

OUTSIDE



THE BOX

Newsletter February 2018 Issue 51



2018 an anniversary year

As Tony notes below, this year sees a number of anniversaries. In addition to those he highlights the Trust has one of its own. Heritage Open Weekend in September will mark 10 years of regular opening to the public. The first of our numbered tickets was issued in September 2008 and later this year we expect to welcome our 20,000th official visitor. Much has been achieved in this post-restoration period. We continue to receive new acquisitions and carry out regular maintenance of our displays to give our visitors an interesting experience.

Richard Kirk

James and Percy fight it out at Buddleia Crossing! The new inner circuit of the garden railway is up and running and proved to be a hit at January's open day.

Chairman's Words

A Happy New Year to you all.

This year, 2018, sees the 150th anniversary of the building by the Midland Railway of the London Extension from Bedford to St Pancras and as a result the construction of the railway through St Albans. We will celebrate this during Heritage Open Weekend on the 8th & 9th September with additional displays of photographs, model engines and other artefacts. There have already been celebrations at St Pancras and our good friends at Elstree and Borehamwood Museum have an excellent display within the museum which is well worth a visit. Spot the items on loan from the box!

Also this year will see the commemoration of the end of World War One. The Trust wants to mark this occasion by putting up a memorial to the eleven Midland Railway men of St Albans who did not return at the end of the conflict. It has been quite a puzzle to find their names including going back to look at the Midland Railway publication of 1921 prior to the erection of the Midland Railway Memorial at Derby, the 1911 census, The Midland Railway Study Centre records and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. St Albans uniquely has street memorials that list the fallen from streets and factories around the city but none from the railway so hopefully this will fill a gap. My grateful thanks to all who have worked on this project.

The English Tourist Board *Big Weekend* falls this year one weekend before Easter which nearly caught us out as when we agreed originally to take part in this weekend it was supposed to always be two weekends before Easter. Luckily it was spotted in time and arrangements are well under way for a fun weekend so why not come and join us and take part in showing off our fantastic signal box.

See you at the AGM

Tony Furse

Elstree & Borehamwood Museum Presents:

150
Years of Rail

"All Change!"

An exhibition to celebrate the coming of rail to Elstree & Borehamwood

23rd January - 21st July 2018

Elstree & Borehamwood Museum (2nd floor)
96 Shenley Rd,
Borehamwood, Herts
Admission free

**From the past
...into the future!**

First IMPRESSIONS
Elstree & Borehamwood Museum
Heritage Lottery Fund
HERTS&NE

Opening hours: Tues to Thurs 12- 6pm / Sat 10am- 3pm
Tel: 01442 454888 (during opening hours) for further details
www.elstree-museum.org.uk Registered Charity No:1157770

Details of the exhibition at Elstree and Borehamwood Museum referred to by Tony. Well worth a visit!



Winners of the 2008 St Albans Civic Society Award



Winners of the 2010 Invensys Rail Signalling Award (Structures)

Newsletter produced by Richard Kirk. Please send items for inclusion to richardnkirk@hotmail.co.uk or contact me on 01727 860047



4-6-0 Black 5 44822 has just passed St Albans South on its way to St Pancras on 18 June 1961. The photograph was taken by Peter Bland and is reproduced courtesy of Bryan Cross. Bryan will be showing some of his collection of London Extension images at the end of the Trust AGM on 20th March.



The latest artefact acquisition has been the airhorns and front grill from scrapped Eurostar unit 3103. The set was disposed of at the end of November 2017 having been towed to Kingsbury by Class 66 No.66778 'Darius Cheskin'.

Membership Matters

Sadly Yvonne Bailey, one of our members, has recently passed away. Yvonne was a resident of Ridgmont Road and a founder member of the Trust and she was a stalwart supporter and helper in the early days and had continued to support the Trust over the years. She will be missed.

Subs for 2018 now due

We are more than happy (indeed prefer) for subs to be paid directly into the sigbox bank account. Details are:

Metro Bank

Sort Code: 23-05-80

Account: 17746944

Reference: Your surname, First name (important so we know who's paid!)

If you wish to set up a standing order please include the above info (particularly the reference) and a payment date of 2nd February. I would be grateful if you would let me know. Alternatively I can send you a standing order instruction form.

Of course we are also happy to continue receiving cheques and cash!

Annual General Meeting

The AGM documents have been sent with this newsletter. Please let me know if you are planning to attend so we can cater for the correct numbers.

Signal Box 'Uniform'

A REMINDER – the following appeared in the last Newsletter.

Please let me know if you wish to purchase a signal box 'uniform' of a polo shirt and/or sweatshirt.

Both are embroidered with the signal box logo.

She will need to know the size – S, M, L, XXL etc. Please refer to Engelbert Strauss website for sizing details.

Price is dependant on the size of the order (items are sold to you at cost) but is likely to be in the region of £20 per polo shirt and £30 per sweatshirt.

The quality is very good and the item will last for years.

Mary Webster

STEAM PASSED THE BOX

The Railway Touring Company are due to run one of their Ealing to York specials on Saturday 3rd March. In charge should be Britannia 4-6-2 70013 'Oliver Cromwell' on its last main line run for some time. Booked to call at St Albans at 7.34am (diesel return).

Progress at the 'box

The New Year has seen a continuance of maintenance in the garden. Following the big clear-down it's now clearing leaves, weeding, and since Tony has successfully completed the double-tracking of the model railway, moving and trimming some of the plants, so children retain a constant and safe view of our up and down trains. The original single layout was a real draw for delighted children and, judging by the response to our first double track Open Day in 2018, is going to see an even bigger success! We have also begun to place some small plants and bushes in the centre of the tracks and rocks near the new bridge. As the plants grow it will allow the trains to disappear out of sight and reappear elsewhere to delight our younger visitors even more.

As mentioned previously, a number of our garden artefacts of some years now, are feeling the effects of the weather, so a good deal of refurbishing has become necessary. The Midland ground-frame is now sitting on a new wooden base; the upper gradient post and its descriptive letters and numbers have been cleaned and re-painted by Peter; the upper concrete apron was jet-washed by Rodney; and the link from the LNWR ground-frame to the lawn signal placed on a new wooden base. Meanwhile David has de-mossed the lawn and John W has completed creosoting the outside of our boundary fence. He will start smelling of the stuff again when he sprays the inside!

We are working on restoring the 'St. Albans South' display at the end of the lawn, and recognising the 150th anniversary of the Midland coming to St. Albans by replacing it with an 'MR 150' for HOD. John W has completed our second bell tapper hands-on display, and also linked up two block instruments. 'Hands-on' displays for our visitors remain an essential element of our offering. Michael has put some doors on the bottom centre of the big cupboard downstairs, to take our back-up merchandising.

So, we've been hard at it, and in case you feel the urge to join us, bring your own mug, as we volunteers have committed not to use non-recyclable paper cups, as our small effort to save the planet.

John Telford