



Vintage Carriages Trust

# *Carriage Chronicle*

News for Members: January 2021



- A Year of Reflection
- Museum Updates
- Carriages in Use
- Volunteering Opportunities

# Welcome to the January 2021 'Carriage Chronicle' Members' Update. - *Bob Sprot*

Welcome to the January 2021 edition of the 'Carriage Chronicle'. We would like to apologize for the late publication of this issue, the compilation of which has been hampered by the various Covid 19 lockdown measures. To recap over the last topsy-turvy year, we have had total closure twice of the VCT building for a total of four months, and then part openings of the shop and magazine room, with the whole museum only reopening from August until the end of October. Unfortunately we can expect more disruption in 2021.

This issue not only gives us the chance to give you our normal updates on current projects but also allows us to reflect on the recent history of your Trust. We hope you enjoy reading the magazine and please stay safe and well.



Lord Mayor celebrates Christmas Photo: Alexandra Stockdale-Haley

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Front cover: Met Brake 427 at Oxenhope Summer 2020 Photo:Chris Smyth

## 2020 - A Year in Reflection - Trevor England

As I write this at the end of December we have just come out of the second period of National Lockdown due to the Covid - 19 crisis. I had planned at this year's Chairman's Day and AGM to mention that I have now been the Chairman of the Trust for 25 years, and I have for a number of years pointed out that we need to continue with succession planning. This year Michael Cope has decided, for personal reasons, to stand down as a Trustee, as Jackie, his wife decided last year and in the years of their Trusteeship Michael covered the role of Secretary for 28 years, and Jackie as Treasurer for 23 years. However the present Charity Commission guidelines do recommend a one year period of time out as a Trustee after nine years! I keep being told that I am still the best person for the role, but there has to be a time when this must end. The good news is that we have gained a number of new Trustees since we became a CIO, and I am pleased that Debbie Cross and Robert Taggart have just become Trustees which also helps to reduce the average age!

So where do we go to look for that future Chairman? About eight years ago Debbie started as the Audience Development Co-ordinator for the 'Rail Story' project. After a few months of working with the VCT she gave me a Christmas present of a plaque that was a variation of a regular saying. It reads "You don't have to be crazy to work here - we'll train you". Now there is a thought!!

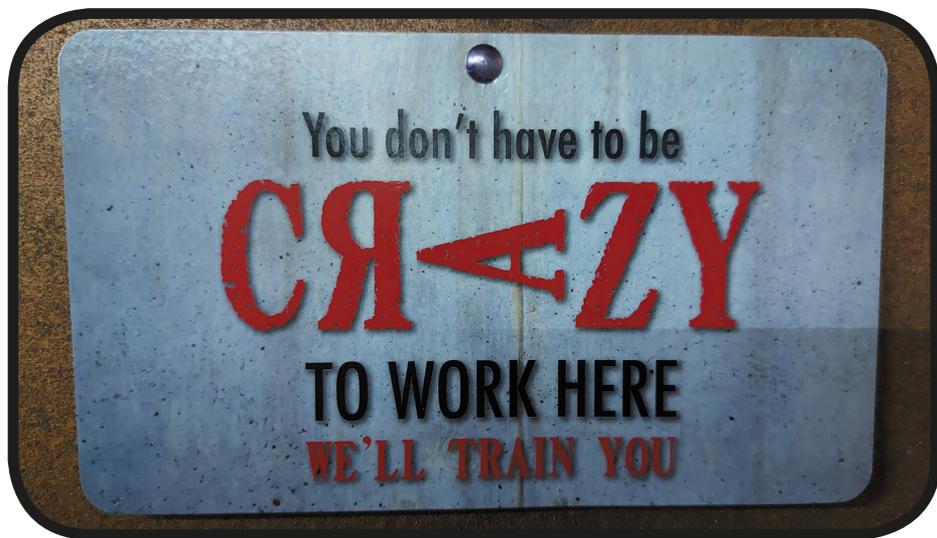


Photo: Alexandra Stockdale-Haley

# 25 Years of Development at VCT

As we have less to report on our progress this year I volunteered to look back through the VCT Newsletters of the last 25 years.

Here are some of the highlights:

1995 - 1997 I was elected Chairman in 1995. Chris Smyth had held the role for 22 years and had led the organisation successfully from a single carriage restoration project of the Chatham. By 1995 we already had a museum, shop, toilets and storage rooms at Ingrow. We built on this firm foundation with the completion of the sideways extension, the rearward extension to form the workshop, and the aim of completing the restoration of all the carriages. This will be fulfilled with the completion of the current restoration of the Midland. The Mayfield clock, display cabinets, magazine room, library, workshop and gallery, and the central walkway were completed in this period. We were also able to restart the major restoration of the Bulleid.

1998 - 2004 In 1998 work began on the restoration of Great Northern 2856. The Midland carriage was craned out of the station dock road, which now houses the BLS Learning coach. In 2001 the restoration of Great Northern 589 began. By 2004 Great Northern 2856 was completed and won the annual HRA Carriage Competition the following year.

2005 - 2010 We undertook reviews of our structure, organisation and of our retail offer. This led to a full refit of the shop in 2009 and eventually the formation of the CIO in 2014. In 2008 we received a royal visit by the Duke of Kent as part of the KWVR 40th Anniversary celebrations and in 2009 we became an Accredited Museum.

The Bulleid carriage S1469 was completed after 25 years and the overhaul of Met Brake 427 underframe took place.

In 2012 our collection archives were upgraded to a new system called MODES. In 2013 all three Met carriages were involved with the Met 150th anniversary. Great Northern 589 was completed. The Trust agreed to take on the full restoration of Diesel Railbus E79962. In 2014 VCT, BLS and the KWVR agreed to make Ingrow a visitor attraction called 'Rail Story'.

## 2015 - 2020

2015 -2020 From 2015 Met Brake 427 underwent a much needed interior refit. The new rearward extension to the workshop was completed thanks to the dogged determination of Bill Black and others.

These are but some of the highlights over the last 25 years. It doesn't even include any reference to Sir Berkeley or Bellerophon and their activities at the Middleton and Foxfield Railways, or their visits elsewhere including into Europe. I recommend that when you have a quiet moment you go to the VCT website and have a good read of our Newsletters. The research for this article was an interesting journey into our past and at last I have found something good that has come out of this Covid 19 year. Keep safe and hopefully we will all have a better 2021.



Austins No.1 leaving KWVR for Middleton at Ingrow in 2001 Photo: Ian Dobson

### Newsflash:

We are also delighted to announce that our trustee Ian Smith has been awarded the Railway Magazine Lifetime Achievement Award for services to preservation. We congratulate Ian on this well-deserved award. The award was given for “Outstanding work and personal dedication to the Middleton Railway for 50 years.”

# Meet the new Trustees

This year saw a change in Trustees; earlier in the year Joanne Haley made the decision to step down, and in recent months Michael Cope also stepped down. New nominees Debbie Cross and Robert Taggart subsequently made it onto the committee at this year's AGM along with the other candidates.

About Debbie:

“I joined VCT as a joint contract with BLS and KWVR in April 2014 as Audience Development Co-ordinator. I worked to develop a strong partnership between the three organisations, which resulted in the creation of Rail Story. I developed a strong educational offer and events programme, which has seen the visitor figures to Ingrow and the museums increase substantially. I have over fifteen years' experience in the heritage sector and have skills in conservation, collections management, strategic planning, marketing and fundraising.”

About Robert:

“Having been employed by the Trust for two years and leaving for pastures new this year, I wish to continue supporting the Trust. At my time with VCT, I have redesigned the Rail Story leaflet, website, newsletter and will continue to update the Trust's other advertising to fit with our new modern branding; I pushed for an events team at Rail Story meetings as a way to promote museum visitor engagement. I am also an active director/trustee at Middleton, and I have been helping on the overhaul of Sir Berkeley.”



# Shop and Magazine Room - *Bob Sprot*

## Shop News

In our current financial year starting in April 2020 we have lost 4 months peak trading to the various Covid shutdowns and this has had a major impact on our sales. Visitor numbers since we reopened in June have been only a fraction of previous years, with the notable absence of young families, although we are grateful to our regular enthusiasts who have continued to buy books, magazines, dvd's and model railway lines in some quantity.

## Donations, Quarantine and Magazines

We have continued to receive substantial donations of books and especially of magazines during our periods of opening. These are placed into a quarantine area for three days before further sorting, and we wish to recognize the excellent and hard work of our regular volunteers for carrying out this exercise efficiently.



Photos: Alexandra Stockdale-Haley

## Growth of Magazine and Online Orders

Perhaps unsurprisingly we have noticed a considerable growth in email and telephone orders for back issues of magazines and these have been handled successfully by Alexandra Stockdale-Haley and John Wallis. Our thanks are also due to Keith Taylorson, who as well as being our main magazine sorter during this period, has taken us on our first tentative steps of selling selected books and dvd's online, and this has met with further success.

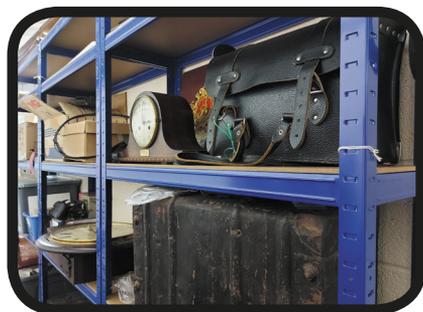
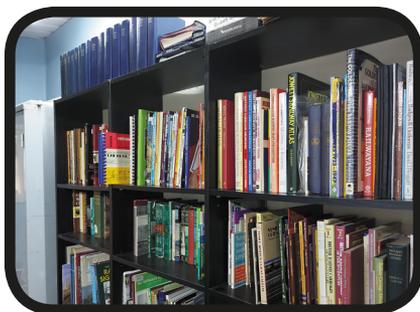
## Museum and Display - *Alexandra Stockdale-Haley*

Due to Covid-19, the museum and shop have been opened and closed several times, but at the time of writing in tier 3, only the shop remains open. This has given us some time to work on some of the things that we had planned for the museum. New display boards are still being worked on, which will more accurately tell the social history of our collection of small objects in a slightly more modernised way. We have also received on loan a small collection of items from York Carriage Works, which will tell the story of carriage building and the apprentices who worked there.

In collaboration with the University of Leicester (as part of an MA Museum Studies project), new activities are also being designed for the future (after the pandemic) which will make way for more visitor engagement in the museum. These include children's activities involving 'packing an evacuee suitcase' to take on the train and designing personal carriage prints, as well as a local oral history project surrounding 'memories of Ingrow' to complement our Ingrow model railway display.



Behind the scenes we have also been working to improve our upstairs area, which is home to our office, meeting room and collection/archives not on display. Locked away we had many objects, the library bookshelf and collections care stationary all cluttered together, but things have now been rearranged into a much more organised fashion.



Photos: Alexandra Stockdale-Haley

## Museum and Display - *Alexandra Stockdale-Haley*

The bookshelf and collections care equipment were moved into the meeting room, as well as the museum files and archived photographs, which now means this area can double as a 'research centre' for anyone wanting to use the books or archives.

The locked cupboard is now purely an object store, which has been kitted out with racking for the small items in our collection so that they are easy to get to and all in one place. This has allowed much more floor space to move around too. The posters and maps are also housed in this area, and bigger artefacts such as plates and boards are stacked neatly where they can be found. We have also invested in a poster rack which neatly holds the framed posters and prints in our collection, which were otherwise kept in all kinds of locations!

The office is now logically home to the Trust's admin and filing, as well as the stationery. As we look to the future we hope that we can still apply for grants in order to facilitate the redevelopment of the museum as a whole.

This will hopefully include refreshing the toilet block, cladding the museum walls, re-displaying and interpreting the bigger objects in our collection, and investing in new technology to help tell our stories and engage visitors in new ways.

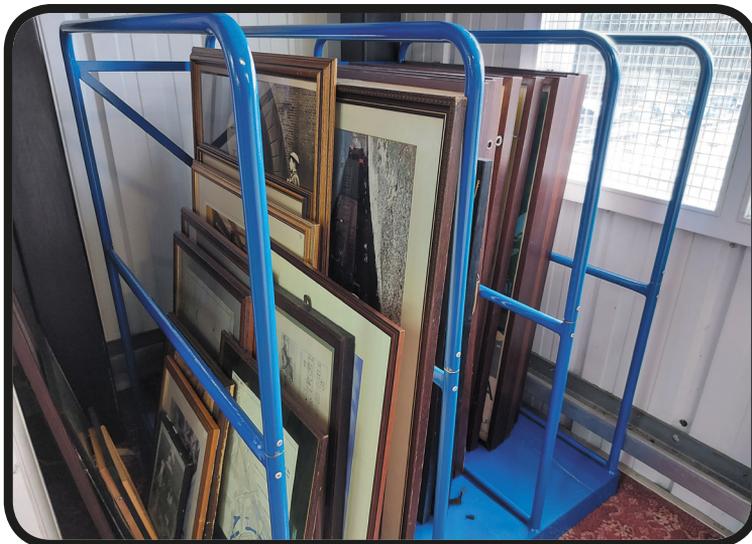


Photo: Alexandra Stockdale-Haley

## Rail Story - Alexandra Stockdale-Haley

Not much has been able to happen this year with our partners at the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway and the Bahamas Locomotive Society due to coronavirus. However we still continue to post on our Rail Story social media channels in the hopes that we can still advertise our site in ways possible. The Engine Shed museum owned by BLS held a competition to name their new 'trainspotter' mannequin, which we were happy to be a part of when it came to giving prizes.

We haven't been able to host many physical school trips to the museums; however, we were able to help host a virtual school trip to the Carriage Works and Engine Shed museums via Zoom to Laycock Primary School. Basic facts about a few of the carriages and engines were given whilst the camera showed a good look inside the vehicles during a short walk around the site, which the children seemed to enjoy.



Photos: Laycock Primary School



Most events have been on pause, but we did manage to fit a Halloween event in before the November lockdown. Rail Story teamed up with Yesteryear Vintage Vehicle Hire and Stories Alive to take visitors on a (socially distanced) spooky journey through the worth valley on a vintage bus whilst listening to some chilling tales from storyteller Eden Ballantyne. The weather wasn't too kind for some of the travellers on the open-top upper deck, but families seemed to have fun regardless.



Photo: Liz Lynch

# Workshop - *Chris Smith and Ian Wild*

## Metropolitan 465

The restoration of this carriage is now complete and it is ready for display in the museum and as required for operational use. The final work carried out involved adjusting all the door mechanisms, the fitting where necessary of newly manufactured Metropolitan door handles to replace incorrect BR Mk1 fittings and making the lights operational. A final painting and varnishing into 'Railway Children' livery has given this carriage a really smart and colourful appearance.

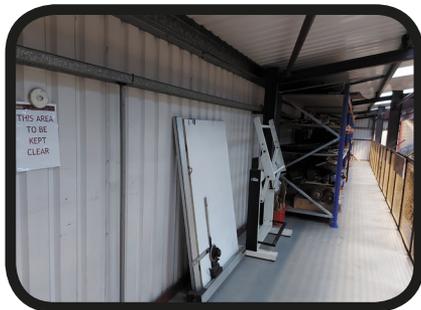
## Midland 358

The body has been lifted again to allow cleaning and some further woodwork repairs to the underside corners. Work is also taking place on the exterior body panels in preparation for painting. Further research is underway to finalise the production of and fitting of the first class upholstery.

The underframe is as complete as necessary prior to it being reunited with the body, hopefully very early in 2021, and which will then allow a further lift to take place so that work on the wheelsets and axle boxes can commence.

## Workshop Tidy Up

With 'stop/start' work schedules impacted by our enforced building closures we have decluttered the workshop and gallery and completed a general tidy up.



Photos: Alexandra Stockdale-Haley

# Summary of VCT Carriages in Use - *Bob Sprot*

## **Bulleid S1469S - at Emsay**

Our Bulleid open third was in use again on summer/autumn 2020 dining trains when our friends at Emsay were able to resume their operation.

## **Chatham S3554S and Metropolitan 427- on the KWVR**

Our Chatham brake corridor third has been one of the mainstays of the KWVR trains for most of 2020. It ran in use as part of the revised public service from August to October and again on the 'Elf Express' trains in December. The 'Dreadnought' 7 compartment brake third was also in use on the KWVR in August and September 2020 and performed well on the Vintage Train service. It is now back in the Museum at Ingrow.

## **L&Y Blackpool 'Club Car'**

While the Chatham has been based at Oxenhope and to keep our Museum full after the departure of the KWVR Pullmans in October we have been delighted to house the Lancashire and Yorkshire Manchester - Blackpool 'Club Car'. This has proved of interest to many of our visitors.

## **Plans for 2021**

We hope that the delayed Railway Children 50th Anniversary event will be able to take place in 2021 and our three Metropolitan carriages are likely to play a part in this celebration. Further details to follow.



Chatham in use on Vintage Trains Photo: Ben Bucki

## Locomotives - Ian Smith

**Sir Berkeley** continues its overhaul at Middleton Railway, with work being concentrated on the chassis. One MRT member was astounded to find that each axlebox on the loco was slightly different from the others! These early engines were hand-built and thus many parts were far from the “standard” they purported to be, which is certainly the case with this engine! The outside frames are now painted vermillion and look really well. Work has now started on repainting the wheels in undercoat, as the accompanying photo shows.



Photos: Ian Smith

**Bellerophon** is currently out of traffic at Foxfield, but we are discussing a plan to have it cosmetically restored to its Victorian appearance for a while before we launch an appeal for its major restoration. The main reason for this of course is that Covid-19 has affected VCT's finances and we believe that now is not the time to commence another expensive restoration! We are awaiting a reply from Foxfield at the time of writing.



Bellerophon in 1996 Photo: Mark Astley

# Volunteering Opportunities

As a charity, we rely on volunteers for many jobs around the museum. We have a few volunteer opportunities available at the moment, which might be useful for somebody wishing to expand their CV, wanting to donate some time to a charity, or just looking for something to do!

## Front of House

Job Description	Roles/Responsibilities
<p>We are looking for volunteers (preferably for weekend work) to aid the running of our shop/reception. As a volunteer you will only be expected to work based on your availability, which can be given each time a new roster is put out.</p> <p>You should expect some days to be very quiet, and some days to be very busy, depending on the season and KWVR timetable.</p> <p>We expect volunteers to be polite, friendly and enthusiastic towards our customers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Processing shop transactions and museum tickets through the till.</li> <li>• Processing magazine orders over the phone.</li> <li>• Replenishing stock.</li> <li>• Answering general enquiries from visitors or over the phone.</li> <li>• Following procedures for opening/closing the building.</li> <li>• Cashing up the till at the end of the day.</li> </ul>



# Volunteering Opportunities

## Magazine sorter

Job Description	Roles/Responsibilities
<p>We are looking for volunteers to help sort donations of magazines that we receive.</p> <p>Our magazine room houses thousands of back issues of second-hand magazines, all sorted by title alphabetically and then chronologically by year. Once we are kindly given magazines, they will need sorting into this format to make it easier for customers to find what they are looking for.</p> <p>You will only be expected to volunteer when you are available.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Helping to sort through donations of books/magazines (after they have been in quarantine for 48 hours).</li><li>• Sorting piles of magazines into the correct place in the magazine room.</li><li>• Keeping the magazine room neat and tidy.</li><li>• Communicating with other magazine room volunteers to determine what/when work needs to be done.</li></ul>



If any of the roles appeal to you, please get in touch with Bob Sprot: [membership@vintagecarriagetrust.org](mailto:membership@vintagecarriagetrust.org)

You will then be expected to fill out any of the necessary documentation. At the moment, all volunteers must comply with Covid-19 rules



Midland Body, Photo: Alexandra Stockdale-Haley

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The Trust's Membership records are included within this  
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Published by the Vintage Carriages Trust  
(Charitable Incorporated Organisation No. 1156931)  
Owners of the Museum of Rail Travel (an Accredited Museum),  
Ingrow Railway Centre, Keighley

Design by Robert Taggart

Printed in England by John Brailsford Print (Yorkshire) Ltd, Rotherham

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