

# QUAINTON TODAY

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



## WELCOME!

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

We hope you continue to read our news and enjoy learning what we get up to on a day-to-day basis!

Feedback always welcome!

## GET IN TOUCH

If you know someone who hasn't received *Quainton Today*, please ask them to get in touch with their email address! Either call me, Louisa Richards, on 01296 655720 or email me at [marketing@bucksrailcentre.org](mailto:marketing@bucksrailcentre.org)

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

Also, if you have a news story to share with the membership, let me know!

You can also find me in the office, usually on Tuesdays and Thursdays.



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

This issue, we have updates from Engineering, the museum, TPO, Q-Branch, Parks & Gardens and lots more!

Enjoy the read!

Louisa  
[marketing@bucksrailcentre.org](mailto:marketing@bucksrailcentre.org)



# SITE NEWS FROM OUR GM

As we come towards the end of July, the heat has died down, but the activity still carries on at a pace. Small things keep appearing around the site. In the last edition, we showed the newly refurbished LMS poster boards on the front of Rewley Road. This week, the new lamp room plate has appeared on the station platform. A big thanks to Tony for casting it to finish off the newly refurbished lamp room.



I have noticed a real change in the centre of late. There is a new pride in the site, and everyone is doing their bit to make the site look great again. Things that have been in storage for years like the TPO exchange apparatus are now painted and installed. Signs are being refurbished and created. We have the 04 and Hilsea being painted, plus they are now looking at Cromwell. As things get fixed, they now get painted, the stove van looks resplendent in its new livery. The talk is of what can we do over the winter in the new paint shop when the Hall is moved into the new machine shop. Plans are a foot to tackle smaller box vans so we can have nicely painted freight trains being moved by smart looking engines. Roger set a standard with his diesel when he came to site, now all our diesels will be looking just as smart. There is always something to do large or small on site and sometimes it's the small finishing jobs that create the most impact.

Things to look out for in the coming month: Network Rail is setting up the central building compound in our old overflow car park. The target date for work to start on the bridge is the first of September. So, the new road junction between us and the village will open by the end of August and the bridge work starts the next day. Access to the centre will be via the village side from September onwards and lots of orange people will be on and around the site.

The bridge completion is February 2026 when the central building compound will be handed over to the track delivery team to relay the track northwards.

What does the future hold for Quanton Road? The aim will be to be able to get on the train at Marylebone and get off in our station. This was one of the original concepts of Metroland. A day out in the country! They sold guidebooks so you could get on a train in London and get off and enjoy the countryside, perhaps visiting a village or walking between stations. In 2028, we will be able to do it again with our station.

Steve Green, General Manager

# ENGINEERING - LOCO UPDATE



## MAY

Having passed her boiler test, *May* had her first successful steaming this weekend, playing an important role in a wedding on Saturday and offering passenger rides on our Steaming Day on Sunday.

She has proven to be a very good engine and popular with the punters - and the wedding couple loved her!

Before she went to work this weekend, the engineering team changed the vacuum pipe from left to right to make coupling up easier for the crew.

## FLYING BUFFERBEAM

This engine is literally one of a kind! *The Flying Bufferbeam* was made to an exact specification and is the smallest steam engine ever made to a standard gauge. Built by Peckett & Sons during the second half of 1935, it was delivered on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1935 (even though the plate says 1936!) Her works number is 1900. Mike Taylor's Peckett loco Merlin has a works number of 1903 and they would have been in the workshop at the same time!

*The Flying Bufferbeam* last ran here in 1994, but now her time has come - over 30 years later! Her major overhaul has begun:

- The wheels have had their tyres profiled (pictured below left)
- The slide bars have been reground and refitted true to the cylinder (pictured below right)
- New bearings have been fitted to the brake weigh shaft
- A new cab floor has been manufactured and fitted

Exciting times in the engineering sheds - I can't wait to see this one take shape over the coming months!



# ENGINEERING UPDATE CONT'D

## HILSEA



*Hilsea* is a diesel built by Ruston & Hornsby. It was used by British Gas and donated to us when they no longer needed her.

*Hilsea* has been moved into the downyard shed and work to get her running has included changing the gearbox oil; mending a fuel leak; completing parts 1 and 2 of the air receiver exam and some other minor fettling. The engine now runs perfectly.

William has started re-painting the engine.

Once complete, *Hilsea* could run freight/demonstration trains or brake van rides. There are no vacuum brakes, like most diesels, so it could not be used for usual passenger train rides.



## DIESEL 04 D2298

The diesel 04 had an engine overhaul several years ago, led by Alan Simms, and now several volunteers are working on putting it all back together and giving it a fresh coat of black paint.

We are hoping that this engine will be able to join the DOWT Fleet as alter ego 'Mavis'.

Great work so far by Peter, Mike, Richard, Gareth and John.

We look forward to following your progress!



# ENGINEERING UPDATE CONT'D



## CROMWELL

With all the painting going on around the site, *Hilsea* is getting a new coat of red, the 04 is having its black finished ready for out shopping. The team is then looking at a new paint scheme for *Cromwell*. Pictured is the Bachmann model of Thomas & Friends' Salty the Dockside Engine. We don't have a face to go on the engine, but the actual colour scheme looks quite nice.

If anyone has any other ideas, we are open to suggestions. The main thing is that one by one the engines will all be gleaming!

## OWSDEN HALL

The chimney had to be lined up with the blast pipe with the use of a 'Plumb Line', before then securing in place. Graham has been busy manufacturing the cylinder covers, valve covers and parts of the splashers, followed by extensive rubbing down and painting to a very high standard. He's also been busy rubbing down and painting the cab and running plates. All of the inside motion has been re-assembled with some work having to be carried out on the studs of the 'Eccentric Straps'.

All of the side and connecting rods have been fitted with some mathematics being utilised to get the rods in balance so that just myself and loco owner Trevor could get them fitted on our own. The 'Crossheads' that secure the 'Connecting Rods' to the 'Cylinders' were also fitted. The 'Vacuum/Air Pump' has been fitted to the main frames but we still have an issue with the pump's cylinder actually not moving, so can't get it connected to the 'Crosshead' at the moment. One of the engines main 'springs' had to be reconnected to one of the centre 'Driving Wheels', which is the latest piece of work that I have been involved with. It took two mornings to complete and my body is still suffering as we speak!

Regards,  
Alan Hogg



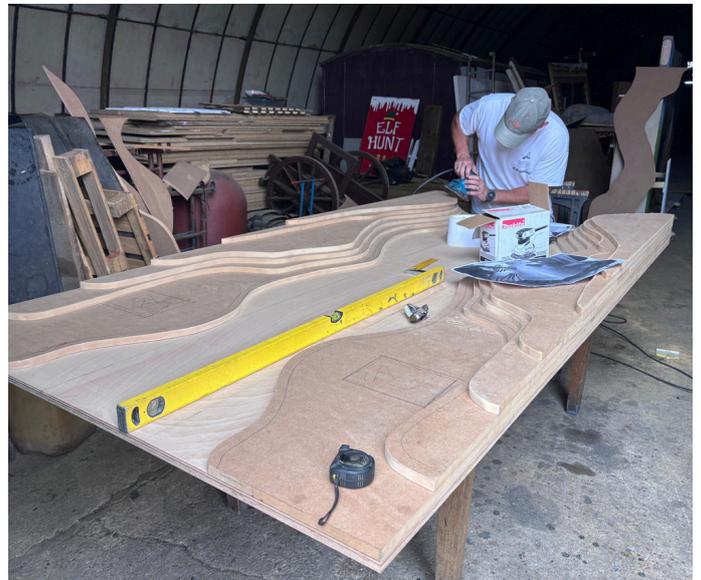
# MUSEUM NEWS

The museum is having an update and a change around. We have built the new wall to section off the main hall from the buffer depot so we can heat the building for Halloween and Christmas. The centre display and wheel display has been removed to create an open multi use space. In September we will build in Santa's workshop which can also be used as a scare house for Halloween. This will then be converted by adding the Enchanted Elevator and turning it into Santa's workshop. After Christmas, the display is removed, and the hall can be used by the Risborough & District Model Railway Club to hold model railway shows.

We are also in the process of building new interactive tables so people can have a go at bridge building and a table for tactile handling of artifacts. We want to make the museum more engaging and educational so it becomes a stand alone reason that people come to visit us. We have three other stories to tell in the museum: Metroland, the Brill Tramway and the history of HS2. These are all things that are relevant to us that we do not currently cover very well. The new hall can be a place where we tell these important stories. We have a long way to go but a really positive start on these changes have been made. Have a look next time you are in.

Steve Green

*Photo below right: Ryan and Josh working on a second new activity table for the museum.*



## DO YOU REMEMBER THIS SIGN?

Sometime ago I was asked by our curator Vickie to sympathetically repair and restore this wonderful sign which came to us from the estate of the late Eric 'Dusty' Miller, a former vice Chairman of QRS for many years and saviour of 7200.

However, I can't find where it came from. Books, on the whole, tend to concentrate on nice train photos in stations and I have been through so many books without luck. As it is headed Great Western & Great Central Railways, it doesn't seem likely to have come from Aylesbury as that was a joint station with the Met Railway. Does anyone know? There weren't that many stations on the joint line. It's a large sign at 5ft x 2.5ft - did you help recover it? Do you know what colours it was?

Any help appreciated!  
Tony Lyster

# PARKS & GARDENS

Following the hedge cutting around the Showground the team have been busy clearing up the clippings from the path running behind the signal box.

We have also started to trim the 'island' beds in the main car park to leave them looking neater and to expose the lamps which had been covered by the growth in vegetation! This work is ongoing and will be spread over several weeks.

Although we have not done any grass cutting for several weeks now the change in the weather and some rain will mean that we will have to get the mowers out shortly. However, there has still been strimming to be done:

- On the bank by the miniature railway to keep in check the bushes and grasses.
- On the bank opposite the signal box to stop the grasses and especially the brambles from encroaching on to the down yard running line.
- Around the huts near the Showground to give the area a tidier appearance for our visitors.

David Bell  
Parks & Gardens



# NEW CATERING CONTAINER

This is the new catering container! They have outgrown the old orange container, which is good news on the café front. This container will give them more room to store food and equipment when we lift it in.

We can also fit in a workstation for all the paperwork we have to do now. It can also double up as an area for catering staff to take a break from the shop floor!

We have had to cut a new door in the end so we can get access off the hard standing. It's great to see catering doing so well even though we are boxed in by Hs2.



# Q-BRANCHERS OLD & NEW



During the July Day Out With Thomas weekend, Q-Brancher Sam had his first footplate turn, being trained by William, a previous Q-Brancher. It was especially lovely to see one of our 'old' Q-Branchers support one of our new ones!

It is a sign of the success of our Q-Branch group, that our younger volunteers progress through Q-Branch and out the other side and remain as volunteers into adulthood. As well as William, we also have Lucy who still volunteers on the ticket gate, and Laura (although she was working as a first aider on this particular weekend, a role she gained through volunteering here on site).

George is one of the youngest Q-Branchers and helped on the platform both days. He is becoming much more proficient but these younger Q-Branchers still need an adult with them on the platform as they are under 16 years – could you volunteer to be that adult every now and then? If so, please get in touch with Helen.

Alfie (not in the photo) had his first day's volunteering on the Sunday and picked things up really quickly! We look forward to seeing him back here again soon.

We currently have a waiting list of young people wanting to volunteer, which gives real hope for the future.

For any Q-Branch queries, please email Helen at [qbranch@bucksrailcentre.org](mailto:qbranch@bucksrailcentre.org)

## TRAINING UPDATE

Sam and Gianni have successfully completed the induction process and now booking turns as Cleaner and Trainee Guard; congratulations to both!

For those that have Personal Track Safety (PTS) the exam is valid for 2 years and HOPS generated reminders are sent at 8 and 4 weeks before expiry - if you receive a message about this, it's not spam! I'll also be sending gentle nudges too... you can do the PTS paper online through HOPS but if it's easier please let me know and I can email the documents.

I'll be in the New Yorker on Wednesdays 13, 20 & 27th August if anyone wants to chat about any aspects of the PTS process.

For HOPS users: As you are probably getting Quainton Today by email, can you please check that the contact details we have for you on the system are up to date? Or ask me and I can check for you. Electronic messaging can be the most efficient means of communications, but only if the info is up to date.

Thank you,

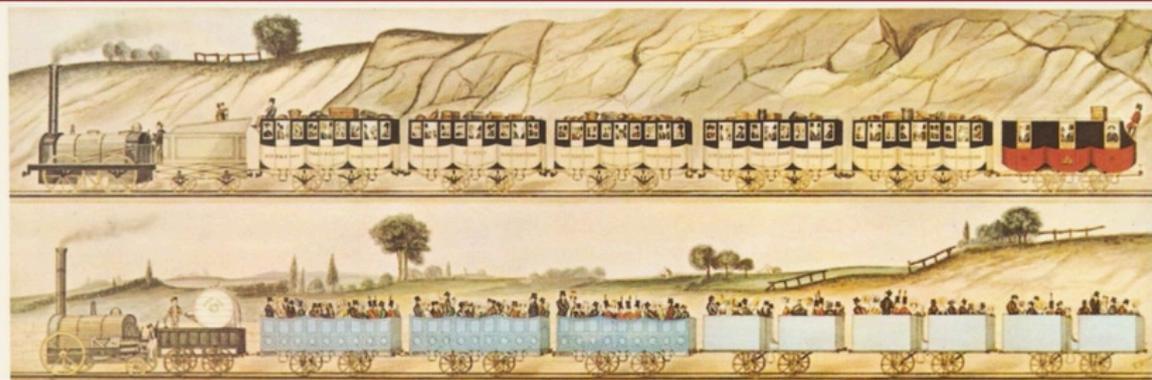
[Alison training@bucksrailcentre.org](mailto:Alison.training@bucksrailcentre.org)

TPO EVENT 2025

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE  
RAILWAY  
CENTRE

# MOVING THE MAIL

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> September 10.30am-4pm



TRAVELLING ON THE LIVERPOOL AND MANCHESTER RAILWAY.

A Travelling Post Office Group event celebrating 194 years of Mail by Rail, including illustrated talks, exhibition panels and a reunion of former TPO workers

T: 01296 655720 E: [office@bucksrailcentre.org](mailto:office@bucksrailcentre.org)

STATION ROAD, QUANTON NR AYLESBURY HP22 4BY

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# NEW TPO DISPLAY

## New TPO Post Bag collection posts display

On the site of the old gas tank next to the TPO, Bob, Terry and the team have been installing the Exchange apparatus that was stored in Romney 6. This is the mail bag holding equipment which the passing train uses to collect post bags as they travel through the countryside.

This has expanded our TPO offering to help our customers understand how the service operated. The next project will be the ground catcher for dropping off the processed mail. It is a metal frame with an attached net, so as the train went passed, it collected mail at high level and delivered processed mail at ground level.



# RISBOROUGH & DISTRICT MODEL RAILWAY CLUB

A warm welcome to the members of the Risborough & District Model Railway Club who have relocated to Quainton Road! You can find their layouts inside the education coach in the museum.

The group will have their layouts on display on our open days, with volunteers from the R&DMRC manning the installation and on hand to talk with enquiring visitors.

Here are a few words from their chairman Paul Wright:

## **Aylesbury LNWR**

Aylesbury is an EM gauge layout (4mm to the foot but with 18.2mm track gauge compared to 16.5mm gauge of OO) and is an accurate model of Aylesbury as it was just prior to WW1. This was the first station in Aylesbury and was also the first passenger branch line ever built in 1839 by the London & Birmingham Railway, later becoming the London & North Western Railway (LNWR). The other end of the line is 7 miles away at Cheddington, which is famous for the great train robbery. You can still see the almost straight line of the railway on Google maps. It was not until 1863 that the Wycombe Railway built the other station which was called Aylesbury Town to distinguish it from Aylesbury.



*Above: Aylesbury Station with the gas works behind*

The layout was built by the late Geoff Williams in the '70s in his loft so was never on public display, but it was well known from magazine articles. It was acquired by R&DMRC to save it from the skip, refurbished and shown at Railex in 2016. We converted the layout to DCC control as this was easier than trying to figure out all the cut wires under the boards. After this, it went back into store.

It has now found a new home at Quainton Road inside the education coach in the museum. It has taken us about a year to get the layout installed and working, and it has taken approx. 3 years to build all the stock on display. Many of our members have joined in with this project and built a wagon or two. There is still stock being built but we have enough to demonstrate the layout. All the stock is typical of the period and shows the type of trains running into Aylesbury.



*The prison, which still exists. The backscene still shows a little storage damage but will be refurbished soon.*

## RISBOROUGH & DISTRICT MODEL RAILWAY CLUB CONT'D

Most of the buildings depicted on the layout have now been demolished and redeveloped, so this area of Aylesbury looks very different now. The prison (built in 1847) still exists and at this time was where some of the suffragettes were imprisoned. It is always interesting talking to visitors who knew the area or even lived there as this expands our knowledge of the site, which can then be passed on to other visitors. Then we have another group who never know the station existed so we can explain the history of Aylesbury.



*Above: The platform, passengers, baskets (made in Aylesbury) and the station master.*

For the last few months, we have been running the layout on QRS Steaming Days and other Special Event days and have had many visitors come to see us. We have also added display boards outside the coach explaining the history of the real station and the model, including a map showing where it was. We continue to hold work sessions, adding new details, refurbishing damaged items and generally cleaning and repairing the models. This is another attraction at QRS, and we are enjoying being part of the QRS experience.



*Above: A LNWR D77 picnic saloon built by John Compton.*

*Below: Freight trains waiting in the storage area. All photos by Paul Wright.*



## STEAMING DAYS



**13<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> July 2025**

We had two steaming days - the latter of which saw *May* enjoy her first outing for over a year offering passenger rides!

NEXT UP...

## EMERGENCY SERVICES DAY



**Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> July**

Emergency Services Day is probably the busiest event of the year, usually attracting around 2,000 visitors.

We need all hands on deck - so if anyone is free to come and lend a hand, please email [office@bucksrailcentre.org](mailto:office@bucksrailcentre.org) urgently!

Thank you!

NEXT UP...

## KIDS GO FOR £1



**30th July - 31st August**

The school summer holidays have officially started! Wednesday Steaming Days start on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> July with the final one on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> August.

Kids go for £1 on Steaming Days in the summer holidays. This does not include Emergency Services Day, the August Day Out With Thomas weekend or Bank Holiday Monday's Auto Fest (what was the Pre-1978 Rally).