



Let there be (more) light!



Sometime during 1977 whilst the City station redevelopment work was underway, member Robin Hogg recorded (left) the departure on the back of a truck of two Midland Railway lampposts saved by local enthusiasts. One for many years graced the front of the erstwhile Harpenden Railway Museum but for some time now has stood beside the entrance to the signal box garden. The other one went to another member's garden where it was lovingly displayed. The Trust has been very fortunate to have recently had this second lamppost donated thus reuniting it with its original companion and returning it (almost) to its original position in St Albans. The Trust's policy of rarely saying 'no' to items offered to us continues to pay dividends with artefacts being added to on a regular basis. Whilst these sometimes cause some head scratching to find places to put and display them they undoubtedly allow us to keep having new items on show to maintain interest for our visitors a number of whom are regular returners.

Richard Kirk

Chairman's Words

This October we had a very successful school visit, sadly not from one of our local schools but from Kingsmoor Lower School in Flitwick. The visit was organised through the Bedford to St Albans Community Rail Partnership (CRP) by Andy Buckley from the CRP and Alister Barclay from Bedfords Sustrans.

The fifteen pupils were met at school by two Thameslink Rail Enforcement Officers (Thameslink's own police force) and escorted to Flitwick Station where they were shown how to purchase tickets and given a briefing about being safe on the platform, stand behind the yellow line. On the train ride to St Albans they were given an activity to keep them occupied and were met on their arrival at St Albans by the Station Manager Harsitt Chandak and shown the new works going on at the station. On arrival at the signal box we divided them into three groups and gave them the usual tour but with the added bonus of a British Transport Police Incident Car in the car park to climb all over and with a range of police helmets and equipment for the children to try. After lunch in the box the children returned to the station and onward to school still with their police escort. They were aged between six and nine and for some amazingly this was their first time on a train or near a railway.

This was the first of a number of planned visits to the box from children in the Bedford area and helps us fulfil an early aspiration to involve schools in the signal box. My grateful thank to John T for organising the visit from our side and to John W, Jim, Peter and Martin who entertained the children so well.

As the winter approaches and the box reduces its open days we try to step up some of the maintenance tasks which having visitors preclude so don't forget to pop along on Wednesday afternoons and help us keep the box and grounds in their usual pristine condition.

Tony Furse



Winners of the 2008 St Albans Civic Society Award



Winners of the 2010 Invensys Rail Signalling Award (Structures)



Winners of the 2017 Mayor of St Alban's Recognition Award

Membership Matters

Dates for your Diary

Christmas Party !! There will be a Christmas Party in the Signal Box on Saturday 14th December from 7.00pm. Drinks and nibbles will be served, please do come along and bring the family. Please let Richard Kirk know if you are coming - contact details below.

Open Days coming up are November 10th, December 8th and January 12th. Please contact Tony Furse or any of the other Trustees if you can help on any of these occasions.

Model Railway Exhibition once again the Trust will be taking the information stand to the Chiltern Model Railway Exhibition in Stevenage Leisure Centre on 11th and 12th of January. Please contact John Webb if you are able to help.



Left: an archive photograph kindly supplied to us by railway author and visitor to the box Paul Shannon. It was taken on 17th September 1979 and shows Class 25 No. 25277 on the up fast line passing Napsbury 'box and the site of the old station with an electrification construction train. New signals had been installed ready to be brought into use on 2nd December 1979. Straightening out of the up slow line had to wait until the 'box was demolished, the track could then be slewed to run under the signal gantry.



Above left: the first section of the rail chairs display alongside the fence in front of the box; the old ballast has been removed to the area around the points at the upper north end and protective material has been put down before the chippings with the chairs on top; the chairs will be placed in alphabetical order with a board on the fence identifying the railway companies from their initials. Above right: members of the Bricket Wood Station Heritage Trust joined us for the recent Heritage Open Weekend and one of our members provided totems from St Albans Abbey, Bricket Wood and Watford Junction stations and the signal box board from Bricket Wood for them to add to their display.

Progress at the 'box

Our big news this issue is the large number of artefacts both donated to and purchased by the Trust from Rodney Marshall, one of our Members, who has been downsizing his large collection of railwayana. These include a sizeable number of railchairs, a Midland lamppost, two boundary markers, a fog repeater signal, tunnel milepost and several other signs. When erected/hung these will form a substantial increase in our collection. We are indebted to Rodney for his kindness and generosity, and Jim and his trailer and others for the transportation. Rodney has put in many hours at the 'box in a whole range of tasks using his many talents and skills. He and Teresa are considering a house move but Rodney still intends continuing to offer his services to the 'box.

Our Hudson Kappa quarry waggon, now on the points rails, has had its bucket placed on top, and looks resplendent with an explanatory information card at its foot. The summer warm weather has enabled much re-painting by Peter, Martin and others, including our level crossing gates, shed, coffin carrier and ground frames. The shed and our Buffet have had a 'spring clean' and all our external signs were treated to a wash down. Michael has finished placing worktops on our cabinets in the Buffet and has erected a serving table – so the Buffet is now complete.

We have started to remove the ballast from under the fence in front of the 'box; digging down to place geotec anti-weed matting; and fill the whole strip with 10mm gravel, before placing Rodney's railchairs end-to-end on it as a display. The reclaimed ballast will be used around the points. We also intend to give more stability to the model railway, as its wooden base shifts in various temperatures and humidities. This will be done by removing the wood and underpinning the tracks with breeze blocks.

Gardening continues as ever, and we have been blessed by additional help this year from Les and new member, Caroline, as well as our regulars. The new Station entrance off Platform 4 and other upgrading work progresses..

John Telford

A selection of photographs taken during the recent school visit referred to by Tony in his notes



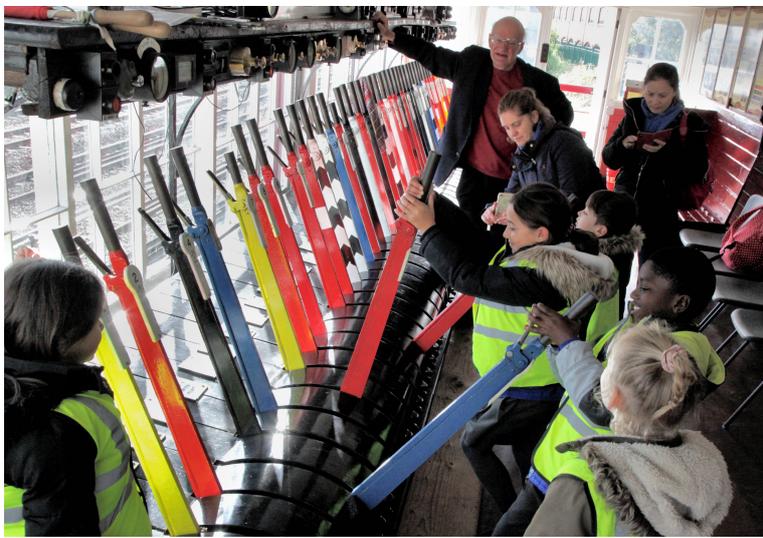
The children started their excursion from Flitwick station accompanied by teachers and Thameslink PCSOs. Travelling first class they were entertained on their journey to St Albans City station.



On arrival at City station the children were met by the station manager, given a safety talk and shown around the station before walking to the signal box.



Tony Furse greeted them at the 'box, gave them our usual safety instructions and then divided them into group to go around the garden and 'box



All aspects of the signal box and garden displays were explained and demonstrated to the children.



British Transport Police provided one of their rapid response vehicles and officers and gave the children the opportunity to try out helmets and shields as well as sitting in the patrol car and sounding the sirens!



All too soon it was time for them to head of back to the station and travel home to Flitwick