

Single News – the KSM Volunteers News-brief – January 2021

Covid-19 update

Following the imposition of Tier 4 restrictions in London and now full lockdown, sadly all volunteer working has again had to cease. This is very disappointing as it will have an adverse impact on the repair work being carried out on No 6. However the situation is serious and it is right that we stop work. We can only hope that things will start to improve as the restrictions have an effect and vaccinations become available. As in the previous lockdown, brief visits will be carried out to ensure that the site remains secure and is not subject to any events liable to cause damage to the building or its contents.

Museum publicity

Although the museum website has served us well over the years, the Society committee decided last year that it was due for a refresh. Designing and implementing an effective website is not a trivial exercise and a professional company was used to provide us with the design and base structure. This has been provided and Stephen Fielding is now working hard to develop the precise content required for the site. The hope is that this will soon go live and a communication will be sent out when this has happened. The railway also decided to refresh their own website and this has now been completed and made live. The results can be viewed here: <https://hamptonkemptonrailway.org.uk/>

Museum infrastructure

After having a touchscreen interactive information terminal on loan during 2019, which was well received by visitors, a plan to refresh the interpretation material presented in the museum has been developed and a pilot project implemented. A wooden cabinet which originally housed equipment, sadly now lost, to report and record water levels in the Bishop's Wood Reservoir has been refurbished and repurposed to hold one of these terminals. The makers of this cabinet were clearly forward thinking as the front opening is exactly the size and shape of a 22 inch touchscreen! Using a mini PC, this now displays information about the museum and its role in water supply in a flexible and absorbing way. It is intended to install at least another four such terminals at various locations within the museum.

Membership renewals for Kempton Great Engines Society

Following a second communication sent out to remind members to renew their memberships for 2021, a total of 92 members have now done so. Donations also continue to arrive with the sum of £1,348 having now been received. There are still 40 memberships that have not been renewed and a third reminder will shortly be sent out to these members, hopefully this will bring us back close to our 2020 numbers.

Darent now ready to return to service

Darent passed its 'dry' inspection in October and its 'Inspection in Service' in November without any problems or cautions so is now good for twelve months service. Since returning from the London Museum of Water and Steam and completion of final reassembly, over 150 circuits of the loop have been completed for testing and footplate training purposes, often pulling a train of heavy goods wagons to simulate a working load. Some line-work painting is required as a finishing touch and this will be done when both weather and Covid-19 allow – in the meantime Darent is securely and snugly locked away in the steam shed awaiting the opportunity to return to service.

Volunteer update

It is with great sadness that I have to report that Barbara Fearon passed away on 10th December. Barbara was a key member of the steaming weekend team for many years. Her baking skills provided the refreshment area with wonderful home-made cakes which were always well received by both our visitors and volunteers. She also worked tirelessly to help serve refreshments and ensure that the area was kept clean, tidy and well run. Our deepest sympathies go to her husband Andy, and also to Ellie and Joseph. We will all miss her greatly.

For further information on any of these items or on other things going on at Kempton please speak with your team leader, or see the minutes from the most recent KGES committee meeting located here: <http://www.kemptonsteam.org/kempton-great-engine-society-meeting-minutes/>