

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!

Louisa

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GENERAL MANAGER UPDATE

The heat wave has been and gone, and we are back to traditional British summer time. Central heating on and where's my coat?

Last weekend saw the site resembling Jurassic Park as we had Dinosaur Day. The looks on the children's faces said it all: fear surprise and happiness being face to face with a velociraptor. With around 800 people attending, it was a busy day. The New Yorker Café was open again and did a good trade. Having our own catering around the site helps increase the profit for the day.

Some of you will see the signal box in the museum taking shape. Thanks to Ben and Josh for getting the floor joists and floor in. The signal box will become another catering outlet for busy event days. Now we are losing the level crossing, it's important to provide services in the down yard museum. Families spend an hour or more in the first section of the museum now with Chufflepop Junction railway in the small artifact room, plus the Aylesbury layout and the activity tables. They will soon be able to buy tea, coffee and snacks from the Signal Box Café completing the experience. As usual, the big thank you goes out to the working members who help make these changes happen and the teams who help run the open days at the centre.

Catering Update

In the last edition, I reported that Angie and Alice had decided to move on, and this week saw them work their last days. I would like to take time to thank each of them for their hard work over the years. We wish them both all the best for the future. We will still see Angie helping out at weekends but no longer during the week.

If you come to the café now you will be able to meet Sue who has come on board to manage the café and catering for the business. You will also find lots of new people training up to work in catering. When we advertised locally for people to work in the café, the response was huge. So we will be building up our bank of casuals to support Emma and Sue.

Today, we held the EKFB Student Carbon Heroes Awards at the centre, not only did we do the full café service, we did the engineers' breakfast and the buffet for the awards; this is how we will be developing catering for the future, along with the two new outlets of the New Yorker and Signal Box cafés.

Better Red than in the Shed

Our 'Better Red than in the Shed' campaign crowdfunding is building up for a launch at the end of the month. Get your baseball caps, hoodies, bags, Tee shirts and mugs in the shop before the website goes live! Members get a special discount - see pages 4/5. We have a brand-new website being developed for Wightwick and Owsden Halls, which will be linked to crowdfunding and drop shipping for merchandise. It will tell you the history of the engines and their part in filming for Harry Potter. We will also link into the railways to show where the engines can be seen when not filming.



GM UPDATE CONTD

Wightwick Hall

We have a maintenance plan for Wightwick Hall and it is currently at the Mid Hants awaiting delivery of its small tubes. This, along with patch screws in the firebox and some boiler stays being made for us by Henley College, will be part way to the new ten-year ticket. The engine is then booked back to the Mid Hants next year to do the large tubes in the boiler. After this and subject to passing inspection, we will receive a new ten-year ticket for the engine. Please look out for the crowdfunding and new website and help give Wightwick Hall another ten years on the rails.



Network Rail

Network Rail started work on site this week joining the line we have been running on in platform one back to the network. They have removed the two points on the main line ready to install their own point in the line and 40m of track next week. This will form the head shunt to allow engines to be removed from maintenance trains and parked up in the new siding. It means that access is limited to the down yard while this work is happening. The main NR work starts on the 22nd June and the level crossing will then disappear. (Thank you to volunteer Matt Bovingdon for the photos!)



New Access Road

On Tuesday this week, I drove the new access to the down yard which you all can now use. When you want to go to the down yard, you drive over the old Station Road bridge, ignoring the 'Works Traffic Only' signs, which are designed to stop the public from driving over the bridge. As you go down the far side of the bridge past the Brixton Building, the road feeds round to the left and onto a new access road which takes you round to the yard by the showground. Once you are there, you can drive straight into the down yard past the museum entrance on your left. The road is fully fenced in so you cannot get lost but it is interesting to see all the work that HS2 is doing.



Louisa cycled the route and videoed it for anyone who is interested to see... [Click here to see Louisa's video!](#)

We have lots of changes going on at the moment, HS2 is still struggling to deliver the new road alignment, and the water works in the down yard. This is affecting deliveries of anything above a 20t lorry to the down yard. It will be interesting to watch the Network Rail project take place. I have been working on it now for two years with their teams and it is finally happening. No one is quite sure what it will look like when finished as plans keep changing. The original concept was bin liner trains to Claydon incinerator. Now, with Universal Studios being built at Bedford, ways are being looked at to accommodate rail tours to us and passengers to Winslow and onto Bedford from Marylebone. Nothing is set or fully agreed so let's see what happens.



Stephen Green, General Manager

THE REVIVAL

YOU MIGHT HAVE NOTICED THAT WE NOW HAVE THE REVIVAL RANGE OF MERCHANDISE IN THE SHOP! HERE ARE YOUR SPECIAL MEMBER DISCOUNTED PRICES!



CLASSIC REVIVAL

MEMBER PRICE

Mug	£9.99	£7.99
Notebook	£10.99	£8.79
Keyring	£8.99	£7.19
Small tote bag	£9.99	£7.99
Mini rucksack	£21.99	£17.59
T-shirt up to 2XL	£17.99	£14.39
T-shirt 3XL-6XL	£18.99	£15.19
Hoodie up to 2XL	£35.99	£28.79
Hoodie 3XL-6XL	£37.99	£30.39
Sweatshirt up to 2XL	£33.99	£27.19
Sweatshirt 3XL-6XL	£35.99	£28.79

BETTER RED

MEMBER PRICE

Cork mug	£16.99	£13.59
Caps	£12.99	£10.39
Vintage T-shirt	£29.99	£23.99
Large tote bag	£12.99	£10.39



SEE OVERLEAF FOR PHOTOS OF MERCH... SEND ORDERS TO JO BY EMAILING: SHOP@BUCKSRAILCENTRE.ORG DON'T FORGET TO INCLUDE SIZES IF ORDERING CLOTHES



UPDATE FROM ENGINEERING

7715: HELP US CHOOSE!

The team of volunteers who has been working on Met 1's cosmetic restoration is excited to soon be moving on to begin a cosmetic overhaul of GWR pannier tank 7715! And we want your opinions!

We need your help choosing the livery... 7715 has been three colours in her lifetime: GWR green, London Transport maroon and British Railways black... Email me your choice with a reason why and we'll go for the most popular choice! marketing@bucksrailcentre.org

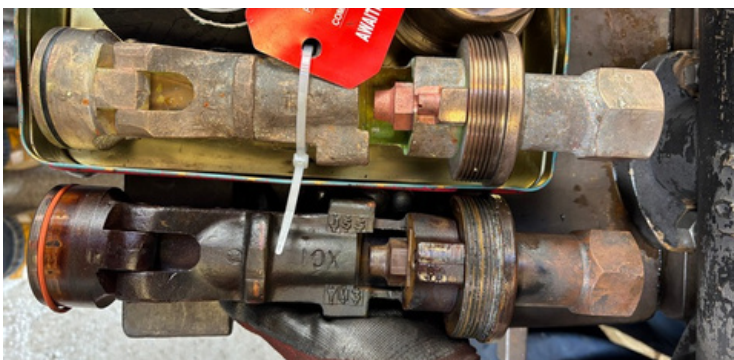


6989 UPDATE

Whilst 6989 is having some boiler work done, the engineering team is taking the opportunity to carry out the overhaul of certain items which benefit from periodic servicing. Last week I found Paul and Frank refurbishing the seats for the steam cones in 6989's brake ejector. This is the device that creates the vacuum for the vacuum brakes. It has to be steam tight.

The Monday Gang - Peter, John, Paul, Max and new volunteer Phil - made a start servicing 6989's injectors. They have to take them all apart and then soak each part in acid to remove all the grime. See photo below showing two injector cones - one before the acid soak and one after! They will also replace the gaskets and seals, lap in the joints and then they'll put it all back together again!

I popped in on Tuesday and found John (right) continuing the work the team started on Monday...



ENGINEERING UPDATE CONT'D

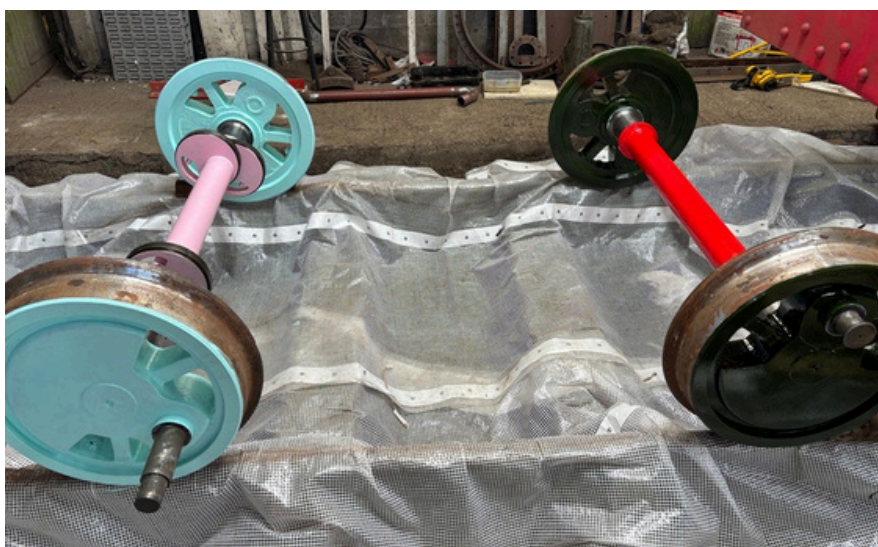
CROMWELL

More investigations have revealed that the knocking sound produced on running Cromwell turned out to be a loose piston. Oak and Ian pulled the inspection covers off and turned the engine over and found the culprit.

A new connecting rod and piston have been ordered, which will be fitted to get this engine back into service asap.



FLYING BUFFERBEAM



The wheels of the Flying Bufferbeam have had their first couple of coats of paint.

Imagine my surprise when I saw this first set in pale pink and blue! Obviously, yes, this is just the undercoat! The set on the right is in the final colours - red and dark green.

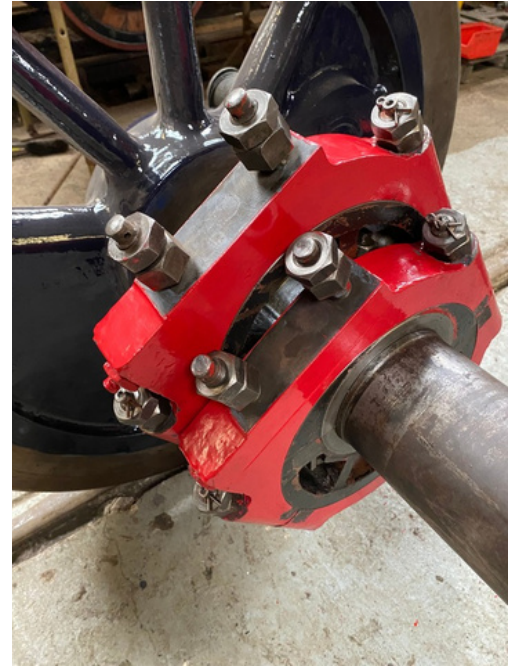
Mendip Steam has been commissioned to manufacture new barrels, side sheets, throat and back head for the Flying Bufferbeam - they are all due to arrive in a couple of months.

Steve has been machining the newly-cast axle boxes this week too.

ENGINEERING UPDATE CONT'D

BAGNALL

William and Dave have refitted the eccentric straps on the Bagnall this week. Assembly was initially challenging until they overcame some of the deficiencies discovered arising from the original manufacturer's assembly methods.



PICNIC SALOON

Godfrey (below left) and Dave (below right) have been working on a design for the installation and linkages for a new vacuum brake system for the picnic saloon to enable us to run this fabulous carriage behind a loco - hopefully very soon!



CARRIAGE RESTORATION

MK1 CARRIAGE

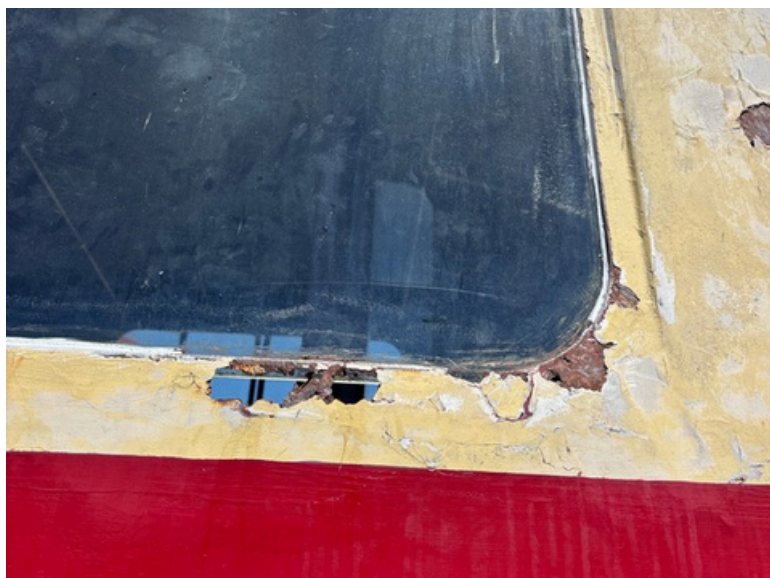
Ric and Steve (pictured right), along with Ken, Chris and Ernie, have continued work on the Mk1 coach.

Unfortunately, removal of the interior wooden cladding underneath the windows has revealed sealant and putty which is in poor condition and causing the windows to leak.

Obviously there was no point replacing the rotten cladding if the windows were leaking as the new cladding would then just rot as well! So the team cleared off all the old sealant/putty, but this then exposed more rotten wood inside, as well as corroded steel... As is often the case with old vehicles, the job has become much bigger than it should have been!

The team will use fibreglass and car body filler (P38) to repair the carriage, before replacing the cladding and resealing the windows.

In the meantime, in between rain showers, the carriage is being protected by a tarpaulin!



NEW EXHIBIT FOR THE MUSEUM!

Have you been in the Museum recently? If not, there is some exciting news! We have a rather large, new exhibit. We have been loaned a Morris Fire Engine. Built in 1936, the fire engine is a Morris Commercial "Merryweather". It has all its original fire fighting equipment, including a pump, brass hose nozzle and helmets. It has a petrol engine and pump and was externally crewed.

It originally worked at the Green King Brewery at Bury St Edmunds until it was made redundant in 1961 and sold for scrap. Luckily, it was saved in 1975 by a private owner who restored it to its former glory, and then, in 1980, it was returned to the preservation scene. It has been cared for ever since and is now a resident of Buckinghamshire Railway Centre. Currently housed in our museum, it has been paired with our Dennis Fire Pump, which is part of the BRC collection. Originally used at the Oxford City Fire Brigade, this is a mobile Fire Pump powered by a petrol engine and mounted on a trailer. The pair will be on display in the museum until the autumn, so take a look now, as that's not long!

Also in the museum now is our very own Lister Autotruck, which has been cosmetically restored by a couple of our volunteers. Built in 1954 and powered by a Lister 2-cylinder diesel engine, this machine replaced the horse and cart and was able to get heavy loads into small spaces. Believed to have been used on a railway station platform, the Autotruck makes a great companion to the fire engine. Again, it will be on display until the autumn after which a new exhibit will replace them both.

The plan is a new exhibit in the first bay of the museum every six months, so keep an eye on this space for more exciting news.

Vickie Aylward, Curator



BELINDA & ANGIE'S SKYDIVE!



Message from Angie: As many of you know, Belinda and I did a tandem Skydive down in deepest, darkest Devon in aid of Great Ormond Street Hospital. I just wanted to say a huge thank you to everyone who donated money to my Just Giving Page. It means such a lot to me and is truly appreciated.

After initially being postponed due to low clouds, we finally took the plunge on 21st May. It was the most awesome experience ever!! It was the most amazing thing to do and I would recommend it to anyone. The feeling of complete freedom up there was exhilarating. Here are a couple of pictures of the day.

Angie

Belinda and Angie are raising money for Great Ormond Street Hospital, and all donations are appreciated! They both have fundraising pages on JustGiving.com - last chance to donate:

[**Click here to donate to Belinda's page**](#)

[**Click here to donate to Angie's page**](#)

GOODBYE ALICE & ANGIE!

We said a sad farewell to Alice and Angie who have left their positions in the cafe this week. Alice is going to take a well-earned break before hopefully going out into the big wide world!

Angie has promised to come back and help out on busy event days.

We wish them both well for the future!

We welcomed Sue this week, who has joined the catering team to take over from Alice as Catering Manager...



CONGRATULATIONS PAUL!

I am really pleased to announce that Paul passed out as Fireman last week!

Very well done Paul and thank you so much for all the time and dedication you give to the railway!

Thank you also to Alison and Lindsay who are running our crew training programme!



Q-BRANCH NEWS

A hot start for new Q-Branchers!

The hot weather on the May bank holiday weekend added an extra challenge for Poppy on her first turn but she eagerly rose to the challenge, greeting visitors as they arrived on platform to see Percy.

Working together with Archie (whose first turn was on a very wet and cold day in February), they agreed how to divide the train to make the best use of their energy.

It made it a much easier day for Helen who was the supervising adult. It's great to see how quickly these young volunteers pick up the role and the enthusiasm they bring.



TRAVELLING JACKS

These are four travelling jacks. They were most commonly used when re-railing a derailed locomotive or vehicle. The column can rise by use of a ratchet (the handle that sticks out) and, when raised sufficiently, the column can then be moved horizontally via the screw across the base.

Normally used in pairs, these are rated at 20 tons maximum lift each. In old photos of Victorian steam engines, they can sometimes be seen bolted down near the front of the locomotive. Different sizes and capacities were available and we do have a smaller one inscribed MET 12. Locomotive manufacturers offered them as optional extras and a recent discovery by two of our engineers researching at the NRM is a table of sizes offered by Peckett & Sons of Bristol – we have several of their products at Quainton.

The colours used here are merely a repaint of what each was previously painted. We have had them for many years, they're origin has been lost in the lists of time though one red one is stamped FAVERSHAM, which might be the town in Kent or a named locomotive. The green ones have the military arrowhead embossed in their casting and were made by Youngs of Birmingham. We originally had a ratchet spanner for each to operate the transverse screw and if anyone knows where these are we would like to know, please.

Tony Lyster



TPO VOLUNTEER RECOGNISED

One of our longest serving Travelling Post Office stewards is Cyril Parsons, who has been volunteering at the Quanton TPO since 2010 (the TPO carriages were acquired in 2007).

Cyril graduated from Reading University in 1956. As part of its Centenary Year programme, Reading University held a reception to recognise outstanding and impactful volunteering by its students, former students and staff. Cyril was one of about 60 recipients of a Long Service award.

Cyril volunteered as an Assistant Leader then Leader of a Cub pack in Epsom. Subsequently, Cyril was an Assistant District Commissioner for Scout Groups in Aylesbury, then was the Treasurer of Headway Aylesbury Vale Charity from 2002 to 2021. Another long-term interest has been volunteering at the Postal Museum in London.

At QRS TPO, Cyril has produced the exhibition panels on postal history and TPO development from its origins in 1838. His posters are much appreciated by the TPO stewards and the visiting public.

A much deserved Award! Congratulations Cyril from everyone at QRS!



UNDERGROUND CAR UPDATE

By George Chmielewski

In the last article, we mentioned how we were working on restoring the internal side of the car body, after the welding which was done last summer to the four windows facing the Vames field.



After we finished the welding and fitted in and sealed the glass, we treated the metal inside the cars and painted it for protection.

View inside Car 54233 towards the trailing end. VAMES can be seen through the windows on the right, behind the undergrowth.

Over the past four weeks, we have been working towards reinstating the two large internal panels which fit under the windows.

The panels have been damaged by prolonged water ingress, which weakened them. The panels were falling apart in some places.



Pictured left are two of the panels.

On the top one you can see the left side is coming apart.

The top of the panel pictured below has also come apart. It was temporarily held in place with wood and G clamps.



Underground car update continued overleaf...

UNDERGROUND CAR CONTD

When these carriages were built, these panels were originally varnished and inlaid with black ebony wood. After entering into service, passengers started damaging this lovely wood by stubbing cigarettes and scratching the wood. After a short while, the wood was painted over.



Many years ago, some of the paint was removed, exposing the lovely wood and inlaid ebony.

The broken panels have now been repaired. Most of the inlaid ebony is still in place. The wood will probably have to be restored professionally and parts which rotted away will have to be rebuilt.

The wood is now sturdy and will be put back temporarily, till it is possible to restore it professionally. The repairs will not be visible, as they will face inwards.



We are also in the process of reinstating other wood fittings. Some of the wood had paint removed over twenty years ago without finishing the job.

A lot of other wood fittings were removed at that time.

Now we are trying to restore and varnish whatever wood we can, before putting it back again.



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 some in the newsletter so you can read how much our visitors enjoy their visits to us - I think it helps to see that people appreciate the work we all do here.



Here are four more 5 star reviews from our Google listing:

“We have visited the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre twice for the Thomas the Tank Engine event and we have been super happy both times. It’s a very interesting place to visit, especially for children and train lovers.

The staff are always very kind and friendly, the museum is interesting, and the miniature trains are such great fun. Everything is well organised and there is plenty to see and do throughout the day.

We really enjoyed our visits and would definitely recommend it for a lovely family day out!”

“Amazing place, very well priced and such friendly staff! We've been a few times and have always found it to be a great day out with the kids. Will be back again!”

“Absolutely love this place. Been a couple of times - first with four adults and second with family and children. Both times it was great fun. It’s so interactive. The Thomas day was fab for the kids too, we spent literally all day there and only just managed to do everything. Traction engine rides, steam engine rides, miniature train ride 🚂 so much to see and in the museum all the quirky little brain teaser games and model railways are brilliant. Definitely worth going for a day out with the kids.”

Plus, we also had this wedding review:

“This place is just something else. My husband and I got married here last month. We had a brilliant time and the staff were just amazing, from the wonderful expertise of Belinda, to the wonderful drivers on the steamers on the day. The venue has such a magical feel to it when the sun goes down, and the golden hour shots are just amazing with the likes of 'Janice' in the background.

I highly recommend this wonderful place as a venue! We have visited several times on their other special days and it never disappoints. The museum has some amazing pieces of history and plenty for little ones to do! With steam rides, a miniature railway and a great little cafe!”

2026 CALENDAR

Sunday 14th June:	Museum Day
Sunday 21st June:	Father's Day Ridgeway Run
Sunday 28th June:	Steaming Day
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 Steaming Day
Sunday 2nd August:	Steaming Day
Wednesday 5th August:	Summer Holiday Steaming Day
Sunday 9th August:	Museum Day
Wednesday 12th August:	Summer Holiday Steaming Day
Sat 15th & Sun 16th August:	Day Out With Thomas
Wednesday 19th August:	Summer Holiday Steaming Day
Sunday 23rd August:	Museum Day
Wednesday 26th August:	Summer Holiday 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



QRS CONTACTS:

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Sarah Neale

Chairman, Barry Payne

Membership, Zoe Dann

Marketing/Quainton Today, Louisa Richards

Caretaker, Ben Pepper

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

Photo Montage: Dino Day Sunday 7th June 2026



Photo Montage: Dino Day!

