chairman, Bluebell Railway plc and chairman, BRPS

It's the middle of April and I am writing this at the very last minute as I kept thinking 'that's OK, I have got time' and then I receive a gentle email reminder to get my article in so as not to delay BT going out! Although it could go out without me saying anything!

Since our last edition, a lot has gone on at the Railway and I am pleased to say the actions the Board and senior managers took in February and beyond are starting to pay off.

To summarise, the things we have done are:

- ➔ Reduced payroll by more than £200k per annum
- ➔ Altered the events we do and looked at doing add-on value events that are low cost but bring in a lot of additional revenue
- ➔ Brought on-train catering production back in house with our own chefs
- ➔ Altered our catering offering at Sheffield Park and this is a work in progress as we develop and evolve with a focus on margin and quality
- ➔ Using small trains where possible
- ➔ Stopped all non-essential capital expenditure, unless there is funding available from the Trust
- ➔ Work has started on changing and improving the website
- ➔ Made an increased push on marketing

Then there is all the work we need to do to keep this momentum going and to look at new target markets for 2024.

There is also the business side of things -- how we run our business, how we report it internally. We have work under way on this too. My plan is that we will actually have a business plan for 2024!

We still haven't finalised the year-end audit (almost there) and, although the numbers will not appear as bad as we all first thought, there are

adjustments that are from previous years and also we have to book the grants we have received as income – they won't be there this year so we have to make it work!

The year has started better than we thought and the large film job we had has made a massive impact on our cashflow. The good news was that despite that filming income we weren't in the red in the bank by the beginning of April. With this large sum from the filming, this gives us breathing space, but that is all it is. We have to work hard to ensure we are getting the revenue in and it is profitable revenue. We also have to watch our costs meticulously, which, let me assure you, every Director and manager is doing and I thank them for that.

I want to thank everyone for the sheer blood, sweat and sometimes tears that is being put in to make this work. We still have a mountain to climb but we are now well on the journey and I am confident we will continue to improve as the year goes on.

On a lighter note, we had two shortlisted entries in the HRA Awards, which were 'Fenchurch' in the Coiley Award for Steam Locomotive Engineering and the second being SR Wagon No.12058 for Morgan Award for Rolling Stock Preservation. We achieved runner-up in both categories. Well done to everyone involved and we should be proud of the high level of workmanship that we produce time and time again. We had a table at the Awards dinner and it was attended by some of the people that had worked on these vehicles. From the pictures they had a very well-deserved enjoyable evening!

It is always hard to thank everyone by individual team and for those of you that see my weekly updates I do try to do this as I think we need to recognise our fabulous people and it doesn't matter whether they are paid or volunteer, everyone works for the Bluebell. So I want to thank everyone that works on the Railway, whether it is full time, a day a week, a day a

month, or even a day every so often. It all helps and it all matters. This is our hobby and we do this for the love of railways and heritage and we must remember that and we must enjoy what we do, as

that drives the passion to deliver the excellent railway we have.

*Paul*

## Volunteer Workshop

Words by Paul Bromley, communications director, Bluebell Railway plc

Scores of volunteers from across the Railway packed into the Birch Grove Suite on Saturday 18 March to hear chairman Paul Churchman set out the challenges facing the Bluebell this year.

He said he was trying to keep people informed about the current situation including providing his Weekly Updates.

Paul made clear at the outset that the Railway was in a difficult financial situation. "It takes a lot of money to keep going," he reminded those present.

Several plc directors and Society trustees were in attendance to support Paul's remarks.

He said other railways were in the same position as the Bluebell as discussed at the recent Heritage Railway Association conference in Birmingham which he had attended along with Operations director Neil Glaskin and chief operating officer Lisa Boyle.

"Just running trains doesn't work, it is events which add value," commented Paul.

He said there was a fine balance to be achieved between curtailing the programme to cut costs and doing enough to still attract people in.

Paul also promised a look at the structure of the Railway because at the time of the Governance Review there were more people willing to take on tasks and stand for various roles.

His final message before answering questions from the audience was a simple one: "It takes everybody to run a railway."

The chairman then spent more than an hour answering about 30 different questions from the



Photo: Roger Kelly

volunteers. These ranged from improvements to our website, ticket prices, providing value for money for customers, ideas for new sources of revenue, potential for collaboration with other heritage railways in the South East, tourism initiatives and reducing energy costs.

All the ideas were noted by volunteer workshop organiser Gordon Dudman and his team.

After the meeting, attendees headed downstairs to the Bessemer Arms for food and drink where the conversations continued.

# HOPS March Update

By Fraser Hutchinson, HOPS project manager

As of 5 April, there are 854 working members signed up to HOPS (Heritage Operating Processing System). We have found another 52 colleagues this month. I know of at least another 20 who are in the process of sending their details to me but again I ask if you have yet to apply for a HOPS account, will you please get in touch with me. All managers have been alerted and we are very close to having all working members with HOPS accounts.

For any newcomers, welcome to the Bluebell. If you need any training on how to use HOPS, please contact me.

This month I have been updating profiles, chasing you all for photos and then having to chase you again when the photos you sent to me were rejected by HOPS because they did not meet their rigid specifications. It is neither Matt Sloan nor I that make the rules on photos so please don't have a moan at the poor old messenger!

In the last two weeks I have distributed over 100 ID cards to all areas of the Bluebell. I do hope that you have received it, if you have been expecting one.

We are constantly processing them, so if you have supplied us with a photo and you have seen it on your profile but have yet to receive a card, please get in touch. For anyone who has supplied me with a photo since 15 March it is in hand and hopefully you should have it shortly. For anyone who has been waiting since before March please let us know.

Last word on ID cards and HOPS accounts. This is a mandatory requirement for WORKING members so those life members who think they are missing out on something – join a department, become a working member and then you can apply for a HOPS account. We have received some dubious requests from individuals but hopefully no one has got through our thorough sifting process!

At the end of last month's ramblings, I asked for any feedback positive or negative. I am pleased to say that I have not received one negative comment about HOPS. This correspondence is now closed before I receive any late comers!

Rostering has now progressed to the Catering Department, the Great Northern Saloon and Customer Services. Competencies are being added on a daily basis. If you have yet to do the Working at Height module you must do so, as this is now mandatory for all working members and paid staff. Also, there are quite a few that have yet to do the online PTS (Personal Trackside Safety) assessment. As soon as you complete it, I can update your profile. Medical self-certification has now been added to HOPS so if you receive an email with a link to go to the self-certification document, please do so as soon as you receive this, as delay will prevent you being rostered and will upset your roster clerk.

Behind the scenes a lot of work is taking place on how we will all use the ID cards for scanning at the start and end of shifts, what are the best tools for doing this and where should they be placed. I hope to be in a position next month to explain how this is to be rolled out.

*Following on from editorial feedback, we use the term "HOPS" without explaining what it is.*

*HOPS stands for "Heritage Operations Processing System". It is an online system for managing key operational processes on the railway, such as rostering, staff competence records and distribution of operating documents. The system is widely used across the heritage railway industry, with well over a hundred railways and heritage centres using the system across the UK and in Australia. – Ed.*

# News in Brief

## BE PREPARED ... FOR HAPPY VISITORS

The Railway runs an active education programme of visits from schools and other groups. One such group was the 1<sup>st</sup> Barcombe Scouts, whose leader provided the following feedback after a visit in March:

"Thank you so much for a lovely evening. The Cubs and parent helpers had a fabulous time. Malcolm you are a very knowledgeable man and very good with the Cubs.

"They definitely learnt lots though and they really enjoyed their visit. Your helpers in the museum were also very patient and we were all very interested to hear about being an evacuee. The signal box was a big success too. The children were all very chuffed to see the steam train coming in to the station at the beginning of their visit. I know that wasn't planned but it was excellent fun!

"So thank you ever so much again."

## LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE COMES TO THE MUSEUM

By Malcolm Johnson, museum curator

The Branch Line weekend will take place on 21 – 23 April and the museum at Sheffield Park has a special display to celebrate two of the guest locomotives that were operated by the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway. The museum thanks Barry Jones and Mr and Mrs Mark Evans for the loan of models and other display items.



## FOOTPLATE TASTERS - DIESEL STYLE

Words and photo: Jack Lamb, guard



We had four participants who each had an hour driving D4106 with an open wagon and the Queen Mary brake van at Horsted Keynes. They drove the short train up and down within station limits and did some shunting to put the brake van on the other end of the train.

After the driving, they were presented with a certificate and given a tour of the carriage and wagon workshop.

## CARRIAGE AND WAGON PROGRESS

David Chappell provides a picture of ongoing progress in the C&W works – [Stroudley Brake 3<sup>rd</sup> No. 949](#), which will look superb paired with 'Fenchurch'.



### FILM VISITOR DEPARTS ...

Roy Watts' photo (taken from a position of safety while on operational duties) shows Black 5 No.44932 preparing to depart the Railway. It had been based here for a couple of weeks in connection with a film contract.

### ... AS DOES 35207

Also leaving – temporarily – is Mark 1 BSK (Brake Second Corridor) No. 35207, which has gone on loan to the Epping Ongar Railway for the summer. (Photo by Roy Watts).

### HRA AWARDS

Two Bluebell projects were shortlisted for Heritage Railway Association Awards – 'Fenchurch' was shortlisted for the Coiley Award for Steam Locomotive Engineering and the SR Wagon No.12058 for Morgan Award for Rolling Stock Preservation. The combined teams are shown below (courtesy Laurie Anderson) at the evening's award ceremony, where ultimately both projects were awarded runner-up status in their respective categories.



# 5 Minutes With ... Tony Astor

## Name

Tony Astor

## Role

Infrastructure Director

## How long have you been involved with the Bluebell Railway?

Definitely the new boy. My involvement goes back to 2019 when I first volunteered in the Carriage & Wagon department before moving to Infrastructure. As a visitor, I first came to the railway about twenty years ago for a wonderful dinner on the Golden Arrow train.

## How did you first become involved?

Working in the airport business, the global pandemic had a dramatic impact on airport operations worldwide. As a result, my work opportunities diminished substantially. I diversified and took on the management of my local village hall and began volunteering at the Bluebell Railway.

## What was your professional career?

I spent nearly 40 years in the airport business, with almost 20 years in BAA culminating at senior management level at Heathrow. I had many varied roles but for much of my time in BAA I concentrated on jet fuel infrastructure projects, major contract negotiations and the development of new jet fuel related facilities at Heathrow Terminal 5.

In 2008 I set up my own airport consultancy business and worked at a number of high-profile airports in the Middle East, focusing on the development of jet fuel infrastructure.

## What does your Bluebell Railway job involve?

I've only been in the role for a short time, but the infrastructure department has responsibility for all the track, buildings, signalling, embankments,



drains, culverts and much more. The job is to lead and co-ordinate our wonderful team of volunteers and a surprisingly small number of paid staff. Also, to project manage new works to ensure we get it right first time.

It's about ensuring compliance with legislation, liaising with other departments, managing the budget (which is always insufficient), ensuring we work as one joined-up operation to maximise efficiency and cost effectiveness.

To sum up, it's about making sure we have the track, stations and signalling to enable the trains to run.

## How often do you volunteer at the Railway?

Currently about two days a week, but I think that's going to increase.

## Are you involved in any other departments or areas of the Railway?

Not currently.

## Do you have a nickname? If so, what is it and how did it come about?

Many years ago, I worked in a small team where one staff member gave us all nicknames from Blackadder. I was Captain Darling.

**What's the best part of your job?**

Despite the best efforts of the team, the unexpected happens. Seeing the team deal with these issues with pragmatism, passion and enthusiasm is truly motivational. As always, it's the people that make a difference and working with Bluebell people is the best part ... oh and the cakes.

**What is your earliest train memory?**

I didn't travel much by train. I grew up in Essex and my earliest train memories were on the EMUs on the Liverpool Street line to London.

**Do you have a model railway at home or in the garden?**

Sadly not.

**What's the funniest or best thing that's happened to you at the Bluebell Railway?**

I think the funniest thing is seeing how big my in tray has become and the best thing is the welcome I've received since my appointment.

**What is the biggest challenge facing the Bluebell Railway?**

I think the biggest challenge is keeping 140-year-old buildings and infrastructure operational. Many of our locomotives are more than 100 years old, again hugely expensive to overhaul and maintain.

As a result, money is the biggest challenge facing the railway. Even in good times, there never seems enough funding for the demands of the railway but today, with energy costs, cost of living issues and still facing the aftereffects of Covid, money is definitely the biggest challenge.

**Do you have a favourite locomotive/carriage/wagon/era?**

I really love the elegant coaches from the 1930s, the so-called Golden Age of rail travel. To sit in a Maunsell coach or LNER teak carriage (on another railway) is to recall that Golden Age.

**Anything else you want to tell us?**

I enjoy skiing and continental touring cycling.



# Tribute to Dick Beckwith

By Tony Astor, infrastructure director

Dick Beckwith, the Bluebell's volunteer Chartered Civil Engineer has decided to hang up his hard hat after more than 20 years of keeping the Bluebell's bridges and structures safe.

Dick was asked in 2001 to produce a report on the condition of all the bridges and structures on the railway. His skill and dedication to the task resulted in the first report being delivered to the Railway in August of that year. He was formally appointed as the Professional Civil Engineering Advisor in 2003 and it is this role that he carried out until this year.

Dick was one of the unsung heroes of the Railway, performing essential, but often unglamorous work. Found knee deep in silted up culverts, scrambling up and down banks and getting a crick in his neck from looking up at the underside of our many bridges. It is a little-known fact that we have over 90 bridges, culverts and structures, all of which Dick inspected regularly and reported on.

Some of Dick's notable achievements include, supervising the repairs to the East Grinstead viaduct, produced stability assessments for the rubbish retained in the tip at Imberhorne, designed the steelwork for various new structures, and much more. In addition, he provided advice and guidance to the infrastructure team on a wide range of topics.

The Railway is very grateful to Dick for all his work and dedication to the Railway over the years and we hope he continues to visit his old friends, as long as he doesn't have muddy boots.



# Resuming Jewel in the Crown, 2023

Words and photo by Bob Darvill, Jewel in the Crown Project Manager

So Christmas is over, the weather is improving, (gradually) and the film sequences are in the can! It is time for the Jewel in the Crown to resurface.

Over the winter the wedding room floor has been restored, heating arrangements improved and moisture problems alleviated. The booking hall has been repaired and redecorated combining efforts with the Horsted Keynes Station volunteers.

Passengers are now greeted with a brighter, cleaner space to assemble and to purchase tickets. We are ready to recommence the restoration of the canopy structures on platform 5. In the coming weeks, a considerable amount of new timber needs to be prepared, fitted and fixed before the restored glazing and heavy zinc can be safely supported.

We learned a lot from our experiences in 2022. We gained an understanding of the building and the extent and complication of the repairs it needs. We learned about working alongside the operational railway, its visitors, events and special occasions. To make good, uninterrupted progress with a high standard of safety, we must exclusively secure the whole work site from the start. A lot of thought has been put into how we do this. New gates have been installed from the roadway into the dock and there is a temporary footbridge between platforms 5 and 4. This will be the only access route to trains and platforms for staff, volunteers and visitors. The site office and storage containers have been relocated to the staff car park, annexed as a secure delivery and work area.

We will monitor, register and induct as necessary our contractors, tradesmen and essential visitors through this compound. We have invested in additional fencing to enclose both ends of platform 5, excluding all other access to the works. Site information and notices have been put back into place and I would ask everyone to make themselves familiar with these.



The infrastructure construction team recognises the inconvenience and disruption to the normal life of the station. We appreciate the co-operation of the volunteer station staff who have had to sacrifice their welfare area, freedom of movement and their parking spaces. In the end this will pay dividends giving the project a better chance of staying on target and staying safe.

Behind the scenes, the team have invested in additional training around site management, health and safety and have been reviewing our documented procedures ensuring they are robust. We have engaged a CDM (Construction Design and Management) consultant dedicated to Jewel in the Crown to advise and assist us. [See job advertisement on page 24 – Ed] The team is aware that our works are very visible, in the public eye and need to be an exemplar of good practice. This is as much part of the job as the work itself.

So we are ready! We expect a slow start in April, but we have every expectation that the reconstruction of the station will accelerate through the summer. Look out for future progress reports in *The Bluebell Times*.

# E6040 Renamed “The Bluebell Railway”

Words and photos by Paul Auckland, project leader



The culmination of four months effort at Eastleigh works saw the loco carrying as-built livery of early BR Blue with half yellow warning ends and being re-named the '*The Bluebell Railway*' by Bluebell Railway Preservation Society Vice President, Roy Watts.

Paul Auckland, project leader said, "This is a key milestone on the journey for having '*The Bluebell Railway*' loco operating at its namesake railway. As a long-standing Bluebell volunteer on steam and diesel locos, I'm excited that the Bluebell has been so welcoming of this heritage locomotive and look forward to it operating trouble free for many years at its new home."

Roy Watts, Bluebell Railway Preservation Society Vice President, said "The Bluebell Railway continues to move with the times and we've now had diesels for many years, starting with diesels operating the tip trains as part of our getting to East Grinstead more than ten years ago. I'm delighted E6040 is coming to the Bluebell Railway as it will be a highly versatile and economical

locomotive allowing us to enhance our timetable alongside steam locos. I'm confident it'll find a number of uses, including giving us an option to keep operating during high fire risk periods".

The loco will shortly be moving to the Bluebell Railway to be commissioned and take up its first duties. Further events to launch the loco are all in the pipeline. Keep an eye on the loco's facebook group [73133 "The Bluebell Railway"](#) and [Bluebell Railway website](#) for more information as it becomes available.

If you'd like to get involved in the group doing practical work to support the operation of the locomotive then contact the project leader, Paul on [paulchillout@aol.com](mailto:paulchillout@aol.com) or you can still donate, including set up a regular donation, to support via [73133 "The Bluebell Railway" Restoration](#).

Basing the loco and operating it at the Bluebell Railway allows us to move as a project to further goals of establishing a group to work on the loco to ensure it continues to be reliable and in

good condition as well as fund raising for the inevitable work that will be needed going forward.

### E6040 / 73133

E6040 / 73133 was designed by Southern Region engineers who set about building a prototype batch of six new "electro-diesel" locomotives at Eastleigh Carriage and Wagon Works during 1961–2. The new locomotives had a respectable 1,600 hp on electric power, and in addition an English Electric 600 hp diesel engine similar to those used in the Southern Region's diesel electric multiple Unit (DEMU) fleet. The success of these prototype locomotives resulted in British Railways ordering a production batch of a further 43 locomotives, including E6040, from English Electric at the Vulcan Foundry in Newton-le-Willows. The "electro-diesels" proved extremely versatile, to the point where many are still in service after a life of over 61 years.

## Another packed month for 1305

Words and photos by Ben Wetherall, Diesel Traction Engineering Co-ordinator

Every week has had at least one working day happen and much has been done on site and off too.

A piece of tarpaulin was found and fitted over the hole in the DMBS (Driving Motor Brake Second) perfectly which has helped to dry this area out.

Flooring has been removed in both coach intermediate ends and all the crash pillars are now accessible which we were very happy to find that only the one out of eight that we already knew about needed attention.

Further good news came when the flooring was removed around the hole area of the DMBS and almost no damage was present there either.

The handbrake in the DTS (Driving Trailer Second) has been stripped out and the reason for its failure has been identified and is in the process of being fixed. Only a replacement bush is needed to be made in addition to the indicator needing to be repaired as it had been snapped.

The DTS cab air leak was fixed. However this had been masking a brake fault whereby the brake pipe could self-charge, the air leak preventing this previously. This is in hand and luckily the spares from the de-icer are already paying dividends.

Speaking of the de-icer, trips have now ended up to Stoke and all that is wanted has been marked up by us to be saved, ready for the transport



company to dismantle it for us. This should be happening soon.

Some parts that were of no use to 1305 were wanted by other preservation groups, so deals were done and 1305 has still benefited either through parts swapping or financially.

Back to 1305 and internally some of the old, upholstered panels under the windows have been removed and either kept for patterns or binned as

they are well beyond repair. Some ceiling panels were removed from the intermediate end of the DMBS for investigation purposes and the roof is in very good order. We even found all the old bayonet bulb fittings still behind the lowered ceiling panels!

Moving to the engine room, various inspection tasks have been carried out, the camshaft chain has been checked and is in good order, the main generator requires a good clean-up as there is slight corrosion to the steel parts within. This is due to the exhaust cowlings needing repair and rainwater coming in, running round the outside of the silencer and down onto the main generator. Luckily it isn't running inside it but is making it damp in the engine room as a whole.

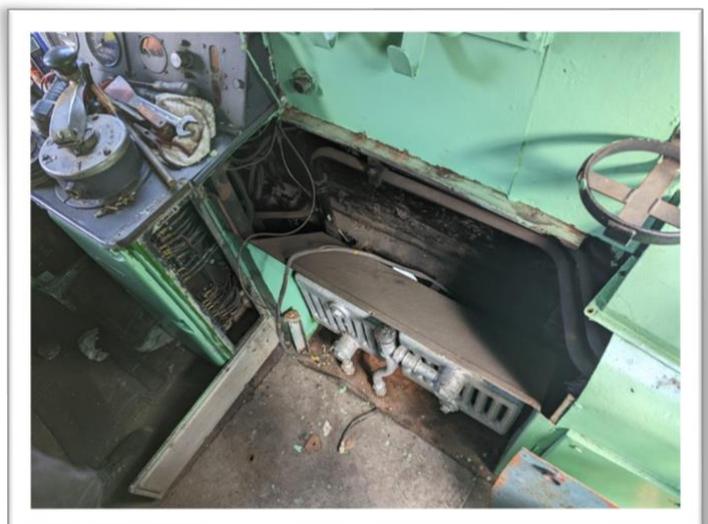
The load regulator needs some wiring replacing due to age but is currently still serviceable.

The fan cupboard (hell hole) needs a very good clear-out at some point which is hoped to be done at Sheffield Park using the jetwash when the underframe has the sandite jettied off it and we can get the radiator grille removed with the forklift for inspection purposes.

The control equipment in both cabs has had various initial inspections too and cleaning where required. Wiper motors are being overhauled, a horn valve has been changed, both CSR (Cab to Shore) radios have now been removed and the removal of the headlight circuits has begun.

Hopefully soon 1305 will find herself in her more permanent location and we can get power to her to be able to start replacing metalwork.

The first job is to get the gutter down. This is the length of the coach and made of aluminium, so we don't really want to cut it. This will need all the internal upper panels removing to get to the backs of the rivets. The reason for the need to remove this is because the roof sheet and bodyside sheet meet behind the gutter, so to remove a section of bodyside from solebar to roof needs the gutter to not be there. This is what we need to replace in the DMBS hole area, from solebar to roof.



We are very lucky to have had two tarpaulins funded by the Trust which will help no end when it comes to the bodyside sheeting repairs.

Finally, the bodyside nameplates are nearly finished. We have been donated a couple of English Electric nameplates for the engine as they were missing.

We are very lucky and thankful to have been made custodians of [PMV number 153](#) which was the Alf Brown Gang mess van. This is an honour for us and

we will be looking after it as well as the ABG did, keeping it in working order should it be needed on special occasions for service or goods trains.

153 is currently in the carriage and wagon workshop awaiting a new roof canvas. The canvas is ready to go, and we will fit it as soon as 153 can be moved to the maintenance shed. It will then be moved out to where 1305 is. This will free up valuable undercover space in C&W and give us a base to work from.



## HOW TO HELP

If you would like to volunteer then contact [Ben.wetherall@bluebell-railway.com](mailto:Ben.wetherall@bluebell-railway.com), follow the gang's progress on Facebook at [1305 Oxted Thumper Gang](#) or on Instagram [@1305s\\_thumpstagram](#). Or if you would like to donate to the only Bluebell Railway-owned ex BR diesel traction, then there is an option in the drop-down menu for 1305 in the [Bluebell Railway Trust's web page](#). Please make sure you add gift aid too to maximise your donation.

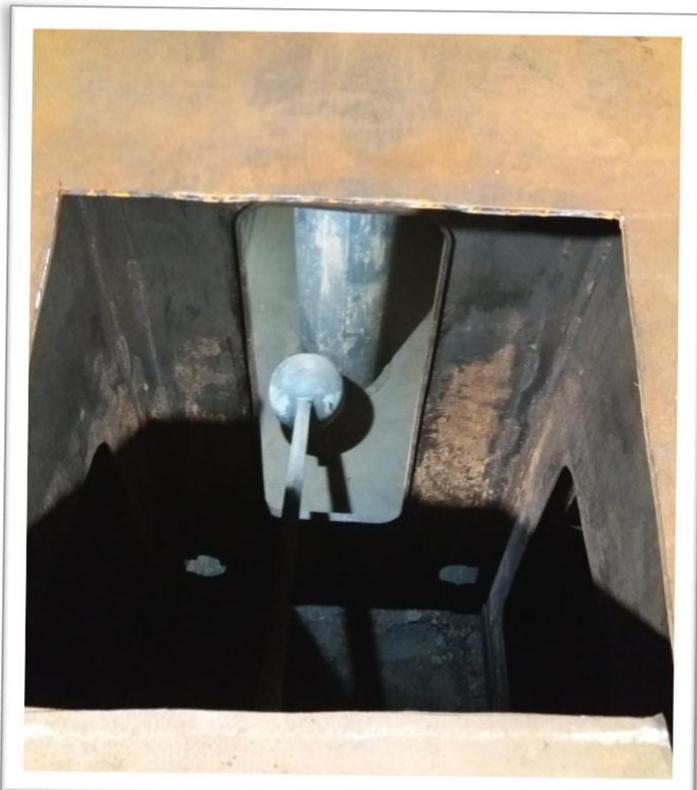
Many thanks and we hope to see you soon!

# Awake the Giant's Tender Steps Into Spring!

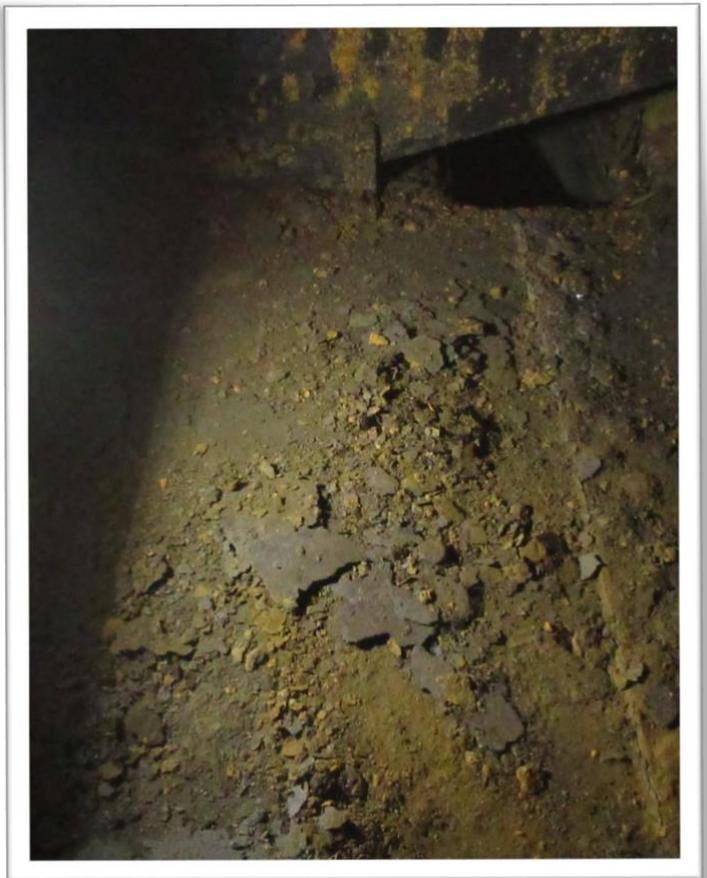
By Andy Taylor, project leader Photos Ken Upton, Phil Wilson, Martin Wilson and Martyn Payne

With the great news reported in December that No. 92240 is now safely back at Sheffield Park, initially in the milk dock on Platform 2 before being moved to the dock at the end of Platform 1. At the beginning of 2023 we had our first working party. There was a good turnout of members with work concentrating work on the tender. The first work was removing algae and lightly rubbing the tender sides down then applying an etched primer to any areas of exposed metal. This lovely green paint makes a firm bond by eating into the metal and giving a super strong hold and protection. The same was applied to the lockers in the cab. Other work undertaken was to make a second point of access into the water tank this which aids removing dust, rust and water scale from the tank. Around 20 angle grinder discs later, Martin finally made a neat hole!

**Below:** The cut out plate in the coal space in the tender looking into the water space. The float the



size of a beach ball is part of the system that gives an indication in the cab of the water level. As you would expect when working on this Giant of a locomotive, the tender and water space is vast. The water space floor was covered in rust scale and ... snails! These were thought to be either water snails that set up home in the tender or from birds that used the tender as a restaurant.



**Above:** Inside the water tank before the first working party started.

In early March, 92240 was moved undercover for the first time in many years. This enabled the locomotive to dry out and work to continue on the tender with around 10 members working around

the engine. Work continued in the water tank, being further cleared and ready to be rubbed down. The tank is in extremely good condition so we are working with a specialist paint company who have worked with Clan Line to ensure the tank will be fit for purpose for at least the next 30 years plus with minimal further work needed in the future.



**Above:** After cleaning. Even though the tender was new in the 1980s great care was taken to exactly copy the original drawings even to the point of the water scoop pipe and mushroom. No use on the Bluebell you would think, but think again! 2 x 3" pipes will run up this enabling a low-level fill point. This will mean the tender is easily filled in the yard from low level. Lastly concerning the tender the coal space has been completely cleaned out and is now ready for wire-brushing then the first coat of protective paint. 2 drains are at the front of the coal space one clearly seen in the middle of the first picture, then one nearer to the shovel plate this second one is completely blocked with coal dust so we are trying to clear this and get it back into operation. In the second photo you can see both drain pipes in the water space.

## WORK ON THE OUTSIDE OF THE LOCOMOTIVE

With much elbow grease, all running plate bolts have been loosened greased and placed back. This will aid the amount of time needed in the works to remove the cladding.

## 9 F CLUB!

The Bluebell Railway's 9F club have also joined our work recently and their most recent working party saw them working on the Bluebell's 9F, 92240, rubbing down and cleaning the footplate steps. Thank you to all the 9F club and we hope to see you all again very soon. To help fund the restoration of 92240, the team have a number of incomes alongside the monthly direct debits which bring a steady flow of income to the project. The team are ever expanding their merchandise range with thanks to Ken. Currently the team have bottle openers, pens, t shirts (adults and kids) as well as mugs, hoodies and there are more items soon to be produced!

## OTHER BITS AND BOBS

Team member Mark has also been working very hard behind the scenes on a new 'Awake the Giant' Gazette which will be an up-to-date newsletter which will be a subscription service. More details of this will be coming out in future articles. Apart from working parties, a vital way to attract new supporters both of interest and financially comes from events and this year the team will be attempting to attend all the major events including Flying Scotsman's visit, Bluebell on Parade, Branch Line Gala, Road Meets Rail, Steam Fair and many others. If you would like to be involved, then please contact the team using the contact details on page 16. Jobs the team does, apart from working on the locomotive, is working with Tom P on the stall, promoting the project around the Railway.

## PHOTO COMPETITION LAUNCH

The Awake the Giant's Photography Competition returns for a third year and these have been proven to be very, very popular. This year we will be introducing new categories for all ages. The categories for this are:



### Under 16s

- ➔ 'Bluebell at its Best' (Any photo of the Bluebell)
- ➔ 'Visitors and Galas' (Any photo representing Bluebell visiting locomotives and Galas)

### Over 16s

- ➔ 'Bluebell in Bloom' (Any photo of Bluebell's home fleet)
- ➔ 'Visitors and Galas' (Any photo representing Bluebell visiting locomotives and Galas)

### Both Age Groups

- ➔ 'Flying Scotsman Flies South' (Flying Scotsman at the Bluebell Railway 2023)

All details can be found on the 'Awake the Giant' page on the Bluebell Railway's website. The competition opens on the opening day of the 'Branch Line Gala' and is running and will close on 1 December 2023, with winners being announced in January 2024.

Tom Newble has been working behind the scenes to start planning the new publication about 92240 but has also started building an archive of 92240 at Barry scrapyards, arrival at the Bluebell Railway and working days. If you have any materials and are willing to add them to the archive and publication, please contact Tom Newble at [awakethegiant@outlook.com](mailto:awakethegiant@outlook.com).

### HOW TO HELP

If you are interested in joining the team, signing up to monthly donations or wanting to show your support to the overhaul and restoration of 92240 then please email Andy at [andy.taylor@bluebell-railway.com](mailto:andy.taylor@bluebell-railway.com) or [awakethegiant@outlook.com](mailto:awakethegiant@outlook.com).

# The Late Edward Wallis Photographic Collection

By Tony Hillman, assistant museum curator

The Bluebell Museum Archive and the Great Western Trust at Didcot were recently successful in a joint bid for the Edward Wallis set of glass plates. The late Edward Wallis was a signal engineer on the Southern Railway and an enthusiastic photographer of the subject who, in just over a decade, amassed a collection of around 1,500 quarter plate (glass black and white) images of railway scenes. Nearly all are of signals and infrastructure; there are few trains and those that do appear are usually only present by accident. The collection is dominated with Southern views, followed by Great Western and a lesser number of 'other' companies' topics. Many images are unique for the time, taken from the top of signal posts so giving a vantage point few others would have achieved let alone recorded.

Edward Wallis was born on 13 March 1898 in South London. He volunteered for service in World War One and when demobbed joined the LB&SCR in the S&T department at Horsham. Over the years he was promoted eventually becoming Lineman at Clapham Junction. He died, following a work-related accident at Guildford, on 12 April 1937, aged 39. The collection remained intact with the family until they decided to dispose of it by auction.

The Great Western part of the collection is to be held by the Great Western Trust at Didcot. The Bluebell Museum Archive will hold both the Southern and general part of the collection. This part of the collection will be made available on the Museum website in due course.

The collection was purchased with money donated to the Archive and income from the sale of photographs and images. Also, we thank the Carriage Shop at Horsted Keynes for their donation, helping to secure this valuable and important collection.

If you have a collection of photographic negatives that you think might be of interest to the Archive please get in touch, [photos@bluebell-railway-museum.co.uk](mailto:photos@bluebell-railway-museum.co.uk)

*Below left:  
Holmwood Station Signal Box. G. Grantham Signalman. 3 January 1923. Edward often included the signalman in his images, also recording their name. [EW 050]*

*Below right  
LSWR No. 460 at Bournemouth West Station. 31 March 1923. [EW 037]*



# New Additions to the Museum Website

By Chris Wilson, Bluebell Railway archive volunteer

This month we have added another 432 images to the Bluebell Railway Museum website bringing the total now available to 19,650. This batch contains photographs of stations and signal box locations beginning with the letter 'S' all taken by the late John Scrace.

Every photograph sale directly benefits the Photograph Archive giving us much needed funds to invest in conservation and storage materials.



**Above:** Sanderstead Station, platform view looking North on 1 July 1961.  
John Scrace [082982]



**Left:** Shoreham-by-Sea 'B' Signal Box and crossing looking North-east on 28 April 1969.  
John Scrace [083041]

*[The editor's first – and last – attempt at traditional "train spotting", in the sense of taking down numbers, took place from that very spot in the early '80s. A procession of slam door EMUs proved not the most riveting to collect numbers from, but the sequence of bells and signals and labour involved working the signalbox, with its big gate wheel, proved fascinating to a young boy. – Ed.]*

## VIEWING AND ORDERING

To view and order go to [www.bluebell-railway-museum.co.uk](http://www.bluebell-railway-museum.co.uk) and click on the Archive tab. There are various searching methods, including by locomotive number or class and location. The content key search allows you to see all the images of a particular type, for example, all the images taken of Fenchurch. Use the New key to see all the latest images including those mentioned and shown here and the Nearly New key to see what we added last month.

# On This Day, 14 April

By Tony Hillman, assistant museum curator

*Three pictures from the Bluebell Photographic Archive taken on 14 April. Thanks to Martin Elms, John Creed, Richard Peirce, Chris Sutton, Roger Merry-Price and Chris Wilson for finding the pictures and providing the notes.*



On 14 April 1952, Easter Monday, photographer J J Smith began the day just south of Eridge Station. Here he recorded D1 Class 31505 on the 9.18am Tunbridge Wells West to Brighton train; the head code disc shows the working is part of Tonbridge locomotive diagram 294. The locomotive was built at Ashford for the SECR as a Class D express engine in July 1907 and was first based at Dover. Post-nationalisation, having been largely relegated to secondary duties, these locos often appeared on the ex-LBSCR lines between Tunbridge Wells West and Brighton.

After the creation of the Southern Railway in 1923, the CME, R E L Maunsell, rebuilt 21 Ds to improve their performance and reclassified them as D1. This included the above engine in July 1927, and it retained the modifications until withdrawal at the end of September

1961. The carriages were also built by the SECR. The one nearest the camera is known as a 'birdcage' coach due to the raised lookout for the guard visible in the picture.

Eridge was opened in 1868 on the line linking Brighton with Tunbridge Wells West via Uckfield. It became a junction in 1880 when the connection via Hailsham to Eastbourne, which became known as the "Cuckoo" line, was opened. In 1914 a spur to the north towards Ashurst Junction was brought into use, removing the need for trains from London to Eridge to reverse at Groombridge.

By the early 1950s the station was being served by about 4 to 5 trains a day from London; these often divided into separate portions for Brighton and Eastbourne lines. There were also around 16 trains a

day from the Tunbridge Wells West direction, of which just over half headed towards Brighton and the rest to Eastbourne.

The Cuckoo line closed in 1965 and the line to Tunbridge Wells West went in 1985, although the latter

has been subsequently re-opened back to Eridge as the Spa Valley Railway. Southern now provide an hourly service from Eridge to London and Uckfield.

*Photo: John J Smith [42843]*



It being Easter Monday, a Special Service was in operation on the Central Section. That day there were eleven scheduled departures from Tunbridge Wells West to East Grinstead (or beyond), of which one went to Oxted, two to Victoria and three to London Bridge. This is the fifth Up train of that day, the 11.30am to Three Bridges photographed just west of Ashurst Junction. The motive power is SECR Class H 0-4-4T No. 31517 allocated to Tunbridge Wells West shed (75F). The rolling stock is a SECR 3 car Birdcage set.

At that time all of the passenger trains between the above locations were diagrammed for conventional three car sets, none of the trains then being formed of push-pull stock. All of this changed from the summer of 1955. The new timetable saw a radical revision of services with the old timetable replaced by interval services over much of the 'Oxted line' system. The result was a large increase in the use of push-pull trains,

particularly between Three Bridges and Tunbridge Wells West, with PP fitted locomotives such as the LSWR M7s being drafted in to assist.

The SECR H Class was a Harry Wainwright design, No. 31517 being built at Ashford Works in January 1910, and being fitted for push-pull working in December 1949. It was withdrawn in May 1961 having spent the last six years of its life based at Tonbridge shed (74D). The line between Three Bridges and Ashurst Junction closed from 2 January 1967 whilst the section between there and Groombridge closed from 6 January 1969. No. 31517 was scrapped after withdrawal, but classmate No.(31)263 is preserved on the Bluebell, and is currently undergoing a ten-yearly overhaul.

*Photo: John J Smith [42846]*



On Thursday 14 April 1960 Redhill's loco shed is home to N Class 2-6-0s 31861 and 31872 from its own allocation of 21 engines. This comprised sixteen N Class 2-6-0s for passenger and freight, three S15 Class 4-6-0s for heavy freight and two C2X Class 0-6-0s for shunting and trip freights, although much of this latter work was now handled by 0-6-0 diesel shunters. Most of the Redhill shed workings were on the Reading – Redhill – Tonbridge line, with some trains running on beyond Tonbridge. Redhill was the only point on the route where reversal was necessary, increasing the number of engines requiring servicing.

The South Eastern Railway board authorised the construction of an engine shed at Redhill on 23 September 1852 and it duly opened in May 1853. It was located in the fork of the Tonbridge and Brighton lines, though the turntable and coaling stage were located some way away near the station. In the 1880s a new 45 ft turntable was provided at the shed. In 1924 the Southern Railway approved plans for a new shed building, a

ramped coaling stage and another new 65 ft turntable. Most of the works were completed in 1928, apart from the plan for a new shed building which was abandoned in 1930. The old shed soldiered on until 1950 when the arched entrances and tiled gable roof were replaced by steel and asbestos sheeting.

From 1960 there were a number of significant changes. First the through freights and a few passenger trains were taken over by D65xx diesels. Then from 4 January 1965 the majority of the remaining steam workings were taken over by the "Tadpole" DEMUs. After that date there was still steam working from Redhill Shed but mainly using BR Standard 2-6-4Ts on the Cuckoo and Three Bridges – East Grinstead lines, until the former closed to passengers between Redgate Mill Junction and Hailsham on 14 June 1965. This left only diesels at Redhill until the shed finally closed on 4 January 1966; it was demolished c.1968.

*Photo: John Scrace [82854]*

# Feedback

## THAT METROLAND DOOR HANDLE

In the last issue of *The Bluebell Times*, (BT43, page 17) we noted the engraved door handle visible in the film "Metro-Land", but were uncertain of its provenance. Reader Peter Baughan wrote to say:

“ With respect to the uncertainty of the origin of the Metropolitan Railway door lock, I can advise that I was very pleased to be able to loan this door lock to the producer having been given it by my father-in-law Percy Silverlock, the Depot Engineer at London Underground's Neasden Depot. As a result I was invited to the private showing of the 'Metro-land' documentary film, prior to release, with John Betjeman in attendance. ”

## LAST WORD ON EMBLEMS!

Malcolm Peakman wrote to say:

“ Your update on reverse crests is still a little wide of the mark, Willie Yeadon in his histories of LNER locomotives explains what happened, briefly the Railway received approval for the LH facing crest, but unaware of the rules followed the precedent of the BR emblem and ordered crests to face forward on each side of the locomotive. When a couple of years later the College of Heralds discovered the unauthorised crest the College ordered BR to cease and desist. Of course BR had stocks of the right facing crests and used them up. So they were not that rare around the late 1950s but would start to disappear in the 1960s. By the way they were not Totems.

On a similar issue the double arrow symbol was used on ships' funnels with the upper arrow facing to the left as the rules of the sea apparently demand that such emblems must be "handed" to face forward (as viewed on a flag). ”

Meanwhile, Peter James pointed out another "wrong-way" emblem – on one of the Bluebell's own locos!

“ I've just been reading the latest excellent *Bluebell Times*. In it Malcolm Taylor suggests that "it would be fun if the wrong emblem could be reproduced in preservation". I think the Bluebell achieved something similar to this 40 years ago when the Adams Tank was first repainted in lined BR black. The early BR lion and wheel should always face forward regardless of which side it is on. But this did not happen on 30583's left hand side. The enclosed picture, taken on 7 May 1983, shows the error. Not so much the wrong emblem, rather the right one the wrong way round. ”



# Job Vacancies

## ROLLING STOCK DIRECTOR

As a plc Board member, the Rolling Stock Director has professional and technical responsibility for the company's rolling stock fleet and for the strategic direction of the department.

The Rolling Stock Director delegates day to day management of the fleet to the C&W Works Manager, through the Chief Operating Officer.

This is a volunteer post that carries no remuneration or specific hours of duty. However, the successful applicant will require sufficient time and flexibility to effectively undertake this role and have the appropriate competences to meet the professional requirements of the post.

## COMMERCIAL & RETAIL DIRECTOR

The successful applicant will be responsible for providing the strategic direction for the commercial, marketing and retail to expand the commercial business development particularly in the areas of event management, business, and commercial planning as the means to win new business, to explore new avenues of activity and to seek out opportunities to help the Bluebell PLC develop and grow.

The Commercial & Retail Director delegates day to day management of the department to the Chief Operating Officer.

This is a volunteer post that carries no remuneration or specific hours of duty. However, the successful applicant will require sufficient time and flexibility to effectively undertake this role and have the appropriate competences to meet the professional requirements of the post.

## SAFETY AND ASSURANCE DIRECTOR

As a plc Board member, the Safety and Assurance Director has professional responsibility for ensuring implementation of the requirements of the safety management system across the railway and for the strategic direction of the department.

A key function of the role is to Chair the Bluebell operating and safety review group and also to act as lead contact with regulatory authorities.

The Safety Director delegates day-to-day management of the department to the Safety Manager.

This is a volunteer post that carries no remuneration or specific hours of duty. However, the successful applicant will require sufficient time and flexibility to effectively undertake this role and have the appropriate technical competences to meet the professional requirements of the post.

## CDM REGULATIONS COMPLIANCE MANAGER (VOLUNTARY POST)

The successful applicant will be responsible for undertaking the role of Principal Designer and Principal Contractor on various projects across the railway.

It is essential that the post holder has current construction industry experience under the CDM Regulations 2015 and railway industry knowledge is preferable.

This post would suit someone planning on leaving the construction industry, but keen to still be involved in construction project on a part time or ad hoc basis.

This is a volunteer post that carries no remuneration or specific hours of duty. However, the successful applicant will require sufficient time and flexibility to effectively undertake this role and have the appropriate competences to meet the professional requirements of the post.

## HOW TO APPLY



If you believe you have the right qualifications and experience for any of these roles, please send your CV to [lisa.boyle@bluebell-railway.com](mailto:lisa.boyle@bluebell-railway.com)



Photo: Paul Auckland

# The Bluebell Times

*A Newsletter for  
Bluebell Railway  
Members, Staff and  
Supporters*

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feedback about this issue or  
suggestions for future articles  
or features, contact:*

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Tom James*

*[bluebelltimes@bluebell-railway.com](mailto:bluebelltimes@bluebell-railway.com)*

## Tail Lamp

If you've enjoyed this issue of *The Bluebell Times*, feel free to pass it on to other people you think might also want to read it.

To find out when the next issue is out and for other updates about the Bluebell Railway, check our [website](#) or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

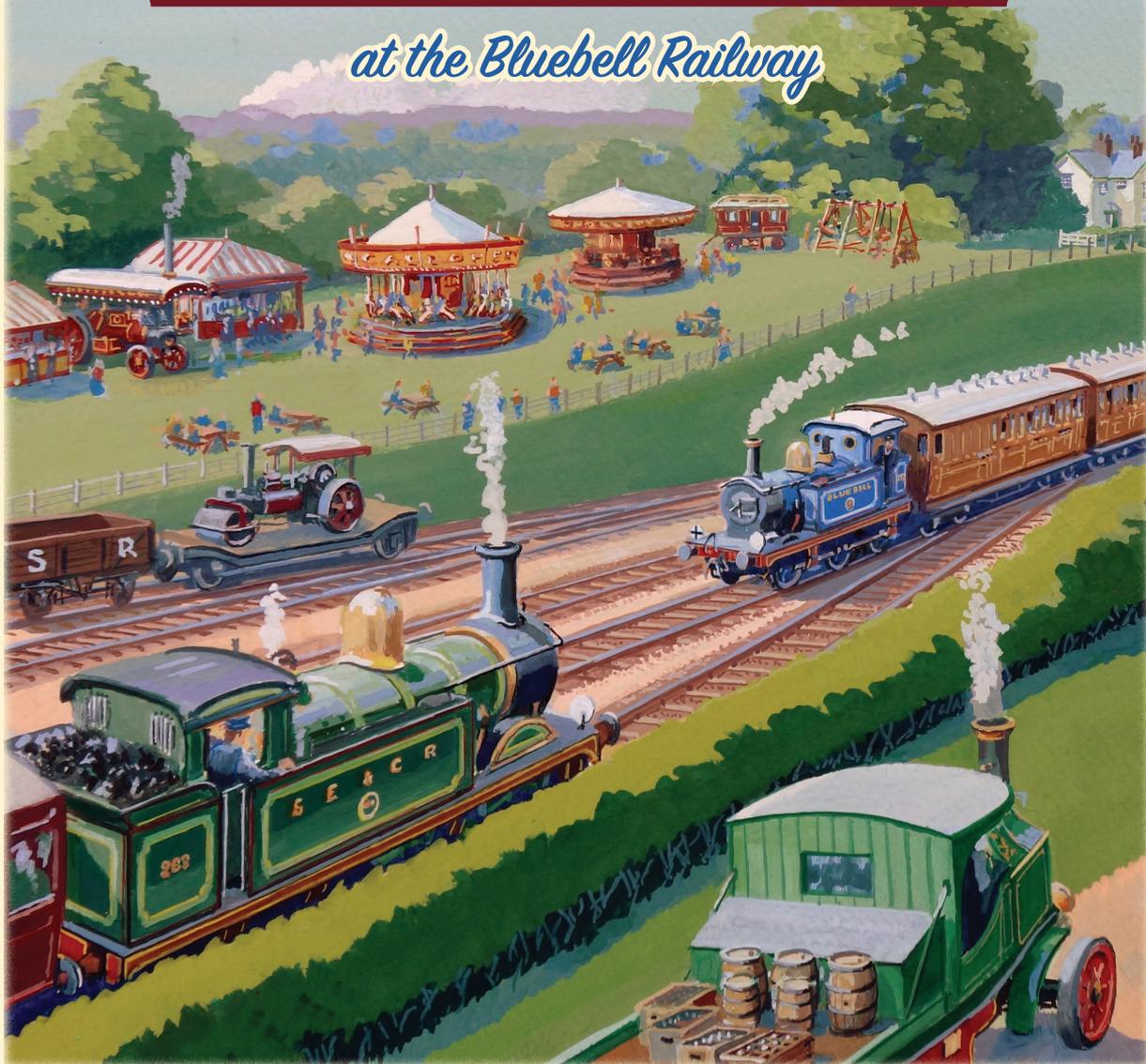
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