

Peter's Railway



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To,
The Downs Light Railway Trust,
Mr Timothy Pennock.
9th February 2021

Dear Tim,

It gives me great pleasure to support the Downs Light Railway and its Centenary Development Programme. It seems like only yesterday when I was with you to celebrate the 90th Anniversary of the line, and also its four-year restoration. I will not forget the ceremony of bolting up the "Golden Fishplate"!! It was a great honour to be invited to take part, and seeing the enthusiasm of the children was uplifting. Clearly all schools should have a railway but, as you know, the commitment to create and maintain it is extraordinary. The Downs School is very lucky.

You will know that the Peter's Railway series of books are specifically aimed at getting children interested in railways, engineering, science and maths. I already do a lot of work with young people and find that the ethos of the Downs Light Railway, to be a perfect example of how to enthuse youngsters with a love of engineering. In fact, railways are a perfect short-cut to so many other aspects of science and industry. The trick is to keep children interested as they grow older, and this is where the DLRT has such an important role. The children who are involved with it can clearly see that trains are not just toys for very young children!!

I am particularly pleased to see that your plans include new workshops for the Downs Light Railway so you can offer what you do to a much wider group of children. The chance to offer the children real practical skills is such a great opportunity for them. Thinking about problems in science and engineering is made so much easier with a practical/physical understanding, and this is sorely lacking in UK education in recent years. To say nothing of the needs of British industry.

I am currently working with Train2Train, an organisation set up to help match the needs of the UK Rail Industry with the heritage rail sector. The idea is to create training schemes at the steam railways to help provide the mainline railways with the skills they so urgently need. We have already set up discussions the DLRT and look forward to a long association. Their objectives are identical.

It is critical to engage young people in railways and STEM, and your Centenary Development Programme is a brilliant and unique scheme: It certainly needs to be fully funded.

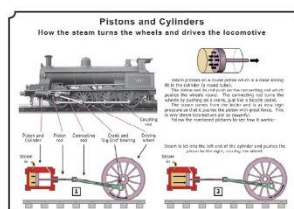
You have my full support. In particular, I look forward to helping you to put your message across to funding organisations, especially those who may not see quite what a unique opportunity you are offering the children of the Downs Light Railway – and to the country in the future years of their careers.

Yours Sincerely

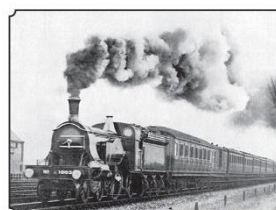
Books for children who love trains and engineering



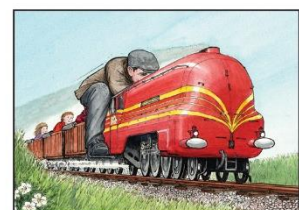
Story



Technical



History



Adventure