

WEARDALE RAILWAY

NEWSLETTER No. 51 - 27 FEBRUARY 2011

WORK PROGRESSING ON THE LINE UPGRADE

WEARDALE RAILWAY RAILCARD LAUNCHED

NEW RULEBOOK AND OPERATIONAL MANUALS IN PREPARATION

- **WEARDALE LINE UPGRADING** : The major works underway to prepare the line for freight traffic are illustrated throughout this Newsletter. David Million, General Manager, gave the following interview to the Northern Echo, here are excerpts : - "Passengers using a rural rail service are to benefit from the installation of an extra line on its route. When the engineering work is complete, an extra morning service will run from Wolsingham to Bishop Auckland, departing from the station at 8.35am, Monday to Saturday. Normal service between Stanhope, Wolsingham, Frosterley and Bishop Auckland is due to resume on Saturday, March 12. David Million, Weardale Railway's general manager, said: "At the moment, it is pretty much a single line all the way through, but the extra one will mean more than one train can operate at the same time between Stanhope and Wolsingham. The new points and junction will be going in next week. Once the line upgrades are complete, it will be possible to run additional services at peak times and for special events, such as the agricultural shows in Stanhope and Wolsingham. We want to provide a better service for the whole community. It is their railway after all, and if we can support local events then that's all the better." Plans are also in the pipeline to install two new stations, at Witton Park and Witton-le-Wear. (See later item)



The first of a series of progress photos showing the extent of the Works underway to prepare the line for the increased traffic. On the left the view from Scotch Isle looking back towards Wolsingham depot showing the trackbed being prepared for the loop line (as at Feb 7) and on the right the pegs show how much the line has to be slewed to accommodate the extra track (Photos : N Swindle)

- **WEARDALE RAILWAY WEB TV AND TWITTER : LATEST** : As mentioned in the last Newsletter, Ruth Carroll is regularly adding videos on her Youtube channel – Weardale Railway TV. Since our last edition she has added a video of No 40 hauling works trains for the Wolsingham loop trackworks in late January this year, see it at : <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1JExU4hS6Qw> . Additionally to complement her Stanhope to Bishop Auckland in two minutes video she has now added a film of the reverse journey, this time at a slightly lower speed of three minutes for 16 miles. You can see it at : http://www.youtube.com/user/weardalerailwaytv#p/a/u/0/cb9jAtq7b_c . Also of note is the fact that the Weardale Railway Twitter site now stands at 989 followers – this is where you need to visit if you want the very latest news and pictures of events . The link for the site is : <http://twitter.com/WeardaleRailway> - Lets get it to over 1000.

- No 40 WORKING HARD :** This weekend marks the end of the half term period where No 40 has been operating the heritage services between Stanhope and Wolsingham. With also the mince pie trains on January 2 and the works train referred to elsewhere, No 40 has seen a fair amount of action in what would normally be a quiet time of the year. We were also able to give Geoff Manchester, a footplate ride winner, his cabride, he has told us he is already boring his grandchildren with tales from the footplate! Now that no further runs are planned until the Easter period, attention will move to the tube replacement work mentioned in the last Newsletter. There is a video of the January 2nd run, the first steaming day of the year. This video was shot on the afternoon train. The passengers were treated to complimentary tea/coffee and mince pies on the journey up to Stanhope. This was served by the Junior Club Buffet Car Manager S Watters. You can see the video at this site : <http://www.youtube.com/user/weardalerailwaytv#p/a/u/2/tPsY1HZQRO8>



David Scott WR Trust Chairman saying thank you to Mark Westerfield from the Railway Trust for the work he has carried out for the Railway, Mark returned to the USA on 30th January



Shunter 08622 outside the Depot where it is undergoing traction motor replacement prior to returning to Teesport as part of BARS lease fleet (Both photos : D Scott)

- WR JUNIOR CLUB :- David Million reports :** “As a result of a link up with King James I Community Arts College, Bishop Auckland, the Bishop Auckland section of the Junior Club are moving to their new home at the school. As part of the arrangement the school are providing the free use of a classroom complete with computers and overhead projection equipment every Friday evening. In view of the geographical distribution of the existing Junior Club members in the Dale – it has been decided to provide transport so that they can have a joint meeting with the Bishop Auckland group.”



A siding is to be laid at Bishop Auckland to allow a train to or from the Network to pass a WR passenger train standing at the platform. On the left is the trackwork and sleepers for the turnout laid out at the depot (Photo N Swindle) and on the right the trackbed preparations looking from the platform towards Latherbrush Bridge. (Photo : J Lewins)

- MARKETING : THE WAY FORWARD :** Andrea Davidson the new volunteer Marketing Manager has now stepped into the post and has prepared the following outline of the role of the Marketing Team : - “ I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the newly appointed Marketing Manager for the Weardale Railway CIC. My background varies from working within Marketing designing promotional programmes, Business Development and Continuous Professional Development for businesses investing in career development for employees. My vision for the Weardale Railway is to develop our services to create customer satisfaction within our rail services and support a sustainable economy for local businesses and the local communities with the hope of job creation in various industries. Our primary focus is in local tourism impacting positively on local trade. The Marketing team and myself have collated a diary of events for this year and hope to introduce new events throughout the year. We will keep you posted. Please visit our website for upcoming news and booking events. If you would like to get involved or take advantage of our Heritage service travelling with us between Bishop Auckland and Stanhope, please send all enquiries to our info@weardale-railway.org.uk. I look forward to meeting you all and developing a strong relationship being a regular event within your social diary.”



These two photos indicate the considerable volume of fill required to make the loop line up to the grade level of the main line. On the left looking east at Scotch Isle and on the right looking back towards the Depot at Wolsingham. (Both Photos : J Lewins)

FROM THE E MAILBOX : 1 : “I went on the 141 on Sunday. Despite late running, which actually suited me, the run was brilliant, I am really impressed. The staff were brilliant, the train was clean and I will certainly be coming back. My friend enjoyed the ride too. I have recommended the railway to others as I feel you do a superb job. I am really impressed by how you operate. It was worth the £10.40!! I took several photos which if you wish I can send to you and you can use for your own purposes .Many thanks for the enjoyable ride . T .T.”

- MAY 2011 : NEW WR RULEBOOK :** Donald Heath, Operations Manager reports : “In order to accommodate the regular running of trains to and from the National Network it is necessary to make some changes to our rule book. The proposed alterations are currently with our external safety advisor for his approval and, based on a discussion with the General Manager at the end of February, it is our intention to bring the revised document into use early in May. Before this change takes place there will be a number of briefing/training sessions which will be held in late March/early April at a location in Weardale – most probably somewhere in Stanhope. These will be followed by a two part examination – a written paper and an oral test, the latter so as to make sure that not only do we all know the new rules but that, equally important, we understand how to use them. (For the older ones amongst us who have read Gerry Fiennes seminal work “I tried to run a Railway”, recall what he said about how he passed his rules test with flying colours and then, just one week later, when he had to put in single line working he had no idea as to how to do it!) From “RR day” (revised rules day) nobody will be allowed to work without that they have passed this updated rules test.” New Manuals and Appendices will also be introduced at the same time – see further news item in this Newsletter.

- **WEARDALE RAILWAY :THE RAILCARD IS LAUNCHED :** A Weardale Railway Railcard was launched earlier this month and sales are already being made . Here are the details :- The Weardale Railcard gives you 50% off adult fares and up to 4 children travel at a flat fare of just £1 on all scheduled Weardale Railway Community Rail and Heritage Services. The Railcard costs just



£15 for a whole year of savings.

The Child flat fare is £3 on Heritage Services. You can use your Weardale Railcard, for long and short hops. Better still you can use it anytime during the week, weekends and Public Holidays. There are no time restrictions for travel. The Weardale Railcard will give you savings on both Single and Return tickets. You're eligible to buy a Weardale Railcard if you permanently reside in any of the following post code areas:- DL13 – Wolsingham, Frosterley, Stanhope and surrounding area. DL14 – Bishop Auckland and surrounding area. DL15 – Crook and surrounding area. Please pass this news and website link on to anyone who may be interested. From the website you can download an application form and see the full Terms and Conditions. <http://www.weardale-railway.org.uk/documents/Railcard.pdf>



Some of the fill required for the new line came from demolished buildings in the Depot (above) also from the site of the former Down platform at Wolsingham.



Ducting for cables being prepared outside the Depot (Both photos : N Swindle)

• **FROM THE EMAIL BOX : 2 :** “I'd like to say thanks for an enjoyable afternoon my friend and I had on the Weardale Railway. On Sunday 23rd Jan we travelled up from Doncaster for a ride out (my friend is a big fan of the 141 DMUs) and decided to have a return trip on 141103. We didn't think we'd make it at first after missing the Bishop Auckland train at Darlington by 3 minutes due to our train arriving late but a taxi was arranged for us, and as luck would have it, the 12:30 departure we were aiming for was delayed too meaning we were able to make it in the end. The staff were very friendly, particularly the ticket inspector who was very informative and told us all about the line and the trains on it, the prices in the cafe were very reasonable and the 141 was in good condition and quite warm inside too. Top marks to everyone who made sure that despite the late running, we were able to get back in time to make the connection at Bishop Auckland back to Darlington. T.C.” **Editors Note :** In the event of delays on trains from Darlington, the Network Rail signalmen on duty at Shildon Box have been asked to inform WR Control and we adjust times whenever possible.

- **FROM THE LATEST WEEKLY NOTICE :-** “From Monday 28th February until Friday 4th March 2011 (inclusive), the passenger service is suspended so that engineering work can take place in connection with the installation of a new passing loop at Scotch Isle. On Monday 28th February 2011 the coaching stock will be taken to Stanhope Station for cleaning purposes and will remain there until Friday 4th March. The placing movements on Monday 28th February are covered by Special Traffic Notice 11/01. A separate STN will be issued for the return workings.”



More progress photos : excavating the fill , loading onto a Class 73 hauled works train and unloading the fill at the worksite.
 (All photos : A Gregory)



Two views of the west end of the loop with turnout installed. This work was carried out by the BARS track construction Company – RMS Locotec under the direction of Alistair Gregory and Steve Goodwin. They both send their thanks to all involved (Photo left : S Goodwin and right : N Swindle)

- TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENTS ON THE WEARDALE RAILWAY :** Steve Bissell reports : “In the past weeks the Control Office and the General Manager have been provided with a working internet connection. Whilst this is commonplace in many homes and businesses, there have been many obstacles to achieving reliable access at Stanhope. Not least of which is that Stanhope is at the top end of the valley and high speed connections are not available.) We are very pleased to achieve just over 1 meg which will be regarded by some as akin to dial-up speeds). The significance of this connection is not only to make the administrative tasks easier for the GM but is key to the development of the facilities required for the control office as we get ready for the introduction of coal trains. A number of initiatives that are concerned with the operation of the railway and communicating with trains rely on a firm internet connection. So this is a significant milestone.”
- IOWA PACIFIC NEWS :** The Weardale Railway majority owner, Iowa Pacific operates several Railways in the USA. Ed Ellis, Company President reports that Iowa Pacific is one of two finalists in bidding to operate the Coos Bay Rail Link from Eugene to Coquille, in Oregon. This is a 113 mile line for which funds have been obtained to rehabilitate the track structure to provide a freight rail service. In other news Ed reports that the recent ‘Copper Spike Excursions’ on the Arizona Eastern Railway are averaging 800 passengers per week, a 200% increase from last year, a sign of the recovering economy and improved services. A Lunch service is now available on these trains. Elsewhere on the Texas- New Mexico Railroad new business in the movement of "frac sand" into the Permian Basin for horizontal oil well well-drilling. The volume is double that of last year, and when new unloading facilities are completed, volume could reach 400 cars per month, which would be six times last year's volume. Obviously, oil prices have an impact on this.
- FIRST 2011 CHARTER IN APRIL :** Nenta Railtours are to operate a Railtour, ‘The York and Weardale Rambler’ on April 9. Starting at Norwich, it will pick up at various points in East Anglia and offers options to stop off in York, Shildon or Stanhope



Junior Club Buffet Car Manager, Stuart Watters (right) and Assistant Scott Atkinson on duty over the half term weekend. (Photo : R Carroll)



The Junior Club's new Training Facility at King James College, Bishop Auckland (Photo : D Million)

- AN EARLY SPRING CLEAN FOR THE 141** :- Dave Scott, WR Trust Chairman reports : -The railcar (141103) has had many months of hard work over the last year and apart from a surface clean and a sweep of the floors, not much has been done to the unit cosmetically! A team of four, (Richard McArdle, Chris Wilson, Eddy Slack and David Scott), with some assistance from Ben Riley WRjc, set about giving the unit a spring clean both inside and out. Certainly the team enjoyed the task and were very pleased with the results achieved. You can see the results in the photos below.



Exterior and interior views of 141103 after its early Spring Clean : February 17. (Photos : D Scott)

- NEW STATIONS FOR WITTON LE WEAR AND WITTON PARK** : The Railway is in the early stages of discussions to build stations at both Witton le Wear and Witton Park. The two key issues on the critical path are funding and planning. In the case of Witton le Wear meetings have been held with Durham County Council and local supporters and the Parish Council and some financial contributions are promised, but further funding and Grant applications will almost certainly be required. We have ascertained that there is space on Railway land on the site of the original station to build a platform with access from the recently built lineside path, which should simplify the planning considerations. In the case of Witton Park, a platform would be tied in with other developments which are being planned in the area, these are in an early stage but we hope to have some positive news soon.
- LINESIDE FOOTPATH BEING EXTENDED** : The original DCC lineside footpath from the level crossing at Witton le Wear terminated at overbridge 3 opposite the entrance to the Low Barns Nature Reserve. It was built on WR land by Durham County Council. A second phase is now underway to extend the path from overbridge 3 to the crossing at Enginemans Terrace adjacent to the site of the former Wear Valley Junction. Construction is now underway using the Council's direct labour unit. Further extensions of this path, both north (along the former Crook branch) and south are under consideration.



A Northern Rail Class 156 has been specially decorated in 'Bishop Line' livery. The B A Station Trust reports an increase in ridership as after the recent Arriva bus fare increase, the Day return fare to Darlington (at £4.30) is now cheaper than the bus.

- **NEW MANUALS FOR OPERATIONAL STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS :** Along with the new rule book, mentioned elsewhere in this Newsletter, new documents are being issued in May - as - **Donald Heath** now reports : - “ Three new documents will be issued : -
 - The first, for Duty Managers and Controllers, will be an Incident Manual setting out all the things which have to be done in the event of an incident occurring on the railway. It deals with the all likely happenings and is based on the document which our sister company has had in place for some 15 years now. It is in the form of a check list of “things to do” in any of the 3
 - the railway being closed to traffic,
 - the railway being open to passenger traffic,
 - the railway being open to passenger and freight traffic.
- Duty Managers will have a personal copy which they are to carry with them whenever they are on duty and there will be a reference copy in the control office for the use of the controller on duty. Electronic copies will be available for any member of staff requesting one, but because the document will contain certain personal contact details it will not be on general issue in print form.
- The second document is The General Appendix which will detail the following items:
 - the speed restrictions, level crossings, loops and stations –Table A,
 - the local instructions for the working of the important level crossings,
 - working of Wolsingham depot and Bishop Auckland and Stanhope stations,
 - action to take when underbridges are struck by road vehicles, and,
 - procedure to be followed if a train staff is lost.
 - The third document is The Operations Manual which will, in general, replace the standard operating procedures or SOPs as they are usually referred to. There will also be route information incorporating details of the exact locations and names of all of the 57 level crossings on the line and other important features and a briefing document explaining the meaning of all of the lineside signs. Both of these documents will be in electronic form and will be on general issue to all members of staff who work in the Operating Department. (Do not forget that the term “Staff” as defined in the rule book includes employees and volunteers.)”
 - **COAL PROJECT :** While work on the line has been proceeding, the Railway has been working with Durham County Council on all the various planning conditions and consents required before work can start within the depot. These requirements are nearing a satisfactory completion and as the land has now been cleared of other buildings, work should be underway shortly. Two further staff positions are being advertised locally, these are for shunter drivers to handle the loading of the trains in the depot.

- **ENGINEERING CLOSURES** : WR has had to withdraw services between Stanhope and Bishop Auckland for periods in February and March while work is carried out on upgrading the line for further traffic developments. At the date of issue of this Newsletter, the remaining service details are as follows :

- Sunday 27th February

Normal Timetabled Service for both Heritage and Community Rail services

Monday 28th February

No service

Tuesday 1st March

No service

Wednesday 2nd March

No service

Thursday 3rd March

No service

Friday 4th March

No service

Saturday 5th March

Normal timetabled service

Sunday 6th March

Normal timetabled service

Monday 7th March

No service

Tuesday 8th March

No service

Wednesday 9th March

No service

Thursday 10th March

No service

Friday 11th March

No service

Saturday 12th March

Normal timetabled service resumes

EDITED by G C MUDD : 27 Feb 2011 Comments, queries, contributions please to
gcmudd@ntlworld.com



**Wreathed in steam the Heritage stock leaves the depot ready for
Its first trip of the day. Taken on Feb 21 by D Scott.**

TIMETABLE FROM MONDAY JANUARY 7TH 2011 UNTIL SATURDAY MAY 21ST 2011

MONDAY TO FRIDAYS - Monday 7th February 2011 until Friday 20th May 2011

		ECS		H		H	Q			
BA NR	arr			0859		1121		1321	1624	
BA West	dep			0915		1135		1335	1635	
SI	dep	0825			1110	1200		1400	1415	1700
WM	arr	0833			1120				1425	1705s
WM	dep			0948	1130	1208		1408	1430	
SE	arr			1010	1155	1230		1430	1455	1730s
						H		H	Q ECS	
SE	dep			1030		1235	1300	1520	1550	1735
WM	arr						1320		1610	
WM	dep	0835	1050			1255	1325	1540	1615	
SI	arr						1335		1525	1755
SI	dep	0845	1100			1305		1550		
BA West	arr	0910	1125			1330		1615		
BA NR	dep	0925	1140			1340		1630		

Key:

BA NR denotes Bishop Auckland main line station, time of Northern Rail services arriving/departing

BA West denotes the Weardale Railway station at Bishop Auckland

SI denotes Scotch Isle

WM denotes Wolsingham

SE denotes Stanhope

ECS denotes empty coaching stock

H denotes runs from 21 to 25 February, 18 to 22 April, 25 to 29 April and 2 May

s denotes stock to set down only

Q denotes this train will normally go straight from Bishop Auckland into the Wolsingham depot and all the timings below that only apply if the 1635 from BA is conveying passengers from Wolsingham, Frosterley or Stanhope

SATURDAYS - 12th January 2011 to 21st May 2011

		ECS		H		H		H		Z		
BA NR	arr			0904		1121		1316		1520	1758	
BA West	dep			0920		1135		1335		1535	1810	
SI	dep	0825		0945	1110	1200		1400	1510	1600	1835	
WM	arr	0833			1120				1520		1843s	
WM	dep			0953	1130	1208		1408	1530	1608		
SE	arr			1015	1155	1230		1430	1555	1630	1905s	
									Z	H	ECS	
SE	dep			1030		1235	1305	1435		1650	1720	1910
WM	arr						1325		1709		1740	
WM	dep	0835	1050			1255	1330	1455	1710	1710	1745	
SI	arr						1335		1719	1720	1755	1935
SI	dep	0845	1100			1305		1505				
BA West	arr	0910	1125			1330		1530		1735		
BA NR	dep	0923	1140			---		---		1800		

ECS denotes empty coaching stock

H denotes runs on 26 February, 23 & 30 April

s denotes stock to set down only

Z denotes only runs on heritage days and will, in the down direction, only run beyond Scotch Isle Depot if there are passengers to be conveyed for Wolsingham, Frosterley and/or Stanhope

SUNDAYS - 9th January 2011 to 15th May 2011

			H			H		Z	Z		
BA NR	arr			1020		1219		1431		1646	
BA West	dep			1030		1230		1445		1700	
SI	dep	0845	1000	1055		1255	1410	1510		1725	1725
WM	arr		1010				1420			1733s	
WM	dep	0853	1030	1103		1303	1430	1518		---	
SE	arr	0915	1055	1125		1325	1455	1540		1755s	
						H		H		Z ECS	
SE	dep	0920		1130	1200	1330		1550	1620	1800	
WM	arr				1220				1640	---	
WM	dep	0940		1150	1225	1350		1610	1645	---	
SI	arr				1235				1655	1825	
SI	dep	0950		1200		1400		1620			
BA West	arr	1015		1225		1425		1645			
BA NR	dep	1029		1240		1449		1656			

ECS denotes empty coaching stock

H denotes runs on 27 February, 24 April & 1 May

s denotes stock to set down only

Z denotes only runs on heritage days and will, in the down direction, only run beyond Scotch Isle Depot if there are passengers to be conveyed for Wolsingham, Frosterley and/or Stanhope