

QUAINTON TODAY

The new fortnightly email newsletter of Quainton Railway Society to help us stay in touch with you!



WELCOME!

Welcome to the first issue of *Quainton Today*, our new fortnightly email newsletter.

We are committed to keeping in touch with our members and other supporters who want to be updated with our news on a regular basis.

UPDATES

Quainton Today will focus on the day-to-day updates that we think you'll find interesting and important to daily life here at Quainton Road, with news from the volunteers and staff who regularly spend their time here.

If you know someone who hasn't received *Quainton Today*, please ask them to get in touch with their email address!

If you know someone who is not on email who would like to receive a paper copy of *Quainton Today*, please ask them to call the office on 01296 655720.



EMAIL ME!

I am always keen to hear from you! If you have any feedback about the newsletter, or if you have an interesting story to tell or fact to share, or if you are working on a project here at Quainton Road, please email me, Louisa Richards, on marketing@bucksrailcentre.org

Enjoy the read!

Louisa



ENGINEERING - LOCO UPDATE



6989

Wightwick Hall, loco no.6989, has had a piston and valve exam, which resulted in us having to machine in a few new bits; she's also had a leaky steam pipe replaced and is now back up and running at the Bluebell Railway - pictured left.

THE BAGNALL

Now affectionately re-named 'Scotty' after her previous owner, the late, great Dick Scott, the Bagnall loco is currently undergoing some major boiler work, with the boiler away at Mid Hants being overhauled.

The frames are stripped ready to remove the wheels to send away for new tyres.



MAY

May had an injector issue, but the engineering team has now fixed one of the injectors and next they need to manufacture another set. This should be completed fairly soon and then May will be up and running again!



ARTHUR & MILLOM

Arthur and Millom are both running beautifully and regularly on the steam rota offering passenger rides on open days, and playing their roles as Thomas & Percy well on our Day Out With Thomas event days. They also make up two very important elements of our Steam Fleet, earning important funds to keep our engineering team working hard!

Our next Day Out With Thomas events are on 5/6th July, 9/10th August and 11/12th Oct.



ENGINEERING UPDATE CONT'D



AUSTERITY 66

Our awfully hard working loco Austerity no.66 has finally come to the end of her boiler ticket and will now be taking a well-earned break. She will join the overhaul queue and we will update you.

COVENTRY

Coventry has been outside on display for three years and now it is time to put her in the up yard shed to help preserve her.



MET 1

Metropolitan no.1 is being put back together for a cosmetic restoration. The plan is to put her on display in the up yard shed with 7200, Arthur and Coventry.



6989 TENDER

New plating has been made for the coal bunker, which has now been welded in place. The brakes have been fitted and the team is testing the tender for water leaks.

DIESEL FLEET

Hillsea has been checked over and had work to put it back into service and she is now working nicely. She will soon be getting a fresh coat of paint.

Cromwell has had work to the air brake system and is awaiting a faulty starter to be fixed. When that's been done, we'll pull WD849 out of service for some maintenance.



7200 NEWS



The 7200 restoration team has been steadily working on three fronts: the loco team on Sundays, the team restoring our Siphon G (Wednesday) and Heritage Boiler Steam Services at Huyton (Liverpool) who are restoring the boiler. Some people may have noticed that a couple of months back we placed and bolted our chimney onto 7200, The Crinolines have been successfully been trial fitted and painted, rubbing down and painting of the side-tanks is ongoing. Repairing and painting of our Siphon G is still happening on Wednesdays , weather permitting. The boiler work is still ongoing, The throat plate has now been welded to the boiler, the welding up of the back head stay holes and corners has now been completed, one set back that occurred was that cracks were found in the firebox, this problem has now been resolved.

TPO GROUP

News from the Travelling Post Office Group

Not long after I became a steward in the Travelling Post Office (TPO) carriages, Roy Miller, one of the founders of Quainton Railway Society (QRS), came to visit the TPO. Talking to him about the TPO, one of his comments was that we learn from our visitors.

When I was on duty in the TPO on the first Sunday in June this year, one of our visitors had worked on the TPOs in the 1980s/ 1990s.



His particular train was the 'Up Special', the TPO from Glasgow to London, the service which, some years before he joined, had been at the target of The Great Train Robbery. He was able to talk about his experience on the TPOs, and answer a question which had been raised earlier on.

As Roy Miller so rightly said, we learn from our visitors!

Roland Gillott, Chairman
TPO Group

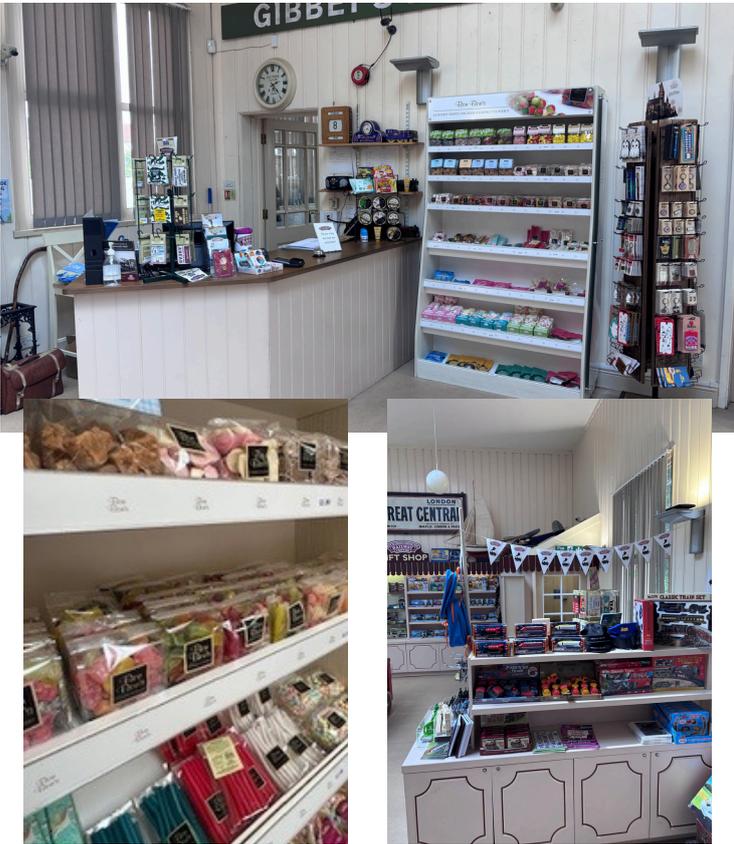
GIFT SHOP

If you've been in the gift shop lately you may have noticed a few changes!

Jo Green, our Shop Manager, has changed the configuration of the shop counter to give more room for our busy event days, and create a better flow around the shop. She then asked Ben, our new caretaker, to remove the top layer of one of the shelving units, to allow better visibility around the shop and towards the back door.

This has allowed us to use the back door for visitors to exit through, hopefully creating more sales as visitors leave the centre!

Jo is also using a new confectionary supplier who has supplied a fancy new shelving unit, which is on show next to the counter!



RAILWAY CAFE

The Railway Cafe has been nice and busy lately, especially on event days, but they also like to do functions too. On Tuesday 10th June, Catering Manager Alice and Events Manager Belinda, provided afternoon tea for 38 people for Florence Nightingale. The event was a thank you to their volunteers. Belinda has also got three school proms booked in, and the cafe is doing the catering for two of them!

The staff in the railway cafe have ordered new aprons and tops with the cafe logo on it - I am sure you agree that Alice and Anglie look really smart in this photo!



SECONDHAND BOOKSHOP

Our secondhand bookshop brings in a really valuable source of income every year. They have recently updated their database of books and are keeping it updated as often as possible. They also now have their own Facebook page. Search Bucks Rail Bookshop on Facebook...



NEW CARETAKER

We are thrilled to introduce you all to our new caretaker Ben Pepper who joined us in the Spring. He has fitted into the team so well and you are bound to see him around the site during the week and on event days. Here he is pictured at our Day Out With Thomas event this Easter with our Chairman, Barry.



KINGS CROSS SUBURBAN COACH

Volunteer Chris Ashton has been painting the Kings Cross Suburban coach, which will soon be found carrying passengers on open days in place of one of the Mk1 carriages, which is going for some maintenance to fix the steam heating.



STOVE VAN

I popped into the up yard shed and found David Gomarsall and his wife Sally working on the stove van, which was in desperate need of a new paint job.

They have so far sanded it down and completed four coats of paint... the masking tape is in place for them to paint the lines next.



TRAINING UPDATE

News from Alison Wilkins who is in charge of our crew training:

For new volunteers or anyone wanting to change roles, the induction course we offer is a mixture of practical sessions with some book work. The aim is to get everyone, at their own pace, to the point of being comfortable and able to safely begin their 'on the job' training.



During this process, students will undertake a Personal Track Safety (PTS) briefing with exam, complete eye-sight tests and submit a confidential medical questionnaire. Also required is the completion of structured role specific pre-reads and introductory written tests. In addition, students will attend both a post-PTS session on and around a cold engine and visit on a steaming day, spending some time on the footplate, journeys with the guard and finding out more about the site. Once the above has been successfully completed, the student can then progress to being a Trainee Guard, steam footplate Cleaner, or both!

I'm also now looking after the PTS exams (first timers and refreshers) and gatekeeping the medical forms for volunteers. If anyone thinks they may need to complete either, please get in touch - I can offer paper or electronic versions of all documents, and will be in the New Yorker every Sunday morning in June if anyone wants to pop in in - either for a classroom training session, general chat or collect / deliver any paperwork.

Contact Alison on training@bucksrailcentre.org for more information.

EXAM SUCCESS!

Huge congratulations from us all to volunteer Peter Russell (below left) who passed his fireman exams on June 8th.

Also, congratulations to volunteer William Thomas (below right), now 18, who has also passed his fireman exams. William, who is also employed as a steam fitter by Elvar Engineering, based here, has also passed out as Station Master!

Congratulations, and many thanks, to you both!



MUSEUM NEWS

Exciting News from the Museum

It's only 24 weeks until our Christmas event begins and modifications to the Museum are well under way. Last year, we put up a grotto and a virtual reality elevator in the first bay of the Museum. The customers loved it, but it was somewhat chilly in the unheated museum in December! So, our dedicated team has been hard at work rectifying the problem for this year's event.

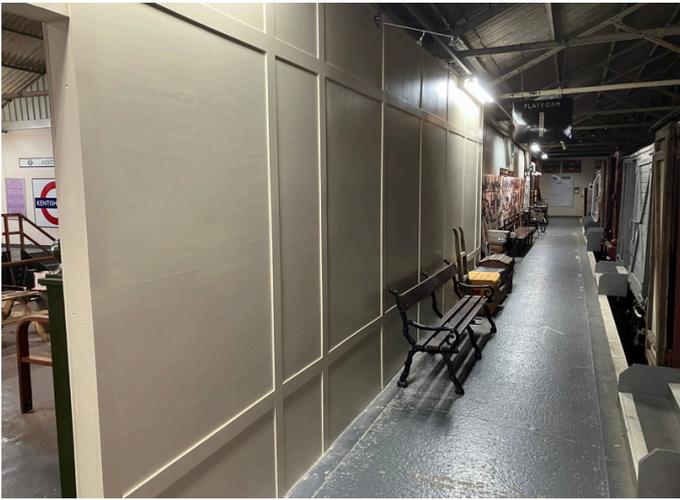
As the weather is up to powers even greater than our Executive Committee, we have taken the decision to heat the first bay of the Museum in December to keep our eager customers warm in the winter festivities. The obvious problem is that the first bay is open plan with the rest of the building, so heating only this bay was impossible as the heat would simply dissipate throughout the rest of the building. This has led to the construction of a partition wall between the first bay and the next two bays. Along the entire length of Platform One in fact! This will keep the heat in the main entrance area, or Bay One, as we like to call it.

The access to the other two bays will be through glass doors which have yet to be fitted. This will effectively create a separate space for Christmas and Halloween, within the Museum, which can be heated. This wall has been painted in appropriate colours along with the remaining railings. The removed railings will be reused elsewhere on site, so nothing is wasted. The wall will be a new interpretation area for the Museum and plans for this are well under way. So, it will not be plain for long!

The area within Bay One has plans as well. It is hoped it will become a temporary exhibit area bringing a new look to our museum. It is hoped that this exhibit area will be a hireable space which will bring much needed revenue to our museum, allowing further renovations to take place. Exciting times for the Museum, which should see a dramatic facelift taking place over the next few years. This should maintain our museum as one of the biggest and best railway museums in the south of England. Why not pay a visit to it next time you are on site and see the improvements first hand!

NEW MESS ROOM

A new mess room/site office has been provided in the up yard for the train crew to have their breaks, and for volunteers working in the Ivatt Building to have a mess room to use.



NEWS FROM VAMES



The main news from VAMES is that the rebuild of our signal system is going very well. When the track was extended, around 30 years ago, we needed to have a fully operational signalling system. We didn't have much money but we had members who knew what to do. Using second hand relays, cables and anything that might be useful, a three-aspect system was installed. The result was a track with 12 sections, all needing signals, using around 40 treadles and about 250 relays. Complicated but it worked.

Over the last few years gremlins crept in; some in the form of vermin both large and small, but damp and corrosion of terminals in the relay boxes round the track was proving to be a major headache.

Last year, our in-house experts decided that the only answer was going to be a complete rebuild using newly designed home-built treadles, new relays in new damp proof relay boxes round the track and replacing the old underground copper wiring with modern cabling. It would be a long job and highly complex but there was no option.

They are having to work out exactly what does what as they go along. The work is proceeding better than we envisaged although there is a long way to go. If you take a ride round don't be surprised if you see figures huddled together round a box, no matter what the weather, methodically working out what wires must go where and why. You can also see the new LED lit signals, now on numbered signal posts, as well.

Meanwhile of course, there is grass to mow, trains to run, fences to repair and all the maintenance jobs which go with keeping everything going. Our new Saturday monthly club days are proving to be popular with our members. The garden railway members are also very busy and meanwhile all the electronic gismos, which keep young children amused by pressing buttons in Roy's Corner, are being replaced as well. There is plenty going on.



Andy Gelson is the one done up like Nanook of the North on a very cold wet day showing an example of the wiring involved. Ian Allen is in the blue jersey in the picture showing the inside of another new relay box. The top photo shows Andy and Ian working in the rain under a parasol putting it to better use than it was during last summer!

Events round up...



STEAM, CLASSIC & COUNTRY FAIR

Saturday 17th & Sunday 18th May

New for 2025, this event was an amalgamation of the Traction Engine Rally, the Steam & Agricultural Show, the Fire Engine Rally, classic car show and a good old Steam Rally! This event had it all!

We had a bar, live music, two engines in steam offering passenger rides (Isabel and Millom), Dorothy the traction engine offering trailer rides, dozens of heritage fire engines which paraded around the site. They also made a poignant tribute for those who lost their lives in the Bicester Motion fire.

A fabulous event which we look forward to bringing back next year! We had over 1,800 visitors over the weekend!

FUN DAY

Sunday 8th June

What a great day this was! We offered a special £5 entry to give people who can't normally justify a day out with us a chance to come on a cheaper day. We then had someone offer to bring a whole host of inflatables to add the 'fun' to our Fun Day! These were set up in the Showground and families had the option to pay extra for this.

We also had Adele Peter Performing Arts School here with students performing on our 'stage', singing and dancing, plus Quanton Community Choir came and sang.

We had over 800 visitors - a brilliant day!



Next up:

RIDGEWAY RUN

The Ridgeway Run is back on Father's Day for the 41st year, Sunday 15th June! We love this event and the fabulous collection of vehicles it attracts from the Historic Commercial Vehicle Society.

Photo page... Fun with the Day Out With Thomas selfie frame!

