

WEARDALE RAILWAY : NEWS UPDATE : No.27
21 OCTOBER 2009

FIRST ANNIVERSARY EDITION
STANHOPE STATION – PLATFORM 3
EASTGATE ECO VILLAGE APPROVED – WEARDALE RAILWAY
STATION IN PHASE ONE
BARS SUBSIDIARY : D & C RAILWAY, NOW ON TRACK

EDITORIAL : The first edition of this newsletter was issued on 18 October last year, making this our first anniversary edition. The aim was to provide a roughly fortnightly update for our volunteers and supporters – and with 26 editions in 52 weeks your editor has succeeded in that aim at least. Thanks then for the feedback and the comments and a big thank you to all the contributors for the news items and photographs. Keep them coming, this is your newsletter for your railway.

Looking back at the first edition makes you realise how far the Railway has come in the last 12 months. The full 18.7 miles of railway now reopened, the line reconnected to the Network, plans well advanced for freight haulage, ready to host main line charter trains, a record season on our existing heritage service and the ability to extend it in 2010. A fitting tribute to the hard work and effort of the volunteers and the huge input of resources from the Company.

- **PROJECT CONNECT :** The final phase of the remedial works at Broken Banks will be underway in the next few days utilising the ballast supplies from near OB3 and the Trust's Dogfish wagons. Spoil from the site is to be moved to the planned location of the WR platform at Bishop Auckland. Over 1000 new sleepers have been delivered and will be used to complete the final phase of the re-sleepering between Witton le Wear and Bishop Auckland. Some vegetation has been relocated to deter trespassers near Bishop Auckland . (A Gregory).



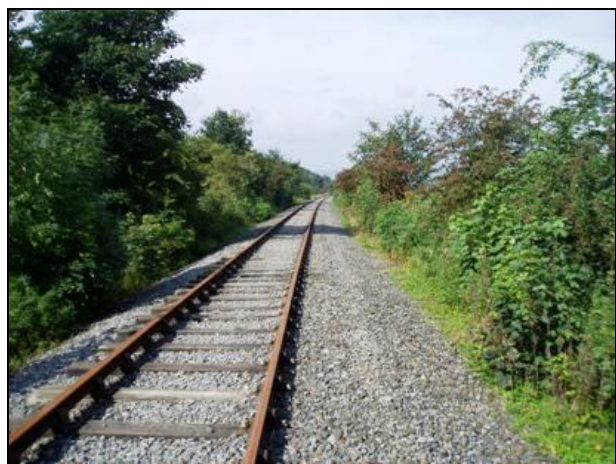
Broken Banks – the scene before clearance by the Sunday Gang and follow up work by the Project Connect team.



Broken Banks – after the first phase of the remedial work. Top profiling and re-ballasting still to complete, in next few Days. (Photos : A Gregory)

- **WOLSINGHAM DEPOT :** Stock clearance continues prior to remodelling the layout to accommodate freight wagons. Planning is also underway to install a weighbridge at Wolsingham. (A Gregory)

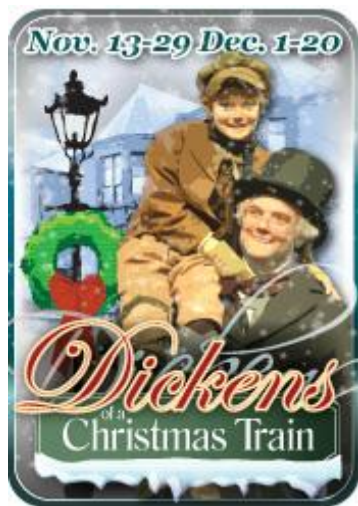
- **NETWORK RAIL : CONNECTION :** Only minor electronic work remains to be completed on the circuits between Bishop Auckland and Shildon. The connection can be used now if the points are clamped. NR plan to clear vegetation from their section of the track up to the junction with the WR owned trackage. (A Gregory)
- **EASTGATE PLAN APPROVED : RAILWAY PART OF PHASE ONE :** After the Plan gained approval at the DCC meeting last month, One North East's John Topliss, project manager for the Weardale Taskforce behind the plans, said that all being well he would hope work should start on the first phase in early 2011. The first phase will see the installation of the bio-mass system and infrastructure as well as about 20,000 square feet of business units. Mr Topliss said: "There is a real need for business units so we would hope to start on those first. We will also talk to the developers behind the fish farm and see about building that during the first phase as well. The first phase will also include access roads, utilities and a temporary station for the Weardale Railway would also be completed. Phase two will include the creation of further business units, a permanent base for the railway and initial leisure facilities.



Two more before and after photographs of the permanent way between Wolsingham and Witton le Wear – showing the results of vegetation clearance, reballasting and resleepering.(A Gregory)

- **WANT TO BE A STEAM ENGINE DRIVER? :** Are you interested in working on the footplate of No 40? MIC stands for Mutual Improvement Class and is part of the training of steam footplate staff as mentioned in the Railway's "Footplate Handbook" (copies of which can be obtained from our Operations Manager – Donald Heath.) In BR days, the MIC was run by a qualified driver and was used to provide theoretical and practical training for the cleaner/fireman grades so that they could be more efficient at their existing jobs and could progress to driver. On the Weardale Railway the class is run by our Training Officer, Fred Ramshaw. The classes, normally one a month, run on a Friday evening from about 7:30 and are a mixture of theory and 'hands on' practical work (last year we had an evening at Locomotion driving and If you are interested please contact either Fred :- fred@framshaw@wanadoo.co.uk) or myself - firing Furness No 20). The first class is scheduled for October 30th at Bishop Auckland station. (Peter Shields)
- **TRUST BOARD APPOINTS WILF HUME HONORARY VICE PRESIDENT :** At the 13th October Board meeting the Trust agreed to appoint Wilf Hume, at 97 our oldest active member, as its first Honorary Vice President. This is in recognition of his distinguished career in Weardale and his support for the Weardale Railway in particular. The Trust hopes to formalise this appointment at the AGM on the 14th November,

- **COMING SOON : STANHOPE STATION - PLATFORM 3 :** The Junior Club have recently been successful in securing funding for the purchase of a carriage for use at Stanhope station. The project will see the carriage located in the old bay platform at the east of the station and will provide a permanent home for the Junior Club model railway display and a much needed additional seating area for functions taking place on the railway. The plan includes the development of a small external picnic area. The funding has been agreed by the Durham County Council Youth Opportunity Fund and covers the cost of the purchase of a carriage, transportation to Weardale and refurbishment. (D Million)
- **CHRISTMAS IN COLORADO :** As we gear up for our own Santa season here is how our sister Iowa Pacific Company – **The Rio Grande Scenic Railway is celebrating Christmas :** “Enjoy a one-of-kind holiday train celebrating the spirit of the classic story A Christmas Carol. Step back to Victorian times as a few Dickens scenes will be read and carolers will sing. Santa will pay a visit to all good girls and boys with presents, cookies and cocoa also served.”



Pictures from the Rio Grande Scenic Railway publicity on their website

- **MESSAGE FROM TRUST CHAIRMAN, KEVIN HILLARY : TIMESHEETS :** Just a reminder to all volunteers that it is important that we all complete a timesheet each month. Most of our volunteers do this every month but we do need everyone to help by filling in the sheet . It is important because when we submit applications for funding it is critical that we can demonstrate the level of voluntary support. Also in some cases the data can be used as an equivalent to match funding when funders cannot give 100% support. Don't forget it is not only activities completed on the railway itself but any activity carried out in the name of the Trust. Incidentally it is pleasing to report that recorded volunteer hours are running 9 % ahead of years figures. A copy of the form will be sent out with this newsletter Please submit them via email or leave at Stanhope Station for Dave Million.

- **NATIONAL CONFERENCE VISITS RAILWAY** : Donald Heath Reports : During the course of an inspection by the British Transport Police's Local Crime Reduction Officer on September 22nd, we walked alongside the new footpath which parallels the railway between Witton-le-Wear and Low Barnes. Whilst on this section, we spotted a party of some 8-10 people led by Durham County Council who were making an inspection of this new public walking facility. The party included two officers from DCC with the balance being made up of representatives from local authorities from all over England. (Editors Note – It was the National Rights of Way Officers Conference) The visiting representatives were obviously extremely impressed with what the railway and Durham County Council had been able to achieve by co-operation together and members stated that they would be attempting to identify and then pursue similar opportunities within their own areas.



National Rights of Way Officers Conference delegates with DCC representatives examining the newly constructed lineside Footpath at Witton le Wear. (Photo: D L Heath)



L – R, Steve Schotts, Mike Fairburn, Steve Raine and Alistair Gregory with the Class 73 near Witton le Wear during BARS shareholders visit. (Photo : E Ellis)

- **BARS SHAREHOLDERS VISIT WEARDALE** : Ed Ellis (Iowa Pacific and British American Rail Services President) accompanied two USA shareholders on inspection tour of the line from Bishop Auckland to Eastgate on October 2nd . They used a combination of the Wickham trolley and the Class 73 both with and without the coaching stock.(D L Heath)
- **No 40 : PROGRESS REPORT** : Malcolm Simpson (Trust Representative) and Steve Race WRCIC Maintenance Manager) report that after lifting the loco to examine the overheating axle bearing which has been hampering full time running that they now can plan to solve the problem. After examining the bearing and now obtaining the original manufacturers plans it appears that at some time modifications to the lubrication system have been made which seem to be the cause of the overheating. Remedial work to the brass bearing will involve machining and filling with white metal to improve the bearing surface and allowing oil access to it and the journal will be smoothed by oil stone and polished. Also they are procuring an oil pad to put in the axle and provide lubrication to the journal.
- **NETWORK RAIL INSPECTION VISIT** : On October 14th two officials from Network rail carried out a successful inspection of the full length of the line from Bishop Auckland to Eastgate using the Wickham trolley and the 141. (G Mudd)
- **JUNIOR CLUB MODEL RAILWAY:** Members of the Junior Club will be taking part in their first public exhibition of their “Stanham” model railway layout at this year’s Crook model railway exhibition which is taking place on 14th & 15th November 2009. The layout will be operated by the juniors who will also give young visitors to the exhibition the opportunity to have a go.(D Million)

- **WRCIC NOW ADVERTISING FOR GENERAL MANAGER :** As the time nears for our acting GM to move on to other RMS Locotec Projects, the Company has advertised in the Railway press and online for the post of General Manager for the Weardale Railway. Closing date is November 4th. You can see the advert at : <http://www.railwaypeople.com/rail-job-vacancies/general-manager-weardale-railway-73735.html>
- **REMEMBRANCE DAY 2009:** The Junior Club will once again be representing the Weardale Railway at the Remembrance Day service taking place at Stanhope. If anyone would like to join the juniors at the service please feel free to meet at Stanhope station at 10am on Sunday 8th November 2009. Junior Club member, Mark Parnaby, will be laying the WRjc wreath at the cenotaph this year.(D Million)
- **SANTA TRAINS :** As of last weekend ticket sales were well ahead of those at the same date last year. In addition we already have bookings for seven midweek trains for schools / nurseries. Midweek dates at present are 1st Dec am & pm, 2nd Dec am & pm, 9th Dec am, 14th Dec am & 16th Dec am. We will be endeavouring to fill days up to give both am & pm running. (I Gardner)



Left : 31452 in its new livery in Ruddington station, near Loughborough on the Great Central Railway – and on the Right an enlargement of the new logo and the British American Rail Services identification (Photo: A Gregory)

- **DEVON & CORNWALL RAILWAY ARRIVES IN THE UK :-** Remember 31452, it visited Weardale last winter and helped out with the Santa trains? It has now become the first loco to be decked out in the new colours of the D & C Railway, the BARS owned subsidiary set up to apply for a Network wide operating licence. Completion of the licensing process is anticipated in the first quarter of 2010. Alistair Gregory reports that the complete fleet of RMS Locotec serviceable locos have now been placed on hire
- **VOLUNTEER NEWS : Dave Million reports the following New volunteers are joining us :** Tony Slack – Ticket Inspector, Mark Woodhams – TTI / Guard / Booking Office Rozeena Fawad – Gift Shop, Ian Kirton, Slav Borisov, Adam Heslington – Junior Club, Nathan Allen – Junior Club, Kamran Fawad – Junior Club. Donald Heath reports that 3 volunteers have just been passed out to drive the Class 73, giving us a total of 6 qualified drivers with a further 8 volunteers still undergoing training. Two more guards have been passed out for the 141 and one also for the Coaching stock.
- **VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT :** The Volunteer Liaison Team will be running a recruitment stand at this year's Crook model railway exhibition taking place at St. Catherine's Church Community Hall, Market Place, Crook on Saturday 14th & Sunday 15th November 2009, you will find us next to the Junior Club's model railway layout.(D Million)

• **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:1: - NOVEMBER 1st : Durham Book Festival at Stanhope**

Station – join the 12.30 train at Wolsingham Station and travel to Stanhope to hear Andrew Martin reading from his new novel “*The Last Train to Scarborough*”

<http://www.bookfestival.org.uk/festival-programme.html>

• **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY :2: NOVEMBER 14th : Weardale Railway Trust AGM : 10.00am in St Thomas Church Hall . Followed by pie and peas lunch and a journey from Stanhope to Wolsingham and on to Harperley and perhaps beyond? Tickets for this special will be handed out to attendees only, at the meeting.**

• **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY :3: - DECEMBER 15th : Volunteer Christmas Party -** Weardale Railways CIC will host a Christmas party for volunteers, staff, their significant others and Junior Club members at the Stanhope Sports, Social Club. The gathering will be held on Tuesday, December 15, from 6:00pm to 10:00pm. A buffet supper will be served as well as beer and soda. A cash bar will also be available.(M Westerfield)

• **FINALLY : Some recent E-mail Feedback from Visitors to the Railway :**

• I visited the Railway on Friday last week and rode to Wolsingham and back. I'd almost forgotten the simple pleasure of going for a train ride - it was like going home. I very much look forward to seeing, and riding, through trains from and to Locomotion. Regards, Tim

• A very enjoyable experience today travelling from Wolsingham to Stanhope, for the first time . Your staff could not have been more helpful: when we explained our plan was to walk back from Stanhope to Wolsingham on a beautiful day ,they provided us with maps & advised how long it would take etc, & how we could get back on at Frosterley if we were struggling! We had an excellent bacon sandwich & a pot of tea at Stanhope before tackling the walk back , which we managed in about two and a half hours. Two Teesside "Smoggies"

• My family and I love railways and in the first week of August had a holiday beside the Weardale railway . We travelled on the line several times in the week and were really impressed. One of the things we liked best was the friendliness of the staff. The station facilities at Stanhope are excellent and it is a shame that the original station buildings at the other two stations are no longer owned by the railway. We also liked the way you were involving young people as volunteers, an excellent idea and if we lived nearer our boys would certainly be signing up in a few years. Regards Rachel.

• I've just been browsing the revised web-site and it's pretty impressive. Well done. Might I suggest that somewhere among the "Find Us" section, you include GPS coordinates for strangers to the area? Keep up the good work. As you might realise from my email address, I currently live in France but I'm determined to visit the line sooner rather than later. Very Best Wishes, John.