

Hastings Tramways Club

Newsletter
No. 52

August 2012

Celebrating 20 years of Hastings Tramways Club!



*HOW IT ALL BEGAN! HASTINGS TRAMCAR 43 AS FOUND AT
WINCHELSEA BY COLIN SMITH, CHARLEY WHEELER & RON
LEACH (OCT 1985)*

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WELCOME

Welcome to the 52nd newsletter of Hastings Tramways Club! Thank you to you all for your continued support and I would like to take this opportunity to say hello to some of our newer members. As we 'celebrate' this our 20th year, big changes and upheaval for the club lie ahead.

THE MOVE FROM ROBERTSBRIDGE

As we announced late last year, the time is now upon us to relocate from the RVR site at Robertsbridge to a new home. The club was given notice last September that we would have to move our two trams, mini tram, tools and other equipment from the Robertsbridge site, ideally by August of this year.

Over the following months (of panic!) the club has been hunting to try and find a suitable replacement site. Several sites in Hastings, Bexhill, Crowhurst and Rother were investigated and led to no-where. However, thanks to the hard work of Chairman



Roy and Treasurer Derek, the outlook now seems more positive. In May, a potential site at Staplecross Shrub Nursery, about 5 miles north of Hastings was identified. Discussions with the owner went well and he seemed really interested in having the trams on his site - he already houses a railway carriage and coach on the site! Following the agreement, work has now been progressing well to dismantle and relocate our equipment to the new site at Staplecross.

By our last newsletter in March, we had emptied the PMV wagon ready for sale. We had purchased the wagon back in 2004 to house tools and equipment at a cost of £300. Back in March, several offers for the

wagon were on the table but none had, at that stage, come to fruition. As the months progressed, offers dropped in and out, not really leading anywhere. However one offer, from the Bluebell Railway, did hold out! Recently, the railway agreed to buy the PMV for £1400 which we were very pleased to accept. The wagon was moved by low-loader to the Bluebell later in the month, where it is now in store. We believe it will be used in the future for spares for other wagons in their collection.

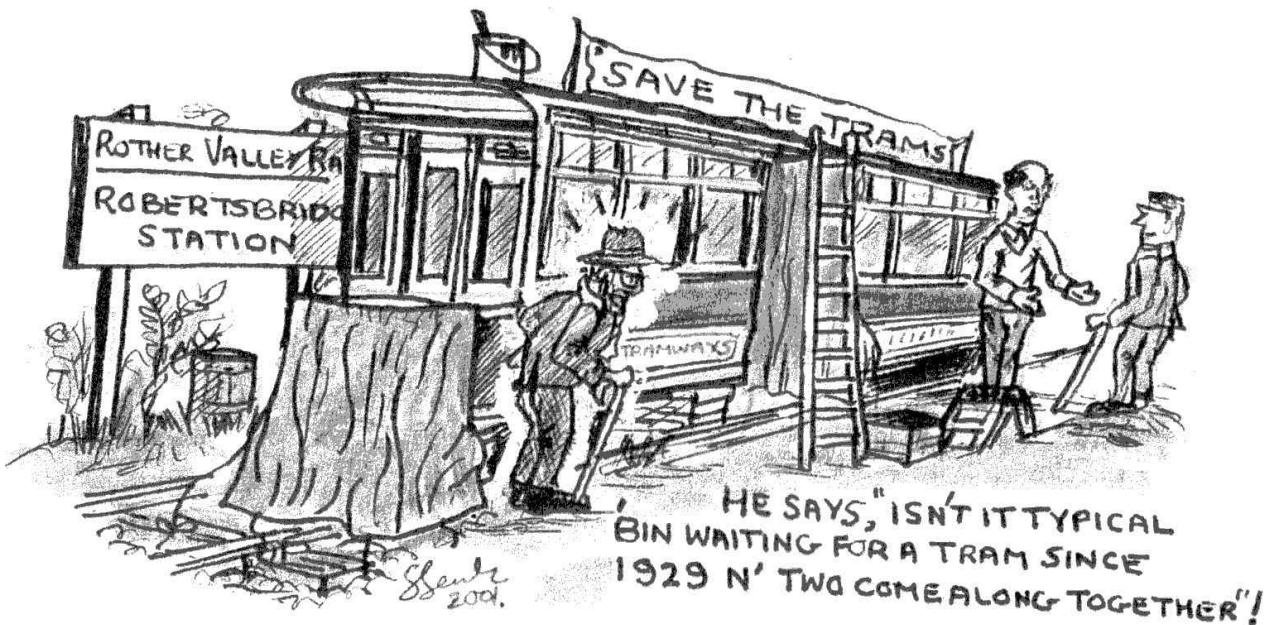
Another headache for the club has been our tram truck, which we purchased several years ago from Dover Transport Museum. The truck was dismantled a couple of years ago in preparation for sand-blasting by the RVR, however this never actually took place and it's been lying in pieces since! It became apparent however that the truck was actually of little use to the club, so the decision was taken late last year to try and sell it. Ideally, it would go to a group or museum that could actually use it, otherwise it would have to be sold for scrap metal. Back in April, a member of the Brighton 53 Society contacted Roy, interested in purchasing the truck. At the time of writing, the sale is in the final stages of completion but we are hopeful this will go through over the coming weeks.

Aside from the two trams and truck, virtually all other equipment at the RVR has now either been moved to Staplecross or cleared from the site. The lean-to around the trams has been dismantled and the shop fronts which it housed are being stored inside the trams for the time being. Roy and Derek have already taken several loads to the new site using a pick-up truck kindly lent to us from Bob at the garden machine centre, next to the station in Robertsbridge. We pay between £20 and £25 per trip to cover fuel etc.

Now, the last remaining job is to actually move the trams themselves. Currently, we are unable to proceed with this as access to our area of the RVR is difficult whilst the railways sidings are still in place. These are due to be removed over the next couple of months and this will allow for a low-loader and crane to get in and move the trams out. All we can do now is wait and hope the trams will lift in one piece! We

have become aware that the 'B' end of car 48 had a problem with part of the chassis where it had rotted away causing some of the timbers to collapse. Roy has been busy grinding off the broken and rot sections and replacing it with a sturdy piece of timber which he managed to bolt onto the old chassis frame.

Hopefully, the move itself will take place in the next few weeks. We will keep you updated!



A CARTOON DRAWN BY A VISITOR TO THE RVR SITE BACK IN 2001 WHEN WE FIRST MOVED TO THE SITE. ALL CHANGE NOW!

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

What with all the activity at Robertsbridge, fundraising has gone somewhat out of the window over the past few months! Our usual annual visits to Appledore, Hooe and Crowhurst have had to be cancelled for various reasons. Back in May, however, the club did attend the Oval Bus Rally in Hastings as usual (see overleaf).

To help counter the losses from the missed events this year, we are going to really try and push publicity (and sales) at the Family History Event on **Sunday 14th October** at Horntye Park Sports Complex, Bohemia Road, Hastings. The show is open to the public from 10am-4:30pm.

OVAL BUS RALLY By Roy Austen

Dull with a bright outcome: that's the way I can describe our day at the Oval, Hastings for the Hastings Trolleybus Restoration Group's annual bus rally on Sunday 20th May 2012.

Each year as the days get closer to the event, I begin to wonder what sort of day it will be. Will it be wild and windy, will it be raining, will our tent get blown away, are we in for a soaking or will it be bright and sunny all day!



Well, the day started off being dull and drizzly with a bit of a breezy, as forecast. Not so good, I thought. But, as the day went on, it managed to stay fairly dry! Many of our members turned up and helped us in the gazebo and by the end of the day I was surprised to be told that we had done very well with our sales and our 'pick-a-ticket' – in fact it turned out to be one of the best we'd ever done there! So there was a bright outcome after all, well done everyone! This is good news at this time when we shall need all the help we can to cover our costs for moving from Robertsbridge!



Sales	£103.90
Pick-a-ticket	£52.80
Donations	£0.20
Total	£156.90

NEW POSTCARDS

At the last meeting, the club agreed to organise the printing of a set of postcards which could be sold in the future as club merchandise. The images are taken from prints by member and artist Mike Turner which he has kindly agreed for us to use. Eventually, a set of 4 will be available (two with painting set In Hastings, two from Bexhill). Currently, 3 have been printed (shown below) and we hope to put them on sale for 60p each. Once the fourth is completed, we will offer the set for £2.00. All profits will go to club funds.



MEETINGS VENUE

For many years, we have been holding our tri-monthly at the RAF Association club house in Wellington Square in Hastings. Over the past few years, due to falls in sales amongst other things, the opening times of the club have been reduced and reduced again. The day of our meeting has been changed several times to try and accommodate the changes. This however makes it very difficult for us to plan ahead. It was agreed at our last meeting that we should look for another venue. Our next meeting will be at our member Mike Turner's art studio while the hunt for a more permanent venue continues. We wish to thank RAFA for their support in the past years and we wish them well for the future.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The club will be holding its regular meeting at 17 Priory Road, Hastings at 8pm on Tuesday 28th August 2012. The meeting is open to all members.