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NEWSLETTER OF THE VINTAGE CARRIAGES TRUST.
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No. 8.

JULY 1976.

Chairman	:	R. Higgins.
Secretary	:	G. G. Smyth.
Treasurer	:	P. Andrew.
Membership Secretary	:	J. L. Wright.
Editor	:	M. J. Leving.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Vintage Carriages Trust will take place at the Globe Hotel, Keighley on Saturday August 21st 1976 commencing at 20.00.

The traditional special train (as kindly provided by the WVR) is scheduled to leave Haworth at 19.30, returning from the Globe Hotel not later than 22.00.

IN RETROSPECT

The last twelve months have contained their share of problems but have not been entirely wasted. Perhaps the best way of illustrating this is by a brief review of all the VCT coaches. The following comments will be expanded by the various custodians at the AGM.

Chatham (S.R. 3554) Custodian: Mark Leving

It is all too easy to assume that once a coach has been restored the problems are over. Anyone who saw the Chatham at the S&D 150 celebrations might have been forgiven for thinking that it would require little attention for a year or three. But since returning to the WVR from Shildon, the coach has had an adventurous life. Repainted in SECR maroon, it journeyed to York for filming a scene in The Seven Percent Solution, and only just got back to the Worth Valley in time for the Santa Service. Leaks in its roof and steam heating system were one of the main causes of the attack of dry rot, the treatment of which unfortunately required the removal of all the lino from the corridor.

A quote for replacement lino for the whole coach is awaited whilst repainting in green is complete. The sealing of the roof is in hand using Aquaseal, but if any member knows of a local firm who do a good line in canvassing roofs, we would be very happy to hear from him.

1st Class Met 3 (L.T. 509) Custodian: Michael Cope

This coach had lain in Oakworth shed for some time suffering the ravages of vandals and dry rot before Michael took it in hand. His first job was to destroy the infected wood, which involved the removal of part of the roof and the complete rebuilding of two compartments. Replacement of this quantity of material will clearly be a long, slow, expensive job and our first thought was to provide basic facilities for the work to be continued in Oakworth shed.

However the WVR vetoed this since their plans are based on a central coach workshop in Oxenhope white shed. Met 3 duly moved to Oxenhope shortly after Easter and it is pleasing to report that one compartment wall has already been rebuilt. Needless to say, the main problem is one of labour – volunteers please contact Michael Cope.

MS&L 4-wheeler No. 103 Custodian: Robin Higgins

Undoubtedly the most infuriating VCT vehicle, it has eaten £4000 of our hard earned cash, is keeping another £2000 tied up in a contingency fund and is still not fit to be put on display.

The problem is that the dispute with Waltons is still unsettled and our solicitor has advised us not to proceed with any further work until the matter is resolved. As things stand the coach seems likely to appear in the S&D 200 celebrations in its current state and bearing a large banner reading "Always get a written estimate".

Met 2 (L.T. 427) Custodian:

This vehicle is the WVR spare brake. It can be seen in service on peak Sundays when WVR brakes 10 or 20 are in the shops, or as a strengthening vehicle for railtours and bank holidays. A fracture in the North end panelling has been repaired by the WVR.

Met 4 (L.T. 465) Custodian:

This vehicle is in the WVR operating fleet but is currently out of traffic pending repairs to the doors and upholstery.

Bulleid (1469) Custodian:

Also in the WVR operating fleet and possibly suitable for use in a rake with the Chatham and WVR Pullman Car No. 84.

G.N.R. 6-wheeler Custodian: Robin Higgins.

Basically a sound historic vehicle, ideal for filming. A new door was fitted some months ago and still requires glazing. Some of the teak panels also require attention.

M.R. 6-wheeler Custodian: Messrs Smith, England & Pearson

A partial repaint in maroon has vastly improved the appearance of this vehicle as seen from Oxenhope exhibition shed. The platform side still awaits attention. Many windows also need reglazing. The interior renovation is a long term project.

Gresley BSK (16520) Custodian:

Professional attention to the external panels is due to begin shortly and will be followed by a repaint in teak brown, blood & custard or maroon which should bring the vehicles appearance more into line with its basically sound state. Three windows have been broken by vandals, and will be replaced.

The VCT Wagon Custodian: Chris Smyth.

Wagons on the WVR are rarely seen empty, and this one is no exception. In fact its bottom was repaired, and it was filled with locomotive parts after even the VCT had declared it to be mechanically unsound and suitable for exhibition only. It has now been left to vegetate in Oakworth shed prior to a repaint after which it will retire to the relative tranquility of Oakworth bay.

C.G.S.

First Class Met – PROGRESS (at last!)

Most members will be aware that, after many years lurking in the dark recesses of Oakworth shed, this coach is now in the White Shed at Oxenhope and is receiving attention. We had hoped to equip Oakworth shed with lights and limited electrical power, but unfortunately the WVR did not see its way to match our offer of £200 towards the anticipated £400 total cost of this. We are of course very grateful for the accommodation at

Oxenhope: hopefully, in the fairly near future the railway may be able to think about some lighting and an increase in the number of power sockets above the present solitary one – which would considerably increase the amount and the effectiveness of work which is currently going on with the five “longer term” projects there (in addition to our coach: the Pullman: the L&Y brake: Tony Cox’s saloon: and Ben Wade’s diesel loco).

The basic reason for most of our coach’s problems was the papier mache (really a form of compressed cardboard) used underneath the lincrusta ornamentation of the ceilings and upper parts of the interior bulkheads. This absorbs water like a sponge. The warm and damp conditions associated with wooden roofs and a long period out of use produced ideal conditions for dry rot, which became very active and resulted in the need to replace most of two interior bulkheads and the roof of two compartments, plus all the ceiling and bulkhead upper facings. Some replacement of interior trim is required: plus renewal of all the moquette and quite a bit of glass – for which the society still holds a limited amount of “compensation” money from youthful vandals. Rewiring of the lighting system is needed, as is recanvassing the roof and (in 1981?) repainting.

As you will appreciate, this is quite some list. However, progress is now positive, with two bulkheads now reinstated and the first two (the badly infected) compartments fully “Woodtreat” treated. Woodtreat is the anti-rot compound currently giving the delicate pinewood aroma to the White Shed and to the basement of No. 3 Mill Hey: we must acknowledge our gratitude to Messrs Stanhope Chemical Products Limited for helpful technical advice and for allowing us favourable terms.

We must also record our thanks to Messrs John Holdsworth & Co Limited of Halifax, who have accepted our order for sufficient moquette for the coach, to a pattern still in production for London Transport but dating back to the early 1950s, on the understanding that we will get any “seconds” produced over the next year or two, at a very favourable rate – we will have difficulty in telling the difference between this and “perfects”. Unhappily, we must also record the sudden death (now some months ago) of Mr G.P.A. Sunderland. Mr Sunderland was a director of Holdsworths and a member of KWVRPS of many years standing. His experience with and knowledge of railway moquettes was probably unrivalled. He was very happy to advise us, the Society, and other societies (including the North Yorkshire Moors, for moquette on their railcars). His professionalism and advice will be sorely missed.

Anticipating events by a year or three: any thoughts on how to replace the old-style “Lincrusta” patterns? Or on the livery to be adopted?

Fortunately the dry rot, which is now inactive in the rest of the coach, caused only minimal damage to the hardwood framing of the coach. In the absence of top-class carpenter members (I think – is I’m wrong, please let me know) a limited amount of work will have to be contracted out. Meantime, your Restoration Team consists of Me, with much valued contributions from Marl Leving, Kevern George, and your Secretary (Chris Smyth) who is Not Bad with a screwdriver, and Improving with a power drill! How about YOU finding an occasional hour to assist, either at Oxenhope or in the cellar of No. 3 Mill Hey: Mark or I (or Chris) will be very pleased to show you what next wants doing.

Michael Cope

427 and 465

These are, of course, the Met. Brake and the Met. 9-compartment 3rd class coach respectively. Both are officially in Worth Valley revenue service.

The former is seeing occasional passenger use, as the reserve brake. All seems fairly well with it, other than recently-flattened batteries (there are still WV guards who do not know how to turn off the lights if normal means fail!) and trouble with a Brake door that will not shut easily.

The latter has made an unexpected, but very welcome, appearance in the Oxenhope Exhibition Shed. The railway will be purchasing moquette to make good its seating, to the same design as that for the first class coach mentioned previously. The coach currently houses sundry harmless fungi: but not, at a fairly recent professional examination, rot of either of the wet or the dry variety. Hopefully the coach’s stay under cover will be long enough for all the doors to dry sufficiently to open readily: and hopefully the Railway and us between

us will this time remember to plane down the doors (professionally if necessary) and seal the wood against moisture so that we may then continue to be able to open the doors.

Unfortunately the “cheap and cheerful” repaint of these two vehicles has not proved a complete success. The appearance, to my mind at least, is not satisfactory: and several water blisters have developed. There would seem to be a case for considering a professional first-quality repaint for at least one of these revenue service vehicles, either by the Railway or by us. A fairly modest amount of attention to the beading etc would first be required.

Your comments on this, please. Livery?

M.W.C.

Editorial Comment

Having acquired London Transport moquette for these coaches, and having an ex-LT locomotive (L89) in London Transport livery available on the WVR, one would imagine that the only possible livery we could choose would be LT maroon. It would surely not be worth the time, effort or money on restoring them to their Metropolitan Railway livery of varnished teak just for the unique Worth Valley climate to destroy it.

As far as the Gresley BSK goes, there are basically three liveries to choose from: Varnished teak, BR Blood & Custard, or BR Maroon.

Maybe at last we've managed to stir some enthusiasm amongst our more lethargic members! If it isn't too much to expect, perhaps some of our readers would like to write to the editor, and express their views on the liveries of the above coaches.

Bulleid (1469)

The Merchant Navy Loco Preservation Society have written to the VCT enquiring about the possible loan of this vehicle for use on railtours with their locomotive and Bulleid coaches of the same design.

This was discussed at length by the committee who felt that in the long term the vehicle was correctly placed on the WVR, and that it “would go well with City of Wells”. However, if the WVR would not be inconvenienced by say a two year departure, and the coach could be maintained and improved, then we would consider the loan of the vehicle.

All Change?

One of the recurring subjects at committee meetings is the possible reconstitution of the VCT as a limited company. It is felt that this would be in the best interests of the VCT, however no decisions have yet been made, and indeed cannot be made until the Annual General Meeting takes place on Saturday 21st August 1976.

Chatham

Since this newsletter was compiled, a quote for the relaying of heavy duty linoleum arrived from a local firm in Keighley. This was accepted, and we are now happy to report that the job has been completed.

Photographs

Black and white prints of VCT coaches are still required for publicity. These should be sent to the Publicity Officer, VCT, Haworth Station before August 21st.

Keighley Relic Shop

The level of sales stock is still very low. Don't forget that for the larger collections of railwayana we are prepared to give a realistic cash offer. All of the proceeds are put towards carriage restoration.