July 2011

News sheet

No. 49

Hastings Tramways Club

Welcome (By Roy Austen)

May I take this opportunity to thank you for re-joining the club and helping to keep alive the interest we all have in trams and tramways whether it may be past, present or future. Also a special welcome to our new members who have recently joined us.

Brighton 53 Society visits Robertsbridge

On Sunday 8th May 2011, the club was pleased to host a visit from several members of the Brighton 53 Society who are aiming to restore the only remaining Brightonian tramcar left in existence. Guy, the president of the 53 society, and several other members visited our site at Robertsbridge to see our trams 48 and 56. Hastings Tramways and Brighton 53 first made contact late 2010 but were not able to meet in person until May 2011. We hope to share experience, knowledge and help each other



where ever we can since we are the only two 3'6" societies in the south east! Anyone who would like more information about the group can contact Guy Hall on 01273 486099 or visit www.brightontram53.org.uk.

Hastings Tramways is hoping to organise a visit to see 53 in Brighton at the end of the month - See forthcoming events, over, for more details.

News from Robertsbridge (By Roy Austen)

As most of you know, Derek and myself spend most of our Sundays and Wednesdays out at Robertsbridge (if we are not doing an event elsewhere), working alongside members of the Rother Valley Railway where our ex. Hastings Tramcar bodies are kept. We support them for the privilege of being on their site; if they need our help they know that we are only too willing to assist them, and likewise they to help us. There is a good friendly bond between us all at Robertsbridge which has been constant for quite a number of years and we hope will continue in the future. You may be interested to know that some of their members have also become Tramway members.

We've all, it seems, been left 'high and dry' as to what may happen to all of us at the Robertsbridge end of the line. Mike Hart, a leading figure in the progress of the railway, showed us a brief, outline plan of how they would reconstruct the railway at the Robertsbridge end, which would result in many of us having to move, including ourselves. Although the time scale for this may be several years from now, we hope this may not be the case.

Work to rebuild the bridges was to be started from Northbridge Street end and work **back up to No. 1 bridge, but now it's starting from No. 1! Already as I write this,** massive earth works are under way and track being taken up and deep holes are being dug. How long before they reach the other end I wonder!

Our Mini Tram (By Roy Austen)

Despite the gloomy news about our site at Robertsbridge I still hope we have a few years with our miniature track which we acquired some while ago and with help from Steve Woods and Derek, I have managed to lay about 150ft of track which runs from our tram depot, skirting the boundary fence, past the greenhouse curve and along the edge of the pathway to a stop in the corner of the picnic area where a small raised area has been built along with a new fence. Two gauges have been used to accommodate both 5 and 7¼, Steve has purchased a small battery electric narrow gauge loco and a sit-on-ride truck in a five inch



gauge. We hope that we will soon be able to give rides, once it is passed it's tests and we are hoping that we can run both tram and trains on the track - this is to suit some of the railway members on site! I also hope to invite someone with a live steam loco. The ¼ scale model tram has had somewhat of a modification, built originally as a static item with some rather crude mini wheel hubs for wheels. These have now been replaced using some 7¼ wheels and have proved to very successful, as it seems to just glide along! We have talked about motorising the tram but we shall just have to wait and see how things progress at the site. The other tram I am building is still some way off being finished. This was to be run on a 10¼ scale track but this will have to change to match the other tram. I think that will number this one 1066!

East Sussex Transport Heritage Centre (By Roy Austen)

The aim of the East Sussex Transport Heritage Centre (ESTHC) was formed with the hope of combining all groups clubs, individuals etc. who have an interest in heritage transport in one form or another, to use the centre as a supporting party with the aim to help one another when needed. Plans by the ESTHC to use the old station building at Bexhill West seemed to have failed due to a short lease East Sussex County Council were offering. Other sites were looked at, but as of yet nothing suitable has been available. We are now saddened to hear that our ESTHC chairperson Deborah Underhill has been taken ill and shortly going into Hospital we wish her well and hope she makes a speedy recovery.

Forthcoming Events

Visit to Brighton 53 GroupSunday 31/07/2011 12:00-17:00The club is planning a visit to the site of Brighton Tramcar 53 near Brighton. The
times are still approximate. We will be meeting in Hastings and then travelling to
Brighton by car. Any one interested in coming along should contact Roy Austen
(01424 751798) for more details.
Hooe Vintage Car RallySunday 07/08/2011 11:00-17:00The club will be holding a stall at the annual Hooe Vintage Car Rally at Hooe
Recreation Ground.
Crowhurst Summer FayreSaturday 13/08/2011 14:00-17:00The club will be holding a stall at the annual Crowhurst Summer Fayre. The fayre is
open to the public from 2pm.Sunday 07/08/2011 14:00-17:00

Date and time of next meeting

The club will be holding its regular meeting at the RAFA club, Hastings at 8pm on Tuesday 30th August 2011. The meetings are open to all members.