




FRIENDS OF THE GOODS SHED

FRIENDS OF THE GOODS SHED FOGS NEWSLETTER NO. 20



THE GOODS SHED GETS ITS OWN GRAND PIANO



Celebrated pianist William Howard tries out the new piano

Thanks to the generosity of a local donor the Goods Shed has been able to acquire a Steinway B grand piano. However, it is only partly funded and it is up to us to find a further £22,680 in order for us to be able to keep the piano beyond the current loan period of 18 months. To start with we hope that our generous supporters will sponsor the 88 keys and three pedals on the piano at £88 per key or pedal. We are working on a board that will be able to show people what keys have been sponsored and by whom (or anonymously if so wished.) In the meantime, anyone who is keen to donate please phone or email me (01666 500137, opheliatheboat@gmail.com) and I will provide the necessary paperwork.





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PAINTING OF WILL AND GRAYHAM

Two of our most stalwart Goods Shed volunteers have been beautifully and poignantly caught in a mixed-media painting by Lesley Whitwell and the picture now hangs proudly in the Goods Shed. Will Cook and Grayham Cleaver have been labouring down at the Goods Shed since the whole project started with the demolition of the interior in 2013.



Will with his carpentry expertise and Grayham with his worldwide experience of well drilling have brought an incredible breadth of skill and experience to the project that has allowed us to overcome any technical problems we have faced. Both are now working on the railway carriage to which Lesley and her husband, Graham, have also brought their painting skills!

VOLUNTEER PRIZE WINNERS - AUGUST SEPTEMBER 2018

The winner of the two cinema tickets in the draw held for volunteering in September was Beryl Champion. Beryl has long been a supporter of the Goods Shed, helping out in the early days at the boot sales and the tea stalls. Since we have had the café she has willingly given of her time to help behind the scenes and she also assists in the bar at evening events. Well deserved, Beryl! The winner in August was – drumroll - your very own copy writer and editor! It's wonderful to have one's labours appreciated, even if it was by Lady Luck. To all our volunteers labouring ceaselessly for the good of our community and the Goods Shed, thank you very much and keep it up – your turn will come!



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THE GOODS SHED CARRIAGE - MARY JANE



Work is still continuing on Mary Jane, the Goods Shed carriage, mainly in order to get some heat into it for the winter. We have purchased two heat pump systems that will hopefully be fitted in the next few weeks. A chiller unit will also soon be installed behind the carriage to ease café storage problems and to allow the carriage to be used for restaurant dining for which our premises licence variation has been approved. All the panelling at the rear of the carriage has now been replaced and painted with just some restoration and painting of the window frames left to do. To give our café customers something to read, there is now a book case in the café entrance; patrons can either buy a second-hand book or just browse while enjoying the café atmosphere. Future work includes making the carriage wheelchair-accessible and building a covered way from the kitchen to the carriage.

EVENTS SEPTEMBER

Following Patrick Gale in August, we had an evening with the renowned poet and writer Simon Armitage on 12th September. The folk duo Ethenia performed to an appreciative audience on the 22nd. On the 26th we had the first of our series of lectures which featured Lynne Gibson talking about the deadly materials that artists used to have to contend with to create the beautiful colours of medieval paintings; a most interesting and hair-raising lecture. As part of the Tetbury Musical Festival on the 29th, we had the Julian Bliss Septet playing jazz to a sell-out audience, a truly great evening's entertainment. Jimmy and Sarah continue to give us a regular workout on Tuesdays with their swing jive lessons - great fun and very sociable; it's not too late to start coming. We hope to be able to put some of our learning to use by dancing at the Elvis in Trouble evening at the Goods Shed on Saturday 13th October - too good to miss.



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EXHIBITION

“DECEPTION”

The latest exhibition in the Goods Shed is by acclaimed photographer Mark Fairhurst. His “Deception” artworks are stunning architectural photos of church ceilings. The photos have been symmetrically duplicated or quadrupled but without any other photo-shopping. They are truly mesmerising and well worth a visit.



CINEMA CLUB

Films shown in September included Funny Cow, Beast, The Mercy and Journey's End, none of which disappointed. We also welcomed Tetbury Film Society whose first showing of the season was the film Hotel Salvation, which was the first Indian and, indeed, foreign language film to be shown at the Goods Shed.

We have decided not to go ahead with the Saturday matinees which we had pencilled in to start on 6 October. This is mainly because we expected to struggle to find volunteers so please let us know if you would like, and are able, to help out. We may start the matinees at a later date if we can identify the demand and have the volunteers.





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AUDIO-HISTORY: RAILWAY MEMORIES

You may remember that in the past we asked for memories of the Tetbury railway. We had some very interesting articles which were all published in the newsletter. We hope to make an audio archive of those memories and of any forthcoming new ones so, if you are happy to let us record your spoken reminiscences, please let me know.



TETBURY TRAIL

You may have noticed some digging going on in the park lands and alongside the old rail bed. This is for the installation of a fitness stations to allow those with the inclination to intersperse their walk with exercises aimed at improving the whole body. We hasten to add that many of these stations will be designed more towards simple stretching thereby allowing those of a gentler disposition to partake. We have also commissioned some signs to go up along the Tetbury Trail in order to exercise the mind as well as the body. These will give descriptions of what is to be found when walking from Tetbury to the Trouble House.

EASY FUNDRAISING

If you are an internet shopper, do please sign up to easyfundraising.org.uk and nominate "Tetbury Goods Shed" as your charity of choice. It really takes very little effort, costs you nothing but means a lot to the Goods Shed. Those who have already signed up continue to raise a modest but regular donation to the Goods Shed. There is the potential to raise hundreds of pounds by this means if more people join in. Go to the Goods Shed website and sign up now. We need every penny.





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VOLUNTEER NEWS

Senior Manager Required. The trust is looking for a volunteer senior manager to take on an important role at the Goods Shed. Although unable to offer any remuneration at present, if the turnover of the Goods Shed is increased it might be possible for this to become a permanent paid employment.

The Trustees believe a recently retired business person or a professional from the arts industry who is looking to have an active retirement would be ideal, or may be a person with some arts management experience wanting to take on a challenge as part of their career progression. Are you that person or do you know somebody who might be interested? Please let us know.

We always welcome new volunteers and there is something for everyone at the Goods Shed. If you can spare some time to help out please feel free to come to an event and ask any volunteer on duty how you can help; or contact these individuals: Office - Christine Berry 01666 503076; Events - Jennie Horton 01666 503569; Bar - Ros Tildesley 01666 502882; Café - Caroline Morgan 01666 505744; Projects - David Walker 01666 500137; Cinema - Sally Battersby 01666 504473; Exhibition Stewards - Adele Dark 07934 990 319.



FROM THE ARCHIVE

DR BEECHING AND TETBURY BRANCH LINE CLOSURE

In October 1959 Ernest Marples was appointed Minister of Transport. Marples, a qualified accountant, was a roads man. He had founded a construction company, Marples-Ridgway, which built roads across the country and as soon as he took office he gave the green light for Britain's first intercity motorway, the M1. He also reined in the British Transport Commission, which was driving a major railway modernisation, and set up an independent advisory panel led by Sir Ivan Stedeford to report on the railways. Among the panel's members was a physicist, engineer and board member of ICI, Dr Richard Beeching. On 15 March 1961 Marples told the House of Commons that Beeching would become the first chairman of the new British Railways Board. His salary would be £24,000 per annum, more than any other civil servant and £10,000 more than the prime minister. There was obviously consternation among many that Beeching was a business man with no railway experience other than his time on the advisory panel. With remarkable prescience one writer wrote, "A noteworthy feature is that Dr Beeching's present intention to return to ICI after five years probably will cause him to be regarded as a surgeon rather than a railwayman."

Beeching had been given the job of making the railways economic, specifically to make its operating profit "not less than sufficient" for meeting the running costs. On 27 March 1963 Beeching published his shock report, "The Reshaping of British Railways" calling for a third of the network to be closed and ripped up.

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FROM THE ARCHIVE

CONTINUED . . .



TWO VIEWS OF THE GOODS SHED SOON AFTER CLOSURE OF THE BRANCH LINE.

Despite a brief upsurge in passenger numbers when AC Cars railbuses were introduced to the Tetbury branch line in February 1959, by 1962 the annual number of passengers was only 12,500 (though this was two-and-a-half times the number during the last days of steam service) and the line was clearly uneconomic. It was decreed that both the Tetbury and Cirencester branches would close.

When the last steam services had run on 31 January 1959, the demand for seats on the train known as the "Tetbury Donkey" was so great that a brake van had to be added behind the 58XX 0-4-2T and its coaches. As the train neared Trouble House Halt on the return trip someone pulled the communication cord and the passengers alighted and went to the pub for half an hour until summoned back by the engine's whistle. Back at Tetbury, the passengers formed a procession headed by top-hatted mourners and marched through the town.

On Saturday 4 April 1964 the last down train was obstructed by bales of burning straw which had been laid across the rails. Then a coffin covered with inscriptions, filled with empty whisky bottles and addressed to Beeching, was loaded by mourners in bowler hats at Trouble House Halt on the last advertised train to Kemble. There it was transferred to the London train for delivery to the doctor. On the following day a special steam pull-and-push train, worked by Collett 14xx 0-4-2T No 1472, ran over both the Tetbury and Cirencester branches. As it rolled towards Cirencester, the passengers were treated to free rolls and beer. An attempt was then made to burn a 6ft effigy of the Minister of Transport but the railway police intervened and so the demonstrators set it alight on the pavement outside the terminus.

Was there a viable alternative to the Beeching plan? Given the facts it seems inevitable that the loss-making operations had to close. It just seems a pity that Beeching did not have the foresight to see the need for future increased transport infrastructure and the possible resurgence of the railways as, indeed, has come to pass. The rights of way that could have been used for new forms of transport or leisure were sold off making it very difficult, if not impossible, to restore any kind of new transport service.

(Acknowledgement to Robin Jones, Beeching 50 Years of the Axeman, published by Morton's Media Group, for much of the above.)

If you know of anyone who may be interested in joining as a volunteer, please feel free to pass our contact details on. (Office - Christine Berry 01666 503076) (Events - Jennie Horton 01666 503569) (Bar - Ros Tildesley 01666 502882) (Café - Caroline Morgan 01666 505744) (Projects - David Walker 01666 500137) (Cinema - Sally Battersby 01666 504473) (Exhibition Stewards - Caroline Morgan 01666 505744)

