

WEARDALE RAILWAY : NEWS UPDATE : No.18

8 MAY 2009

STEAM RETURNS TO THE WEARDALE RAILWAY DMU PERFORMS TEST RUN :- WOLSINGHAM TO WITTON PARK

- **First Steam Hauled Passenger trains coming soon : May 23rd, 24th ?** The Trust owned loco, No 40 passed its Fitness to Run test last week , which means the Company can soon take over its operation and can schedule it, as required, on passenger services. The loco has run light engine to Stanhope and back. Some further minor adjustments remain to be carried out , the repainting needs to be completed and further test runs are planned to complete the programme of work. If all goes to plan then the loco will be scheduled on the weekend services on May 23 and 24. Please check the website for confirmation of this nearer the time.



No. 40 out on the main line again during test running last week, with the 141 in the headshunt at the exit from the depot at Wolsingham. The loco also ran light engine to Stanhope. (Photos : K McNally)



Teddy Bear time coming around again. It is hoped to run No 40 this year- see below. (Photo : J Askwith)

- **Next event : Picnic Time for Teddy Bears : Spread the word please :** Coming up later this month is the Teddy Bear's picnic on 24th May. This is an opportunity for the children to bring their Teddy along for a free ride on the train. Music and entertainment will be available at Stanhope Station. Specially prepared picnic bags will be available for sale on the train, or bring your own. Also, please bring your own rug! (J Askwith)
- **News from Marketing Team :** As was said in the last update, the Easter weekend proved to be very successful. Both the Easter weekend and the Mothers day events being up on the numbers for 2008. In fact the first four months of the year have shown a steady increase when viewed against the last two years. The marketing team are working away in the background on the events to be held during the rest of the year. In addition we are looking at new events for 2010 and beyond. If you have any suggestions for events or would like to help, please contact us. (I Gardner)
- **Silver Wedding – by rail :** On the 28th April a couple celebrated their Silver Wedding on the loco hauled coaching stock (with headboard). Champagne and refreshments were served on board. There will be more on this in the next Between The Lines magazine. Kath Wood reports that she is now receiving other enquiries – including a Golden Wedding and a birthday celebration. (K Wood)
- **Equality Policy :** In line with current legislation requirements the Trust has recently adopted an Equality Policy. If you want an email copy contact Dave Million. The full policy will be posted on (boards in the Ticket offices at Stanhope and Wolsingham and in the Depot. (P Shields)

• **Developing Rail Services in the North of England – a talk.** See details below. The speaker, Paul Salveson was very helpful to us in the early days of setting up WRLtd when he headed up ACORP. Now he is heading up the efforts of Northern Rail in Community Rail Partnerships including on our nearby Heritage Line to Bishop Auckland – should be well worth attending. (G Mudd)

Friends of the NRM : North East Branch Open Meeting
Partnerships in the development of
local rail services in the North of England

Dr Paul Salveson MBE

Founder of the Association of Community Rail Partnerships and
Head of Government and Community Strategies for Northern Rail

1900hrs on Thursday 14th May 2009 @ Locomotion, Shildon

The meeting is held in the Collections Building. Entry is free.

- **Group visits on the increase :** Once again we are attracting group visits to the Railway. In fact, we have taken three more bookings in the last week alone. The group bookings cover a wide variety of interests and ages, ranging from schools, Surestart groups, social groups as well as coach companies. The next group visit is on May 9th and is a party of 60+ from Surestart. Hopefully we continue to attract such groups more and more, as well as hoping that they pass the word around about us. (I Gardner)



Seen at Broadwood Crossing –The Beast of Bollilhope Burn, created by residents. Message reads “Can you clean up your River?”(Photo : J Askwith)



The former GNER table settings come into use for the Silver Wedding special organised by Kath Wood and her helpers. (Photo : K Wood)
If anyone would like to purchase GNER branded wine glasses please email David Million on david.million@wrjc.org.uk. Glasses are priced at £7 each or 4 for £20

- **GNER Crockery :** A recent wedding anniversary party on-board the train gave us the perfect opportunity to use the ex GNER crockery and glassware that National Express East Coast donated to the Weardale Railway. The feedback received was excellent with a number of guests purchasing wine glasses adding over £70 in much needed funds to the Junior Club and No 40 appeals – thanks go to Clive Elsdon for his taking full advantage of this selling opportunity! (D Million)
- **Trackwork Progress towards Bishop Auckland :** Work on clearing the trackside of vegetation has continued, concentrating on the area of heavy growth on the western approaches to Witton le Wear. This week the working party finally cleared the growth back to allow the passage of a normal train, plus improve the sight lines on curves. Previously this section was only passable by the Wickham trolley. Once past Witton the track sides are much clearer and the earlier work carried out with the assistance of the Sunday Gang and the Juniors should be sufficient. (G Lord)

- **HMRI VISIT : 13 May** : Work continues, as detailed elsewhere in this report to prepare for the Inspector's visit next week. He asked to travel on the DMU towards Bishop Auckland and at present it looks as if it should be possible to get as far as the Broken Banks area, within a few hundred yards of Bishop Auckland station. The section at Broken banks requires further alignment and re-sleeping and at the moment is only passable by the Whickam. (G Lord)

- **NEWS JUST IN** : 141 travels from Wolsingham to Witton Park : The first full gauge train movement over this section of track took place today (May 8th) when the DMU travelled from Wolsingham, through Harperley, Witton le Wear over Witton viaduct and on to Witton Park. There, progress was halted – see photos below.



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4

The first train for 13 years over this section of track between Wolsingham and Witton Park. Photo 1 at Witton le Wear level crossing. Photo 2 taken on Witton Viaduct and Photos 3 and 4 at Witton Park. Photo 4 shows the stretch of rail recently stolen and which prevented further progress (All Photos : D Million : taken 8 May 2009)

- **Junior Club News** : The Junior Club model railway displays continue to be popular attractions at Stanhope station with some very favourable feedback being received from people visiting our “big” railway. The juniors intend to open up the displays as often as possible during the summer and signs will be displayed at Stanhope station when the displays are open. On May 9th the four high achievers mentioned in the last update travel First Class on a day trip to London by National Express. A trip for a further 3 youngsters is planned for June this year (D Million)
- **Donations to the Trust** : Kevin Hillary reports that Mr. and Mrs. Nowell of Harrogate brought along a petrol strimmer to Stanhope Station on Sunday 3rd of May, which will be put to good use by the Sunday Gang. Also, a petrol lawn mower has been donated by Mr. Chris Dodds of Newton Aycliffe. The Trust welcomes such donations and if anyone else who has surplus equipment they may feel we could put to use please contact us at the Station. Additionally the Trust has purchased a small selection of fun fair side shows which we hope to use as an added attraction at the various events held at the railway. (K Hillary)

- **Donations to the Junior Club :** The juniors would like to thank Mr Brian Mullinger of Burnhope Close, Crook, for his kind donation of model buildings for the railway layouts. Further thanks go to volunteers Dave Butler and John Hargreaves for their recent donations to the Junior Club. Dave donated a full computer system complete with speakers and John donated a computer desk. Thank you, these items will be well used as they allow us to make more use of the projector that NXEC donated last year.(D Million)
- **Holbeck 3 crossing emergency work :** Heavy construction traffic to a property over this crossing, caused damage with tilting and subsidence of the track. A stop and proceed order was put in place until a working party from our sister Company RMS Locotec led by Chris Barker arrived and on Wednesday this week completed repairs. Trains were run as per timetable.(G Mudd)
- **Eastgate Eco Village :** As mentioned earlier, the Planning Application is now with the new Unitary Authority, Durham County Council. A decision is not now expected until July at the earliest.



Finally two photos from John Askwith who arranges and designs most of our printwork. On the left a display Board at Stanhope showing one of his new 'period' posters – an everyday scene at Stanhope as we all know it. On the right a beautifully composed photo of the 141 on Broadwood Bridge.

- **COMING SOON : Weardale Railway Ties.**

Edited by G C Mudd : May 2009

Please send your contributions, comments, questions, photos etc to : gcmudd@ntlworld.com