



# Outside the Box

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



The lever frame looking superb during the Heritage Open Weekend in September

## What a wonderful sight!

As Keith describes below the recent Heritage Open Weekend was a success. The box looked magnificent both inside and out and it was a great pleasure to see so many people wanting to see what we had achieved. There were an amazing number of past and present railway men many of whom had had working experiences in and around the box. The comments from the visitors were very favourable and showed how much the efforts of the Trust and its members are appreciated by the people of St Albans and elsewhere. So much has been achieved since the first meetings of the local residents back in 2002 not least in the restoration of the lever frame and interior of the box as the photograph alongside shows. There is work still to do but we can be proud of what has done so far.

Richard Kirk



The donated distant signal sited in the garden

## Chairman's Words

### Heritage Open Days a huge success.

With bright sunshine reflecting off the rhubarb and custard paintwork we broke our attendance records for Heritage Open Days. 1080 visitors came to see the box, the demo's, and to drink tea. The huge turnout resulted in many pages of very positive feedback and a very healthy £1,600 profit from our sales of refreshments and signal box related items. Many thanks to all of the volunteers that helped over the weekend, it was a splendid joint effort that received much public acclaim. We seem to be appreciated!

### Visits to other signal boxes.

We have been offered a visit to view 3 signal boxes that have working simulators etc in a back garden in Stevenage. Please let me know by email if you are interested and I'll get it organised. Some of us have had the pleasure of visiting Romsey signal box too. This is a must if you haven't been. They have a garden and working ground frame, signals, and level crossing, and a very comfortable restored box. Again a group visit can be arranged just let me know.

### Signalling items.

Many thanks to Simon of Network Rail for donating the signal you can see in the garden (see photograph opposite) and the banner repeater downstairs. We have also been donated and lent other items for the museum room – including both name boards from 'St Albans North' signal box (see page 2 for a piece about this box). We have also received a tape recording of the station announcer from 1979. (Did the announcers really all sound like the Queen?)

If you have any items that you think need a new home, where a greater audience can admire them – please let us know.

### Grand Opening.

The date has still not been fixed I'm afraid. This is due to the work inside taking a little longer than expected. However the lino has now arrived from Germany and we can get a lot done over the winter with the aim of opening properly in spring 2009. Watch this space!

Keith Webster



Open Weekend visitors crowded into the museum room to look at the exhibits and the steam model railway





The Midland Railway lamp post that originally stood in the old St Albans station forecourt



A visitor tries his hand at the lever frame!



Another ex-Midland Railway signal box in course of restoration! This one is at Barrow Hill Roundhouse, dates from 1897 and was originally at Pinxton.

## Member's day

We are holding a members only (+ families) open afternoon on 6<sup>th</sup> December from 1-5pm. There will be signalling displays, mince pies, tea, coffee and souvenirs. Come and meet the Trustees and see how the restoration has progressed. Entry is free.

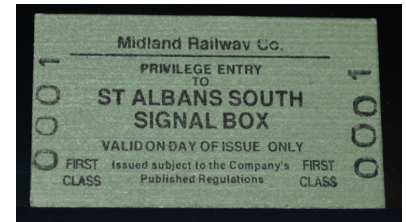
## Group visits

We have had a number of groups visiting the box and then crossing the road to the Constitutional Club for drinks and a buffet meal. These have been very popular and if you wish to arrange a group visit, please email us or contact John Telford.

## Gifts

A free greetings card for your use is enclosed with this newsletter – there are many more available for you to purchase! Also available are specially commissioned model railway wagons ( see the Trust website for details) and signal box mugs. An order form is enclosed.

Get your Christmas cards and presents early!



Souvenir tickets were issued to Open Weekend visitors

## The St Albans Branch of the Locomotive Club of Great Britain

The Locomotive Club of Great Britain (LCGB) is one of the most well known national organisations for railway enthusiasts. It was founded as long ago as 1949, initially to cater for people interested in number taking and photography, before evolving into the society that is seen today; one that caters for the serious study of railways in general. Over the years a number of branches have been set up. At the present time there are nine including St Albans.

The Branch meets at the United Reform Church in Chiswell Green on the second Thursday of every month from September to May. Each meeting consisting of a talk or film show on a railway related matter.

The forthcoming programme includes talks on the refurbishment of St Pancras Station, the building of the A1 steam locomotive 'Tornado' and a slide show of British steam from 1964 to 1968.

Apart from the meetings, members receive the LCGB's magazine 'Bulletin', are able to take part in visits to places of railway interest at home and abroad and can enter the annual photographic competition.

Trust members are invited to attend St Albans branch meetings. For a £2 entry fee you will be given a warm welcome, an evening's entertainment and a half-time drink and biscuit!

For further details please contact Murray Eckett the branch Publicity Officer on 01442 251540 (evenings only) or go to the Society's website [www.lcgb.org.uk](http://www.lcgb.org.uk).

## St Albans Other Signal Boxes

### No.1 St Albans North



Howard Green's picture taken on 27th September 1958 shows ex Midland Railway Class 3F 0-6-0 No.43428 of Bedford shed leaving St Albans North sidings and passing in front of the North box. The box was 595 yards from the South box and was situated on the down side of the main line just north of Hatfield Road bridge. It controlled entry/exit into the north sidings (now the station car park and main entrance) and also to a carriage siding between the up main and down slow lines that was sited through the small arch in Hatfield Road bridge still existing today. The box also controlled the up home signals just north of the York Road footbridge and the down starting signals situated between the York Road and Jennings Road footbridges. The signal box was set into the down embankment and its position can still be located. Access was via a gate, a set of steps and a path along the top of the embankment from the Hatfield Road overbridge. The first box on the site was opened in the 1870s whilst the one in the picture was the second replacement and dates from 1906. St Albans North closed on 20 December 1970 and its duties were taken over by St Albans South.

St Albans Signal Box Preservation Trust is a company limited by guarantee registered in England No.4653488.

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