



Space and Time!

One we are getting short of the other we almost have too much at present! What do I mean? Well, with all the recent and potential donations and acquisitions we are quickly running out of space both in the museum area and the garden. Our policy of not turning down suitable items offered to us does sometimes cause head scratching as to where to put things. On the other-hand it does mean that there are plenty of new sights for returning visitors. As to time, it could be argued that we have more than enough at present what with no visitors to prepare for and not much growing in the garden. However, as John identifies below there is still plenty to do in anticipation of a return to regular openings, hopefully, sometime next Spring. In the meantime I hope you are all able to enjoy a good Christmas as we look forward to a better 2021.

Richard Kirk

Chairman's Words

You have all received an invitation from Richard to purchase the DVD 'Railways of Hertfordshire, Volume One', at a special discount thanks to our member Stephanie South the proprietor of TVP who made the DVD. To those of you who took up the offer I hope enjoyed viewing it as much as I did being the narrator. The most interesting part was meeting similar groups to ourselves all trying in one way or another to preserve a piece of local railway history. We started on the Hatfield to St Albans line at the grade 2 listed Smallford Station, a fantastic wooden Great Northern building marooned in a builders yard but with a really enthusiastic group trying to bring the station building and platform back to life. We wish them well. Moving further down the line to a totally different approach at Nast Hyde Halt where Station Master Mike has brought back to life a derelict platform with planters, railway signs and even a set of buffer stops and a length of track. I am sure that the smile on the faces of the passers by, and this is a busy path, make all Mike's hard work worth while. Well worth a visit. We changed lines and went to see Bricket Wood Station not at the time in the hands of the preservation group but nearly there. The line between Watford and St Albans is still in use and the old station building is in great condition, they have fantastic plans; watch this space. We finished up in the Watford area looking at some sad unused stretches of railway with little chance of preservation but who knows, perhaps, anything is possible.

If you haven't purchased a copy now is the time to buy yourself an early Christmas present you won't regret it.

I hope you are all managing to stay well in these difficult times, please stay in touch and if there's anything we can do to make your life easier just let us know.

Tony Furse



Chesterton Junction, Cambridge was where the St Ives branch left the main line. The Signalman is placing the hoop and pouch containing the single line token into the holder for collection by the driver. The lamp illuminates the hoop at night. These items are now on display in the 'box garden, donated by Andy Buckley who took the photo prior to closure in 1980s. Below Tony Furse re-enacts the scene. New posts have been erected but the rest is as shown in the top shot.



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

An update from the Treasurer

The first thing to say is that currently we are financially secure.

Clearly we have missed out on a lot of income, and associated Gift Aid, while we have been closed. And, at the same time still incur necessary costs of maintenance, security, electricity, and insurance.

However, we have been the recipients of a government Covid grant to charities etc., distributed by St Albans Council. This covers the shortfall for the current year.

Finally and by no means least we enjoy the support of you, the members, most of whom have renewed this year; thank you for that. Of course it will be subscription renewal time again in the new year, and I very much hope you will stay with us!

Rob Little



Two recent additions to the garden display. On the left is the set of fog repeater signals originally located at Market Harborough. Replacement arms have been made and the equipment is linked to the adjoining home and distant signals. To the right is a milepost that stood at Coughton in Warwickshire on the line from Barnt Green to Ashchurch via Reddich. The distance was measured from a zero point at London Road Junction, Derby not St Pancras. Both items have been kindly donated to the Trust.



Progress at the 'box

Autumn maintenance at the strangely quiet 'box has included ongoing fighting with emerging foliage, which we are determined to win; and three wasp nests - which we lost! The little devils were eventually left to end their season peacefully and undisturbed! We were then able to move on to maintenance. Our latest MR Lamp post has been painted, and awaits the top being wired up by John W, painted and reunited with its base. John has also completed the re-wiring and LED bulbing of the 4-Aspects – sunglasses now required. Martin is restoring the wooden gradient post.

Our two sets of platform scales have also been given a new coat of paint; as has the oil drum by the Lamp-hut by Michael. New items from Andy Buckley, Bedford-St. Albans CRP Officer, include an LNER single-line tablet collection bracket and token pouch with attendant lamp and ladder - and new wooden posts for these have been prepared by Tony; a home signal arm and several lamps - including a level crossing version. Richard Allen and friend have stripped as much as they could of a NE Slotted Signal in a Sheffield garden which we are purchasing and which is now ready for collection – post lockdown.

More recently we have been donated another boundary post and milepost, which Richard and myself have working on, and yet another Midland lamp post from within St. Albans. So, yet more restoration to undertake, but much to promote in new offerings when we finally re-open. Lastly, Jim and Tony have erected and linked up our Fog Repeater Signals to the two semaphores at the north end, and Peter and Michael are upgrading our expanded finial display. Still plenty to be done outside, if the changeable weather permits - if not lots of donated books to sort!

John Telford