

**The Potting Shed**  
**March 2018**  
**No. 43**



**Come and join us on  
24 March 10:00am –  
3:00pm for our first  
Spring Open Day for  
Sale of spring bedding  
plants and flowering  
bulbs perennials  
shrubs and alpines.  
See the narrow gauge  
and model railways.  
Tea, coffee and  
homemade cake will  
be available.  
Our next open day will  
be 21 April 10:00am –  
4:00pm**

**POPPLETON COMMUNITY  
RAILWAY NURSERY**

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**Charity Number:** 1148341

**Company Registration number:**  
06211163

**Editorial**

Even though the early months of the year are a quiet time from the public's perspective of the Nursery, much has been going on. The horticultural team has been growing things for you to buy, the railway team is slowly building a wagon shed from the old station shelter and plans are being made for the Bloom! festival in July. There is therefore much to look forward to in the year ahead.

**Membership**

If you haven't renewed your membership for 2018, it is due before the end of March. Your name will be removed from the membership list if you haven't renewed by then.

**How old is the Railway Nursery?**

Two years ago we celebrated 75 years of the Nursery at Poppleton. We had always known it had moved from a site in Leeman Road in 1941 but where the site was and how long it had been established there was a bit of a mystery. Recently we have found out more but there are still unanswered questions.

Mike Bowers who had known the nursery as a boy visited Poppleton in the autumn (see the last issue of The Potting Shed), and said

the Nursery was opposite the Stables in Leeman Road, this meant it was where the NRM is today. I had been told by someone at the NRM that there were greenhouses there in the past, but the site mentioned seemed too small for a full nursery, so I had discounted it as I had no maps or photos. I have been able to view large scale maps of York on the internet, and this has changed my mind.

The 1941 Ordnance Survey map shows there were greenhouses on the area where the 1975 offices and entrance were built for the NRM, but there was only a very small area for plant beds or vegetables. As I viewed older maps things became clearer.

In 1892 the Engine shed (NRM great hall) was much smaller, but the two greenhouses were there in the same position as 1941. One, a lean to against the engine shed about 40' x 15', and a larger standalone house 70' x 15', in an area of land of about 2.5 acres, which would make a good size nursery. There were also a couple of buildings but it is not known who used them.

Later maps show some additional greenhouses, but the biggest changes were the progressive enlargement of the engine shed, making the nursery much smaller. By 1952 all signs of greenhouses had disappeared.

This all seems to fit with a

nursery which moved to Poppleton during the war, before or after the bomb damage to the area in 1942. The first greenhouse at Poppleton G1, was an old one 15' wide, was it made with the surviving bits from Leeman Rd? The first houses where G2 & G3 now stand were also too old to be new in the 1940s so were they also moved?

Other questions remain which will require further investigation, and any help with research or finding of pictures, would be appreciated.

When did the nursery start in Leeman Road? We know that it was just agricultural land until the new station was built in 1876 and the railway changed to its present course alongside the river. The Station hotel was opened in 1878 and the engine shed about that time. So was the nursery built then to provide vegetables for the hotel? This would make the Nursery about 140 years old. Are there any pictures of the nursery by the engine shed even in the background? I have been looking but found nothing so far.

When the engine shed was extended in the 1920s, did the nursery start using another area for planting out? Either in Leeman Road or did they possibly start using the land at Poppleton then? Are there any pictures of the yard at Poppleton before 1940? Someone had told me it was allotments, but could it have been used by the Nursery staff from York for growing vegetables? Bob Brook

## Railway and building work

Bad weather and a lack of people has often prevented the group from working, although we have done something most weeks.

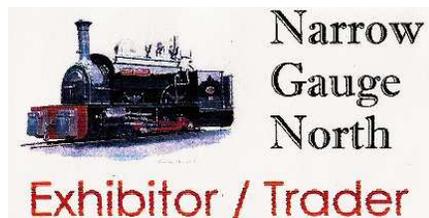
The roofing on S2 has now been completed with guttering and a water butt at the Harrogate end.

The erection of the station shelter as a wagon shed has been slowly progressing. At the time of writing two-thirds of the complete building is in place and we are ready to move the remaining section into place. We are very much learning as we go both in the way of moving the section and joining the sections once in place. If you feel you would like to give us a hand, come down on a Thursday afternoon after 2:00pm.

As time permits another wagon is being completed, this one will be flat but will also tip to either side of the vehicle.

We are still clearing wood from the greenhouses but other jobs have taken precedence.

## Narrow Gauge North



Neil Clayton's Ripon Light Railway model was exhibiting at NGN and had included space for Poppleton to be included. A 7:15 start at the

Nursery soon had the layout loaded and an uneventful drive to Pudsey meant we had the layout set up well before the 10:30 public opening. Not as much improvement/housekeeping was possible as before last year's Peterborough show, however David Dawson has fitted radio control to his model of Terry Stanhope and this makes controlling two trains on the line and changing over trains much easier. David also has a radio control set up for Bob Brook's model of LoweCo which hopefully can be fitted in the future. Although there were fewer visitors to NGN than in previous years, and the visitors thinned out towards the end, there was much interest in both the layout and visiting Poppleton.

## Gardening News

Spring is at last making an appearance at the Nursery. Recently nearly all work ceased for a week as everything, including the toilets, was frozen up. Plants were immovable which meant we were unable to take part in the Table Top sale at the Poppleton Centre as we had hoped.

Nevertheless, work is now going on apace as a van load of plug plants has arrived, which have to be potted on. These will be bedding plants for sale later in the year. Vegetable and flower seeds are being planted and the sweet peas are already coming up.

You might think that with six greenhouses available, there is plenty of space for

bedding plants, however all will be filled included the sunken greenhouses. Much time has been spent over the winter trying to clear and tidy these.

Pots of daffodils (Tete-a-Tete, Jetfire and Silver Chimes), Scillas and large pots of mixed daffodils for naturalising are available now. A selection of herbs will soon be ready, we always have thyme and rosemary in stock. Many perennials are starting along with shrubs.

Do let us know if you there are any plants you would like to see at the Nursery. We look forward to seeing you in the coming months.

Gill Duxbury

## Poppleton station adoption



A combination of the unexpected — Carillion, the contractor who do some of the work on our station for Northern Rail, going into liquidation and the Winter snow, means we do not have a lot to report this time.

We have our water butt fit-

ted and ready for this Spring and Summer. The broken fencing each side of the new passenger shelter on the Harrogate Platform has been replaced. We have made progress on preparing the previously overgrown raised bed on that side. Sue and Colin decided that it would be best stocked with a few permanent shrubs and we will add bedding plants in the Spring.

Our notice board on that side has attractive posters in place and details of each monthly meeting of the Poppleton History Society are also displayed. Sue is officially recognised by Northern as the Deputy Station Adopter.

The notice boards in front of our large flower bed have not been moved, Colin is chasing Northern about this. Bases for CCTV cameras have been put on the platforms but all seems to have come to a halt. There is still some fencing to be renewed — we will chase Northern again.

Colin will be putting in a bid to Northern for 2018 funds for more of our plants and other items to go on the station later in the year in the next week or so.

Colin Wood Team Leader

## Needs list

- Baskets from old flower arrangements.
- Garden plants, shrubs, perennials that you no longer want.
- Carrier bags

- Garden tools, woodworking and engineering tools and equipment.

Small items can be put in the crate over the fence at the nursery if we are closed, or contact us on email or phone. Now we are owners of a van we can collect large items. We do not want items that are broken, we are not a disposal service.

## Jobs

There are lots of tidying jobs at the nursery — any extra help would be appreciated. There are numerous repair and maintenance jobs on-site, and we need members with DIY skills to take them on. Please do contact us.

## ... and finally

Eagle-eyed readers of the web site or the Nursery's handout with sales dates will have noticed that the Nursery will be open to the public for 3 consecutive days at the beginning of July. This is in conjunction with the Bloom! festival, a York-wide celebration for the 250th anniversary of the Ancient Society of York Florists, thought to be the oldest society of its kind in the world. The Nursery will be open from 10:00am to 4:00pm on 5, 6 and 7 July. In addition the railway group will be hosting a railway themed evening on the evening of Thursday 5 July to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the opening of the Narrow Gauge Railway. This evening,

full details to be announced, which must be pre-booked. If Nursery, contact details on the will be ticketed with a charge you are interested contact the first page of this issue.

## The Nursery in winter on 1 March. . . the first day of Spring!

