



# Sandford Station Railway Heritage Centre

Registered Charity No. 1136266 - [www.sandfordstation.co.uk](http://www.sandfordstation.co.uk)

## NEWS LETTER No.4 - Autumn 2013

### A Colourful Year at the Station with numbers up, fascinated visitors and great events

#### Dear Members and Friends



A fresh coat of paint on the carriage at the start of the season, a new picnic bench plus tables in the trucks and large slices of fantastic cake, were popular additions at the station this year. May saw the restored name board from 1869 returned to its original spot on the platform where it was unveiled by Trevor Smallwood, President of St Monica Trustees. The platform and carriage became a theatre for storytelling and song by former railway staff, Sandford people born and bred and young

performers during 'Somerset Arts Week'. But the highlight of the year was the vintage coach trip on the 7<sup>th</sup> September, commemorating fifty years since the 'Last Train' enjoyed by over 80 passengers, The tour first called at Winscombe old station, now a community heritage and conservation site, where members of the Millennium Green Trust were waiting on the platform to re-enact a scene from 1963. Then on to Axbridge station, run as a centre for Sea Cadets, for a rare view inside the Victorian building and to hear tell of the importance of the railway to the historic town and strawberry trade by local historian, John Page. *See website for more details and photographs.*



The sad news of 2013 was the loss of two of our best known and very favourite personalities - ex engine driver on the Strawberry Line, Colin Forse (pictured left), in April followed in June by **Professor Mick Aston**, a keen supporter of SSRHC in his home village of Sandford. Colin featured in 'Branch Line Dance' filmed at the Centre and Strawberry line last year. An account of his days as engine driver on the Cheddar



Valley Branch Line is recorded for posterity in his book 'A Life on the Railway'. Mick, a man of the people who popularised archaeology on a national scale, was with us at the Running-in-Board unveiling on May Day, adding his unique touch of celebrity to the occasion.

**Colin Forse** - a 'proper' railwayman and true Somerset gentleman His book, 'A Life on the Railway' is available at the Centre price £6



**'Last Train' - 50 years on 7.9.1963 - 7.9. 2013**

**Not a steam engine but a vintage coach transporting over eighty passengers down Memory Lane 50 years to the very day since the last passenger train ran on the Strawberry Line.**



**Members of the Millennium Green Trust go retro at Winscombe**



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**'On Track' – Hercule Poirot, murder on the train – whatever next!!**



**Storytelling and song – Mike Lyall's memories as a signalman on the line, and growing up in Sandford by John Westlake and Margaret Ballard, a far-fetched story dreamed up by the audience and songs from youngsters from local schools with the carriage and platform as theatre.**



**Merry Christmas and a happy New Year to all our members**

**We look forward to seeing you when we re-open in April 2014**

**See our web site [www.sanfordstation.co.uk](http://www.sanfordstation.co.uk) for more information and details.  
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**Include your name, address & email details, thanks.**

***Please renew your membership if you have not already done so.***

From Lois Brenchley & Trevor Perks; On behalf of Sandford Station Railway Heritage Ltd