

WEARDALE RAILWAY : NEWS UPDATE : No.15

27 March 2009

INSPECTION MEETING WITH NETWORK RAIL AT BISHOP AUCKLAND WORK NEARS COMPLETION ON NO 40

- **Network Rail : WRCIC meet at Bishop Auckland:** Representatives from Network Rail recently met with Weardale Railway managers at Bishop Auckland to inspect the connection to the main network and agree on the work required to restore the line for through working. This will involve some work on the track and work on the circuitry linking the signalling and the points to the box at Shildon. As previously mentioned Network Rail have undertaken to complete this work by the end of July. (G Lord)
- **Trust Loco No 40 Latest News :** As the photo below shows, the restoration of number 40 continues to make progress and with cab roof now in place it now looks like a steam engine. Work is continuing and the current plan is to have the locomotive ready for its boiler inspection on the 8th of April. If this and other tests are satisfactory, the Trust will hand the locomotive to the Company for its Fitness to Run examination prior to its return to service. This marks the culmination of many hours of work over the last 6 months by the hard working team of Reg Kemp, Norman Swindle, Peter Kearsley and Keith McNally, latterly also by George Richardson. (G Mudd, K McNally, T Hewitt)



No 40 moved out of the Depot at last to have the cab roof replaced. Taken on 18th March. (Photo : K McNally)



Craig Mountain Railroad No 3 recently restored to service for on one of Iowa Pacific's tourist lines – the Arizona Eastern

- **Another Iowa Pacific Loco back in service :** The photo above shows the two truck Heisler locomotive owned by IP employee Steven Butler which has recently been restored to service at the Alamosa depot of the Rio Grande Scenic Railway in Colorado. It is somewhat older than No 40, it was built in 1917 – it is an oil burner used originally on logging railroads but now will be working on one of IP's heritage services. Steven was planning a visit to Weardale to see UK steam this month but due to other commitments has had to postpone his visit. (Ed Ellis & web)
- **Witton le Wear – the path and the crossing :** The DCC direct labour team have now completed vegetation clearance and most of the drainage works required for the 1.1km path alongside the line east of Witton le Wear. Fencing work is well underway and the project is running to plan. Work in the depot on the new Witton le Wear crossing gates should be just about complete by the time you read this. They will be hung after the DCC have completed all the work at the work at the Witton end of the path. (G Lord, V Lloyd, DCC)

- **The other Station in Weardale : Parkhead Station** : Also known for a time as Blanchland it was the goods station at the top of the Crawley Incline above Stanhope and at 1,500 ft was one of the highest points in the UK network for adhesion haulage. The derelict station house has been painstakingly rebuilt over the last eight years by Terry and Lorraine Turnbull and now serves as café /tea room plus it serves as a B & B for visitors and the many cyclists on the C2C route. There are items of local railway memorabilia and the food is fresh, homemade and very reasonably priced. Highly recommended : <http://www.parkheadstation.co.uk> (G Mudd)
- **The push for Bishop Auckland** : Work has continued on the Wolsingham – Bishop Auckland section - this will involve the replacement of several hundred sleepers and the oiling of fishplates over the 10 ½ miles of railway, the repair of 21 miles of fencing where required, the reinstatement of 4 level crossings and the further clearing of vegetation as required by the Railway Inspector, to clear sight lines for operational reasons. The Junior Club have been helping with the fishplate work and the weekday gang have cleared back the vegetation over 3 ½ miles of the line east of Wolsingham. (G lord)
- **Mothers Day special event** : The Class 73 was operational for the special services on the 22cd March and operated with the coaching stock and the griddle car where Kath Wood and her team provided cream teas etc to the family groups. The Juniors operated their ‘Stanham’ model railway, there was a miniature steam railway offering rides in the car park and in the waiting room materials were provided for children to draw Mothers day cards. A good time was had by visitors as indicated by the feedback, however the weather was cold and overcast which meant we did not break attendance records. (G Mudd)
- **Weardale Railway website hits 200,000 visits.** Earlier this month the website reached a total of 200,000 visits since the clock was last set up. For the last month the site has averaged 100 hits per day. These updates are added to the ‘Supporters Snippets’ section of the site a few days after you receive them. You can also access back numbers. The website was set up by and is maintained by Frank Holmes our Membership Secretary. <http://www.weardale-railway.org.uk>
- **Hackworth family donate archives to National Rail Museum** : Timothy Hackworth established his locomotives works at Shildon in the pioneering days of the Stockton & Darlington Railway. On the 28th March one of his descendents, Jane Hackworth Young, will give a talk at the Locomotion Museum on “The Hackworth Inheritance”. Weardale Railway Trust members are invited to attend . **Friends of the National Rail Museum, Education room at the Locomotion Collection Building, Shildon, 11.30 am, Saturday 28th March.**
- **New volunteer Roster** : If you are a regular volunteer you will have received a copy of the new monthly volunteer roster compiled by John Hargreaves in his role Volunteer Resource Officer. This is the first edition, covering April, when we will be operating for 22 days. The roster will be expanded to cover other jobs (e.g Café , Ticket Offices etc). This will be sent to all volunteers so that they can see any unfilled gaps, as for example in the shop, such that everyone can see where volunteer help is still needed. (J Hargreaves)

If you would like to help in the shop or café please contact Kath Wood –we still need people for the Easter period and afterwards : Contact her on kathwood_95@hotmail.co.uk , or on 07779 571 228