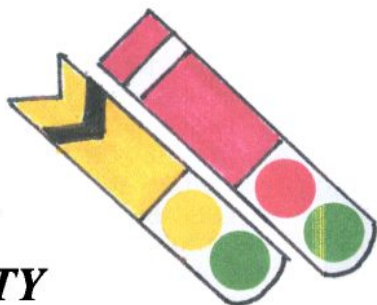


# ***SIGNAL***

***THE MAGAZINE OF THE  
CRAWLEY SIGNAL BOX  
PRESERVATION SOCIETY***



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**No 86**

**March 2017**

## **EDITORIAL**

Welcome to the first issue for 2017 and we have some good news concerning our, hopefully soon to be, new window covers – the big project for the year! Our present wooden covers are long past their best and are increasingly difficult to take down and put back so these will not only replace them but will not require removal on open days, easier and safer all round.

The AGM will soon be upon us and the usual notification of attendance will be found within so please reply if you wish to attend, also open days have been decided on up to July and these dates can be found on the back cover.

I'm pleased to report that 2016 brought in four new members which is good news and let's hope that more will be forthcoming during the next few months.

The piece about Ifield in the last issue came shortly before I obtained a copy of a c1907 map of the area and the map in question has answered another question posed in 'Signal' No 67, June 2012 you can read about this within.

Also on the back cover are the dates for Crawley Museum Society's lectures, there have been some last minute changes due to the delay in the opening of the Museum so this list supersedes the previous one, therefore the first meetings for the year will still be at the Horticultural Society Hall. Very unfortunate and we hope the delay is of a short duration.

By the time you receive this issue spring will be on its way and, if we're lucky, a good summer – fingers crossed.

By the way readers may have noticed a slip with the heading for the article about Billingshurst box in December's issue, with it actually appearing at the bottom of the previous page, apologies from your editor.

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Editor Chris March 01293 514737

## **SOCIETY NEWS**

The Society will be holding its AGM on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> April at 66 Ifield Road, West Green, Crawley RH11 7BQ; the meeting starts at 7:30pm. Enclosed with this 'Signal' is a return form for those attending so that we know the exact number coming. **PLEASE SEND THE FORM TO CHRIS MARCH AT 6 LADY MARGARET ROAD, IFIELD, CRAWLEY W. SX, RH11 0BX OR PHONE 01293 514737; OR TO JIM NUNN AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS, OR PHONE JIM ON 01293 428535 IF YOU ARE ATTENDING. WE HAVE IN THE PAST MEMBERS WHO DO NOT REPLY BUT INSIST ON TURNING UP ON THE EVENING ~ PLEASE REMEMBER THE MEETING IS HELD IN A PRIVATE HOME, NOT A PUBLIC HALL.**

Graham Babiell has been working away at the box on free Saturdays and the relay boxes downstairs have received his attention, further plans include lighting operated by sensors for visitors wishing to have look at the ground floor. This area we hope to improve over the coming months.

Open days are listed on the back cover and members are welcome to come along and help if they so wish.

Chris March

### **AN LBSCR DRIVERS EYE VIEW JOURNEY BY EXPRESS TRAIN ON THE LONDON TO BRIGHTON MAINLINE IN 1920 EARLSWOOD JUNCTION TO COPYHOLD JUNCTION**

At Earlswood by the end of 1907, the double line between Redhill and Balcombe Tunnel, which had sufficed to carry both expresses and local services from the time of the lines opening in 1841 and throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, had been quadrupled. As the 'through Quarry line' passed the junction it took on a revised designation and became the 'Fast Line'. At the same time, the original 'Main Line' that had travelled via Redhill came in from the right and was renamed the 'Slow Line'. The 1905 built Earlswood Junction box of 70 levers controlled the distant and then junction splitting signals. However, with only thirty chains between it and the 1906 built station box of 41 levers, it was again necessary for the down fast distant on the splitting gantry to be slotted between the two. Station box had a platform starter on the down fast line and an advance starter (or section signal).

Salford's 1907 built box had only three of its 44 levers involved in the down fast line. These were for a distant, home and a section signal. Of the remaining levers, 20 were spare in 1920. The 1905 built boxes at Horley North (53 levers) and South (50 levers) were only 32 chains apart. Hence, although North had, under its sole control, a distant and outer home, it shared control with South over the distant and its related home signal. For its part, South had sole control over the starter and section signals (the latter having a slotted distant beneath for Gatwick box). Gatwick Station had a loop off the down fast line and so there was a gantry mounted splitting home on the approach and a platform end gantry mounted starting signal and a stand alone section signal.



*Photograph:*

*Earlswood Station in LBSCR days after the 1907 quadrupling as mentioned in Derek's article.*

*Chris March collection*

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These were all managed by the signalman in his extraordinarily lofty and platform mounted box of 1907 with 75 levers.

An intermediate break section box was located at Tinsley Green almost halfway between Gatwick and Three Bridges North boxes. This 1907 built box of 25 levers had a run of signals on the down fast line comprising a distant, a home, a starter and an advance starter/section. From personal observations by your author at this location in the 1950's, locomotive hauled fully fitted trains were fairly frequently travelling at a or near the line's maximum permissible speed of 85 mph as they passed the long since closed foot crossing linking Tinsley Green and Tinsley Lane North. In 1920, speed on the 1907 installed down fast line soon built up after the 55 mph slack at Earlswood Junction, for the initial 4½ miles from there to Horley was a 1 in 264 downhill and as far as Balcombe Tunnel Junction, the line was almost dead straight. Speed could be maintained even as far as the line began its steady climb towards the Brighton line's summit close to the tunnel entrance as no reduction was required on the down fast line for the facing points at the Gatwick station loop or the junctions at Three Bridges.

A single post distant heralded the approach to Three Bridges and this was followed by gantry mounted junction splitting signals with a distant for the down fast, this being controlled by North box but slotted with the central. Located where the cross overs linked the fast and slow lines, the 1910 built North box of 75 levers was only 23 chains from the much earlier and 1880 built Central box of 94 levers. The latter was located between the up fast line and the down slow line just south of the junctions with the Horsham and East Grinstead lines. On the down fast line, Central box had just one signal (a station starter) below which was a distant slotted with South box. These shared a gantry with a starting/section signal for the East Grinstead branch. Since it was never envisaged that a train for that line would stop at the station, there was no previous junction signal arm for the branch on the gantry at North box. The 1910 built Three Bridges South box of 78 levers was primarily involved with the sidings west of the up slow line but did have a home and starting/section signal on the down fast line.

Although authority had been given in 1903 for the widening to four tracks between the north end of Balcombe Tunnel and Keymer Junction (and revised to north of the Ouse Valley Viaduct in 1906, nothing ever happened. As a result, the 1907 completed quadrupling from Kingswood ceased just short of the northern entrance to the 1,133 yard long tunnel beneath Balcombe Forest. The junction of the four tracks into two was under the control of the 1909 built Balcombe Tunnel Junction box of 21 levers. On the approach to the junction when travelling on the down fast line, there was a distant signal followed by a home. Both were a single arm on a post with the home being located just north of the bridge carrying a farm track from Greentrees Farm.

Less than half a mile from the South portal of Balcombe Tunnel was the diminutive Balcombe Intermediate box. Commissioned in 1916 as a 'break section' box, it had only 9 levers, two of which were spare. The distant for the box's down home signal was well over a mile away at the north end entrance to the tunnel and must have required a heavy pull on the requisite lever. Outside the box was the down home and in advance of it was the section signal with a slotted distant with (and for) Balcombe station box. Balcombe's box in 1920 was the original wooden structure dating back to the early days of signalling having been built in 1864 and of the same construction type as the recently preserved box from Billingshurst. The station box had a home, a platform starter and an advanced starting signal. That at the platform end was equipped with co-acting arms so that the higher of the two could be seen from an approaching train above the road bridge which crossed the station.

Between 1862 and 1912, there had been a signal box at the south end of the 474 yard long Ouse Valley Viaduct designed to be a 'break section' box between Balcombe Station and Haywards Heath North boxes. However, when the 32 lever Copyhold Junction box was opened in 1912, the nearby viaduct box became redundant and was closed. Parallel with this in 1912, a 30 lever box was opened at Stone Hall north of the viaduct and almost exactly halfway between Balcombe Station and Copyhold Junction. What the LBSCR management had in mind for the box at Stone Hall is not known but clearly a 30 lever LBSCR frame wasn't necessary for a 'break section' installation requiring just 6 levers to operate a distant, home and starting/section signal in each direction. The frame certainly wasn't a transfer from the closed Viaduct box for the last signalman to have duty there had worked a 9 lever 'Rocker' frame.

Copyhold was not a junction until 1916 when a link was made from the main line into the double track line from Horsted Keynes via Ardingly which previously had enjoyed an independent approach to Haywards Heath Station. A distant preceded the gantry located junction splitting signals for the down main line and the down relief line at Copyhold and after the junction, the down main starting signal had Haywards Heath North box's slotted distant slung beneath it.

Derek Coe

## **RURAL IFIELD – EPILOGUE ...**

### **... REVISITING GOFFS PARK CROSSING**

In the last issue of 'Signal' I wrote about rural Ifield c1907 and speculated about the road in the foreground (see photo with that article) which went south of the line into what is now Gossops Green. My assumption about the road towards Rusper Road was correct and this follows the alignment of today's Tangmere Road.

Since the last issue I have obtained a reproduction of a map showing Ifield, Crawley etc from this period<sup>1</sup> and this not only answers the Ifield query but also a previous one about Goffs Park crossing featured in 'Signal' No 67, June 2012!

Dealing with Ifield first; the southbound road turns east then north into West Green. At the southernmost point a further road leaves this to run directly south to Oakwood(?) and Woldhurstlee, somewhere in the region of Gossops Drive and Paddockhurst Road today. Lions Farm is within the arc of the road with the railway line on its north boundary.<sup>2</sup>

Ifield village is about half a mile from the station and as the population of the village was quite small one must presume there was not a great 'customer base' for the railway to draw business from, only farms existed south of the line. To get to Crawley from Ifield Village involved a trip of about a mile following a route along today's Friston Walk – The Mardens – Ifield Road into West Green and finally the High Street. No doubt many walked the journey, or had access to horse drawn vehicles (or perhaps one of those new fangled horseless carriages?). Many Ifield-ites may well have considered a train journey expensive, especially as accessing Ifield Halt involved almost going in the opposite direction to start with! This may well be why the station had a 'halt' status, and, without sticking my neck out too far, may also suggest Lions Farm was considered the main beneficiary, hence the name? Having said that of course the name changed after only five weeks, perhaps the LBSCR didn't want to alienate the village?

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<sup>1</sup> Cassini Past & Present Historical Maps.

<sup>2</sup> Here we have an anomaly of spelling, today we spell 'Lyons' with a 'Y' on the map it is spelt 'Lions'. The 'Y' spelling is the one from 'Crawley to Littlehampton' by Mitchell and Smith, one wonders if one is incorrect or both versions existed at different times? As we are dealing with the Edwardian period I shall adopt the 'I' spelling as per the map!

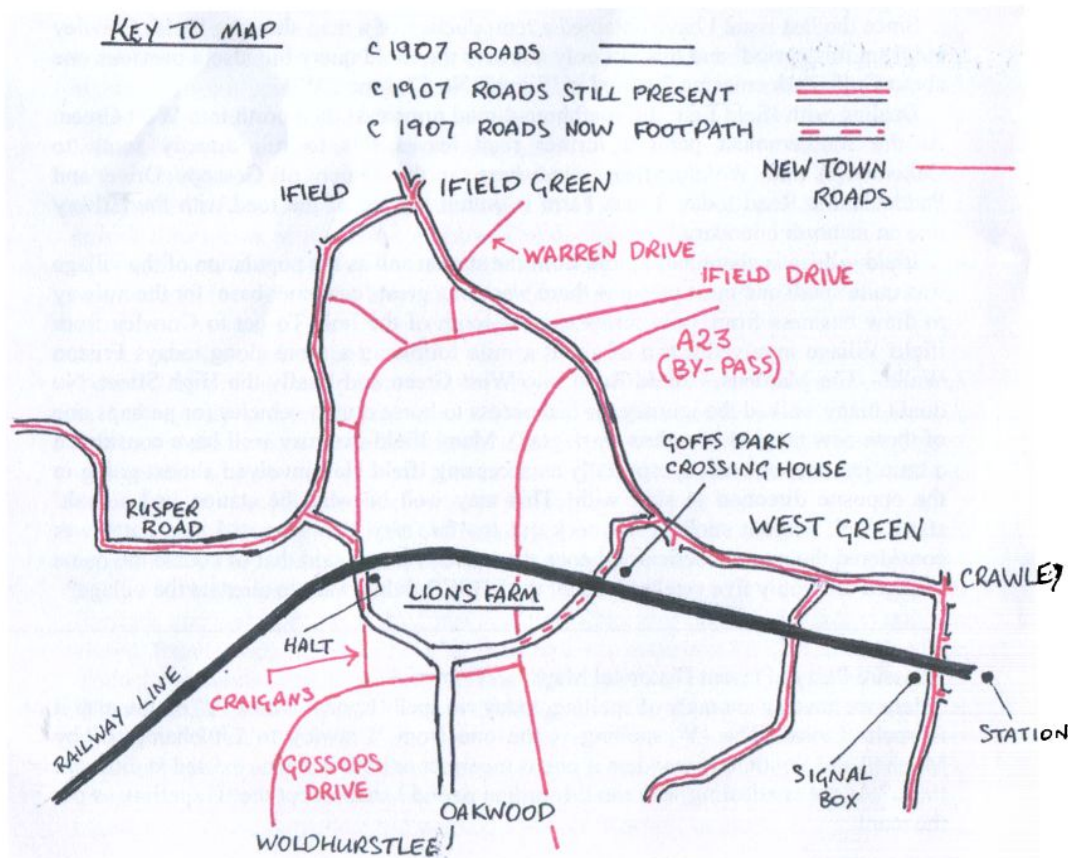


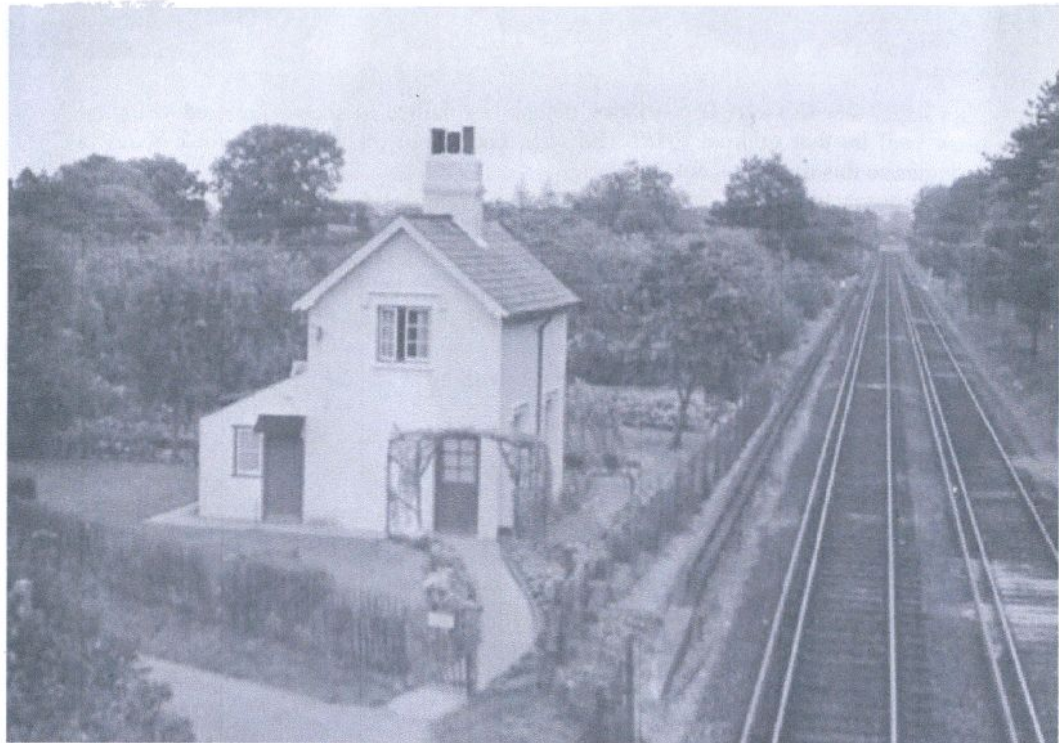
So what about Goffs Park crossing? Well this has a connection with Ifield's level crossing, literally! In the June 2012 issue I wondered where the path from Goffs Park went once it crossed the now A23? The answer is nowhere, it travelled south west then turned north west to connect with Lions Crossing (Ifield) as related above. My original conjecture though was correct in that the path from Goffs Park to the A23 was once a road! Incidentally the 'Goffs' name is not shown on the Edwardian map so if anyone knows what estate, or farm, the present day park belonged to please let me know. Goffs Park House, as a building, is shown and the name 'Oakwood' is adjacent(?) to it on the original map? does the name go with the house?

It would be interesting to know when Lions Farm ceased to be, again, any information out there?

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*Sketch map of Ifield c1907 with modern roads superimposed.*





*Photograph:*

*The house at Goffs Park crossing, taken from the footbridge, date unknown. As you can see the house is detached in it's own grounds with a well cultivated garden surrounding it. The tree line on the right marks Goffs Park as it still does today and in the distance can be seen Horsham Road's level crossing gates. Note also the telegraph poles, once a lineside feature of our railways.*

*Photo courtesy of Graham Babiel*

The house at Goffs Park crossing exudes charm with it's rose arch and neatly tended garden. The road/pathway can be clearly seen in the foreground of the above image, now leading to the footbridge. Though the date is unknown it could be post war(?). At the time of the photograph the house was obviously not used as a gate keepers cottage, but was it still railway property/occupied? Or privately owned/rented? Perhaps some old Crawley directories may provide an answer? Returning to Ifield for a moment this level crossing also had a crossing keepers house which lasted a lot longer, up to the demise of the gates there in the 1970's, sadly this has also now gone, it was in a similar style to the Goffs Park dwelling.

I decided to take a walk round the road that circumnavigated Lions Farm and by following Craigans then turning into Gossops Green Lane (which is now bisected by Overdene Drive – not shown on the sketch map), down to the A23, over the bridge and on to the original road, now a path, to Goffs Park and finally on to the footbridge crossing the line here. This route, I believe, follows the original road quite closely, in



fact I feel that Gossops Green Lane, though not named as such a hundred years ago, may well be that original road? The walk back from the footbridge took about ten minutes so this route was not very long!

On approaching Ifield from the south I took a couple of photographs slightly further back from the c1907 view and the tree on the right of the gates in the photograph, shown in the last issue, may well be the one that's there now, so there is a degree of orientation with the early image, not that we really needed it!

An interesting exercise (including the walk) but, of course, no sign of the farm nowadays, this site is covered by The Croft, Nurserylands and Priest Croft Close.<sup>3</sup>

I hope the adjoining map and photographs will be of interest.

Chris March

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<sup>3</sup> Has the name Nurserylands a connection with Lions Farm?

*Photograph: The view of Goffs Park Crossing today (26/2/17) from exactly the same position on the footbridge as the previous photo. It appears that the garden path has remained at least where it leaves the footpath approaching the bridge. The tree in the foreground, in the corner of Snell Hatch, has rather spoilt the view!*

*~ Photo by Chris March*







*Photograph:*

*Jim explaining the 'workings' to (front to back) Andrea, Emily, Gill and Helen. I was entrusted to work the bell instruments from the 'next block'.*

*Photo by Chris March*

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## CRAWLEY MUSEUM SOCIETY VISIT TO THE BOX

On the 10<sup>th</sup> February Curator Helen Poole and three of her colleagues, Gill Pitt, Emily Hill and Andrea Dumbrell met up with Jim Nunn, David Moore, Graham Babel and myself at the signal box for a private visit.

With the soon to open Museum in the High Street David organised the meeting so that the Museum Society could learn a little more about our own activities. Founder members will remember that the CSBPS was originally formed as an offshoot to the Museum Society though we have always been independent, nevertheless we are in the same business (along with Ifield Mill) so we like to keep in touch, in fact Nick Sexton and I swap magazines as part of our mutual aims, to keep old Crawley alive!

Jim gave our guests a demonstration of the block instruments and explained how the box used to work, also showing and explaining the work put in from the time we first moved in some twenty five years ago.

With the imminent new Museum at The Tree we have a golden opportunity to support each, other encompassing as we will both ends of the High Street, certainly a central location will provide benefits for the Museum.

David is organising with Helen a display of images to be included in their transport display, this of course will enhance our profile still further and when up and running the Museum can send visitors our way on open days, and indeed we can reciprocate at the same time, it's all good publicity! At the time of writing this David and I are planning to get together to choose photo's for inclusion in the Museum display, there's a lot to choose from!

A few minor problems have delayed the Museum opening but it won't be long now before we can visit.

An enjoyable morning was had and I hope we suitably impressed our colleagues from the CMS, who not only inspected our good work over the years but also learnt a little about railway operation. Andrea in particular was keen to see the 'machinery' in the downstairs section, there are plans afoot (courtesy of Graham) to provide lights etc to make this area better for visitors, watch this space! Work is always ongoing at the box so come along and see the progress.

Chris March

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*Photograph:*

*Examining the block instruments, David Moore looking on in the background.*

*Photo by Chris March*







*Photograph:*

*With talk of the 'new' Crawley Station being demolished and re-developed I thought a view of the old station being demolished may be of interest, however no redevelopment took place on that site! As many of our members will know the old station closed in 1968, the goods yard preceding it by a few years. The 1968 replacement may have earned some rent for BR but never contributed any architectural merit!*

*Photo courtesy of Graham Babel*

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Another bright and sunny day  
Just helps the year up on its way  
More open days we hope will come  
The children we know will join the fun

The trains they hoot as they come along  
Even Norman Wisdom sung as a song  
We will have Easter eggs everywhere  
But we know they are around to share  
Some friends we have lost we miss them so much  
But prayers will help to keep us in touch

Pam Chappell

**OPEN DAYS**  
**APRIL 22<sup>nd</sup>**  
**MAY 20<sup>th</sup>**  
**JUNE 17<sup>th</sup>**  
**JULY 15<sup>th</sup>**  
**12 noon to 4pm**

**CRAWLEY MUSEUM SOCIETY LECTURES**

At the Horticultural Hall, Ifield Avenue, West Green, Crawley, RH11 7AJ

Lectures start at 7:30 pm

CMS members £2.00, non-members £3.00

**TUESDAY MARCH 28<sup>th</sup>**

**‘AT HOME IN STANDEN: THE BEALE FAMILY AND THEIR  
ARTS AND CRAFTS HOME’**

**By Anne Stutchbury**

**TUESDAY APRIL 25<sup>th</sup>**

***TO BE CONFIRMED***

**Please note that lectures are still being held at the Horticultural Hall  
pending the opening of the Museum at The Tree.**

**IFIELD WATER MILL OPENINGS**

The Mill will be open every third Sunday of the month from April to September  
Except MAY when they will be open for NATIONAL MILLS DAY on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup>

Times – 2:30 pm – 5 pm