

## WEARDALE RAILWAY : NEWS UPDATE : No.22

24 JULY 2009

### **NEW MANAGEMENT POSITIONS ANNOUNCED** **No 40 MAKES SUCESSFUL 'SERVICE' RUN TO STANHOPE** **'PROJECT CONNECT' STARTED** **15 STEAM DAYS PLANNED IN AUGUST**

- **ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES FOR THE EXTENDED WEARDALE RAILWAY :**  
With the railway operating every day for the next two months and the implementation of 'Project Connect' (the reopening to Bishop Auckland) the workload has grown to such an extent that a new management structure has been announced. A combined post of Project Manager and General Manager will be implemented with immediate effect to cover all the operational and general management responsibilities of the railway. This position will be held initially by Alistair Gregory. The company wishes also to increase the emphasis on the refurbishment and restoration of rolling stock within the depot and has established the new post of xxxx XXXX which will be held by Graham Lord. The job of marketing the extended the railway and managing the commercial activities has also grown and will need to be extended further. To coordinate these activities the new post of ZZZ zzzzzz has been established, this will be held by Nicola Rafferty. (quote from Ed here ??? – or Alistair??)
- **PROJECT CONNECT TEAM ARRIVED :**Alistair Gregory is the Project Manager for BARS affiliate RMS Locotec and he and his team have now arrived in Weardale to commence work on the upgrading of the track land infrastructure between Wolsingham and Bishop Auckland – this is Project Connect. The 10 man team have spent the last winter and spring in the Isle of Man on a contract with the Isle of Man Railways. They are moving here from a North Tyneside contract where they re-laid and renewed sidings. ( See photos)



Before and after photographs of the North Tyneside sidings at Percy main, a recent contract handled by the Team from RMS Locotec who are now working on the track towards Bishop Auckland ( Photos : A Gregory)

- **PROJECT CONNECT : THE PLAN :** Alistair has provided the following information for News Update. The team will work on the railway for the next two months – their work plan will cover ; re-sleeping (this could involve up to 5,000 sleepers eventually), Broken Banks-reprofiling of track, fencing repairs, rail changing, track realignment, level crossing upgrading, bridge repairs, drainage and weed control treatment. The team operates on a rotational basis such that work can take place on seven days per week.

- **No 40 RETURNS TO SERVICE** : The long awaited return of Trust Loco No 40 to service took place over the weekend of 11 and 12 July for initial proving runs. The DMU had to replace the loco for two runs on the Saturday. But the problem was soon fixed thanks to the team working with Steve Race and the loco worked perfectly on all three runs on the Sunday, the day of the Classic Car rally. Receipts on the train and in the café and shop were 100% higher than last year.



No 40 before its first trial run pictured from left Steve Race Maintenance Manager and Graham Richardson and Keith McNally.



Arriving at Stanhope on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> with the three Mk 1 coaches plus griddle car and plenty of spectators. (photo : J Askwith)

- **STEAM HAULAGE FOR 15 DAYS IN AUGUST:** WRCIC management have supported a programme to run No 40 for 15 days in August (every Friday , Saturday and Sunday, plus Bank Holiday Monday - 31<sup>st</sup> August). They have also agreed to finance an advertising program in late July, early August to promote the programme. We will also move to get maximum press radio, TV coverage –plus we ask all volunteers to assist (see next item.) As well as giving an extended test for No40, the aim is to get data on receipts to help plan next years programme and get the best financial balance between diesel and steam haulage.
- **VOLUNTEER INPUT WILL BE CRITICAL TO SUMMER SUCCESS** : With trains running every day in August and September there will need to be maximum volunteer effort to ensure the success of programme. There are still some gaps in the rosters for August so please check with either Kath Wood or Dave Million if you can help . On a good day we can more than double the takings from tickets by the sales in the shop and the café –but they both need to be staffed fully to benefit. **David Million** : Telephone: 01388-747683. Mobile: 07711-017980, [david.million@wrjc.org.uk](mailto:david.million@wrjc.org.uk) or [kathwood\\_95@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:kathwood_95@hotmail.co.uk)
- **HOW TO HELP EVEN IF YOU CAN'T GET TO THE RAILWAY** : Attached to this newsletter is a poster in A5 format, we ask that you print this off (as many copies as you dare !) and place them in your local shops, libraries, pubs, noticeboards etc. There are also some signs designed for roadside use which Ian Gardner has organised, they will need to be picked up (or delivered) from Stanhope station . Contact the Control office : 01388 526 203
- **LETTER TO THE EDITOR** : Ron Enticott a past Treasurer to the Railway and who accompanied your editor to the Colne Valley railway in 2006 at the time of the initial purchase and who donated a substantial towards its purchase, writes “Having contributed to the purchase of number 40 a couple of years ago it came as a great disappointment to find that the boiler had failed. That disappointment has now turned to pleasure as I see No. 40 back in steam and resplendent in her new paintwork. May I say a big thank you to all those who contributed in any way to getting her back in steam so that she can do the work for which she was designed. I am sure it will be a big boost to our passenger numbers”.

- **MESSAGE FROM IOWA PACIFIS PRESIDENT ED ELLIS :** “As the majority owner of Weardale Railway, we are truly grateful that the Trust has restored steam to the line. Through the hundreds of hours of hard work of Reg Kemp, Norman Swindle, Peter Kearsley, Keith McNally, George Richardson and others, the financial contributions of many, led by Gerry Mudd and with the invaluable help of Trevor Hewitt, we now have an attractive locomotive that will delight visitors to the Railway. The Company is pleased that our Maintenance Manager, Steve Race, was able to supervise and assist the process. Nothing will delight us more than to see No. 40 pull into Bishop Auckland in the near future!”
- **LETTER TO THE EDITOR :** From Andy Butler who knew the locomotive from its North Norfolk Railway days : “Good to see that No 40 is back in service, an excellent passenger loco doing again what she was built for. I was one of the few people to fire her when she was on the North Norfolk Railway. Sadly she was too heavy for bridge 303 over the coast road. Her last trip on the line was from Sheringham to the bridge with the Quad set and that must have been around 1973.” Editors note : The loco was at the NNR from 1969 to 1974. No 40’s fully loaded weight is 55 tons.
- **QUESTION FROM THE EDITOR : Received the following from Steve Bissell :** “Thanks for the regular news letters. Have you considered issuing them in PDF format? This would not only make the files significantly smaller but would also have the advantage of securing the format. Sometimes different versions of Word will mess around with the picture formatting.” Have you any views on this? Do you have a problem with formatting? I have been thinking of a two column format. Any ideas, feedback on how to improve or adapt the Updates is welcome. Send to [gcmudd@ntlworld.com](mailto:gcmudd@ntlworld.com)
- **SUNDAY GANG TURN UP AT THE WRONG RAILWAY :** no, not really. Kevin Hillary reports : The Sunday gang were invited down to the Wensleydale Railway recently to assist their track clearing team, as there were concerns over the encroachment of mother nature. It is not just Weardale that has this problem it seems. We met at Leeming Bar Station and proceeded to the site of Constable Burton Station, and then a short walk to the work site, with all the paper work completed. After a long hard day and with many thanks and praise heaped upon us. It is hoped that this will be the first of many exchanges between the two railways. We have a great deal to learn from one another.



Two Photos from John Lewins of the Sunday Gang on a very bosky stretch of the Wensleydale Railway, he was accompanied by, amongst others Peter Shields, Mike Wood, Bernard Morris and Trust Chairman Kevin Hillary.

- **TRUST MEMBERSHIP** : Frank Holmes Trust Membership Secretary reports that membership has now reached 790 and now includes 14 of the recently introduced life memberships. Life Membership is £225 (under 60) or £150 ( over 60).



Some of the vehicles at the classic car rally on the 12<sup>th</sup> July  
(Photo : J Askwith)



A gleaming No 40, complete with Weardale railway Crest on the run round loop at Stanhope station on July 12. ( J Askwith)

- **OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT NEWS : MORE DRIVERS QUALIFY** : We should have a sufficient number of steam competent volunteers to be able to man No 40 throughout August on the basis of three days every week and, with thanks to Fred Ramshaw, who successfully ran a Mutual Improvement class this last winter, we now have a further four volunteers in the pipeline. On July 3 & 6, George Sykes attended at Wolsingham and passed out a further four individuals for driving the 141 DMU and six people for driving the Sentinel shunters. This last item is particularly important as we now have nucleus of competent people to turn out a volunteer driver to man the works train that will be required for Project Connect on a daily basis for the whole of August (and, probably, a lot of September.)
- **POLICE INSPECTION 16<sup>th</sup> JULY** : After the spate of thefts of track equipment between Bishop Auckland and Witton Park the BTP Inspector based at Newcastle came to make an inspection of the railway on July 16<sup>th</sup>, with a view to helping us devise an enforceable strategy for reducing and, eventually, eliminating trespass. This included recommendations as to the types of fencing to be used at various locations and the best ways of dealing with individuals who are now known to be persistent trespassers.



No 40 at Wolsingham in front of an admiring crowd on July 11<sup>th</sup>.  
The cake headboard and balloons are to celebrate a passengers  
First birthday ( Photo J Lewins)



Storming up the grade on the same day. Not all the  
denizens of Weardale are impressed however.  
(Photo J Askwith)

- **WOLSINGHAM STATION BUILDING : VOLUNTEERS STILL NEEDED** : Kath Wood reports that not enough volunteers have yet come forward to man the cabin every operational day. Please contact Kath if you would like to help.

- **CAFÉ: NEW MENU IN OPERATION :** The new menu, was introduced at the beginning of July. Some prices have been increased but this is partly balanced by using better quality locally sourced ingredients. The general public still comment that the prices are very good (= cheap). The new table menus also promote the “party” catering options we can offer. Several enquiries have now been received from visitors seeing this option.
- **CREDIT CARD PAYMENT FACILITIES NOW AVAILABLE :** Credit card readers are now installed and operational at Stanhope station, in the ticket office, shop and café.
- **SANTA TIME COMES ROUND AGAIN :** Enquiries are already being received for the Santa Specials and the leaflets are now available at Stanhope station ticket office, with the option of paying by credit card this year for the first time. Price is £10 (adults and children over 4, £5 up to and including 3 years.)
- **VOLUNTEER NEWS :** Four new adult and one Junior volunteer joined the ranks this month with a further three applications pending. Welcome to John and Joan Armstrong, Adrian Beadnell and Graham Peat Stuart. Ian Densham has agreed to take up the challenging role of Chief Booking Clerk which includes the rostering of volunteers at Stanhope Ticket Office. Ian will also look assist Kath in providing volunteers at Wolsingham station.



Two more before and after photos from the RMS Locotec team now working on the Weardale Railway. These were taken Earlier this year on the narrow gauge electric railway between Douglas and Ramsey on the Isle Of Man ( A Gregory)

- **VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT :** the Volunteer Liaison Team is looking for suitable recruiting opportunities. The first event was during the weekend of 4th / 5th July at Stanhope as part of a joint WRjc fund raising event, this resulted in 2 applications, and a combined sales / publicity / recruitment stand was exhibited at West Auckland Carnival on Saturday 18th July.
- **WEARDALE RAILWAY BRANDED CLOTHING:** The popularity of the WR branded clothing continues to grow with a 5th order being arranged. Volunteers or staff requiring items should contact David Million ASAP. A quote has now been received for WR branded ties for staff, volunteers and general sale and a requisition is now with management.
- **LEVEL CROSSINGS :** Steve Bissell reports : There are 4 level crossings between Harperley and Wear Valley Junction which require the submission of level crossing orders (Witton – le Wear, Abattoir, McNeils and Enginemans Terrace). Most of the information required is now ready and submission of the consultation documents may be possible in the next week. Following submission of the consultation documents a material schedule will be produced for the crossing construction and additionally for the signage at the footpath and accommodation crossings.

- **WITTON LE WEAR CROSSING CABIN** : The team of volunteers (Trevor Hewitt, John Wardell and David Scott) reinstating the cabin are making good progress. The re roofing is now complete and new glazing and shutters installed in the west side window and a new door frame fitted



**Witton le Wear Crossing Keepers Cabin, progress  
Photo, roof complete, window in place( T Hewitt)**



**Finally a scene from sister company the Rio Grande Scenic  
Railway in Colorado. A mixed train heading towards the La  
Veta pass, the highest standard gauge railroad pass in the  
Rockies – it requires 1,700 ft of ascent.**

Edited by G C Mudd : 24 July 2009

Please send your contributions, comments, questions, photos etc to : [gcmudd@ntlworld.com](mailto:gcmudd@ntlworld.com)