



SMALLFORD STATION
& ALBAN WAY
Heritage Society



The Smallford Station and Alban Way Heritage Society

AGM 2020

Monday 26th October 2020
7.30-9.00pm: via Zoom

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AGENDA

1. Welcome
 - a. Thanks to our Host – Zoom!
 - b. Apologies for Absence

2. Notes from the previous AGM
Confirmation that these are a correct record

3. Reports
 - a. Chair
 - b. Treasurer
 - c. Membership

4. Election
 - a. Committee
 - b. Officers

5. AOB

6. Date of Next Meeting

The AGM will be followed by a Presentation

Plans for improving the Environment around Smallford Station, its Platform and the adjoining Car Park

Presenter: Roger Gray; Smallford Station & Alban Way Heritage Society

Roger will provide an update on the plans to –

- Improve the environment around Smallford Station, its platform and adjoining car park
- Renovate a railway goods van body which will provide permanent storage for our exhibition and items we have collected, and to site it close to Smallford Station and available to the public.
- Projected Costs and Fundraising

St Albans District Council & Oaklands College are major partners in this collaborative project

The Presentation will be followed by an on-line discussion

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CHAIR'S REPORT

The Smallford Station and Alban Way Heritage Society (SSAWHS) was established at an Inaugural Meeting held on April 10th 2017 at University of Hertfordshire – its purpose, to continue and develop the work established by the 'Bringing the History of Smallford Station to Life' Project. This is our third AGM.

1. Your Committee

There are 9 Committee Members. Over the past year, our full Committee has met 17 times – 14 of these have been 'virtual' meeting via Zoom (which has been a learning curve for us).

Chair	Jeff Lewis
Honorary Secretary	Vacant
Honorary Treasurer	Rob Brook
Membership Secretary	Roger Gray
Curator of 3D Objects/Exhibitions	Alastair Cameron
Technical Adviser	Dave Barnes
Without Portfolio	Pauline Baycroft
Without Portfolio	Chris Musk
Website Manager	Jonathan Musk

Due to pressure of other commitments, three Committee Members resigned –

- Honorary Secretary Gary Fisher
- Publicity: Facebook Group: Newsletter Anna Hammerin
Both of the above roles remain unfilled.
- Archivist/Guided Walks/Website Development John Darnton
John has generously said he will continue undertaking these roles

We are most grateful to all three for their commitment and support and wish them continuing success.

We have established a small but very important Project Group to consider plans for developing the environment around Smallford Station.

We are also most grateful to –

- the University of Hertfordshire Heritage Hub for providing us with continuing support and a venue for our Committee Meetings (pre-COVID!).
- Rae Borrás, of Borrás Construction, for meeting the cost of transporting a goods van body from Northamptonshire to St Albans.
- Oaklands College – with whom we continue to discuss and are starting to implement some exciting collaborative projects
- St Albans District Council who will be supporting our exciting community Project.

2. Projects/Activities

Developing Smallford Station and its Environment

As previously reported, for various reasons beyond our control, discussions on acquiring an interest in Smallford Station building and creating a Community Heritage Centre have been put on hold.

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We have therefore decided to consider ways in which we can improve the environment around the station platform.

Two years ago we established a small Project Team to put together detailed plans -

1. For Improving the Environment around Smallford Station

- Erecting 'Welcome' signs - eg at the entrance on Station Road and to the car park
- Information Board on Alban Way facing the car park entrance
- Planting around the station car park

2. For improving the station platform, installing -

- Raised flower beds
- Replica vintage lamp-posts and benches
- Display panels along the rear fence

3. For renovating and restoring a goods van body -

- To house our exhibition and a range of artefacts from our collection
- To site this close to Smallford Station and open it to the public

Influential Support

We are really lucky to have three particularly important people who have 'come on board' to support this exciting Project –

- Frances Leonard is a St Alban District Councillor who has been a member of our Society for several years: She has been enthusiastically 'pushing our Project forward'!
- John Clemow is a retired Architect and David Lane a very successful Town Planner: both have generously offered their services for free and, with their encouragement and support, we will be making a formal Planning Application to SADC.

The Involvement of St Albans District Council (SADC)

Our plans require the approval of St Albans District Council (who are the owners of the platform and all the land surrounding the station) and their consultants, Countryside Management Service (CMS).

Especially through Frances Leonard's support, negotiations with SADC are going very well; they have appointed a 'Liaison Officer' to help the negotiation process: we've had an initial meeting with him which went exceptionally well.

The Involvement of Oaklands College

Students from six Departments are involved –

- Art and Design
- Carpentry and Joinery
- Graphics, Multimedia and Photography
- Horticulture
- Special Needs
- Trowel Trades

Art & Design Level 3, Carpentry Level 3 and Horticulture Students are expected to start getting practically involved after this October half term (obviously COVID dependent!).

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Projected Costs and Fundraising

Our current estimates suggest that the costs of materials for our Project are quite substantial and in the region of –

- £2,500 for work on the platform and around the car park



- £5,000 to renovate and restore the goods van body – which will hold our exhibition



To raise these funds: we've set aside £1,500 from our own funds; we'll be setting up a 'Just Giving' webpage, approaching local companies and residents and applying for funding to various 'bodies' including Colney Heath Parish Council and our County Councillor.

Several people have already made, or promised, significant contributions –

Transport Goods Van Body	£630.00	Rae Borrás
Bench	£500.00	Pauline Baycroft
Donations	£100 each	Jon Kingdon & Nick Trigg
Planning Pre-Application & Application		Frances Leonard
LED Lighting - Goods Van & Lampposts		Dave Barnes

If you'd like to make a contribution (which would be fantastic!), please email us at info@smallford.org

Smallford Station

Listing

We have continued to explore what exactly is covered by the Grade II Listing of Smallford Station – believing that the Station Master's House should be included.

State of Repair

We have ongoing serious concerns about the lack of maintenance of the station building and its continuing deterioration. With the support of O'Shea's Financial Director, some work has recently been undertaken on repairing the slate roof.

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Public Access to the Platform

This is yet to be resolved, although we are now fairly hopeful that it will be. For instance, we know that it's not a matter relating to Building Regulation, as was previously suggested.

Making our Collection more Accessible: Developing our Archive and our Website

This is turning out to be a more complex matter than we had initially considered – especially given our limited knowledge of website development. However, John Darnton continues to explore it with the support of a local colleague. Alongside Improving the Environment around Smallford Station, this is an extremely important matter for our Society.

3. Keeping in Contact with our Members and Friends

Social Media

We have recently had a meeting with Sophie Ruane-Lewis who has generously offered to support our endeavours to utilise Social Media.

Mailchimp Email Circulation List

The number of subscribers to our Mailchimp Email Circulation List has risen over the past year from 82 to 92. In the past year we circulated 6 emails, the open rate ranging from 56%-64%.

Litter-Picking Group

We didn't realise, until last year, that a small group of enthusiastic residents (mostly from Sleepshyde) have been litter picking and undertaking some simple maintenance of The Alban Way from Smallford Station to 'Deadman's Crossing'. We recently met up and shared our exciting Project Plans and they're happy to get involved – eg in keeping the station platform and car park tidy and smart. If you'd like to join the group on one of their occasional litter-picking exercises, please let me know (via info@smallford.org) and we'll put you in touch with them.

University of Hertfordshire Heritage Hub

UH Heritage Hub has played an important role for us - since the very early days of 'Bringing the History of Smallford Station to Life' and its successor, SSAWHS. Over the past year there have been some significant changes at the Hub and all three of our key contacts are no longer working there; the long-term implications of this reorganisation (for the Hub and SSAWHS) are unknown. At the beginning of this Academic Year, UH initiated a Review of the Hub and, at the time of writing, we do not know the results.

4. DVD: 'Railways of Hertfordshire'

In June 2020 I received an email from Stephanie South of Transport Video Publishing (who have been producing programmes on railways for some 40 years). She was producing a programme on 'The Railways of Hertfordshire' and Tony Furse of St Albans South Signal Box was presenting and narrating: she asked if I'd be happy to be interviewed – which I was. The DVD was published in August 2020; Smallford and SSAWHS are included in a section titled 'Gone but not forgotten' and copies are available at £16.95: If you purchase a copy, please let them know about your connection with SSAWHS and Stephanie will make a contribution to our funds. Alternatively, you can purchase a copy via us – email info@smallford.org

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5. Items Available for Donations

- Publications:
 - *The Hatfield & St Albans Railway Branch of the GNR: More Tales & Research:* Roger Taylor
 - *From 'Bringing the History of Smallford Station to Life' to Smallford Station & Alban Way Heritage Society: Our Journey':* Jeff Lewis
- Fridge Magnets
 - Smallford Totem
 - LNER logo

We have decided not to put a purchase price on any of our items but provide a suggested minimum donation.

Items added to our Collection over the Past Year

These include -

- Donated by Pauline Baycroft
 - OO-Gauge railway models: 3 Locomotives + 3 Rolling Stock items
- Donated by John Kingdon
 - GNR Boundary Post (ex-Hertford Branch) – restored by him
- Donated by Paul Jeffries
 - 4 'Exhibition-Ready' (very nicely painted) Rail Chairs
- Donated by Mike Izzard
 - Digitised photo of the Mason family taken by Ethel Mason who committed suicide, possibly at Deadman's Crossing', on 22nd May 1929



6. British Association for Local History

We continue to be members of this association (£75/annum) especially since membership includes Public Liability Insurance.

7. Some of our Current Challenges

Especially with the resignation of three Committee Members, we're seeking people who would like to get actively involved in our work and exciting plans: some of the roles are -

- Committee Member
- Fundraising and Generating Income
- Publicity and publication design
- Website development

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- Participate in our exciting projects
- Take on new projects – eg booklet on nature along the Alban Way
- Update some of our publications – eg trifold, guided walk booklet...
- Finding out how the line was used during both World Wars? We’ve made no progress whatever on this matter despite significant efforts

8. Calendar of Activities: 2019-2020

Apart from those shown below, all other planned activities were inevitably cancelled due to COVID 19.

Presentation: *Smallford Station & the Hatfield & St Albans Branch of the GNR*

- 18th February 2020 St Albans U3A
- 19th February 2020 Essendon WI
- 24th September 2020 Oaklands Agricultural Students – on-line via MS Teams

Presentation: *The Varying Fortunes of the Hatfield & St Albans Railway*

- 22nd October 2019 Welwyn & District History Society:
- 19th November 2019 Priory Methodist Church: Men’s Railway Group, Bedford

Exhibitions

- 19th October 2019 Local Transport Day, Willington Village Hall
- 6th February 2020 Shuttleworth Collection, Old Warden

Guided Walks

All cancelled

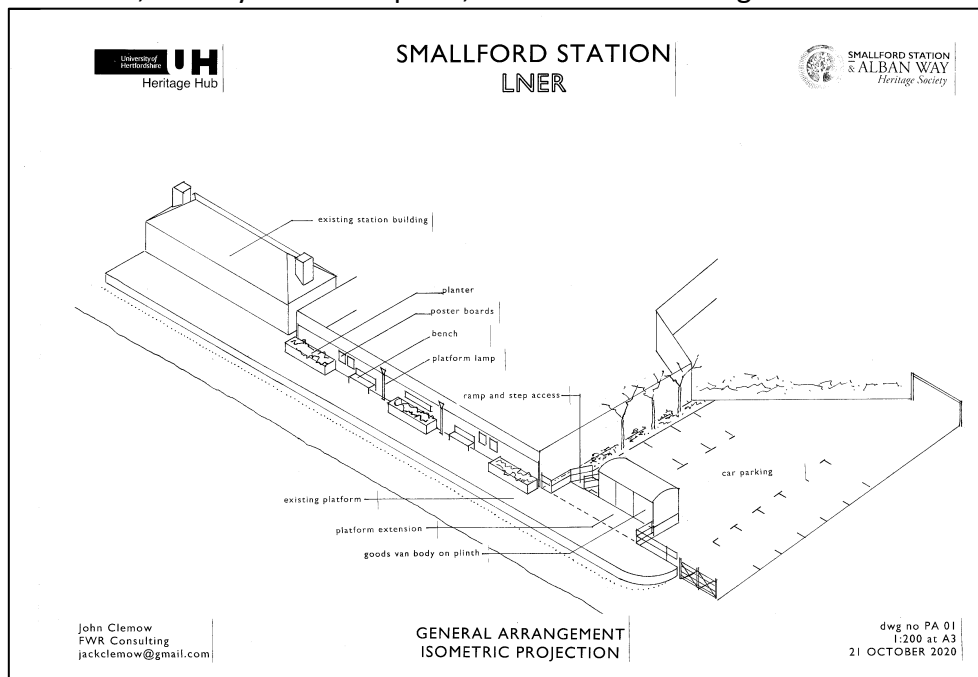
Future Calendar of Activities: 2020-2021

We are not in the position to plan public activities due to COVID 19.

However, we are likely to provide presentations to Student Groups at Oaklands College

Jeff Lewis: Chair: SSAWHS

With thanks to John Clemow for his artist’s impressions of the future of Smallford Station shown above. And, literally hot of the press, John’s latest drawing!



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TREASURER'S REPORT

Our Financial Year End is 30th September.

Due to Covid-19, the society has been unable to participate in any of our normal activities (eg exhibitions, guided walks) and has made a limited number of group presentations - leading to an adverse effect on the years' income.

The following is a summary of transactions for the accounting year end 30th September 2020.

INCOME	£
Membership Subscriptions	70.00
Donations (from individuals and presentations + £150 from Natwest)	755.33
Merchandise	99.50
Reimbursement	37.43
Total Income	962.26
EXPENDITURE	£
Business Purchases (BALH Membership inc PLI, MS OneDrive & 365, AGM Items)	182.04
Stationery (ink, banner)	131.99
Merchandise	110.26
Donations	10.00
Total Expenditure	434.29
BALANCE	£
Opening Balance at Bank	2553.99
Surplus	525.47
Closing Balance at Bank	3079.46

Rob Brook: Treasurer SSAWHS

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

We currently have 92 Friends and Members who are on our Mailchimp Email Circulation List: last year this was 82:

Of these –

- 14 are paid up Members
- 8 are Honorary Members
- 70 are 'Friends'

Given our fundraising, £5 of every £10 Membership Fee will be donated towards the costs of our exciting Collaborative Community Project.

Roger Gray: Membership Secretary: SSAWHS