

# FRIENDS OF CHATHAM TRACTION

Registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation No. 1174323

[www.chathamtraction.org.uk](http://www.chathamtraction.org.uk)

## Update 56

14 August 2021

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Chair

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*Richard B.*

## More quiet months.....

*A bit of a gap since the Update 55 in March. Work on GKE has continued, and our contact with the Medway community has extended. But we are still short of our Appeal target.....*

## The End is in sight!

Sooner or later we were going to need a strategy for bringing our involvement with South East Coachworks to a close. We have long had schedules of remaining tasks, produced mainly for the purpose of estimating costs in support of funding applications or appeals. However this year we began to differentiate between jobs that needed to be done by the coachbuilders and those we could handle ourselves. Coachbuilder jobs are those requiring special skills, facilities and access to a range of material, or were outstanding details associated with earlier such jobs. In June we agreed with SEC a list of jobs that would represent their final input. They will work to complete these by the end of September. Not only does this give us sight of a milestone around which to plan next moves, but for SEC it helps clear the way for their business to develop perhaps on a different course following the pandemic. A couple of photos which show most recent progress – a rhapsody in chrome! See page 2 for what happens when SE Coachworks' involvement is ended (at least for now...).



## We've Gone Public....



**The Archives Centre is at Bryant Road,  
Strood ME2 3EP.  
Go and have a look, and tell your friends!**

Some time ago we were invited by the Medway Archives Centre to provide a display showing what we do, and how we contribute to the history of Medway. Arrangements were firmed up earlier this year, and the exhibition was in place by the MAC's programme date of 15<sup>th</sup> July. New co-ordinated display panels have been produced in an attractive visual style developed by Richard Lewis. The display, situated in the MAC entrance hall, is free to visit until 14<sup>th</sup> Sept with no need to book. The Centre is open 9-5 Mon, Tues, Thurs and Fri. 9-12 Sat. Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> September will be a special day with FoCT present to explain and answer questions about the Medway Heritage Bus.



*The Friends of Chatham Traction was formed in March 2007 to restore the sole surviving Chatham Traction bus, GKE 68, as an educational resource – the Medway Heritage Bus.*



City of  
Rochester  
Society



The  
Rochester  
Bridge  
Trust



## Men in Sheds

Another move into the community has been to make contact with Medway Men in Sheds. Run by the Sunlight Development Trust based in Gillingham, it caters for men who live in Medway, are aged 25+, not in work or have retired. Their activities are creative and practical with a strong social element. We asked if they could construct for us a means of making a wall-mounted display case free-standing, for use at events. Led by Chris White, they've eagerly taken up the challenge and have conceived a base which can be dismantled for transport, and which conveys the spirit of the bus, reflected in images and contemporary detailing. We'll say no more for now.....!

## Events

Firm dates have been given for the regular autumn events:

- Chatham Historic Dockyard's "Salute to the 40s" (18-19 September). (<https://thedockyard.co.uk/whats-on/salute-to-the-40s/>)
- The South East Bus Festival at Detling (**Sunday** 10 October). (<https://southeastbusfestival.wixsite.com/sebf/general-information>)

Now that the Covid situation seems to have eased we'll be arranging to attend both. Volunteers would be welcome to support our presence at these events. Please contact Wendy.

### Badge Offer

Dinnages Publishing have been working on a new design limited edition badge featuring GKE 68. This should be available for the Detling Festival.

The Lyle's Lemonade advert is likely to feature on the completed GKE 68, sponsored by a descendant of the Lyle family.



## Funds & Donations

**The Appeal** We are still some £12k short of our £40k appeal target, and meeting remaining SEC costs may be a close-run thing. The MAC display may generate more interest and there are still some moquette rolls to sell. Please spread the word that the Final Appeal is still "live"!

**Renewals** Since the mention in Update 55 several people have contacted Mike Hodges to confirm their annual donation status, their preferred renewal date. This has helped greatly to clarify our records, and make for an easier read-across between contact details and payments. If anyone still needs to confirm then please contact Mike.

**Legacies** Recent events have shown once again the need for clear instructions in one's Will concerning donations of collections or money to causes one would have wished to continue supporting. We have provided brief guidance on p.4 of **Connecting Service 12**, sent with this Update.

## And Finally

When SEC have completed the listed tasks, and any issues arising from a "snagging" walk-round, GKE will be towed to Nu-Venture's Aylesford garage. A dedicated "berth" has been prepared and all GKE-related items are collected together within it. Remaining work on the chassis will be able to proceed, drawing on NV's facilities and skills (subject, of course, to their own priorities). It should be more convenient for FoCT volunteers to assist with other work, including the electrical system, and the attachment of individual items, e.g. rear view mirrors. Our Upholsterers in Bristol have been affected by the need for self-isolation of several key staff, and have therefore put back the start of work on GKE's seats to September. As the cushions and back squabs will be about the last things to be fitted this is no great problem!

*Sometime around the transition from Faversham to Aylesford we will arrange for a viewing.....*