

NEWS FROM QUAINTON



Photo by Mark Lewis

WELCOME!

I can't believe the 2022 season is almost over! We've had several amazing events - I hope you've been able to enjoy some of them. We're already planning next year's events and the calendar is filling up nicely. I'll give you the full calendar of events in the next newsletter. There's lots going on behind the scenes here, so read on to find out what we've all been up to. As always, we rely heavily on our volunteers, so our huge thanks are extended to each and every one of them! If you want to start volunteering with us, please give us a call on 01296 655720 and we can talk about what sort of thing you'd like to do. We look forward to welcoming you here soon!

Louisa Richards, Marketing Manager

PANTO EXPRESS

Our Christmas event went live at the end of September and sales are already going well. The format will be the same as the previous two Panto Express events in 2019 and 2021. Customers book their session which starts with their train ride. Father Christmas visits them in their compartment and gives the children their presents. Visitors then come inside to watch the mini pantomime by a professional touring theatre company. This year's panto is Cinderella.



LAST THOMAS VISIT FOR 2022

Thomas will be making his last visit to us for the year during October half term: Saturday 22nd, Sunday 23rd and Monday 24th October. If you would like to help out on one of the days, there are lots of roles available from car parking and gate to catering and platform. Please just call the girls in the office to find out what's available. If you've never helped out at a Thomas day before, just ask them and they can tell you all about it! Please call us on 01296 655720 or email us on: office@bucksrailcentre.org

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!

We've had 40 new members join since the start of the open season which is great news! Thank you to you all and welcome. Remember, as part of your membership, we are here to encourage you to come to the centre, join in and help us run the place and maintain it! Why not come and help out behind the scenes or on one of our open days? We have several different teams of volunteers; there's bound to be something to suit you! Give us a call and we can talk you through your options. You don't have to have any specific skills but if you have some that you would like to use, just let us know! Call the office on 01296 655720 or email office@bucksrailcentre.org

LOCO UPDATE

BY ADRIAN AYLWARD

ARTHUR:

Arthur's restoration is progressing well. A new tube plate has been riveted on and the axlebox is being prepared for whitemetalting, and we hope to have it back on its wheels by the end of October. (Photos by Adrian Aylward)



SWORDFISH:

The members of the Swordfish working group have fitted a brick arch in the engine and have done some machining work on the connecting rods (The photo above was taken by Andy Midwinter).

DIESEL No.2298

We've completed stripping and checking the engine and now starting to rebuild it with new parts where necessary.

6989 WIGHTWICK HALL

6989 Wightwick Hall is currently on hire at The Bluebell Line and they have now expressed an interest in extending their hire period into next year.

66 - AUSTERITY

We need to lift 66's boiler out after Christmas to replace some worn rivets in the smokebox and we hope to have her running again in time for February half term.



CHISLET:

The owner of Chislet has made a very generous donation to cover the cost of removing the asbestos in the boiler.

We have therefore stripped the saddle tank and cab off, and we have instructed a specialist asbestos removal contractor to come to complete the necessary work. This work should be done in November.

NEW: ONE PARENT FAMILY TICKET

We thought it was about time we introduced a one parent family ticket, discounted along the same lines as the two parent family ticket. The ticket works in exactly the same way but with one full price adult (parent or carer) and one full price child, and then three other children added at a discount.

The price of the new one parent family ticket is:

Steaming Day: £22.50

Special Event: £28.50

OLD STATION PLATFORM

A hardworking group of volunteers have been painting the old station platform including the fences, gates, telephone box etc.

Volunteers have also repaired the footbridge and they are currently repainting it. It's looking very smart! Thank you to all the volunteers who worked so hard to make it look so good.



PARKS & GARDENS

The Parks & Gardens team has also been working hard keeping the site looking good - as you can see from the weeping willow which has had a much-needed hair cut! Not only can our visitors now sit once again underneath its boughs, but we can also see Coventry and the signal box! Thank you to the whole team who work constantly, reliably and quietly, behind the scenes pretty much every week.

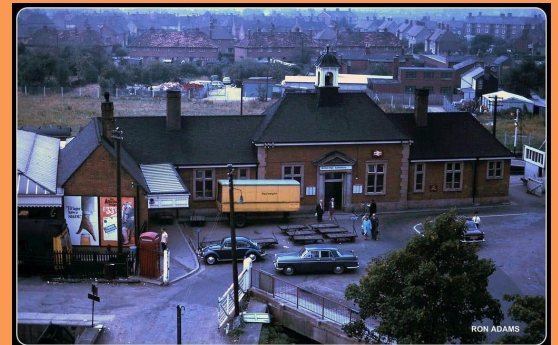


MUSEUM SIGNS UPDATE

Earlier this year, Vickie took delivery of this rather fabulous 'British Rail Aylesbury' sign that has been donated to us for the museum. It was apparently rescued from a skip 30+ years ago and has been in someone's garage ever since.



Vickie asked on our members Facebook page and someone shared this photo, below, taken by Ron Adams, of the sign in situ from around 1968!



The three signs pictured above are the most recent signs to go up in the museum - all donated to QRS recently.

The top one is a spare replica, the middle one was from Leighton Buzzard signal box on the LNWR mainline and the bottom one is originally from Lostwithiel station on the GWR.

What great additions for our museum - well done Vickie!

NEW: QUANTON LENDING LIBRARY

The Lending Library is an initiative with the Waddesdon & Haddenham Community Board. The idea is based on the old video lending library and is sponsored by waste and landfill. The idea is simple: Items are donated to the library instead of going to landfill. There will be a key list of items. You join the library and can then borrow things to save you the cost of purchasing. For instance, you want to make some cakes but don't have a mixer. Borrow one. Birthday party in the garden? Borrow table, chairs and a pop up marquee.

Quanton Lending Library will be opening here!

The initiative is run by the council and advertised by the council. All we have had to do so far is give the use of one of our storage containers. Bob and Terry are working on fitting it out. The meeting place will be at our Railway Café three days a week, so it will also benefit our café by bringing in more business. Ours will be one of three in the country.

The follow-on to this will be the repair shop, which we will set up next. Off the back of this, we are getting major help from Bucks Business First and backing against HS2 from the council. All these people are linked together by the Community Boards. These are two hugely exciting initiatives to come to our railway and we can't wait to get them up and running very soon.

NEW: PLAY AREA

We are thrilled to announce that we have finally been awarded a grant for a children's play area! The grant has come from the Waddesdon & Haddenham Community Board and installation should be happening at the beginning of October.

Not only will this be a great addition to our offering for families visiting on our event days, but we are sure it will also increase footfall to our mid-week café for parents and carers with pre-school children.

The play area will be located on the grass by the weighbridge hut.

Another really exciting project soon to be completed here at Quanton Road.



Community Board
Haddenham and
Waddesdon

TPO UPDATE:

The Travelling Post Office (TPO) Group has been enjoying showing our visitors round our repainted TPO coaches, which were reopened at a formal Reopening Ceremony on 22nd May 2022 by Alderman Ray James, a former Mayor of Aylesbury, who is a TPO steward and a former Chairman of the 7200 Group. Bob Frise made a presentation (of a model of a Stowage Van with an adjacent number to our Stowage Van) on behalf of the TPO group to Peter Hoskings, our founding and recently retired Chairman.



We have enjoyed being fully open for the first time since before the pandemic. Sorting the post continues to be a popular attraction, now very much an "all age" activity and there is a sticker with "I've had a go in the TPO" for those who take part.

We try to be open as often as we can on steaming days, but we will welcome extra volunteers. So if you're wondering if it could be for you, please get in touch with the office who will pass your details to us. Even if we are closed, the coaches themselves are an interesting exhibit for those passing Platform 5, and on the fence we have summaries of TPO history for people to read. In that way, the TPO is always available.

Taking part in School Days is something else which we have enjoyed, with some of the youngsters returning with their parents on a steaming day to show them what they experienced on their school trip.

Roland

SLEEPER DONATION

We have had 150 concrete sleepers very kindly donated to us by local company, Morris Roe. The sleepers have been on their site for many years, piled up and never used. This year, when the company finally decided to get rid of them, one of the managers thought he'd get in touch with us because he used to come here as a child! Obviously, we were thrilled to receive such a donation. The company then very kindly delivered them to us as well.



CONGRATULATIONS TO HELEN

We're delighted to share the news that volunteer trainee train driver Helen passed her Fireman's exam at the end of the summer! Well done Helen!



NEW YORKER

We are about to restart work on the inside of the New Yorker, which will include welding and insulating, followed by finishing work to create a shell to fit out. We are also building the platform outside the New Yorker. The aim is to have it ready by the spring.



WEBSITE/WIFI/NEW TICKETING SYSTEM - ALL CHANGE PLEASE!

Meetings are ongoing with HS2, but we are pleased to say that we have received our first small claim from them, which is for the reimbursement of the new overflow car park work that we had to start in 2020. This will be invested in the following projects, to upgrade our IT in essential areas:

Upgrading our existing internet access around the site, increasing Wi-Fi in key buildings, such as the museum and Rewley Road.

A new ticketing system, which will make purchasing tickets, memberships, local passes and gift vouchers much easier for our customers is now live for Christmas! Once our events are decided for next year, we will move over to the new system completely. This will incorporate a new point of sale system in the giftshop, café and entrance gate. This will replace the old equipment, which unsurprisingly has come to the end of its life expectancy!

The new system is much more user friendly, making it easier and quicker for taking sales and scanning visitor tickets. The aim is to install the epos system during our closed period, ready for February.

This will also coincide with a brand-new website to bring us into 2023! Designs are being worked on now, watch this space!

PLEASE STAY IN TOUCH!

Have you contacted us with your email address yet? We would like to be able to contact all our members by email as it is so much easier and quicker! Email: office@bucksrailcentre.org or call 01296 655720.