

## NORMAN FEATHERSTONE

Norman was one of the last station masters at Bat & Ball Station before the station building was closed and boarded up.



*Norman at Bat & Ball Station*

A plaque to commemorate Normans work at the station and the picture above are permanently displayed inside the booking hall at the station.

Recording oral histories was one of the activities for the Heritage Lottery Fund Activity Plan. Two people who were interviewed were Derrick and Lynda Rodgers who live in the house attached to station building. They knew Norman very well – here are some of their memories of Norman.

*“Quite often you would tap at Norman’s door at the ticket office and he would say “come in, come in” and when you walked in it was like stepping back in time. The kettle was always on, always on. He had a great big, huge wooden table in the middle of the room and the cat basket and various cooking things all along the back wall.”*

*“It was always warm in there and he, I don’t know, he was always part and parcel of the place”*

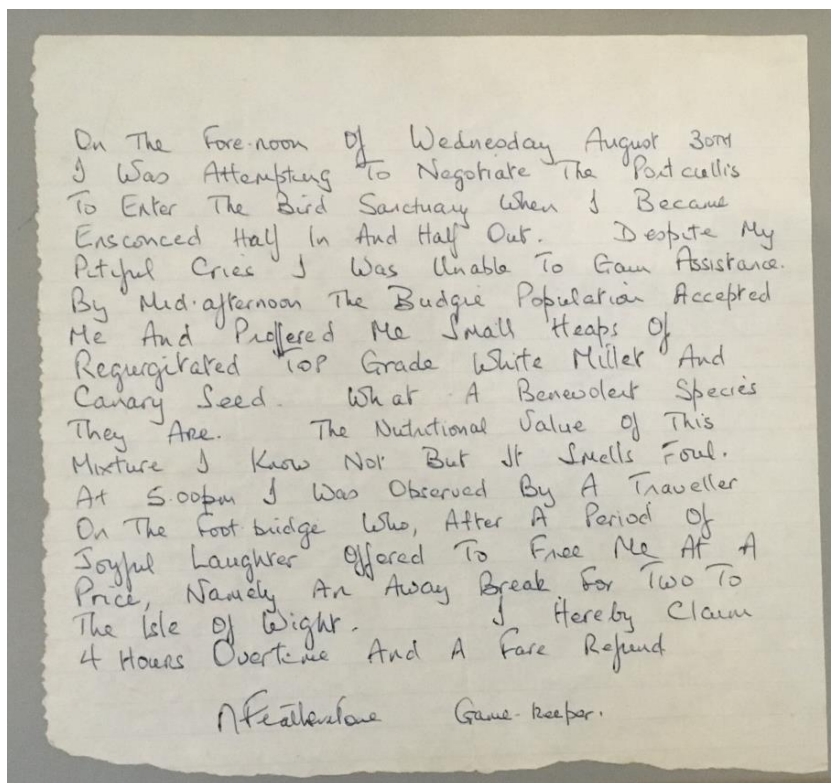
*[Lynda Rodgers]*

*“The station was open 6.00 ‘till 10.00, closed for the afternoon, then he would open again, maybe 4.00 ‘till 6.00 in the evening, so he done like a split shift.”*

*"Norman lived at Crockenhill. So I think he used to walk or cycle to Swanley and come down on the first train in the morning, open the station, then he would leave on the 10.00 train back, then come back again in the evening and back up."*

*"He was kind of local, local to the area. He was a fount of knowledge, Norman, with train tickets. People wanted to go far distances and just come and tell them the route off the top of his head tell you where everything is." [Derrick Rodgers]*

*"If we [Derrick and Lynda Rodgers] were to go away, Norman was always very, very good looking after the various dogs or cats or whatever we had and for a while, we had budgies. We were very ambitious! We had them under the shelter in the courtyard and Derrick had put all wire up and everything, there was a little tiny gate where you could get in and out and I think we had about five or six budgies in there. Well anyway, we came back from holiday one day and there was a message from Norman." [Lynda Rodgers]*



*Copy of letter from with kind permission from Derrick and Lynda Rodgers*

*He had such a good sense of humour, bless him. He did get stuck. He was trapped! He was quite wide of girth!!*

*"We found it [the letter]. It was special. He was a very special man, Very, Very nice man, one of life's nice people. Very nice person."*

*[Lynda Rodgers]*