



Issue 27

24th September 2020

Dear all,

As always hope you are well and in control. I do not know how many of you saw the lady in Lingfield, who is obviously finding it all too much, wreck the COOP and smash the wine because someone asked her to follow the one way system in the shop. Hope you are finding plenty to do to keep you occupied and relaxed.

In the Silver Jubilee addition I joked about hopefully not reaching the Golden Jubilee but if we believe Boris we may well do so. I have to admit that with a world population of around 7.8 Billion the financial gain from being first on the market with a safe vaccine is enormous and I have every faith in the world wide team of scientists out there to come up with a solution before very long.

Lorema and I bit the bullet this week and went out for afternoon tea at Southdown Nursery at Hassocks and used up a tea voucher we had been given as a Christmas present. They were well organised with sensible Covid precautions in place and we had a very large and enjoyable tea.

Hope you enjoy the 27th Edition.

Keep safe

Mike W.

Brief club house NEWS

We still await news on the date the roofers will arrive.

Howard has taken a look at the crack in the tunnel and as it has also cracked from the concrete of the tunnel he recommends that we fix it as soon as possible. We are now in the process gathering quotes to repair the tunnel mouth.

We are scheduled to hold another virtual committee meeting on Monday 28th This will include reviewing how we are going to move forward with the current government legislation.

On Monday in my new mobile state I went up the club to do the door key duties and met up with Roy Preston, Dave Mattingley, Mike P, John Green and Mick Robinson. As you will see Mike and Dave gave the station its annual coat of protection, Roy was going round with Mick replacing individual sleepers that were not in god shape, it raises an idea for a challenge for the kids when we get going again spot how many new sleepers there are!! John Green mowed the lawns so we are in good shape. Many thanks to them all. It was also good to see Linda Midderigh for a short while who also called by to have a chat and it was good to hear that they are both well.

Unknown to us all it was benefit day with Roy kindly bringing along a box of homemade jam including raspberry and apple and blackberry jam.

Even though I am still trying to diet I could not resist the temptation to have some.



What did I do with it? I did some baking and thanks to Roy and Olina's jam I am now enjoying homemade jam tarts.

Thanks as always to the team of helpers and the security team.

Mike P.'s musings No. 25

I thought I would take a break from boring you about my life with small locos, and look back to a time, nearly 20 years ago now, when we replaced our original station building. Perhaps, for some more recently joined members, this will be interesting.

Last Monday, Dave M. and I swapped over from gardening, to station maintenance, oiling up the roof shingles, and PVA'ing the outside walls ready for winter! I have done this pretty much every year since it was built and it has remained mould and algae free even on the north side. As we worked, I was reminded of how we came to have this building.

Around the turn of the century, the club discussed various options for a new passenger station, because the original one, which had served us well for about 45 years, was showing its age. Rumours were going around that it was only the wood worm holding hands that kept it together! A brick building design was drawn up, but, eventually, turned down, mainly on planning permission grounds and expense. It was finally agreed to get a purpose built wooden replacement which would stand on the original concrete plinth, but be a little smaller and thus, not so close to the track. It would have a canopy for some shelter for the station master/mistress. The canopy was not made too big for fear that the wind, which blasts across the park from the south west on blustery days, would flip the building over! The copper beech tree that now shelters the station area was just a sapling at that time.

In 2001, I was keen to get the new station in situ for our "50th anniversary" event planned for early May. So, with the new building ready (partially fabricated) at the factory, we took the plunge to demolish the old one.





Along with myself, Norman, Brian, John Midderigh, Allan Killick and later John West, we got cracking early one Saturday morning in March. Brian especially had a lot of fun, he loved a bit of demolition! I took some pictures for posterity! My camera, by that time, had been upgraded to the one advertised on TV (and recommended by David Bailey, no less!). "Olympus Trip" ...I think it was called. Great little camera, which, after many years of faithful service, finally fell apart, just as "digital" was getting more common place, and by that time you couldn't get a film developed for love nor money! Anyway, I digress. After demolition, we carted away all the debris on our three trusty works bins, took it around the back of the clubhouse, near where our burner bin is now,

and had a huge bonfire in the afternoon. Health and safety was only just really getting started then, so we didn't worry that John West got his eye-brows singed off with the heat from the fire! Ha,ha. No risk assessments either, just some paraffin and matches and away we went! Job done! By the end of the day we had a clean concrete plinth and a pile of ashes.

John Gange, and John Ely came up the next day I think, and built a brick surround base on the old plinth, ready to receive the new building the following week. Soon after, on a Monday morning, I went to the club and met the truck which arrived with our station in flat pack format. Over the next three days, 3 chaps from the timber company erected our station....2 days for the structure, and another day to put the cedar shingles on the roof. By Wednesday night it was all done! I took some more pictures of the proceedings.



The building, from memory, cost around 3,000 pounds, and the cedar shingles were about a 1000 of this, so they are worth taking care of! Considering how flimsy they appear, it's amazing the storms over the years haven't torn them off, but they are still in good shape.



Anyway, it's good for another year now, and done just in time before the weather changes I think, and possibly before the covid lockdowns increase too! I've sent Mike quite a few pictures this time, I hope he can fit them in without overload! They are before and after, and after again.

Mike P

Andrew Ellis



The Brawn F1 car was painted during Jenson Button's championship year from a TV photo.

Part 3

Having moved to Paddington as a Welcome Host I needed to live nearer to the mainline so I found a flat near Haywards Heath station.

I used to travel up on the slam door trains for early turns in a seat by the Guards van that had been converted so didn't have a door next to it. This was important in the winter as it meant you didn't get a freezing draught on your knees. Those trains had radiators under the seats so were very cosy. I had many good snoozes on the way to Victoria. A few times the trains got delayed as they do so I had to wait until I arrived at Victoria to use an internal phone to let PADD know I was on my way. No mobile phones then for most folks.

My duties included manning the Help desk under the departure display at the front of the concourse. We had our backs to the buffer stops. We dealt with complaints and helped people with problems. We had authority to do what we liked. One lady came the desk to ask how to upgrade her ticket because she had missed the booked train she had to travel on. I can't remember the details but she was going to a funeral and had had a terrible day so far. I gave her a first class pass and put her on the next train. She forced £5 into my pocket but I gave this to a friend who happened to be in the buffet car to look after her. We didn't have free teas in those days.

On one occasion a passenger came running up from the underground and past the desk to the platform where a train was pulling out and threw his luggage on

the floor and stamped his feet. I made a point of checking the time, knowing what would come next. As predicted he came shouting and screaming that the train had departed early. I politely pointed out that it had departed 30 seconds late. He demanded a taxi which I declined and then pointed out that I had caused him to miss an appointment for a £1m contract. I thought to myself "perhaps its just as well you probably won't get it".

I met a few celebrities but one that sticks in my mind is David Dimbleby. In those days you could collect pre-booked tickets from the Help Desk but had to either produce the card they were paid for with or a unique reference number. He came to the desk asking for his ticket. I asked his name and found his ticket. I asked to see the card it had been booked with. He didn't have it so I said "That's not a problem sir, do you have the reference number please?". No he didn't. Sadly I couldn't give him the ticket but asked if there was someone he could contact to get the reference number. He then got rather angry and kept saying that he was David Dimbleby from the television. He never got his ticket but years later he did a double take when I passed him outside Victoria station in casual clothes.

There was one very unpleasant man who always complained about anything and everything. He was thoroughly unpleasant and almost dripped with venom. We were sure that Didcot Power station was affecting people from that area. They all seemed so angry all the time. To make our experience less unpleasant, whomever got him that day would win a chocolate bar.

My other duties were manning the first class lounge and serving complimentary refreshments and manning to information pagoda. I hated the first class lounge. It was a lovely room. It had been a royal waiting room and still had the original wallpaper on one wall. It had beautiful little pictures but believe it or not people who had bought first class tickets used to steal them. The problem I had was keeping track of who had asked for what and keeping up with it all. I was useless. Luckily a colleague loved it and hated the pagoda, which I loved so we started swapping.

We used to get lots of Americans who had no idea of our geography and several times I had itineraries given to me that included a day trip to Lands End but being in Edinburgh the same night.

A while later there was a reorganisation and I got promoted to a grade E Supervisor. I was in charge of several teams of train despatch staff but also did classroom training of candidates for Booking Clerks as a side line. This was a good move for me involving a more operational role.

I remember overhearing one of the train dispatchers talking to a man with a cowboy hat and what I thought was a Texan accent. He asked which way out the train went (they were standing by the buffer stops). The dispatcher who was Irish and quick witted went on to describe how today they were trying a

new route. The stops would slide away so the train could join the underground to a shorter route from London. I couldn't believe that the Texan seemed to think it was true and got on the train.

On night shifts all sorts of strange goings on happened but those aren't for sensitive ears.

After a period of time I was looking for an even more operational role and there was talk of Trainee Drivers jobs at various companies. I took a move to be a Senior Conductor (Guard who sells tickets on Intercity trains). Several colleagues made the same move.

I remember one day having a Guards van full of cages of mice going to a pet shop in Wales. In between my other duties I fed them on some biscuit crumbs. On the overnight sleeper we used to swap from the down train to the up train at Bristol. I remember seeing the Royal Mail train in the platform and being amazed that they were still sorting post on board.

On one trip as we were leaving Didcot at night the station staff said looks like the engine is on fire. He was a bit of a joker so I said "Yeah right" but he insisted and I stopped the train. We had flames 40 feet into the sky. It turned out that class 43s or intercity 125s were prone to blowing a gasket with dramatic consequences. Luckily we had another engine.

A colleague in a similar situation got into trouble for making an announcement when both engines failed one after the other saying " Well I am very sorry but on the positive side, at least we aren't an aeroplane".

After a year or so South West Trains advertised for Trainee Drivers and so I applied.

I had to go to Fraggie Rock (Friars Bridge Court) where the Senior Management were based for an aptitude test.

We started the day with a full room and after each test reconvened to be told to go to this room or that room. Someone then came in to say you had passed that part of the test. I remember the coordination test well!!! There was a keyboard with 5 different coloured circles. The same colours would appear on the screen and you pressed the corresponding button. There were two blocks that would light up left or right and you had to press a right or left pedal, lastly we wore headphones that sounded left or right and we had to press the corresponding button. This all went on at the same time. In the first test it got faster and you had to keep up. In the second it stayed at your pace but if you were too slow you failed. One poor chap was on his second and therefore last ever go at it. He was swearing all through and I didn't see him again.

Somehow I got through it all and amazed as anyone I realised that I was going to be a Trainee Train Driver. I'll leave that for next time....

Andrew E. To be continued.

News From Afar - 23 Sept.



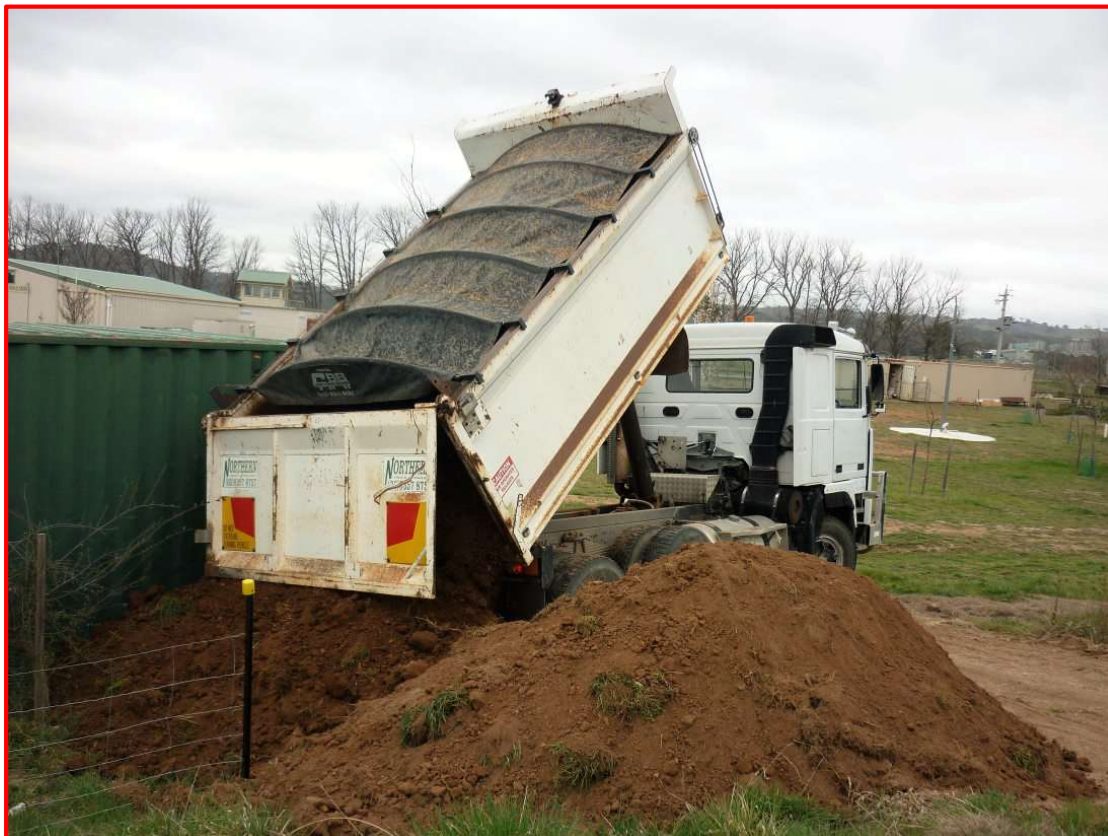
Spring Blossom



Sunday 20 Sept 2020

A day when members usually have a day to test and enjoy their own creations with no public on site. I say usually as it was a shocker weather wise, showers on and off all day. Greg Z and I still attended, and it gave us a great chance to have a massive clean up and sort out of our club house and workshop with no critics or doomsayers at hand. It took around seven hours and lots of cursing, along with many versions of “what the is that in here for”, and many other mutterings and expletives. What we *nearly* achieved was the area being returned to a club house, not a store room or workshop. I say nearly, as due to restrictive space at present in this area, we have to compromise to an extent. The result was a much more pleasant and tidy area for a day or so at least.

Site Work - Friday 18 Sept.



More top soil, donated, arriving to add to our ever increasing piles of material for our track extensions.

***An Insight into our Secretary Mick Richardson -
The boy from Burwash***



In compiling this week's report, I have researched another 'Pommie' member of our railway. Our former President and now Secretary, Mick Richardson, on the right of the picture of course, and hailing from Burwash, East Sussex. Although he now has an Aussie accent, having been in Canberra since 1978, he assures me the correct pronunciation is Burrish. His exact starting location was Bough Farm at Burwash Common after his parents moved there to take over the dairy herd after their 1947 marriage in Wiltshire.

A short move two years later took him to Spurs Farm on Witherenden Hill and he grew up in the idyllic Wealden countryside until at 19 years the offer came of a job with the Sussex Constabulary and with it three years at Shoreham-by-Sea. Whilst there a chance meeting with a former member encouraged him to apply for the Bermuda Police and in 1972 he joined flew off to the famous holiday island.

New police officers in Bermuda were only accepted if they were single but, recently engaged, after settling in, he found employment for his fiancée, Val, who, although from Lewes in Sussex, had moved to Australia when she was six. They married in 1974 and, after Mick completed his contract in 1978, they decided to move to Australia.

This led to an application to join the Australian Capital Territory Police and in 1979 the pair moved from Victoria to Canberra. Mick spent about 35 years in the Canberra Police (now known as the Australian Federal Police after a merger with the Commonwealth Police). Most of that time was as a “scooter pig”, an affectionate term for a traffic motorcyclist but he also filled in his spare time occasionally helping raise three children, being a member of the Lions Club, running a small sublimation printing business under his house and driving for numerous coach and trucking companies part time and in 2009 taking up train driving with a fellow copper “cause it seemed like a great idea!” So for about eight years he had the time of his life working freight and maintenance trains all over New South Wales.

Fortuitously, his Sergeant mate also owned a 7.25 inch diesel loco, a NSW 81 class, so Mick also joined the CSMEE.

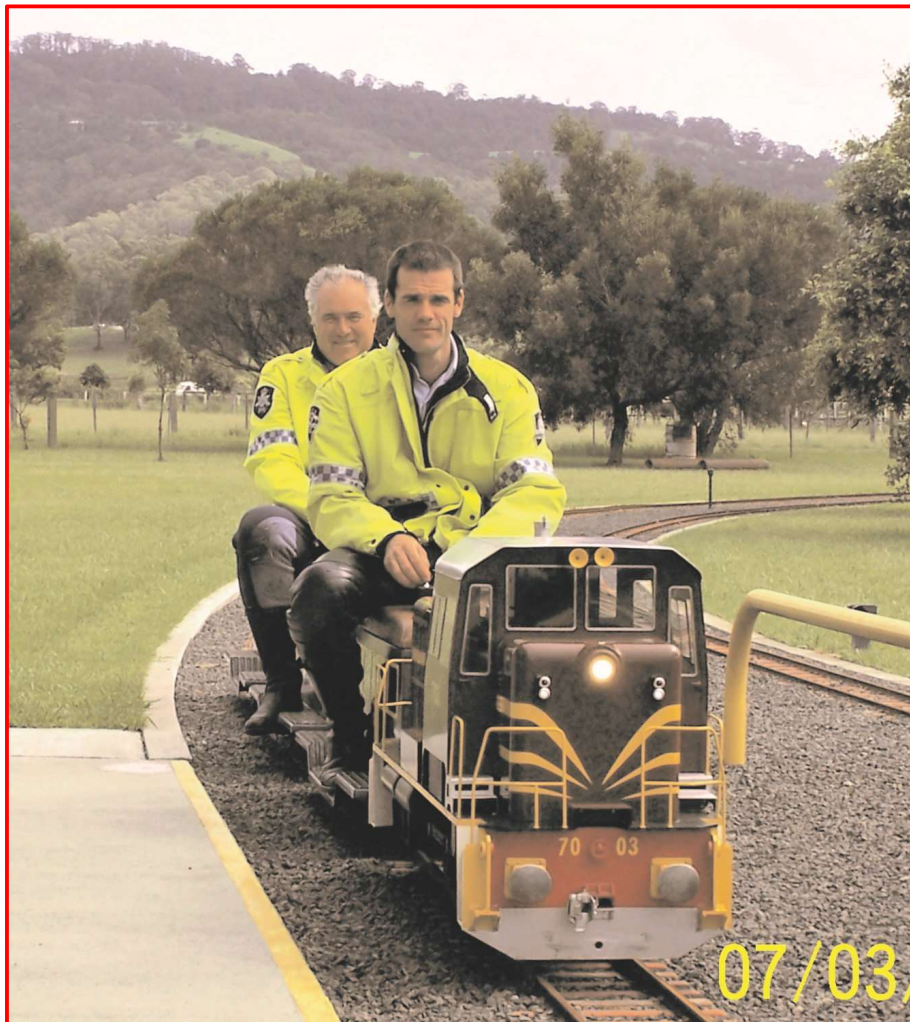
Forced into retirement by COVID-19, and the inability to continue cruising around the globe, he now spends a lot of time pretending to be an active member of the Canberra Miniature Railway and wishing he was still a licensed hoon around the streets of Canberra to keep him off the G&Ts and fabulous Aussie Reds! Below is Mick on Monday. Note any changes?





One of Micks play things, a 'B' Double truck, and right a not so miniature loco.

Below Mick (rear) having a ride or instructing, who knows. A nice loco.
Notice Mick and his mate are in uniform. Chasing speeding trains perhaps?



On the Home Front.



The ants decided it was a good time to build some defences for the expected Sunday rain. Did they work? The defences are still there today Tuesday, so I have to presume that they did.

Another Donation.





Donations of this type are always welcome.

Machine maintenance.

Kel B looks on, while Darryl struggles to get a new drive belt on the pulleys.



Getting fed up with constantly pumping up the two front tyres, it was decided to purchase two wheels with solid tyres.



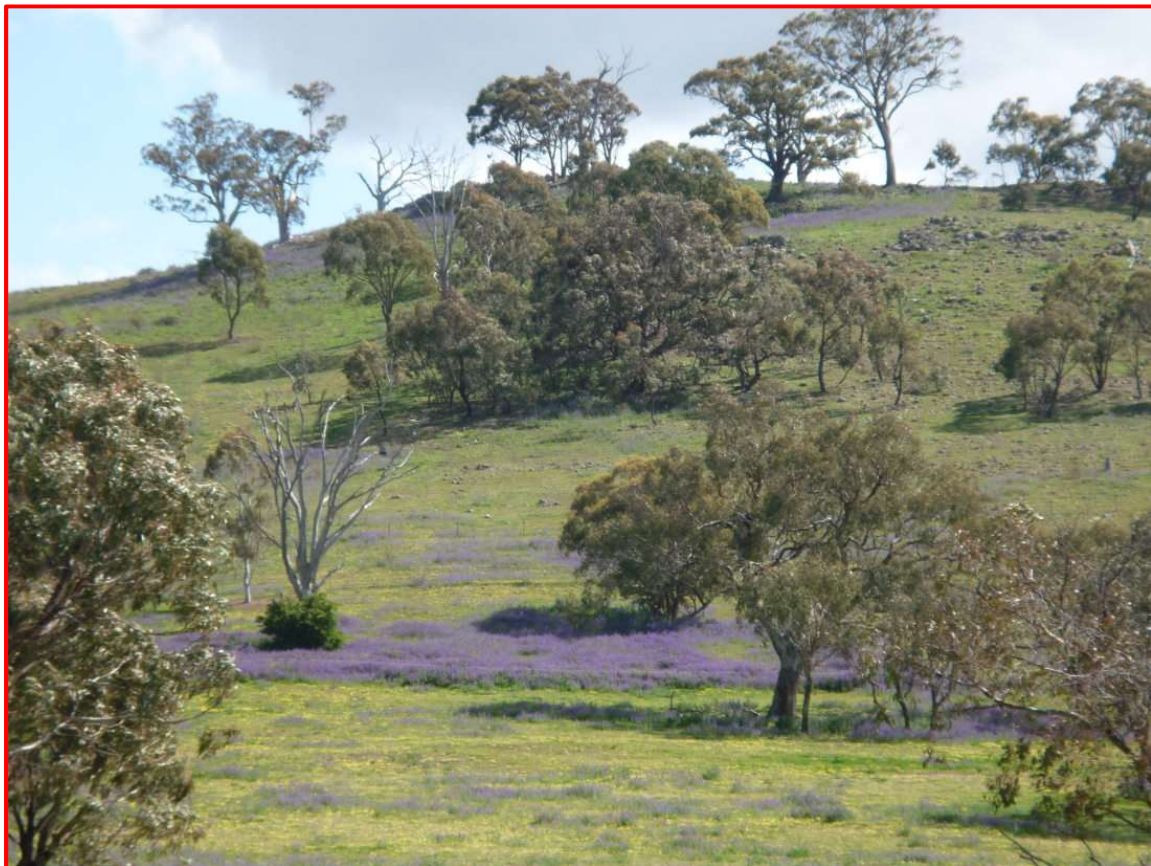
They went great for around 20 minutes before the centre hub sheared from the rest of the rim as seen above. Checking the other wheel we found it was just about to happen to that one.

Back to the supplier for any better ideas. Chinese? You guessed it.

The picture of Mick in the 'Boy from Burwash' shows him re-fitting the old wheels to 'get us home' so to speak.

This Seasons Weed.

Paterson's Curse (Echium plantagineum), also known as Salvation Jane or Riverina Bluebell, is a plant that is extremely toxic to horses. It contains compounds known as pyrrolizidine alkaloids, the metabolites of which cause cell death in organs throughout the body, most commonly the liver. The kidneys and lungs may also be affected.



In a local paddock where horses are usually kept and everywhere else in the ACT, NSW and so on. Pretty but dangerous.

Stay well.

David - Canberra - 23 September 2020

Special Trains

Dübs crane tank No. 4101

"Dubsey" crane tank No. 4101 is an 0-4-0CT crane locomotive manufactured by Dübs & Co. in 1901, Glasgow for the Shelton Iron and Steel Works, Stoke on Trent.

A "crane tank" is a type of steam locomotive upon which a steam-powered crane is mounted, producing a machine which is capable of performing as both a shunter and a mobile crane



Built in 1901 at the Glasgow Locomotive works in Polmadie to the order of the Shelton Iron & Steel Works Ltd and given works number 4101, the engine has an interesting history. Built as a true crane tank, that is to say a normal steam locomotive with crane jib and auxiliary engines, the design repays close inspection.

The 34 ton engine has 14" diameter by 22" stroke outside cylinders, single slide bars and Laird type crossheads. A slewing engine powers the jib through 360 degrees, whilst situated within the construction of the jib, a reciprocating engine gives a lifting capacity of five tons.

The boiler does not have a dome due to the restricted clearances, the regulator valve being mounted on the front tubeplate. Used as a workhorse around the steelworks complex dealing with heavy lifting, shunting and re-railing operations for no less than 72 years the engine was amongst the last of its type in industrial use.

Receiving a new boiler from Kerr Stuart's in 1921 and conversion to oil firing in 1961 the engine left Shelton for the East Somerset Railway at Cranmore in September 1973.

At Cranmore "Dubsey" (for she was always called this at Shelton) was converted back to coal firing, returned to steam and was used to relay much of the railway to Merryfield.

Purchased by a consortium of Foxfield members in 1998 and moved to Foxfield on the 18th of October the same year.

Dubs & Co crane tank 0-4-0T No. 4101 "Dubs" was last steamed in 1985 so the engine was stripped down and underwent extensive overhaul for a return to steam in 2001 to celebrate her centenary.

"Dubsey" was the 2010 winner of the Heritage Railway Association John Coiley award for Locomotive restoration

The engine became the world's only operational crane tank.



"Dubsey" At work at Foxfield Railway - crane tank demonstration

"Dubsey" can still be seen at Foxfield Light Railway which is the preserved railway of the Foxfield Colliery created when the colliery closed in August 1965, local volunteers formed the Foxfield Light Railway Society to preserve the line.



Foxfield Railway was built by a local labour force, made up of North Staffordshire Railway employees. Working at weekends and supervised by the North Staffordshire Railway foreman plate layer Noah Stanier, they used second hand material obtained from the North Staffordshire Railway. At first, passengers were taken in converted trucks up the formidable 1:19 to 1:26 gradient out of the colliery site at Dilhorne, accompanied by a tank engine.

Eventually, new coaches were purchased and a station was built at Caverswall Road, Blythe Bridge, half a mile from Blythe Bridge station. The service runs for 2 1/4 miles (3.6 km) from the station to the top of Foxfield Bank.

Since forming as a society in 1967, The Foxfield Light Railway Society has gone through significant periods of change and has seen significant successes in its time.

Foxfield Railway was featured, in 2009, by the BBC when they filmed their Christmas special of 'Return to Cranford' starring Dame Judi Dench.

Today's facilities at Caverswall Road Station include a station cafe serving hot and cold refreshments, a small gift shop, a museum area holding locomotives and artefacts currently out of use and 'The Foxfield Arms' – our real ale bar serving a range of beers, wines and spirits.

Mike W..

Puzzle Corner.

Lorema's last week's Challenge:-

The 20 Hand Tools hidden were:-

Pliers		File		Punch		Scriber
Hammer		Hacksaw		Tap		Vernier
Drill		Scraper		Die		Micrometer
Spanner		Countersink		Square		Snips
Clamp		Chisel		Ruler		Mallet

Lorema's this week challenge.

9 clues to find answer to the 10th:-

Some parachute jumpers do this before they open their parachute.	
A creative steel structure found near Gateshead.	
Puts Life into "White Kitchen Goods".	
The county where hops are grown	
A hotel for people waiting for conviction	
London runners of a very early police force.	
The Beatles started here.	
A collection of Royal Naval Vessels	
Wine production cannot take place without this plant	
What is the hidden link to these answers?	

My thanks go to all who keep sending me the material.

If you have something for the NEWS please contact me

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