

QUAINTON TODAY

Quainton Railway Society's fortnightly member newsletter
to help us stay in touch with you!



WELCOME!

Welcome to *Quainton Today*, your fortnightly member newsletter.

GET IN TOUCH

If you know someone who isn't receiving *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

If you know someone who is not on email and 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 email me or find me in the office, usually on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Come and see me!



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Enjoy the read!

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NEWS FROM OUR GM

We are now in May and time this year is flying by. Wightwick Hall went straight from Epping to the film set for Harry Potter filming. The marketing for this is starting to ramp up and you will have seen an increase online. I am away on holiday in America at the moment and we have a whole channel just showing Harry Potter films every day. The Harry Potter Experience trains will be launching here in the states this year before they start in the UK next July 2027. Today, Wightwick Hall has been delivered back from the film set to Quainton. The engine has a fault so will not be running unfortunately. It has a leaking boiler tube caused by a pin hole. The boiler inspector has looked at it and said we need to replace all the small tubes.



6989 has a list of other works which need doing, like boiler stays and patch screws, but they can be done at the same time. This is a big undertaking, and we have been offered help from another railway to do the work as it has to be completed by the next filming slot in September. So, make the most of seeing the engine on site as in the next couple of weeks it will be picked up and taken to the workshops at the Mid Hants Railway.



As the engine is gaining a big following, we are building its own website for the Red Halls. This will contain all the information about Wightwick Hall and let people know where they can see it. The site will cover its history, filming, crowdfunding and our new merchandise range, which you will be able to either buy in the shop or order online. The tag line 'Better Red than in the Shed' will be featured on the range, which will include baseball caps, t-shirts, jumpers, mugs etc, something for everyone. See photo below of the team modeling some of the items!! For obvious reasons, I am not wearing a 'Better Red' baseball cap here in America!



In other news, the saga of HS2 continues. You will notice a new temporary access road being built into the showground, which should be ready by the end of May. This is because the water works in the down yard are still with us and likely to be for some time. The problem is the two high pressure water mains supply the reservoirs on Quainton Hill. These supply 40k people in the area, so the pipes have to keep working at full pressure, which means HS2 cannot work on them. Network Rail is gearing up to replace the track in the old station and fit a new point near the overnight sleeping wagons. This will create double track in the station for the first time since closure but the track going through platform 2 will be a head shunt delivering materials through the bridge to the rail building compound in our old overflow car park. This work will start in June.

Access to the down yard will be either over the foot bridges or over the rebuilt station road bridge and via the new temporary access road into the showground. We knew this year would be tricky with all the building works going on but we are on this all the time with HS2 working to protect the centre. Trying times, I know, but once the new road alignments open things should become easier.



Looking forward now we have a Museum Day this weekend followed by Day Out With Thomas over the Bank Holiday weekend. Let's hope for good weather and a great turnout for Thomas! This is a show we do well and people love. So please do volunteer if you can to make this a great weekend.

Stephen Green, General Manager

ENGINEERING UPDATE

BAGNALL

Dave and Paul continue to work on the Bagnall overhaul. This week, the sandboxes have been removed in order to gain access to the operating linkage that was seized up. They stripped the parts down, freed them up (using a combined effort of brute force, oil and heat) and then re-fitted them. They also emptied the sandboxes. One in particular was $\frac{3}{4}$ full of sand, so they emptied it and found a Twix wrapper inside with a best before date of 1982 and a price tag of 12p!

As you can see from the photo, right, the lower sander mounting plate of the rear sandbox has cracked, so Ian is making a new one.

They have also worked on the running board, which is what the sandbox sits on. When the sandbox was removed, it was found to be totally rusted, so it was wire brushed, degreased and painted - pictured right.

Bottom: Also this week, Paul has been working on the rear sander paddle operating rod. He has been refurbishing the ends after the removal of the taper pins as everything was seized up.



ENGINEERING UPDATE CONT'D

MET 1

Duncan and James continue to work on the project to cosmetically overhaul Met 1, which is nearly at completion. Duncan is pictured here polishing the steam gauges. All that's left to do really is to make a new cab floor and then give her a final coat of lacquer.



BUFFERBEAM

Jerry is shown here cutting the threads of the adaptors for the cylinder drain cocks of the bufferbeam.



ENGINEERING UPDATE CONT'D

BRAKE CYLINDERS

Tony and John have been working their way through the vacuum brake cylinders that we took off the DMU. They are overhauling each one so they are ready to replace the brake cylinders on the Mk1 suburban coach as and when those ones need overhauling.

Overhauling a brake cylinder involves changing all the rubber components, cleaning up the metalwork and repainting.



GWR BRAKE VAN

Gareth has been welding the sandboxes for the GWR brake van and new volunteer Chris has painted them all in red oxide primer.



MIKE'S WICKHAM

Great news - Mike's Wickham trolley has passed its Fitness to Run exam!

ENGINEERING UPDATE CONT'D

BR MK1 CARRIAGE

Lighting in many of the compartments of the BR Mk1 1st class carriage wasn't working, so Neal and Ian went to investigate.

They discovered the regulator (below right), which controls all the electricity throughout the carriage, and the fuse board (below left) were both totally corroded.

Inside the compartments of the carriage, they found all the wiring and components were also corroded and in poor condition, mainly due to being over 70 years old! They removed 40 light fittings and are mending all of them, replacing old and corroded parts and wiring.



SOME AMAZING THINGS WE DO...

SKYDIVING STAFF!

Belinda from the office and Angie from the cafe will be jumping out of a plane for charity this Saturday!

They are raising money for Great Ormond Street Hospital, and all donations will be appreciated!

They both have fundraising pages on [JustGiving.com](https://www.justgiving.com), so just search Angie Lovett and/or Belinda Sandon...

Good luck girls!



WONDERFUL NEW PLANTER

We absolutely LOVE this new planter that volunteer Geoff has made for us, modelled on Met 1.

Geoff, can we order some more please?!



NEW YORKER

Josh has made the most beautiful sign for The New Yorker cafe ahead of its inaugural opening at our May Bank Holiday Thomas event. We hope to hold a soft launch, with the new cafe selling drinks and snacks, to hopefully lessen the queues of the main cafe inside the Visitor Centre.



ALSO AROUND THE SITE...

COUNTDOWN TO CATASTROPHE!

We held our first Team Building Day here on Wednesday, for a local company who came and enjoyed mini engine driving experiences and Escape Room-style challenges around the site, all devised by Belinda, with the help of Ben, Josh, Tony and William. It was a huge success and we will be promoting our Team Building Packages to local businesses going forward!



PARKS & GARDENS

The Parks & Gardens Team has welcomed three new members - John Horne, Nigel Flowers and Susanna Mason. They have soon joined in with the various tasks around the site and Nigel has set up a WhatsApp Group for us called 'Mind the Grass'.

Another new season of grass cutting, strimming and weeding has commenced and two jobs have included tidying up the main entrance, and trimming the bank by the miniature railway. There is also the never ending job of tending the flower beds on platforms 1 and 2, keeping the weeds down and cutting back the brambles. A lot of material has been carried away for future bonfires and Nick is clearly enjoying having a go on the tractor.

Roger Slade, along with others, has cut down a lot of the brambles and vegetation along the path to the overflow car park. It has now been unofficially christened 'Roger's Walk' by Dave Bent (right).

The two remaining plant troughs on Platform 4 finally disintegrated after giving many years of valuable service. They have been replaced by two new ones kindly made up for us by Josh in Romney Number 6 (photo below). They will be planted up by the start of the Bank Holiday weekend.

As the P&G Team has to go out on the lineside from time to time to cut back vegetation, there is a requirement to have an up-to-date personal track safety certificate. Alison Wilkins kindly ran a training session for the Team and everybody successfully passed the test to acquire their PTS certificates.



PROGRESS IN THE WILDLIFE GARDEN

The Wildlife Garden is making great progress to become a calmer space which will be of great benefit to our visitors with neurodiversity (or anyone else who wants to enjoy a quieter area). Alongside the sleeper circle seating and fairy garden that were completed last year, we now have some sculptures to gently stimulate the senses as you walk the circular path.

Later in the year we hope to have picnic benches so you can enjoy your lunch in a bit of dappled shade, ideal for the sunny weather that is starting to come.

The volunteer team has been busy putting in plants and regularly watering them. Do you have a spare 20 minutes a week when you could do some watering? There is a watering can on site and a tap close to the woodland. If you have any spare plants, we are happy to re-home them for you!

The first load of type one has arrived (a year ago I had never heard of it and I certainly didn't expect to feel so excited to see it!) And we have more than anticipated! The type one will form the solid layer of the path, with wood chips on top to give an aesthetic appeal.

Ian Miller kindly started installing the edging to prevent the path from spreading but there is plenty more to go if you would like to join in. There is a lot of shovelling to do if anyone fancies a bit of exercise. Ideal practice for footplate crew or anyone wanting to experience what it is like to shovel coal into a firebox. Practice your aim while you shovel type one into a wheelbarrow.

If you would like to support this project with either donations or your time, please contact either Vickie Aylward at: museum@bucksrailcentre.org or Helen Smith at: qbranch@bucksrailcentre.org or pop around to the Wildlife Garden (behind the museum) on a Thursday morning when some of the team are usually there. Come and visit us if you are curious and we can show you what we are doing.



OUR FAVOURITE REVIEWS SHARED WITH YOU!

We get reviews all the time on Trip Advisor and Google etc. I thought it would be nice to share one in the newsletter every now and again - most of the time our dedicated volunteers are given a mention!

Another fabulous reviews from our Google listing. See especially paragraph 3...!

FIVE STARS:

"An absolutely fantastic day out from start to finish! Buckinghamshire Railway Centre is a true hidden gem for railway enthusiasts, families and anyone who loves a bit of British history and charm.

The beautifully restored 'Quainton Road station' instantly transports you back in time, and the collection of vintage steam and diesel locomotives is incredibly impressive. Seeing the trains up close - and even riding in the classic carriages - is a magical experience for both children and adults.

The museum exhibits are thoughtfully curated, offering fascinating insights into Britain's railway heritage. The volunteers and staff deserve special praise - they are friendly, knowledgeable and clearly passionate about what they do, which really enhances the experience.

There's plenty of space to explore, great photo opportunities everywhere, and a lovely relaxed atmosphere throughout. Whether you're a serious train enthusiast or just looking for a wholesome, educational family day out, this place delivers in every way.

Highly recommended - we'll definitely be returning! 🇬🇧🌟"



QRS CONTACTS:

Steve Green, General Manager: Email: stephen@bucksrailcentre.org

Sarah Neale: Email: accounts@bucksrailcentre.org

Chairman of the Executive Committee, Barry Payne: Email: barry@bucksrailcentre.org

Membership, Zoe Dann: Email: membership@bucksrailcentre.org

Marketing/Quainton Today, Louisa Richards. Email: marketing@bucksrailcentre.org

Caretaker, Ben Pepper: Email: caretaker@bucksrailcentre.org

Footplate, Guard & PTS Training, Alison Wilkins. Email: training@bucksrailcentre.org

Museum Curator, Vickie Aylward: Email: museum@bucksrailcentre.org

Or email the office at office@bucksrailcentre.org or call 01296 655720.

2026 CALENDAR

Sunday 17th May:	Museum Day
Sun 24th & Mon 25th May:	Day Out With Thomas
Sunday 31st May:	Steaming Day
Sunday 7th June:	DINO DAY!
Weds 10th June:	Schools Day
Sunday 14th June:	Museum Day
Sunday 21st June:	Father's Day Ridgeway Run
Sunday 28th June:	TBC
Sunday 5th July:	Moving The Mail
Sunday 12th July:	Steaming Day
Sunday 19th July:	Museum Day
Sunday 26th July:	Emergency Services Day
Weds 29th July:	Summer Holiday Weds Steaming Day
Sunday 2nd August:	Steaming Day
Wednesday 5th August:	Summer Holiday Weds Steaming Day
Sunday 9th August:	Museum Day
Wednesday 12th August:	Summer Holiday Weds Steaming Day
Sat 15th & Sun 16th August:	Day Out With Thomas
Wednesday 19th August:	Summer Holiday Weds Steaming Day
Sunday 23rd August:	Museum Day
Wednesday 26th August:	Summer Holiday Weds Steaming Day
Sunday 30th August:	Steaming Day
BH Monday 31st August:	AUTO FEST
Sunday 6th September:	Museum Day
Sunday 13th September:	Steaming Day
Sunday 20th September:	Museum Day
Sunday 27th September:	Steaming Day
Sunday 4th October:	TrackPlay Day
Wednesday 7th October:	Schools Day
Sunday 11th October:	Museum Day
Sat 17th & Sun 18th October:	Day Out With Thomas
Sunday 25th October:	Steaming Day
Fri 30th & Sat 31st October:	Halloween evening event: Night Fright
28/29th Nov and 5/6th, 12/13th & 19-22nd Dec:	Panto Express with Father Christmas

