



The Potting Shed

March 2010 - Issue No. 5

SPECIAL EVENTS 2010

QUALITY PLANTS AT LOW COST

Plant Sales

The dates for the Plant Sales at Poppleton Nursery are as follows:
(Opening and closing times will vary due to the different times of the year).

Spring Sale 2010

Saturday 27th March 2010
Opening - 10.00 until 15.00

Early Summer Sale 2010

Saturday 8th May
Opening 10.00 until 16.00

Summer Sale 2010

Saturday 3rd July
Opening 10.00 until 16.00

Autumn Sale 2010

Saturday 9th October
Opening 10.00 until 16.00

Christmas Sale 2010

Saturday 11th December
Opening 10.00 to 15.00

POPPLETON COMMUNITY RAILWAY NURSERY

Station Road
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York
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Winter Scene at POPPLETON NURSERY



Welcome to our latest publication 'Issue 5' of The Potting Shed March 2010

What's been happening! *By Bob Brook*

What a winter! We knew that our first winter in the Nursery would be challenging but we did not expect so much snow and cold. But we have survived! The weather has found more faults with the buildings than expected, and we have gradually found out about the drainage or lack of it in places round the site. The mice found the crocus and enjoyed a meal but other bulbs have done well. The various sales organised by Paul Botting and the NHS team have kept the money coming in, so that we are keeping our heads above water.

So we are in to planning for our second summer in the nursery, bedding plant plugs and seeds have been ordered, and we hope that by May the four greenhouses we have in use will be full of flower. Please come and buy your needs from the various sales organised and encourage your friends to do the same. Members are welcome to come and purchase plants when the nursery is open during the week.

Although we are ahead of our three year plan for restoring the buildings and greenhouses, there is still an awful lot to do. We have a small but cheerful bunch of volunteers, but would welcome more, so any offers of help would be welcome.

Volunteers needed - Can You Help?

September we appealed for people to help with a view to running the administration side of the nursery. One or two people

offered to help on various jobs but we still need people with a business background, somebody to co-ordinate volunteers, (*so people feel welcome*) and someone to communicate with other groups, schools & garden associations, etc.

You will see details about a new garden group for youngsters and their carers. We would welcome any other ideas for such groups.

YOUR NURSERY NEEDS YOU!

We would like to appoint a volunteer that would look after the Health & Safety aspect of the Poppleton Railway Nursery site.

As well as our requests for volunteers to help on buildings and railway restoration, we would always welcome those who would like to spend a couple of hours on the horticulture side, from growing and potting on to weeding and general keeping things tidy, something for every ability with pleasant surroundings and good company. The nursery will be open 4 days most weeks and volunteers are welcome on any of those days.

Wants list

Thanks to those who donated items after the last request, we would still like the following if anyone has some available:

**Lino or heavy duty floor covering,
Second hand wooden floorboards (any odd
sizes from 4 ft long).
Any large water tanks.
Garden hand tools**

Keighley



Barnsley



Penistone



Pannal



The Potting Shed

Poppleton Nursery at work

Railway News – By Tim Elsworth

A Sunday working party just before Christmas brought a railway track point from Neil Clayton's museum in Ripon back to Poppleton.

This involved digging it out of a green field then lifting it onto a tractor and trailer before crossing Ripon to Neil's house. We then placed it onto a truck for the journey to Poppleton. Unfortunately lack of time prevented us from having more than a quick look at Neil's extensive narrow gauge collection, however we have pencilled in a visit when the weather is better.



Loading the Point onto Neil Clayton's truck



The Railway Track Point is now located in front of the Poppleton Nursery Engine Shed

No final decision has been made as to where the point is to go at Poppleton Nursery although there has been talk of putting a track into a greenhouse - - *Watch this space!*

Restoration Work

Progress on the restoration of the trucks at Poppleton has been nonexistent due to cold weather conditions. The rebuilding of the pot-bellied stove in The Potting Shed gives us a warm and dry workshop where we shall be able to finish de-rusting and painting the truck components. This and the onset of lighter evenings should result in a fairly rapid rebuilding of the trucks we have for restoration. So if you have wanted to come and help restore the railway artefacts but been put off by the cold conditions we now have a warm dry

workshop to work in --- let's see how many trucks we can have available for the May open day. Railway restoration takes place on Thursdays 10:00--20:00.

We have not been totally idle, as mentioned in the last issue Jarvis left a large amount of paperwork on the site. This is not required by Jarvis but due to the financial and personal confidential nature of some of the documents they will arrange for disposal. In consultation with Tim Proctor, archivist at the National Railway Museum, we have decided what is to be disposed and what is to be kept whether in the NRM or at Poppleton. Much of the paperwork deals with regular maintenance and improvement of the stations in Jarvis' remit (also work by/for Northern, Northern Spirit, Trans-Pennine Express and GNER). A large part of northern England was covered ranging from Newcastle and stations on the Settle and Carlisle in the north to King's Cross in the south to Cleethorpes in the east and stations on the Newcastle--Carlisle line in the west. The criteria we have set ourselves for keeping documents are:

- Samples of the range of work which Jarvis and other companies undertook
- documents which relate to gardening or directly to the Poppleton Nursery
- documents which have a particular railway interest particularly plans of stations

There was a box of photographs amongst the paperwork. Photography was used to record the progress of jobs. There were a large number of photos of repairs to station seats, toilets and shelters etc. many of them out-of-focus or not correctly exposed as the photographers were not David Baileys! Some photographs were retained in line with the above criteria but also of a quirky nature.

See left column for photos...

In conclusion to detail a couple of finds amongst the paperwork, as well as its railway work, Poppleton Nursery did the gardening work at Duxford Aircraft Museum and West Burton power station and there are maps of both locations as well as maps for improvements to Poppleton station.

Winter Scene at Poppleton Nursery



Volunteers at Decembers Plant Sale



The Potting Shed

Poppleton Nursery at work

Membership Renewals

Your membership of Poppleton Railway Nursery is greatly appreciated.

Membership fees for the year 1st January 2010 to 31st December 2010 **are now due.**

A Renewal Form can be downloaded from our website:

www.poppletonrailwaynursery.co.uk

Subscriptions:

£5 full membership

£2 student/unwaged/ over 60's

£10 corporate membership

Please include an email address if possible as this is the most cost effective way of keeping in contact with people.

Send to:

David Thompson
Membership Secretary
Scagglethorpe House,
Westfield Lane
Upper Poppleton
York YO26 6EB

Plant Sales & Nursery Life

By Paul Botting

A big thank you to all the gallant volunteers who ran the Christmas sale. It was so cold that day but there was plenty of customers and we sold over £200 worth of plants and decorations.

The nursery greenhouses are beginning to fill up with plants which will be ready for the sale on 27th March. I do hope you'll come along to pick up some bargains.

We are busy sowing seed and taking cuttings to produce the summer bedding plants for the May sale, so we are winding up the level of activity on site. Everything has to be grown cold so what we do produce will be really hardy.

We discovered that the pit house (G4, 5 and 6) was able to maintain a frost free environment during one of the coldest winters for 30 years. The coldest temperature recorded at the nursery was -18 degrees centigrade so we have to thank old fashioned horticultural know how for this gem of a greenhouse.

PCRn has been successful in taking on the maintenance of the Poppleton Station flower beds. Volunteers have now been appointed to oversee this and several people will be involved with planting out on the platforms. Northern Rail who has agreed to this volunteer involvement said there were other stations that the nursery could get involved with in the future.

Poppleton Railway Nursery

By David Thompson

The Poppleton Railway Nursery is Britain's last surviving railway nursery.

It was established in 1941 to provide salads and glasshouse crops and cut flowers for railway restaurant cars and railway hotels, and bedding plants for stations all over the north-east. The site actually has a narrow gauge railway for operational purposes and this is still in existence.

After the war, it served railway hotels and the hundreds of station gardens across Yorkshire and the north-east.

The railway, with a narrow gauge of two feet, brought the plants from the greenhouses to the main line. Later, a petrol-engine locomotive would shunt wagons along a short stretch of track, although often the trucks were pushed by hand. In 1991 the greenhouses were connected to electricity after nearly half a century of gaslight.

The Poppleton Community Railway Nursery (PCRn) was set up after Jarvis informed Network Rail in July 2006 that they no longer had any need for the old nursery. Jarvis later provided funding for fencing the site to allow safe access for non-railway staff and Network Rail has granted a tenancy to PCRn.

Still owned by Network Rail the nursery is now being run by a volunteer group, currently a not-for-profit company, but working towards charitable status.

Having been unoccupied for a few years the site has needed, and still needs a lot of work to get it up and running again.

PCRn has a partnership with the NHS in the York area, which has long found horticultural skills training to be therapeutic to adults recovering from mental health crises. Paul Botting, NHS Technical Instructor, said, "The NHS trust needed additional dedicated space to consolidate on one site and to expand its nursery training operation. Our partnership with PCRn is absolutely ideal." Other partnerships and community projects will be added from time to time as the complex again becomes fully operational, and volunteers and funding permit.