

subsequently placed in 1958 by the city of Calais through the then British Consul on a wall in the street now standing where the Rue Françoise had once stood together subsequently with an adjacent information board which is now only skeletal. This is at the intersection of the present Rue Jean de Vienne and Rue Philippine Hainault.

Finally on 23rd April 1994 an American benefactor Mrs Jean Kislak in the presence of descendants of Nelson and Emma Hamilton unveiled a monument surmounted by stone from near Emma's birthplace on the Wirral a monument to her in a quiet corner of the Parc Richelieu (just across the canal from Calais railway station near to the Tourist Office) on the perceived approximate site of Emma's original grave, which she donated to the city of Calais.

On the bicentenary of Emma Hamilton's death, 15th January 2015, it is therefore heartening to record that in remembrance of Nelson's dying wish for the great love of his life floral tributes were laid at the



*Emma's Monument at Parc
Richelieu, Calais
15th Jan 2015*

memorial for her to honour her memory. Disheartening is the fact that no mention of this anniversary appeared in any national newspaper or journal nor reference made by either the Nelson Society or the 1805 Club, whose own websites uphold their concerns for the upkeep of graves and memorials to those associated with Nelson. At the time of the tri-centenary in 2115 it is extremely doubtful on this basis that any of the Calais memorials will be legible, assuming they remain in place that long, unless they are kept in good repair and the stone lettering re-incised sometime soon.

Emma had done good service for her country and those around her in her lifetime. It is in this spirit that we in our turn should now bequeath her memory to the nation in keeping with Lord Nelson's own bequest to us.

I am indebted in this account for much of the detail courtesy of Flora Fraser's book "Beloved Emma – The Life of Emma, Lady Hamilton" (Bloomsbury 1986, reprinted 2013).



Rail Link Campaign C1993

High Speed Rail Track To Dover Securing and Maintaining It

— Peter Sherrerd —

When on the 20th January 1986, in Lille France, President François Mitterrand and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher announced their support of the Channel Tunnel project followed by an Anglo-French Treaty and Exchange of Notes signed in Canterbury by Geoffrey Howe, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, and Roland Dumas, The Minister for External Affairs of the French Republic, on 12th February 1986 it was clear there would be

major implications for Dover's economy. There was a prolonged period of opposition to the Channel Tunnel project but alongside such opposition much foundation work was undertaken to motivate local people and businesses to come to terms with substantial changes that would arise and in the forefront of the agencies engaged in such work was the Dover Chamber of Commerce of which I was honoured to be President twice in these turbulent years. In the face of little or no support from the government, which was directing all its energies, finances and support to the Channel Tunnel, local agencies including the Chamber of Commerce turned their attention to the diversification of the local economy and the key infrastructure elements Dover would require if anything like a level playing field was to be achieved between Tunnel and Port.

Central to the infrastructure requirements was a call to upgrade of the road access routes into Dover (the A20 was dualled from the M20 to the port but for the A2 dualling we are still waiting!) and the safeguarding of the rail link to Dover via Folkestone with a particular call to enable high speed trains to reach the town. The campaign for a high speed train service to be extended to Dover was to be a protracted one and, in the initial stages, one that was to prove to be a very lonely experience and not one to guarantee popularity in the many arenas engaged in the massive Channel Tunnel project. The notion of a high speed rail service to Dover found no friends in Alastair Morton's Channel Tunnel Group and the government made clear it did not have an obligation to provide such rail link to Dover while British Rail indicated it was not its responsibility either and added that the franchisee would

only want to operate profitable lines while Union Rail indicated it was not commercially attractive to extend the high speed train services to Dover. The omens were not good and no-one it seemed was supporting Dover, the political will being conspicuous by its absence! I battled on over the years making Dover's case as best I could and maintaining media interest but things continued to look stacked against Dover.

Then an opportunity arose, with the publication of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link Bill, to try one more time to persuade Parliament of Dover's need for such a high speed rail link. My wife, Mary, and I lodged a Petition in Parliament opposing the Bill unless it contained amendments we put forward to include a Dover link concurrently with or following the completion of the Channel Tunnel high speed link connecting with and of a complementary standard to the high speed link. I appeared before the Select Committee on 15th March 1995. Needless to say the promoters of the Bill strongly objected to the Petition on various grounds ranging from challenging my *locus standi* to suggesting such an infrastructure project was a commercial decision for Railtrack. Notwithstanding, the Committee listened to



Hitachi Visit

me in polite silence as I put forward a case for this element of infrastructure for Dover but it was manifestly not falling on sympathetic ears and I was advised I could not take a contrary view to the committee! The Chairman added "We have been charged by the House of Commons on a certain line and that is the line I am charged with." I believe the Petition of my wife and I was the only Petition deposited in Parliament by (a) member(s) of the public. Notwithstanding this further setback we battled on often being criticised and parodied - one celebrated put down was in being advised that anyone pursuing the possibility of a high speed train service to Dover was "living on the Planet Zog" (wherever that may be). Others took up the baton in the campaign.

In 2015 we are in Planet Zog - with a high speed rail service linking Dover to St Pancras via Ashford and it has proved to be very popular. Now, maybe, we take the dark blue Javelin trains and the high speed journey for granted but how is that service maintained and where? That was a question explored by two groups from Dover, including Society members, when they visited recently the Hitachi Train Maintenance Centre at Ashford which has been established as a centre of excellence



Society Member Ron Chatburn gives the thumbs up!

with capability for complete train service support.

Those attending were given a visual presentation on the development of the Hitachi rail commitment in the UK which has led to Hitachi's global rail Headquarters being centred in London and with Ashford being identified as a base for fleet maintenance of the class 395 train sets, more commonly known as the Javelin trains. These trains, made in Kasado Japan, comprising six coaches are employed on the HS1 route from Ashford International to St Pancras International, which commenced in December 2009 but also run through East Kent to include Dover, Sandwich and Ramsgate. The 395 class fleet comprise the first High Speed commuter trains in the UK the initial units of which were delivered some nine months ahead of schedule with the entire fleet being supplied to programme and entering service in 2009.

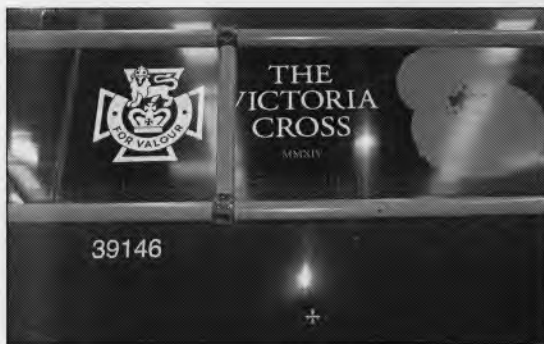
The Maintenance Centre was completed by 2007 and provides whole life maintenance as well as repair and overnight servicing and cleansing for all 29 six car Class 395 units as well as other activities for other trains. The state of the art Centre Maintenance Workshop comprises five "roads" where complete trains are serviced and includes a synchronous train lift (enabling a complete train to be lifted off its bogie wheels without the need to separate the carriages) and a bogie /equipment drop as well as a Tandem Wheel Lathe, in a separate workshop, which can simultaneously re-profile four wheels in situ. In addition the site has two train wash plants and a fully isolated train test track and automatic inspection equipment. At any one time of the 29 trains in the fleet two are in the depot being comprehensively overhauled while one is being fully maintained. The maintenance processes

have been developed from successful Japanese experiences the knowledge of which has been transferred by the company to Europe. The visitors were treated to a complete tour of the Centre including access to the cab of a Javelin. Hitachi employs up to 200 people many of whom are recruited locally or from other areas of the rail industry. Hitachi recruits two apprentices every other year to join the workforce with career progression possibilities. The maintenance staff have a full knowledge of Kaizen a Japanese practice or philosophy that focusses upon continuous improvement of processes in manufacturing, engineering, supporting business processes and management. Fitness to run checks are carried out on the entire Class 395 fleet at the end of each day either at Ashford or in Faversham and Ramsgate where the trains are also stationed for the night. The 395 series of trains make the journey from Ashford to the London terminus in 38 minutes at a speed of 140 mph and can carry 354 seated and 508 standing passengers.

The highly informative and interesting tour of the Centre enable Dorsetians to learn about the complex technology that is required to run a modern train service in particular where different signalling and power systems are engaged. The full behind

the scenes visit opened eyes to the skills and expertise that are employed to keep the high speed rail service running as well as an insight into the career possibilities for young people within the railway industry. In addition to the Javelin trains the Centre provides overnight servicing and cleaning of 34 x 4 car classic train sets and Hitachi has replaced 194 traction packages on the class 465 commuter trains at the rate of two trains a week so Dover is doubly served by the facilities now in place at Ashford. Hitachi is developing its train expertise in the United Kingdom with new depots and a rail factory in Newton Aycliffe as it seeks to expand in the United Kingdom and in Europe. With their work ethic, assured delivery processes in place, whole life maintenance philosophy and talent for inventiveness, we can no doubt expect the Japanese to have a growing influence on our rail network with newer series of Hitachi trains throughout the country and maybe even the Very High Speed trains introduced including the world famous Shinkansen bullet train (or will that have to await HS2?!).

The next time you travel on a Javelin train give a thought to the behind the scenes operations that keep these trains on the right track to Dover. The battle for a high speed rail link to the town, protracted and lonely as it was in the early days, definitely was well worth the effort in the town's interests. Javelin trains taking us to St Pancras in a short time has definitely been worth the wait and the battle to secure the service. A great pity we had to wait so long for the political will to be favourable for the delivery of this vital piece of the infrastructure puzzle for Dover in the context of the development of the Channel Tunnel. So this is what Planet Zog represents!



The Victoria Cross Train