



Newsletter 13<sup>th</sup> July 2007  
Issue 10

# Outside the Box

St Albans Signal Box Preservation Trust  
[www.sigbox.co.uk](http://www.sigbox.co.uk)



## Good news:

- It's all happening
- Builders
- AGM

## It's all happening

Welcome to the tenth newsletter of the Trust. Things are moving on apace and we can see light at the end of the tunnel. (No it's not a train coming!)

The 120 'edible hedge' plants were planted in just a few hours and we're looking forward to the fruits of our labours next year.

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Groundworks Hertfordshire Ltd have now completed their phase of the project, and local builders Richardsons have started their work on the structure.

The 'lamp hut' has been restored next to the signal box (it can be seen in the photo on the website taken in 1974 between the signal and the box). It will be used for storage, but no paraffin lamps as they pose a fire hazard!

Our grateful thanks again go to all the willing helpers who have attended working days, and adhoc 'help' days. Without their efforts it would have been impossible to achieve so much.

The pleas for a newsletter editor have been heard and hopefully the next one won't take so long to appear. Many thanks to Richard!

The garden has been planted with over 200 shrubs and trees, and the new lawn is growing well in all the rain.

Check the website at [www.sigbox.co.uk](http://www.sigbox.co.uk)

## Builders

Groundworks Hertfordshire Ltd. were appointed to level the gardens, dig up the concrete, lay the paths, replace the fence, and open the road access. They have also shored up the embankment with railway sleepers and built the disabled access ramp. This work is now completed to a high standard – all on time and within budget. See the photo at the top of this page.

## AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the Trust was held on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2007. The meeting was told of progress and the healthy grant funding that we have received. New Trustees were voted in, and votes of thanks made to all the volunteers who have achieved so much.

## BBQ

We will be having a Barbecue on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> August at the signal box. From 12am till 5pm or longer if it's a balmy evening! All members and friends are welcome so please let us know if you are coming, so that we can organise the catering.

Local builders, Richardsons of Sleepshyde, have now started on the box itself. Network Rail have approved the work and preliminary foundation excavations started. Some of the rotten wood has already been replaced.



*We still need some of these !  
and BR block instruments*

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Access path – before and after



## Heritage Open Days

Heritage open days are on the weekend of 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> September 2007. Last year they were a huge success. We had 310 visitors and although entry was free we raised over £500 for the Trust's funds.

We want to be just as successful this year and once again are calling on volunteers to help. An hour or two on either Saturday or Sunday would be much appreciated. The tasks are similar to last year – meeting and greeting, demonstrating the block instruments, refreshments, selling the unique signal box items, etc. Please let us know when you can help.

We would also like ideas for money raising schemes! If you can organise something that is signal box / railway related and would interest our visitors, please let us know.

## Grants

The Railway Heritage Trust have kindly extended our Grant deadline to March 2008. We explained the delays were not of our making and they agreed with us that safety was more important than speed in getting the work done.

The Heritage Lottery Fund have also agreed an extension to January 2008.

## Private Owner Wagons

We would like to commission our own limited edition model wagons – does anyone know of an old St Albans private owner livery we could use?

## From SNCF Society Journal Number 121, March 2006

by Andy Hart

Roses - of lime juice fame - had a franchise to bottle and distribute Dubonnet in the UK. Their plant in Grosvenor Road, St Albans, had no dedicated rail connection, but happened to back on to the down carriage sidings at the south end of the station on the Midland Main Line. Once the coaches stabled overnight had been taken out for



Jinty 47261 – (Howard Green)

## Frame Restoration

Great strides are being made in the restoration of the lever frame. Phil and Peter have spent many hours stripping down, sanding, oiling, cleaning, and repairing the 'tumbler' frame. You can see some of the 'bits left over' in the photo! (I think these are actually awaiting cleaning).

Our friends at the Midland Railway Centre in Butterly have kindly helped us out with spares for the frame, and these impossible to obtain items will be put to good use.

## Lamp Hut

The lamp hut seen in the 1974 photographs has been resurfaced with new corrugated iron to provide some shelter as building work is carried out. It can be seen in the photo on the left.

## Working days

The working days have been well attended but more helpers are always welcome. Most of the heavy gardening work has been completed, with just a little light weeding now and again.

The building work has only just started on the box itself, but if you want to help with painting and other DIY tasks just let us know!

We will soon need regular help with opening the box to the public – this is the easy bit! If you'd like to be the resident signaller and welcome the public once a month, or more, please volunteer!

the day's duties, the tank wagon was shunted to the end of the siding nearest the works and emptied into the bottling factory by a flexible pipe. It presumably had to be removed before the coaches returned to the siding for the night, and the photo shows 'Jinty' 47261 pulling the empty wagon out of the siding, past St Albans South signal box.