

# WEARDALE RAILWAY

**NEWSLETTER No.48 4 DECEMBER 2010**

**SNOWY SANTA SEASON UNDERWAY WITH RECORD BOOKINGS**  
**NEW BOOK FEATURES WEARDALE RAILWAY ACHIEVEMENTS**  
**RAILWAY CHRISTMAS PARTY DATE ANNOUNCED**

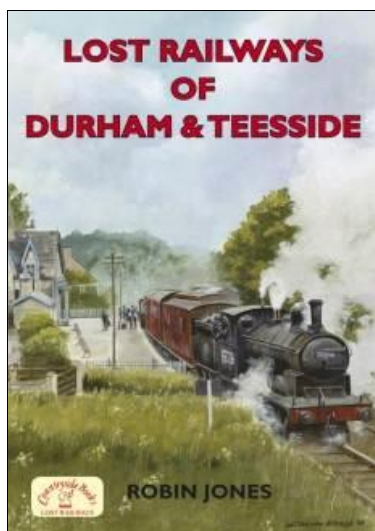
- **WEARDALE RAILWAYS CHRISTMAS PARTY – THE DATE IS : DECEMBER 15<sup>th</sup> :** Attention all Trust Volunteers and staff. Mark Westerfield has arranged for the Party to be held in the Stanhope Working Mens Club at 6.30pm (until 10pm) on Wednesday December 15<sup>th</sup>. Supper, soft drinks and beer will be provided. All regular 2010 volunteers plus partners/spouses are welcome.



**STEAMING THROUGH THE SNOW : No 40 with the full rake of coaches passing Holebeck 1 on the afternoon run to Stanhope on November 28 . (Photo : John Lewins)**

- **SANTA SEASON UNDERWAY :** By the time you read this Newsletter we will into the second weekend of the Santa Special season and as you will see from the photos No 40 is working hard pulling five Mk 1 coaches, now all lined out in the BR 1950's 'blood and custard' livery. Included in the formation is the Pullman style coach 'Nina' for which a premium price is charged. This facility as well as the ability to reserve a standard class compartment as an 'extra' has proved very popular. At the time of going to press only 250 of the 3,500 seats remain to be sold – so we are heading for an almost completely sold out season. Over 95% of the bookings were made online - the first year this facility has been offered.

**NEW BOOK FEATURES THE WEARDALE RAILWAY :-** Robin Jones, the editor of Heritage Railway Magazine has written a new book : “The Lost Railways of Durham and Teesside”. The 160 page illustrated book covers the numerous now closed railways in this pioneering area of railway construction and includes a detailed chapter on the Weardale Railway, bringing the story right up to date. In an interview Robin said: “I really do like the renovated Weardale railway, probably because I can see a train moving on it. It is hard to imagine now but those three ( Tanfield, NYMR and WR) were just a tiny fraction of the lines running like a spider’s web across the region.” He went on to say “Durham and Teesside Railways is the jewel in the crown. It is the place where the world changed forever because of the trains in these two counties. It should be a world heritage site. The Stockton and Darlington Railway was a world first, the first public railway to use steam locomotion”. Read his full account of how he came to write the book on the weblink below and if as a Trust member you wish to buy a copy - see the special offer in the box on this page. Read More <http://www.journallive.co.uk/lifestyle-news/newcastle-features/2010/11/16/railway-pioneers-put-north-east-on-global-map-61634-27662708/#ixzz166Ody789>



## **THE LOST RAILWAYS OF DURHAM AND TEESSIDE**

### **SPECIAL OFFER**

The normal cover price is £10.99, but due to a special purchase, the Trust can offer the book at the Stanhope shop for a limited time at just £9.75.

A copy can be posted to members in a (new) padded envelope at cost price only, i.e. 45p for the packing plus second class post of £1.18, total £1.63.

Please make cheques payable to Weardale Railway Trust and post to Stanhope shop with your details.

- **BOOK REVIEW : THE LOST RAILWAYS OF DURHAM AND TEESSIDE :** Mike Rapp, WR shop custodian, received a review copy of the new book and here is his review : When asked to review this latest addition to the Lost Railways series, I had high hopes that the format and quality would follow broadly upon the rest of the series. In no way should this book disappoint a reader interested in the general history and development of railways in our region. Robin Jones takes the reader effortlessly and logically from the birth of the early waggonways through the transition into the systems which, in some cases at least, can still be traced “on the ground” today, not least our own Weardale line. The contents cover; Origin of the following lines : Stockton and Darlington, Stainmore, Weardale to Crook and Tow Law, Leamside, Sunderland to Durham and Bishop Auckland, Consett to Tyne Dock, Clarence Railway and it’s pioneering electrics, finishing off with the East Durham and coast lines. It’s 160 pages are well written, with only one significant error found, in that the onetime main line actually ended at Rainton Meadows rather than Rainham! Maps and photographs are plentiful, some previously unseen by your reviewer. This is a book which will whet the appetite of anyone seeking an overview of Durham and Teesside’s railways, with a view to more detailed investigation. **Recommended.**
- **MINCE PIE TIME – AND A WALK :** The traditional Mince pie specials will run daily from December 26<sup>th</sup> until January 3<sup>rd</sup> 2011. Additionally on January 1<sup>st</sup> Durham County Council Countryside Service has organised a guided walk using the railway as a starting point. The assembly point is Wolsingham Station at 10.15 from where volunteer Countryside Ranger Steve Shippen will lead the group on a 8 mile walk to Stanhope where after time for refreshments the group will catch the train back to Wolsingham. John Askwith comments that last time this walk was held we had 73 walkers reach the station and nearly ran out of mince pies.

- **IAN JOWETT** : It is with very great regret that we record that Ian passed away on the morning of the 25<sup>th</sup> of November. He had been an active and loyal supporter of the Railway from the early days of the Preservation Society in the 1990's. He was also one of the earliest operating department volunteers back in 2004 and was still active as a crossing keeper until very recently. We extend our condolences to Margaret and her family. The funeral was held at Durham Crematorium on December 3<sup>rd</sup> and was followed by a Memorial Service in St Thomas' Church, Stanhope at noon of the same day,



Prior to the start of the services Santa made a special trip to Stanhope to receive presents for the Grotto from Duty Controller Dave Bullows (Photo : R Carroll)



The Weardale Railway was represented at the Festive Fair held at Bishop Auckland College on November 20<sup>th</sup>. John Askwith is shown helping a visitor to the stand (Photo : K Hill)

- **SPECIAL SERVICE FOR BISHOP AUCKLAND FESTIVE FAIR** : Extra trains were operated between Stanhope and Bishop Auckland on November 20<sup>th</sup> to bring visitors to the Festive Fair held at Bishop Auckland College. A special voucher enabled visitors to travel for free and also ride on a special bus service from the Station to the College. The WR stand was well attended and James Lynn and John Askwith were kept busy for the duration of the event with many Santa Special leaflets distributed. John was also interviewed by Bishop FM and had an opportunity to promote the Santa services. Thanks also to Kirsty Hill, Marketing Development Officer for 2D( Teesdale and Wear Valley for the support.
- **DECEMBER 28<sup>th</sup> IS 'WORK YOUR CHRISTMAS PUD OFF DAY'** : John Askwith reminds all Trust Volunteers that the Weardale Railway Trust annual 'work your Christmas pud off day' will be held on 28<sup>th</sup> December 2010 at Stanhope Station. Prospective volunteers are welcome to attend for light duties and friendly banter in and around the station from 09.30am till 3.30pm.
- **NEW WEARDALE RAILWAY TRAVEL OFFER IN JANUARY** : For a limited period starting in January 2011 the Weardale Railway is offering a full line day return fare of £1.00 on production of a valid bus pass. This offer applies to the Community services only and is not available on the Heritage services. The offer will be available for a limited time only
- **BISHOP LINE NEWS** : Bob Whitehouse the Community Rail Officer for the Darlington – Bishop Auckland line, now christened 'the Bishop Line' reports : For those of you who are Facebook users the Bishop Line Community Rail Partnership has a Facebook group page to which you can upload photographs and comments. A new website is in the course of preparation.
- **WINTER ARRIVES IN WEARDALE** : The weather has certainly made for some atmospheric Santa special services but the effects on the transport services in the UK have proved fairly severe with numerous cancellations and long delays. However the Weardale Railway managed to run its full timetabled service throughout the periods of heavy snow. Services were only interrupted on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> December when both Diesel units became unserviceable at the same time.

- SANTA SEASON STARTS WITH A SPECIAL SERVICE** : Santa services started on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November at 1pm with a special train from Wolsingham Station where it collected patients from Butterwick House Children's Hospice and Butterwick Hospice at Bishop Auckland and their families for a fantastic ride out to visit Santa! The snow proved a hindrance for some intending passengers, but No 40 performed well hauling five coaches up the hill to Stanhope where Santa awaited with presents and entertainment and refreshments were provided. This treat was made possible by the cooperation and support of the Weardale Railway, Meldrum Construction and Spennymoor Farmers and Tradesmen's Association.



Marianne Saunders ( Financial Controller ) and Dave Meldrum (MD) of Meldrum Construction Services Ltd who were joint Sponsors with Spennymoor Farmers and Traders Association. of the Butterwick Hospice special train.



Also on hand to welcome the Butterwick Hospice special were Wendy Elsdon and Santa himself.

- LOOKING FORWARD TO 2011** : This has been an eventful year for the Weardale Railway seeing the reopening to Bishop Auckland, the start of a regular daily Community service and the operation of 5 charter trains onto the line from various cities in England and Scotland. Next year looks as if it will also see further developments – work on preparing the freight depot at Wolsingham is now well underway, also underway are discussions on building new stations at Witton le Wear and Witton Park and the construction of a direct footpath to link the WR and NR platforms at Bishop Auckland. The availability of No 40 will allow the reintroduction of a more regular Heritage steam service with the possibility of offering buffet service and a First Class option.

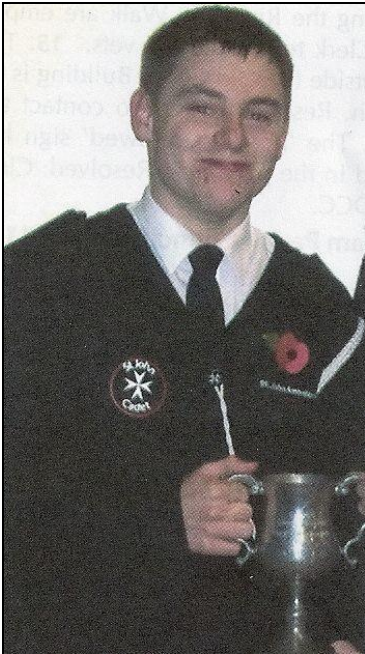


Remembrance Day in Stanhope and the largest ever attendance by the Weardale Railway Junior Club – 16 Junior and Youth team members were present – by far the largest group to attend the service. ( Photo : D Million)



The crowded platform at Wolsingham on the day of the Butterwick Hospice special . ( Photo : Ruth Carroll)

- STANHOPE TO PARIS – BY RAIL IN JUST OVER SIX HOURS** – Followers of the Weardale Railway Twitter site ( there are now over 800 of them) will have noted the following : “**After buying a return ticket on the Eurostar, I elected to take the train from Stanhope starting with the Weardale Railway Community Service. Stanhope to Bishop Auckland then to Darlington, Darlington to Kings Cross, a walk across the road and St Pancras, then, to the Gare du Nord. From the platform at Stanhope to the Gare du Nord in Paris took a little over six hours! Not bad, considering airport security and the time it would take to get to and from Airports at either end of the journey!**”



Jordan Parker, County Cadet, St John Ambulance, see item below.



Because of the snow John Lewins was late to arrive lineside on the 27<sup>th</sup> November so he had to take this photo against the light – however with No 40 steaming well it makes a fine sight.

- WELL DONE JORDAN :** Jordan Parker a founder member of the Weardale Junior club and now a Youth Team member has been elected St John Ambulance County Cadet of the year. He has been chosen out of 100’s to represent Co Durham in the National Cadet of the Year competition in Swindon in the New year. He will also be travelling to London in March to attend a reception at Buckingham Palace as a guest of HRH The Princess Royal.



**NO SNOW IN WEST TEXAS-** where our Former GM is having a railwayman’s holiday based in Lubbock, TX. On the left Alistair Gregory stands on an SD60MAC of the Texas & New Mexico Railway and on the right a view of the West Texas Polar Express stock in the yard at Lubbock hauled by a GP38 of the West Texas and Lubbock Railway, both owned by WR shareholder, the Iowa Pacific Railroad (Photos : A Gregory)