

New fame for royal station

Wolferton seeks help to add to growing website

by JO GARNER

THE fascinating regal history of Wolferton Station is now globally accessible at the click of a button, but the search for people with connections to the unique building and local railway line is taking a little longer.

A wealth of material surrounding the royal station has been collected by the current owner and railway enthusiast Richard Brown and turned into a 400-page carefully-crafted website, but the Yorkshire businessman is keen to fill in the missing gaps before the information disappears altogether.

"We have the names of 29 people who worked on the station or the line itself."

"One of the signallers is still alive and we have a former lady clerk who has

been a wonderful source of information, once you mention a name," said Richard, who fulfilled a childhood ambition to live in a station when he moved in the property eight years ago.

"I'm passionate about railways and my father and his brothers and their father all worked on the railways," he added, recalling the excitement he felt when first considered the possibility of owning the 'downside' property.

Although Richard retains his part of the station as a private home, he feels the website is a way of sharing his good fortune and effort, although he rarely turns away the railway enthusiasts who emerge from their vehicles with cameras and peer tentatively over the authentic crossing gates.



A Peter Annable painting of Wolferton Station shows Queen Mary in her 1929 Daimler Saloon, leaving the station's 'downside' or arrivals, in 1948, on her way to Sandringham House.

"The place is steeped in history and it's wonderful to hear the stories people have and to see the photographs that have been

passed on to them. That's the most rewarding part," says Richard, who has advertised extensively for more information through railway magazines, local newspapers and parish magazine.

Often it's the most unlikely situation that can spring a big surprise. While visiting the recent exhibition in Hunstanton, Richard met the Cambridge-based granddaughter of Wolferton's first stationmaster who was trying to trace her family tree.

There has also been contact with another stationmaster's son - a weatherman on the Isle of Lewis, off the coast of Scotland.

"He sent me a photograph of his father welcoming the Prime Minister Anthony Eden at the station."

"He was on his way to see The Queen at Sandringham to tender his resignation over the Suez situa-

tion. "The thing with something like this is, once you start you must keep plugging away," says Richard who is hoping people will visit the website and remember more people and incidents.

"Sometimes the information is limited but we'll keep piecing it together."

"I just want to keep adding to the history of the station," says Richard, who sees himself as a custodian. "When I bought the station he told me 'well you'd better get on with it then' and I'm doing the best I can."

Visit the Wolferton Station website at: www.wolfertonroyalstation.co.uk

Anyone with stories to tell or photographs to share, is asked to contact Richard at richard@wolfertonroyalstation.co.uk or phone 01977 642212 or fax 01977 640240.



Avid railway enthusiasts and families who travelled to Hunstanton by train in the days of steam may feel nostalgic seeing this picture, but Richard Brown, owner of Wolferton Station, is also hoping the painting by Peter Annable will spark more memories and names for the website.

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