

News Briefing for volunteers

■ Shakespeare Statues

There has been a great deal of work going on behind the scenes to commence the installation of the statues at the stations. Unfortunately, the final design has led to the need for modifications and a review of where the statues can be positioned. This work is now advancing with a first phase on installation planned to take place in September/October 2024 at Stratford upon Avon, Wythall, The Lakes and Henley in Arden. We will then move onto a second phase of installation.

■ New Trustee – Welcome to Neil Ewart

We are pleased to announce that we have appointed a further trustee to Friends of the Shakespeare Line. Neil Ewart has joined the trustees of FoSL and will be taking a lead role going forward in supporting volunteers at our stations with any day-to-day requirements and queries that occur. Neil is already doing a great deal of work with getting our Community Hub room at Stratford more usage. He helped organise the John Austin Railway Paintings exhibition in the room in Spring earlier this year and as you may have seen this weekend a local Stratford artist, Ken Morgan, is exhibiting his works there. Neil is an active member of Friends of Vintage Trains and has also been working closely with Friends of Henley Station in planning a better and more co-ordinated approach to next year's activities along the line. To get Neil's contact details just send a message for FoSL on WhatsApp or email us at;

FOSLVolunteers@protonmail.com

■ Earlswood Station and Garden Centre

Howard Hemmings and Neil Ewart are due to have a meeting with Earlswood Garden & Landscape Centre shortly to review our relationship with EG&LC and to also see what we may be able to do with EG&LC to address Earlswood station as it has currently got no volunteers but is adopted by EG&LC. We are mindful that Earlswood station requires some TLC so we will be doing what we can to address this.



■ Meeting with Heart of England Community Rail Partnership (HoE CRP)

Neil Morgan and Angela Okey met with Malcolm Holmes, Chair of HoE CRP and Julia Singleton-Tasker the CRP Officer for HoE CRP in July. It was a positive meeting where discussions took place about how FoSL and HoE CRP can work together more closely and support one another. Further discussions are planned.

■ New Volunteers for Yardley Wood

Howard Hemmings and Neil Ewart have been working on attracting new volunteers for Yardley Wood station following the retirement of long-standing station adopters Vivienne and Diane.

■ Destination Stations

Working with Creative Touch Design at Henley in Arden we have conceived, designed and produced a set of destination posters that highlight the CO2 benefit of rail travel compared to road. The posters are due to be used by Network Rail at Birmingham's New Street station.

■ Hire Henley in Arden

Don't forget that you can hire The Station, Henley in Arden for club or society meetings, team events, corporate days or for personal events such as birthdays and wakes etc. The Station is available for hire Monday to Wednesdays for any periods between 0800hrs and 2200hrs. Just contact Angela Okey or send your details via the contact form on the website; thestationhenley.co.uk

■ Autumn Evenings

We are working closely with Friends of Henley Station to hold some special evening presentations. We are starting on 28 October 2024 at 7.30pm with Ian Boskett from Tewkesbury and his unique presentation on The Great Train Robbery in 1963 and his demonstration of some of its railway aspects.

We are also planning two other evening presentations.

'Renovating and Repurposing Henley in Arden's Station Building'

with Angela Okey and Fraser Pithie

'How the North Warwickshire Line was Saved'

with Fraser Pithie

These presentations will be ticketed because of the capacity of Henley station with tickets priced at £10 each with proceeds going towards Friends of Henley Station and Friends of the Shakespeare Line. Keep a lookout for these presentations, we will email volunteers once we have dates and details.

If you would like tickets for Ian Boskett's Great Train Robbery presentation please drop a line to:

info@thestationhenley.co.uk





Dear Volunteers,

As we reflect on another remarkable year at the Friends of the Shakespeare Line, we want to take a moment to extend our heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering dedication and hard work.

Your contributions have made a profound impact on our community and the enhancement of our beloved “Shakespeare Line”.

Through your volunteering at your station your efforts have not gone unnoticed. You are the lifeblood of our organisation, and your passion and commitment shines through in giving up your time and what you do.

Thanks to your commitment, we have improved the experience for countless rail travellers and ensured that the rich history of the Shakespeare Line continues to thrive. We hope that your enthusiasm and support inspire others to join us, and together, help to further create and maintain a vibrant community that celebrates our heritage.

As a token of our appreciation, we invite you to enjoy a complimentary journey on the Shakespeare Express steam train with afternoon tea refreshments. This is our small way of saying thank you for the countless hours you have given, the positive change and difference you have fostered and continue to make.

Thank you once again for your incredible service through your volunteering and the commitment you give

We look forward to celebrating our shared achievements and making more memories together in the future.

Warmest regards,

*Neil Morgan, Angela Okey, Neil Ewart,
Howard Hemmings, Neil Williamson,
Martin Lambert & Fraser Pitthie*

The Trustees of Friends of the Shakespeare Line



Thanks to FoSL...

*In the heart of every station,
Where history whispers and dreams take flight,
You stand as beacons of dedication,
Guiding us through day and night.*

*With hands that toil and spirits bright,
You nurture the stations of the Shakespeare Line,
Every smile, a spark of pure delight, your kindness,
upon your community does shine.*

*Whatever the weather, you lend your might,
Restoring beauty, preserving our past,
Your unwavering passion, a wondrous sight,
A tapestry of love, woven steadfast.*

*So here's to you, our cherished crew,
With gratitude that knows no end,
For all the hard work and care you imbue,
You are our heroes, our faithful friends.*

*As we journey together, let's raise a cheer,
For the laughter and joy you bring near,
Thank you, FoSL volunteers, for all that you do—
This tribute is ours, heartfelt and true.*

Everything in order....?

There are few crucial elements or requirements to volunteering at your railway station apart from turning up and giving your time and commitment. Except that is being 'signed up' by the train operator who is responsible for the station you are working on.

In our case, except for Birmingham Moor Street, the station operator for all our stations is West Midlands Trains. Please make sure that you are signed up with WMT as a volunteer and that you have received the health & safety email and its link to the H&S video, that you have watched it and confirmed this back to WMT.

To make things easier we emailed links to the H&S video to all FoSL volunteers so we can be sure that all our volunteers are signed up, safe and insured to volunteer on their station.

If you have not received our reminder email etc then please contact [REDACTED] – this is your responsibility.