

WEARDALE RAILWAY

NEWSLETTER No 62 - 6 JULY 2012

CLASS 33 HAULING WR PASSENGER SERVICES
FLASH FLOOD BLOCKS LINE NEAR WOLSINGHAM
TRUST STEAM LOCO BOILER READY FOR REPAIR

- **CLASS 33 ARRIVES, ALSO POSSIBLE STEAM LOCO FOR WOTL:** The Railway has hired a Class 33 from Nemesis Rail to cover for the period while No 40 is away. It is no 33103 and carries the name 'Swordfish'. It completed its move from Burton on Trent to Wolsingham on the 26th June and was put straight to work on the 30th June weekend. It has similar controls to the Class 73 which was on the railway until recently so driver training under the eye of General Manager Graham Isom is still underway. See pictures of its first weekend. Meanwhile intensive efforts continue, with the objective of hiring a steam locomotive to haul the majority of services for the rest of the season, pending the completion of the overhaul of No 40. WR management have considered options or chased down nearly a dozen leads for hire and are currently working on a potential offer for a suitable locomotive that if agreement can be reached could be in service for the War on the line event on 14th/15th July.



Weardale Railways latest motive power. To cover for part of the period whilst No40 is under refurbishment a Class 31 will be available to operate the passenger services. No 31103 which bears the name of 'Swordfish' is shown here on arrival at Bishop Auckland on 30 July. Photo : John Askwith.

- **MIDWEEK 'SPECIALS' SCHEDULED :** The school holiday timetable will operate from July 27 from which date passenger trains will operate from Wednesday through Sunday. But before that date there will be several special trains operated. Jo Brown, Commercial Manager reports : "There are three special parties booked on July 10, 11 & 25. They are all morning workings with the first one being an 1115 departure from Stanhope and the other two a 0930 departure from Bishop Auckland" contact the Operations Manager if you are available to volunteer any of these days.

- SEVERE STORM DAMAGES WEARDALE RAILWAY :** A severe storm on Thursday 28th June was followed by some flash flooding, the effects of which blocked the line for a period. Trevor Horner our former Track Engineer said “I’ve neither seen nor heard of anything approaching this magnitude on this railway in my lifetime” Photographs show the extent of the damage which was located at two points on the Railway. The first location was at a culvert, which was completely buried, at approx. 7m 62ch. The second location was at Bridge 18, 7m 71ch, which carries the railway over Ashes Beck. The bridge was partially blocked underneath and the build-up of old tree trunks caused a dam just upstream of the bridge resulting in a mass of debris deposited on the track. Both locations are to the west of Wolsingham station. At each location at least 30 – 40 tonnes of material were deposited on the track. Alistair Gregory who was present said : “All credit to Graham Isom, Ricky Ireland and Luke Corkin for keeping the railway open throughout the night to allow the coal train to run and especially to the civil engineers Brian Green and Trevor Horner, their supervisors and their staff for the quick clear up operation the next day that kept services running.



The scene at Bridge 18 on the morning of June 29th after the flash flooding of the previous days –around 30 tons of Rock and debris on the track. Photo left : Trevor Horner and Right : Alistair Gregory.



Just to the west of Bridge 18, a culvert overflowed onto the line carrying yet more rock onto the line , RMS moved in under the direction of Civil Engineer Brian Green and removed the debris the next day in preparation for the following days train services. Photos : Alistair Gregory.

- WAR ON THE LINE : JULY 14 AND 15 : VOLUNTEERS PLEASE :** Ruth Carroll writes : 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 14th & Sunday 15th July 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 preparation work on Saturday 7th, Sunday 8th and setting up on Friday 13th July and setting down on the Sunday evening. We would be very interested to hear from you if you are available to help. · We are looking for volunteers to help in the following areas:- Erect bunting. Fill sand bags. Tape windows, erect fencing on playing field, mark out playing field, Entrance Operating Tannoy/ sound effects, General station assistance **PLEASE CONTACT : Ruth Carroll, Weardale Railway Trust, Volunteer Co-ordinator. : RCarroll@britamrail.com or Mobile:07887-558151. Also see poster at end of Newsletter**



The Teddy Bears Picnic event on May 27 was blessed with good weather and families turned out to ride the train and spend time at Stanhope. The Youth Team held a 'Name that Bear' competition. There were also sightings of Goldilocks (Becky Ashton) who seemed to be getting on quite well with the three bears. Photos ; Ruth Carroll.

- YOUTH TEAM MINIBUS AFRICA BOUND :** But not with the Youth Team members. David Million explains : Some of you may know that the WRYT minibus was recently put up for sale due to the seemingly never ending costs connected to running and maintaining the vehicle, costs which the Youth Team were unable to afford. On Thursday 28th June at 5:50am the minibus started its long journey from Crook for a new life in Africa, travelling firstly to London and then onto Africa via container ship in a couple of weeks. During the past 10 months the WRYT have made extensive use of the vehicle transporting members to Stanhope each week for their weekly training sessions and also on trips away including the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, Blackpool and to a number of model railway exhibitions. The minibus also provided a WRT members shuttle link to/from the Trust AGM last November. With the transfer of WRYT weekly training from Stanhope to Bishop Auckland and the increasing costs needed to keep the 10 year old vehicle maintained and roadworthy the difficult decision was made to sell the vehicle and focus on identifying grant funding for the purchase of a brand new minibus sometime in the future.



DCR update : DCR, also owned by WR majority shareholder BARS (British American Rail Services) as well as operating regular trains of scrap metal from the north and Midlands to Cardiff has been operating several one-off special moves. On the left : 56311 hauls 56091 & 31601 through York on 27/06/12 working 0Z56 Wolsingham - Washwood Heath. 31452 was later added to the consist at Derby. Photo : Nic Hartley. On the right : 56312, now devoid of Railfest branding, passes Warrington on 25/06/12 working 5Z56 Crewe Holding Sidings - Kilmarnock Works. Photo : Rob Reedman. Details of all DCR moves and photos can be found on Ben Wheelers blog : <http://bars-blog.weebly.com/>

- **VOLUNTEERS BARBEQUE : 11th August : RSVP REQUIRED** : Ruth Carroll reports : I would like to invite you all to a barbeque for volunteers and their partners. This is going to held on Sat 11th August 2012 at 7.30 pm at Stanhope Station. **If you could let me know by beginning of August if you are able to attend or not.** Food and drink will be provided. I look forward to seeing you there.



Youth Team members at the Seimens (TransPennine Express) depot in York, where they were permitted to have a driving experience on the simulator used to train Class 185 drivers. Members also visit Railfest 2012.
Photos : David Million

- **YOUTH TEAM ATTEND TRAIN SIMULATOR AND RAILFEST** : David Million reports : On Tuesday 5th & Thursday 7th June two groups from the WR Youth Team visited York for a rare opportunity to take part in the Trans-Penninne Express Class 185 Driver Simulator experience, the visit fitted in with the Railfest event also taking place in York. The TPE Class 185 Driver Simulator is based at the Siemens / TPE depot in York, close to the NRM. The £1million simulator is one of two used by TPE and is normally only available to trainee TPE drivers. During the visit Youth Team members were given a briefing followed by driver experience in the simulator of about 25 minutes each where a wide range of driving skills was displayed! The visit was rounded off with a tour of the maintenance shed where TPE's Class 185 units are maintained.. Feedback from those that attended was excellent. Afterwards a visit was made to the Railfest event at the NRM.



Right: Into service, 33103 ready to depart from Stanhope on its first day of operation and on the left the same train passing the morning coal train, hauled by Colas rail 66849, in the loop at Wolsingham. The coal train will follow the passenger service up to Bishop Auckland. Both Photos : Alistair Gregory.

- **WAR ON THE LINE : EVACUEE CHILDREN** : John Askwith reports : Children from Frosterley Community School will be evacuated to upper Weardale for safety, on Monday 9th July 2012, pre-empting the 1940s weekend planned for 14th & 15th July 2012. The evacuee special will depart Frosterley Station at 10.00am. (This will be the railway's press day for the WOTL event). Members from the Military Vehicle Trust (Durham & Tees Valley) will be at Stanhope Station in period costume with military vehicles and available for interviews and photo-call with the children.

- TRUST STEAM LOCO OVERHAUL UNDERWAY :** Trevor Hewitt reported on the 18th June that excellent progress had been made with the overhaul of No40 : “ I am pleased to report on behalf of my hard working colleagues Norman Swindle, Keith McNally, Graham Richardson, Richard Maughan and John Maughan that with only 19 boiler tubes now left to be removed and a few front boiler retaining bolts to also be removed, that the boiler will be ready for collection by L.M.S. during the 2nd week of July. This is the date indicated by L.M.S. This small team of old guys, with not so old Richard-working part time, have therefore ensured that we have met the deadline set by our chosen boiler smith with a couple of weeks to spare. May I also extend our thanks to Steve Race, Luke and Ben for their help, without whom we would have struggled to complete the work in time. We intend having a couple of weeks rest from filthy heavy engineering and will get back to work when the boiler has departed.” Subsequently Trevor has confirmed that the remaining tubes have been removed and the boiler is ready to be lifted from the frames when the LMS team come to collect it for delivery to their Loughborough works.



Four stages in the dismantling of No 40, prior to accessing the boiler so that it can be moved to the boiler-smiths for refurbishment. Starting at top left, the side tanks are removed, then the cab sides followed by the cabroof. Last Photo (Bottom right) shows the loco ready to lift the boiler. Photo : David Scott, all other photos : Richard Maughan.

- BOLTS LAW ENGINE HOUSE RESTORATION :** Many readers will be aware of the remote moor top rail line that connected the mines in the Rookhope valley with the rest of the network at Waskerley (the former Stanhope and Tyne Railway) .The railway descended into the valley via the Bolts Law Incline. The Northern Echo recently carried this report : The future of a historic landmark which inspired one of the greatest poets of the 20th Century has been secured after vital restoration work was carried out. The Bolt's Law Incline Engine House, near Rookhope, in Weardale, was the setting for WH Auden's poem New Year Letter, which he published in 1940. The engine house, built in 1846 by the Weardale Iron Company, is a legacy of the area's mining history and a survivor of the railway industry in County Durham. Located at the top of a long slope, the building once housed a steam-driven engine that hauled wagons full of iron ore, lead and limestone for more than a mile up and down the hillside. The restoration project was recently finished and local groups, such as The Friends of the North Pennines, were invited to view the completed work. A recession in iron mining, and the closure of the Tow Law and Tudhoe ironworks, made the line uneconomic and it eventually closed in 1923. The tracks stayed until 1943 when they were taken away for war salvage.

- **DURHAM VIP PASSES AVAILABLE TO VOLUNTEERS :** Ruth Carroll writes : . We have been given two books of Durham VIP Passes from ‘This is Durham’ allowing fantastic offers and visits to some of the best attractions in the North East. If you would like to take advantage of these offers you will need to call in at Stanhope Station and sign a book out. You can then visit the attraction of your choice and the book must be returned and signed back in again at Stanhope Station



Right : 33103 Swordfish being prepared for its first day of operation on the Weardale Railway (June 30th) and on the left, driver training underway for Keith McNally. Both photos : Alistair Gregory.



DCR Moves 2 : Delivering the Class 33 to Weardale on June 26. 31601 leads 33103 with 56311 behind, passes Witton le Wear crossing (left) Later the trio are seen approaching Wolsingham (right). 31601 and 56311 returned to Washwood Heath the following day with 56091 after its refurbishment at Wolsingham Depot. Both photos from David at :- <http://www.blackhatrailwaypictures.co.uk/> where there are many other photos of interest.



Haulage on the 27th May Teddy Bears picnic services was by the 141 DMU seen here passing McNeils crossing near Harperley on the morning Stanhope –Bishop Auckland service.

Photo : John Lewins.

EDITED by Gerry Mudd :5 July 2012 : Comments, queries, suggestions to : gcmudd@ntlworld.com



Volunteers Urgently Required for the War Effort!

**Are you able to help in the build up, or on the weekend of
War on the Line?**

YOUR RAILWAY NEEDS YOU!

Positions include:

Week Prior

Set up & preparation

- * Tidying, gardening, filling sandbags, painting, Café preparations and decorations

Event Days

- * Gate duties, car parking attendants, stewards, café assistants, public crossing, operational roles, dance stewards

After the Event

Dismantle and clear up

- * Removing posters, tapes, decorations, litter picking, removing sandbags etc.



***This will be our best event yet but only
with your support!***

Contact Ruth Carroll

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