

Tetbury Rail Land Regeneration Trust

Friends of the Goods Shed Newsletter No 37 – October 2020



Community, Creativity, Culture

Events Restart – Controlled and Safe

A tourist coach parked outside the Goods Shed was a sign that things were beginning to get back to normal – and then another lock-down! However, a few activities have restarted at the Goods Shed. Just Jive had its first session of the season on 15th September with Jimmy and Sarah teaching a pre-booked class of 22 people with one session of strolls, done individually, and then one of swing jive with partners.

Unfortunately this meant that rather than changing partners every two minutes, we all had to stay with our spouses or partners



which, like playing bridge with your wife, is not always the wisest choice for domestic bliss. There have been a few meetings held in the hall but with the limited number of people able to be present there have been a few complaints of echoes reverberating around the bare hall.

The cinema should be starting up again (Boris allowing) from Thursday 8th Oct with two shows a day matinee and evening (2pm and 7.30pm) and a new art exhibition is due to start on 14th October.

The first music event since lock-down was held on 25 September when the band "Our Man in the Field" played to a full house, that is about 44 people all suitably spaced. The band had promoted the event themselves and so it did not appear on the Goods Shed website. It was a good opportunity for the Goods Shed volunteers to practice all the necessary procedures for these infectious times – including having the bar outside. One satisfied customer wrote,



Our man in the Field perform on 25 Sep.

“Many, many thanks to all the hard working volunteers at the Goods Shed tonight for helping the return of live music by putting on a gig by Our Man in the Field. It was well organised and socially distanced with a crowd of about quarter

capacity spread out over all the seating. The place was clean and we felt totally safe. Yes, we had to wear a mask throughout the show, but that's not really a hardship in the grand scheme of things. Hopefully the first of many such gigs and a small return to normality for artists and venues alike.”

More Improvements

With the Goods Shed being far less used during the current crisis the Trustees have taken the opportunity to make some improvements. Extra lighting bars have been added above the stage area and the screen has been brought forward a fraction. This has allowed a curtain rail to be added from which a black curtain will be hung. This will provide a professional backdrop for performances and will also help with sound absorption. An additional lighting beam will give far greater flexibility than before with performers being able to be lit from above. The stage will now be a more permanent feature in the Goods Shed; it will only be moved for major events that need a completely clear floor area. As a bonus an additional feature is a curtain rail right across the hall in front of the stage but there are no plans as yet to hang a curtain from it.



Further framework for lighting installed above stage.

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In conjunction with the new Covid19 way of doing things, the Shed-Arts website has been updated with a new booking system allowing people to choose their seats. A selection of single seats and tables for two or four will be available allowing us to adhere to the various new rules requiring table service and distancing.

After several years of renting a storage container, the Trust has purchased it and the investment should pay for itself within 30 months. Work on restoring the rear of the carriage has continued. The rear was worse than the front and considerable timber replacement is being carried out thanks to the carpentry skills of Bill Dee. Many thanks also to John Rees who, having donated the materials, has completed a small project to smarten up the area in front of the cafe and has kept the weeds down on the rest of the site.

Whistle Stop Café



Ros's veg – every Saturday from 11am.

The café has continued to be very popular during the warm weather. A temporary, open-sided marquee-type structure on the platform has helped customers stay out of the sun and, occasionally, the rain. The marquee was lent by a Trustee but it is hoped that one will be procured to allow the hardy to continue to enjoy the fresh air while remaining sheltered.

The cafe is hoping to be up and running inside the goods shed by mid-October at the latest, we will be operating full table service, and card payments only. We are also expecting the hugely popular Saturday

Tetbury park run to be starting again at the end of October, this is yet to be confirmed, but we will know two weeks beforehand. When it does restart the cafe will be open from 9am to 11am just for the park runners, and then after that for all other customers, this is because we are expecting large numbers and they will take up all of the indoor space and most of the outdoor space too.

With only two people able to work safely in the kitchen at any one time, Sasha and Catherine have been working long hours to ensure that all our favourite treats are available. The café is a vital part of the Trust's income so please do keep coming along to enjoy a well-deserved cup of cake and irresistible cake. If you come on a Saturday make sure you visit Ros's vegetable stall and buy some superfresh vegetables. She is usually there from 11am to 2pm.

Alas, summer and the flower season have come to an end but many thanks to Debbie Tetley for continuing to run Jill Dodge's flower stall following Jill's little accident with her shoulder. Debbie has been outside the Goods Shed for many weeks on Saturday mornings helping to raise funds for the Goods Shed. Thanks to Debbie and best wishes to Jill for a complete recovery.

Support the Tetbury Trail

The Tetbury Trail was chosen to benefit from the Co-op Local Community Fund during 2020 and there is now one month of fundraising remaining. At a time when funds for community groups and

charitable organisations are becoming more difficult to obtain, we are very grateful for this opportunity to raise money for the Tetbury Trail.

We are raising funds to develop this important community space to encourage people to access the countryside and gain from the beneficial effects to their mental and physical wellbeing. We want to put an all-weather surface along the new sections of the Tetbury Trail, so it can be used by walkers, runners, cyclists, horse riders, and the disabled all year round.

To help us raise the vital funds, we are relying on Co-op members. When a member buys products or services from the Co-op they earn a five per cent reward for themselves, with a further one per cent that goes to local causes like ours. The Co-op is looking to support organisations like the Tetbury Trail that make a difference in their local communities by improving community spaces and promoting health and wellbeing. Co-op members can support the Tetbury Trail by going online at www.coop.co.uk/membership. Please visit the website and choose to support us.

If you're not a Co-op member and would like to support the Tetbury Trail at no cost to yourself, you can join at your local store or online at www.coop.co.uk and get five percent back on your purchases. The Co-op's dedicated website for the Tetbury Trail is <https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/40781>. Thank you for supporting the Tetbury Trail.

Volunteers

The volunteer Receptionists and Event Staff are starting to help wake the Shed up again. We used experienced Event volunteers for the first music event on 25 September and will use them again for the cinema opening on 8 October to test out new ways of working within all the new guidelines, and then we can pass those on to everyone. It is hoped that the Receptionists will start welcoming visitors back inside the Shed through the foyer at the start of October and there is training being undertaken on Friday 2nd October.

We are, of course, always in need of new volunteers for all the various jobs needed to be done in the Goods Shed so, if you want to get out of the house and work in a safe environment, please do contact the office or speak to a receptionist.

We also need some people to help with a one-off leaflet drop, so if you would like some exercise and fresh air please contact us via info@shed-arts.co.uk.

The History of Tetbury Rail Lands and the Goods Shed

Continuing our story of how Tetbury Goods Shed Arts Centre came into being:

The History of the Tetbury Rail Lands Part 5, 2016

In early 2016 the allocation of funding by Tetbury Town Council (TTC) to the Goods Shed was not without controversy. Some councillors and citizens felt a strong loyalty to the Dolphins Hall and resented the use of money on the Goods Shed despite the redevelopment of the Dolphins Hall being allocated a greater amount. There was also a feeling that somehow the Goods Shed would make money at the expense of the ratepayers despite the fact that it was a non-profit making charity with a declared intention to funnel any profits back to the benefit of the community. With the resignation of the Dolphins Board *en masse* due to its inability to agree a workable redevelopment plan, town morale was at a low and a special meeting for all town residents was convened on 17 March 2016. One lady stood up to say that Mr Cook's presentation on the Goods Shed had been the only positive item on the agenda and she praised the Trust's contribution.

As 2016 started the Trust was still examining the building plans in detail. It was apparent that the design would make theatre operations difficult. To save money the proposed permanent stage and storage area were axed but it was deemed essential to have a double door giving access to the stage area for large equipment. The council announced that a new joint working committee (JWC) had been formed and all financial aspects of the redevelopment would now be managed by the council. In March 2016 an invitation to tender was issued to 3 firms, Edmont, Chappell & Dix and Stonewood, and a local firm, Matthew Stevens, was subsequently added. As there were insufficient funds for all the planned building work the JWC decided to remove the fitting-out of the kitchen and the glass frontage from the initial contract. Subsequently the fitting out of the kitchen was undertaken by the Trust and the glass frontage was added back into the contract being funded by the council. The tender return due date was 11 Apr 2016, later slipped to 25 April, and on 19 May it was announced that Stonewood had been appointed prime contractor with a building start date of 30 May. The architects, Clark and Maslin, were appointed project managers.

Meanwhile in February the Trust received £750 from the Langtree Trust and a pledge from the Jack Lane Trust for £1,000. A promise of £15,000 towards the purchase of seating came from the Foyle Foundation. The Trust began planning for an appeal to raise more funds for the retractable seating and in July a flyer for the seat appeal was issued with every edition of the Tetbury Advertiser offering a personalised dedication plaque on each seat for a donation of £250. At about this time the idea of a grand piano costing up to £100,000 was also first mooted. When the start of building was announced the Trust had to hurriedly procure a storage container and mobilise volunteers to empty the Goods Shed of the various items that had accumulated over the previous years, mainly old chairs and tables. With the project finally being realised and the first booking for the new hall having been received from Tetbury Community Choir, thoughts turned to how the arts centre would be staffed and job specifications were drafted. However, with all available funds already committed there was no possibility of actually appointing anybody.



Soon after work started on the foundations for the annexe an old well dug during building in 1889 was uncovered.

By mid-June work had started on the Goods Shed with the concrete floor base laid and scaffolding erected inside and outside. In July it was found that due to ground conditions the annexe would need deeper foundations at an additional cost of £15,000. Soon after, one of the original wells was uncovered beneath what was to become the kitchen. Further costs included extra money for roof repairs, the rehangng of the main sliding doors and redigging the drainage system. This attrition of the contingency funding meant that the council could not afford to pay for the reinstatement of the front canopy.

In July Mr Doyle reported that the Trust had just received £30,000 from the Garfield Weston Foundation and expected £6,700 from Cotswold Conservation in August. The Seat Appeal had already raised £6,250. The funding to finance capital expenses was going well but it was appreciated that the Trust needed to ensure that interest in the project did not flag. In August 2016 the first Friends of the Goods Shed Newsletter was published online under the editorship of David Walker. There was a TRLRT stand at the Tetbury Flower Show, a brick signing event, another Jill Dodge coffee

morning and at the Heritage Weekend in September the construction work was thrown open for visitors to see the progress.

Over the summer the Trust began negotiating a lease of the building from the town council. Initially the council required a minimum rent of £5,000 per year and wanted 25% of any profit and even this had not been considered sufficient by some councillors even though the Trust would be paying £136,700 of the funds it had raised to the council as its share of the costs. Fortunately for the Trust it was found that if the council obtained a commercial rent it would be obliged to pay VAT on the redevelopment work and so a 25-year lease was signed at a peppercorn rent.

Meanwhile further problems with construction arose. Due to the load imposed by the retractable seating the flooring had to be increased in thickness. The prime contractor had quoted over £34,000 for the installation of the best quality secondary glazing, which was essential for the use of the Goods Shed as a concert hall, and so the council removed it from the contract. An independent glazier was found who quoted £18,950 for the acoustic glass and Mr Cook volunteered to install the secondary glazing at no cost. TTC agreed that the bill would be split with TTC paying £9,000 and the Trust paying the balance of £9,950 + VAT. When the JWG agreed that the internal doors would be oak finish instead of plain, Mr Doyle generously offered to pay the difference. The temporary removal and then reinstatement of the foyer in the contract meant that it could not be built before Christmas because of the lead times for the glass. The footings, which had been completed, had cost £5,000 and the structure would cost a further £29,000, for all of which the council would now pay. Final completion of the building was not now expected before February with the lease being planned to be signed two weeks after acceptance of the building.



Trustees Stephen Hirst (L) and Will Cook (R) inspect progress of the redevelopment work in summer 2016.

By October 116 of the planned 182 retractable seats had been sponsored and it was agreed that as soon as two outstanding grants had been received the seats could be ordered which they duly were in late November at a cost of £81,000 including VAT. The seating was installed in the Goods Shed in late March 2017 with all the seats having been sponsored and each fitted with a small brass name or plaque.



The parents of Adam Philby who designed the Trust's logo meet HRH The Prince of Wales at the official opening of the Goods Shed

Although not quite finished the renovated building was opened by HRH the Prince of Wales on 22 December 2016 with due celebration. Mr Brecon Quaddy created 3 large graphic boards for the occasion illustrating the history of the railway and of the efforts to convert the old rail lands into an asset for the community. The following day the now "traditional" carol singing was held, but this time in the body of the newly opened Goods Shed, despite no seating. Another New Year's Day walk was held along the old track on which significant progress had been made in opening it up to the public. After more than a year's negotiations Mr Mike Tucker had agreed to open up the track through his land as a bridleway, from the Worwell to the Long

Newnton road, on condition that the existing footpath to the south east of it was diverted along the track. This was agreed by Gloucestershire Highways and then formally put into law by Cheltenham magistrates in November 2016. Funds for improvements to the track were raised from a sponsored cycle ride in June and by a local cycling organization. In February 2017 the town council provided 6 bicycle racks which were installed next to the Goods Shed by volunteer labourers.

(to be continued)

Quiz

You know the formula by now: 5 more questions on Tetbury and a further five to test your general knowledge.

1. Does Tetbury have a coat of arms?
2. Who founded the Tetbury Collegiate School in 1864?
3. Where is Magdalen Mead Well, an important source of water for 19th century Tetburians who did not have their own well?
4. Speaking in the 1980s, what did Tetbury's historian Ted Prince say "may be considered the prime initiator of the revolution that has changed Tetbury more in the past thirty years than anything that happened in the previous three hundred years."
5. There are currently 224 listed buildings in Tetbury of which one is a stone wall. What and where is it?
6. Why were Teddy boys so named?
7. Why are US dollars known as bucks.
8. When did the last national serviceman leave the British Army?
9. What was so great about all the ships designed by Isambard K Brunel?
10. Name five European capital cities that begin with V.

Answers to Last Month's Quiz

1. *While based in Tetbury during the Second World War the US 654th Engineer Topographic Battalion built a 1:12,500 scale model of Omaha Beach in the Malthouse as an aid to D-Day planning and operations.*
2. *The 1971 film starring John Mills featured Tetbury as a location for the cattle market and pub was called "Dulcima".*
3. *The plaque on Fox Hill next to an old gas pipe marks the coming of gas to Tetbury in 1836.*
4. *Tetbury's church is known as St Marys' and not St Mary's as it is dedicated to both the Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalene.*
5. *Tetbury's three breweries were, before they were bought up or closed, Warn's, Witchell's and Cook's.*
6. *The famous sea battles of Actium (31BC), Lepanto (AD1571) and Navarino (AD1827) were all fought close to coast of mainland Greece.*
7. *The hanging of Michael Barrett in London on 26th of May 1868 was the last public execution in England. Barrett was a Fenian bomber.*
8. *The uncle of Prince Henry the Navigator of Portugal was King Henry IV of England; his sister, Philippa married King Joao of Portugal.*
9. *Sixty two guns (more accurately 62 rounds) are fired on the anniversary of the birth, accession and coronation of the sovereign.*
10. *Etymologically earl is the most ancient rank in the peerage as it is of Anglo-Saxon origin and predates the Conquest (although strictly speaking there was no peerage at that time). The rank of baron came along with King William's Norman and French companions in 1066. The rank of duke was established in 1337 (the Duke of Cornwall), marquess in 1385 (Marquess of Dublin) and viscount in 1440 (Viscount Beaumont).*

From the Archive

Having delved to the very bottom of the archives I was amazed to come across a notebook that, when opened, revealed a treasure trove of adventures experienced by a local man who probably worked at Tetbury Station. He seemingly recorded his adventures on the railway with his two regular companions, Fielder and Titus. They appear to have had a lot of fun on their travels obviously enjoying a prank or two to liven up their adventures. The unknown diarist recorded these adventures in vivid terms drifting between the English he learned at school and his native vernacular.

“On Sat'dy we three gode up to Lunnon on the train for the Royal Smiffield Shaow. We changed at Kemble and a 'ooman and a child were in our compartment. The inspector a-comes along and when the lady presents only one ticket 'er says to 'er, he sez, “Has 'ou a ticket for that child?” “Certainly not,” was her indignant reply, “it has nothing to do with the company. *I'm* carrying the child”.

Two flappers joined we at Swindon, I think they had a-come up from Chippers and had just changed trains. “The cheek of that inspector, 'er glared at me as if I didn't have a ticket,” said the first. Her companion asked breathlessly, “What did yer do?” “Glared back at 'im as if I 'ad.”

Two Irishmen ran to join the train at Reading. I speck them 'ad bin at the races aday afore but 'ad a mossel too much drink and missed the last train. Howsomedever they'd still left it too late to git'm some tickets. “Dere'll be trouble at da next station when dey ask us for tickets,” said one, “what'll we be doin' now.” With a confident air tother one said, “Juss youse leave it me, Daragh. I'll make it right.” At Slough he suddenly leapt out of the carriage with an exhortation to his companion to stay put. In a few minutes he returned brandishing two tickets. “Jesus,” says Daragh, “and how did you do dat?”

“T'was easy as falling off a log. I went into a carriage with some toffy-nosed Englishmen in it and said, ‘Tickets, please’.”

As we approached Paddington a porter gode down the train calling, “Paddington. All change.” Well a furriner, accustomed to allus doing as he wuz told, straightways handed over all his money, only begging that 'ee t be allowed to retain suffishunt to pay for his return ticket. On the way back from the show we a-come to Paddington and we didn't know where to ketch our train so we queued up at th' information desk. At the front was an old gennelmun who axed querulous-like, “When is the next train to Bristol?” “Four-five, sir,” was the prompt and efficient reply. “Bisn't there one afore that?” “No, sir, or that would be the next one, wouldn't it?” The clerk at the desk 'eed obviously had a long day and this might 'ave affected his response to his next customer. 'Er was a nice looking young 'ooman, just in front of us, who seemed to be nation hazy 'bout her planned journey. “Do you go to Kew Gardens?” she axed. With a charming smile the young clerk answered, “Sometimes on a Sunday, Miss, if it's a fine afternoon.”

The clerk directed us to our platform and as we 'proached the brake carriage at the rear of our train we a-seed this queer sort o'twoad. Fielder, who be reglar church, not chapel, sed, “That be the bishop o' Gloucester, 'e be a noted wit.” Wall, the bishop 'e were looking 'round fer a porter. One soon spotted him and rushed up to attend to his luggage axing at the same time, “'ow many articles, my lord?” “Thirty-nine,” was the bishop's immediate reply.

There was also a very grand 'ooman who was looking 'round her until she spotted the same vossled porter who she summoned over. In a very plummy voice 'er said, “Portaw, I've lorst my luggage.” “Then,” said the cockney porter, “what do ya want a bleedin' porter for?”

Howsomedever, we ketched our train and Fielder put his hat on the seat with his ticket in the band of his hat where he was wont to put it for safe keeping. It seemed Titus still needed more fun to be atook from our excurschon. Gi'ing I a wink, 'er deftly abstracted the ticket while Fielder wuz looking out the winder. As we slowed down afore entering Reading, Titus remarked orl casual-like, “They inspeck tickets 'ere”. Fielder, 'aving searched everywhere in vain for his ticket, finally exclaimed, “By George, I've lost ut.”

“Rath, git under the seat, man, it'll be all right”, advised Titus. Hardly had Fielder stowed hissself away when the ticket inspector entered and wuz presented by Titus wi' two tickets.

“But why do you give me two tickets?” enquired the mystified offishul.

“Oh, thass alright,” replied Titus, “but the other gennelmun prefers to travel under the seat,” from which dusty refuge Fielder had then to crawl. Titus did larf, 'e were allus gittin' larruped at school for doin' daft thengs, nagging the gals and like.

At Swindon we seed an old lady in conversashun wi't ticket collector seemingly unwilling to accept his advice. She wandered hesitaty-like to'ords our train and enquired of a porter "Is this really the train to Cheltenham?" The porter's confident reply of "Yes, mum" was met with a look of disbelief as if all the railway staff were conspiring to get 'er on the wrong train. "Are you sure?" 'er persisted. "Well, mum, the board of directors, the stationmaster, the signalman, the guard, the driver and myself think so. I can't say no fairer than that, can I?"

"Fancy a mossel o' bacca?" said Titus. I replied that the compartment wurn't a smoker. "No problem," said Titus and unrolled a smoking sign that 'eed obv'usly prev'usly removed from a smoker compartment. "I always carry one of these," 'er laughed as 'er stuck it on the window and passed around the 'bacca, "It keeps the ladies out so yer don't have to stand if'n come looking for a seat." What a clever idea I was thinking just as the lady we'd abin observing entered the compartment and said, "I adore the smell of a pipe". Having settled in, 'er turned to we and sed, "Does this train stop anywhere?" Well Titus was a bit tickle and replied, "Well, if'n don't stop at Cheltenham, mum, there'll be a most mortal smash."

Contact me if you have any questions or wish to contribute to the newsletter: David Walker, 01666 500137 or opheliatheboat@gmail.com.