

**WEARDALE RAILWAY : NEWS UPDATE : No.24**  
**3 SEPTEMBER 2009**

**\*WEARDALE RAILWAY RECONNECTED\***  
**NETWORK RAIL COMPLETE TRACKWORK AT BISHOP AUCKLAND**  
**LINE CLEARED AFTER BLOCKAGE BY FALLEN TREES**  
**73139 IN SERVICE AND IN WEARDALE RAILWAY LIVERY**

- **Project Connect: RMS Locotec team :** The team have completed work on the first phase of the project, namely the re-sleepering and other remedial work between Wolsingham and Witton le Wear. They now move on to the next phase between Witton le Wear and Witton Park which includes the section over the viaduct. Alongside them GBL Drainage Clearance are working in the 'Project Connect' possession. They will be utilising road-rail and standard plant including road rail drainage machine, and a tractor mounted flail . A new Operating Department Notice (09/01) is now in force governing operations east of the Wolsingham Depot Limits. ( A Gregory, D L Heath)
- **Network reconnection news:** As the photographs below show the Weardale Railway is now reconnected to the main Network at Bishop Auckland. The turnout is now completed, all that remains is to complete the circuit testing between the turnout and Shildon signal box. This work is expected to be complete within the next two weeks. ( A Gregory, M Westerfield)



Bishop Auckland, looking west: The completed turnout with new point motor, Weardale line runs straight ahead (Photo M Westerfield)



Bishop Auckland looking east from platform end ( Photo : D Scott)

- **Project Connect: Drainage Works :** A contract has been placed with Geoff Brown Ltd (GBL) to carry out drain jetting at various locations between our boundary at Bishop Auckland and Witton Park. GBL provided a 3 man team last week which carried out preliminary work to facilitate the jetting operation. This included flailing the south side of the railway from the boundary to Paradise Crossing following which catch pits were located and cleared. DCC will renew a section of drain under Escomb Bridge which was incorrectly installed during the bridge reconstruction and then construct a storm overflow down the bank side and connect it into our lineside system. This will prevent the flooding experienced at the bridge during periods of exceptional rainfall. Our Projects Group will excavate several lengths of overgrown ditches before jetting is carried out in mid September. Hopefully at the end of the works we will have a dry cutting for the first time since the 1960's. ( T Horner)
- **New Volunteers:** A welcome on board to two new volunteer members who were inducted recently: Mark Woodhams and Rozeena Fawad , both are from Bishop Auckland. ( D Million, M Wilkinson)

- **Project Connect: Bridge Works:** DCC are completely refurbishing bridge no. 12, which lies approx. 400m east of the Escomb village bridge. The bridge is an interesting structure in the form of a “bow-sprung” single span, laid on a skew and carrying a bridleway. It is Grade II listed and therefore consent had to be obtained from English Heritage before works started, as the parapet height needed to be extended to fit modern standards. Work commenced several weeks ago with the removal of all the wooden decking and parapets. The framework of the bridge, which consists of wrought and cast iron members was then shot blasted and fully painted. Several metal repairs were found necessary, including the replacement of broken and missing sections. With this work now completed re-decking is due to commence this week.( T Horner)



**Bridge 12 near Escomb Village – a Grade 2 listed skew bow spring bridge before work began.( T Horner )**



**Bridge 12 with work underway on the wrought and cast iron members. (Photo T Horner)**

- **New WR Website up and Running:** On the 27<sup>th</sup> August, Frank Holmes, our resident Webmaster (and Membership Secretary) unveiled the newly redesigned website . Some sections are still being updated, in the meantime can you check out the section heading : “SHOP” where your attention is drawn to various retailers who will give a donation to the Railway if you purchase via clicking through our website , E.G:- [Sky Digital](#), [RAC](#), [Office Supplies](#), [Early Learning Centre](#), [Amazon](#), [MFI](#), [Comet](#), [Marks and Spencer](#) ( F Holmes)
- **Operations Department Announcement: Training Officer:** It is with very great pleasure that I write to inform you that Fred Ramshaw has been appointed as the Weardale Railway Training Officer. Initially, he will concentrate on steam operation but will gradually extend his activities to all of the other footplate areas as and when he is ready to take on board these additional responsibilities. He will write to you in due course to let you know what he intends to do and how and, most importantly of all, in what way he envisages that he will interact with those of you who are involved/have intentions of being involved with footplate volunteering. I am sure that you will all join with me in wishing him every success in this very important appointment. ( D L Heath)
- **In Case of Emergency Cards to be introduced:** The Weardale Railway Management is to introduce the concept of ICE cards. (ICE = "In Case of Emergency".) The idea is that each one of us completes a small card which gives details of the person who is to be contacted if the individual is unlucky enough to be taken ill/suffer an injury whilst working on the Weardale Railway. If appropriate, it also contains information about medication so that, should such a person have to have medical treatment on site or, subsequently, at a local hospital then all the relevant information is available to the medics. The system will be run by the Document Controller and a copy of each card will be kept in the control office readily accessible so that, if the worst happens, the information is available for action. It will not be compulsory but it is hoped that everybody will participate for their own benefit. The Document Controller will be writing to you individually. (D L Heath)

- Passenger Services: Class 73 replaces No. 40:** The plan to utilise no 40 for 15 days in August had to be modified when further running in the first two weekends revealed problems with the boiler crown stays and the associated nuts and washers and with the LH driving axlebox. Fixing the latter requires the use of lifting jacks which have now been obtained from the RMS store in Wakefield. Completion of the work will commence once our Maintenance manager returns from leave. It is hoped to have the loco operational again for the War on Line weekend. Meanwhile the newly refurbished and also repainted Class 73 was pressed into service with the coaching stock. Special mention here to Norman Swindle for putting in several extra days as volunteer driver on 73139. ( A Gregory, M Fairburn)



The Class 73 (73139) near Ashes House Crossing on the 11.45 ex Stanhope on 23<sup>rd</sup> August (Photo, J Lewins)



Newly repainted 73139 in Stanhope station ( Photo : D Scott)

- Morris Minor Rally: Trust Chairman's report:** The Morris Minor Rally was held over the weekend of 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> of August. There were 49 vehicles on show including 17 non Morris Minor's. Pride of place was given to the late Ray Goldie's Morris Traveller, anyone who has visited Stanhope will have seen the plaque in tribute to Ray. With the failure of No 40, service trains were the class 141 on Saturday, while down in the depot there were a team led by the interim General Manager Alistair Gregory, busily painting the class 73, well done and thank you, you all did a great job it looks a treat. From what I heard from the attendees, it looks like they want to return next year, Sunday was wet but not enough to put to many people off attending. A good time was had by all.(K Hillary)



The Witton le Wear Crossing keepers cabin restoration continues – the east side windows and shutters in place (Photo : D Scott)



Parsons Byers : 1 September – fallen trees block the line RMS & WR staff and volunteers start the clearance work. ( Photo : D Scott)

- Fallen trees block line at Parsons Byers:** Heavy winds on September 1<sup>st</sup> caused a severe blockage on the line at Parsons Byers, east of Stanhope. Trains were cancelled on September 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> while an emergency track possession was put in place to allow for tree surgeons and WR staff to access the worksite. Trains were operating again on September 3<sup>rd</sup> ( A Gregory )

- **Block Classes: Message from Steve Bissell:** Phil Graham has asked me if I know anybody who would like to attend his block classes at York. They are open to anybody not just Network rail employees. Enrolment for 1st year classes is now open I can forward forms if you are interested. First class is Tuesday 22nd September, repeated on Wednesday 30th going through to Wednesday 17th March repeated Tuesday 23rd March 2010 The examination is on Tuesday 30th March 2010. CONTACT : Steve Bissell [spb@wgs-rail.co.uk]
- **Eastgate Eco Village:** The planning application is scheduled to go to the DCC Planning Committee on the Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> September, venue yet to be announced, probably County Hall in Durham, time 2pm. ( Contact G Mudd or Steve Raine for venue info if you plan to attend)
- **WAR ON THE LINE: CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS:** You will be aware that we are fast approaching one of our busiest events of the year “War on the Line”. The event takes place over the weekend of Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> / Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September and we are looking for volunteers to help out on both days. In addition to the event itself, we are also looking for help in setting up on Friday 18th September and setting down on the Sunday evening. I would be very interested to hear from you if you are available to help. The approximate timings are as follows:-

Friday 18th September (setting up) – anytime from 1000 until 2100

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> September (daytime event) – 0800 until 1700

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> September (evening event) – 1700 until 2300

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September (daytime event) – 0800 until 1700

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September (after event) – 1700 until 2100

**We are looking for volunteers to help in the following areas:-**

- Entrance gate staff
- Car park stewards
  - Bar staff
  - Litter pickers
  - Station gift shop
  - Station café
- Operating station tannoy / sound effects
  - Celebrity 5-aside football (Sunday)
- Looking after attractions within the station (Cinema etc)

Junior Club members will again play the part of evacuees on both days. If you are able to assist either for a full or part of a day please let me know . (David Million ) CONTACT :-

Telephone: 01388-747683, Mobile: 07711-017980, Email: [david.million@wrjc.org.uk](mailto:david.million@wrjc.org.uk)

- **Volunteer Barbeque:** BARS management under the guiding hand of Mark Westerfield hosted a Barbeque to thank WR volunteers for their efforts over the past months. It was held on August 15<sup>th</sup> at Stanhope station – see pictures below



Pictures taken at the Volunteer Barbeque on August 15<sup>th</sup> ( Photos : T Wansbury)

- **Trust Chairman's Award for Volunteer Achievement:** The Trust Chairman, Kevin Hillary recently called for nominations for an award to be presented to the volunteer who was generally recognised to have gone out of his or her way to contribute to the Railway. The award was presented to Munro Odell at the Volunteer Barbeque on the 15<sup>th</sup> August. The Chairman thanked Munro for his outstanding contribution in being the de facto Station Master at Stanhope, carrying out a host of duties and for arriving early every operating day and not leaving until the last volunteer has departed .



**Presentation by Trust Chairman, Kevin Hillary to Munro Odell for his major contribution in the running of Stanhope station . ( Photos : T Wansbury)**

Edited by Gerry Mudd Please send emails, comments, queries, suggestions and contributions to :- [gcmudd@ntlworld.com](mailto:gcmudd@ntlworld.com) , thanks. 3 September 2009

**JUST ARRIVED**



**Photographs taken by Alistair Gregory on September 2<sup>nd</sup>, during the tree clearing operations at Parson Byers, Norman Swindle is the Class 73 driver and at top right looks as if the rails needed attention as well.**