

WEARDALE RAILWAY

NEWSLETTER No. 36 : 9 APRIL 2010

WEARDALE RAILWAY : THE WAY AHEAD : OPEN MEETING LEANDER : MAIN LINE STEAM CHARTER TO STANHOPE FUTURE JOBS FUND SUPPORTS NEW RECRUITS

- **WEARDALE RAILWAY : THE WAY AHEAD :** WR management held an open meeting for volunteers and supporters in Stanhope on the 8th April. There were approximately 50 attendees. For the benefit of those unable to attend, a very brief summary is given below, we will expand on these points in this and later Newsletters : --
 - ❖ **Progress and Immediate Plans :-** UK Coal agreement, Coal loading Planning application underway, Community rail service planning : target- to open - May 23, Obtaining new business (Charters, etc), Infrastructure development (Wolsingham loop in June, new sidings), New assessment procedures for steam crews
 - ❖ **Management changes :** - New General Manager will take up position late May, he has railway operational and management experience and has worked with volunteer heritage operations and acted as advisor to heritage lines. A Gregory will take up his RMS position in Early May, David Million will act as General Manager until the new manager arrives. Marketing : Clive and Wendy Elsdon will jointly take over the Marketing management role in conjunction with the existing Committee.
 - ❖ **Future Plans / Aspirations :-** Stone haulage from Eastgate, Station at Witton le Wear, reinstate second platform at Stanhope, add to rolling stock, replace interim platform at Bishop Auckland with a joint platform at the Network station, raise profile of railway, commence apprenticeship scheme.
 - ❖ **Discussion :** - Role of volunteers and paid staff on train services? : **A :** Early and late shifts by paid staff, volunteers operating in between .
 - ❖ **Discussion :** - May 23rd , why so fast ? : **A :** To demonstrate D & C Railway's ability to operate regular services and enhance its opportunities for business elsewhere on the network.
 - ❖ **Discussion :** - Can the Railway handle heritage, community and freight services simultaneously? : **A :** Yes.



Easter Sunday at Stanhope with Classic Cars on show (J Lewins)



No 40 making a spirited start from Wolsingham on Easter Monday (Photo K Moorcroft)

- WEARDALE RAILWAY SIGNS UP EIGHTEEN NEW RECRUITS :** As an initiative in partnership with Groundworks North East and with assistance from the Job Centre the Railway has recruited 18 formally unemployed young people to provide them with work experience. Recruits were chosen at a Jobs Fair in Wolsingham Town Hall and employed through a Future Jobs Fund, an initiative targeting young people and the long term unemployed. They were selected from 58 who attended. Many said their attempts to find work had been hampered by their lack of workplace experience. Steven Williams, 22, from Willington, is waiting to train as a secondary teacher after graduating from Hull University last year he is now working at the Stanhope station café alongside Emma Page from Crook . Half of the new recruits are from the immediate Weardale area, the remainder principally from Crook and surrounding villages. Sean Jones, 23, from Crook, has signed up to work as a trainee electrician. “I am happy to be trying something different. I have applied for lots of jobs but it all comes down to the issue of experience. Employers want you to have experience but you can’t get that until somebody gives you a job.” (M Westerfield, Northern Echo)
- TV SERIES : FILMING COMMENCES :** The new TV series ‘George Gently’ has commenced filming in Weardale, one location involved taking over the Black Bull Inn opposite Frosterley station also some immaculate 1960s cars were observed up on the moors. As mentioned previously filming on the Weardale Railway involving No 40 and the ‘blood and custard’ coaches will take place later this month west of Stanhope.



Martin Shaw plays Inspector George Gently in the TV series now filming in Weardale and other areas in the North East (Photo : BBC)



WRjc members Jonathan Ravenhall and Stuart Watters serving in the Griddle Car on Easter Saturday (Photo : A Gregory)

- NORTH TYNESIDE STEAM RAILWAY GROUP VISIT :** Saturday, 17th April 2010 is a special day for a party of 24 members and staff from the North Tyneside Steam Railway. They will be setting off at 9.30am by coach from their railway at West Chirton, North Shields for a morning visit to Locomotion Museum at Shildon. After lunch, they will leave Shildon by coach and travel to Stanhope for a brief look around the railway station followed by a trip on Weardale's 141 to Wolsingham Station. A special traffic notice will be issued to enable the visitors to continue in the 141 to Wolsingham Depot where they will alight for a 25 minute exploration. The 141 will return them to Wolsingham Station in time for the scheduled public service departure at 3.30pm but the visitors will stay on board so they can be dropped off at Frosterley for a meal at the Black Bull pub prior to returning to North Tyneside. Regular Weardale volunteers Bob Stapley, Keith McNally, and Norman Swindle are also North Tyneside members and will be on the trip. (K McNally)
- PROJECT CONNECT :** The Railway now has the go ahead to build its Bishop Auckland platform for the community service. This will be on WR land roughly 400 metres west of the Network Rail platform. It is hoped in time to extend the Network Rail platform to serve both Northern Rail and WR trains. Meanwhile work continues to meet a May 23rd deadline to have the Railway ready to operate trains through to Bishop Auckland. Key tasks are to complete the rail-replacing identified in the recent track survey and completion of the works at Witton le Wear crossing which includes installation of the traffic signals and some associated road works. The team are targeting to have trackwork completed in time for the next phase of the ORR/HMRI inspection which will be in mid May

- RIO GRANDE SCENIC RAILROAD** : This Iowa Pacific owned railway, with which we are affiliated, is expanding its programme of summer events to include the following new and improved services : ED Ellis, Company President reports : For the first time, we will have on-board bistro meal service available on trains to and from La Veta. The food is reasonably priced and the view out the window can't be beat. We will have 30 "Roots & Boots" summer concerts with a mix of Country, Bluegrass, folk, and Spanish acoustic artists including Grammy-nominated artist Michael Martin Murphey. We have a range of events and specials this year -- the favorites are back like "Rails & Ales" and we have exciting new additions such as the "Moonlight in the Mountains" evening dessert and wine train. (Below : passengers in the upper level dome car on the Rio Grande Scenic Railroad)



- WR MANAGEMENT WELCOMES THE NEW RECRUITS** : Railway Project Manager Mark Westerfield commented, "Railways are at once capital intensive and labour intensive, There is no shortage of projects that can be addressed with a willing workforce, Having this many willing workers will enable us to go a long way towards the revival of the Weardale Railway". Initially six of the new recruits will work in the Depot on maintenance and restoration work, six on the Project Connect work and the remainder at Stanhope in the Café and Ticket Office. It is planned to train those who are suitable to help operate the Community train service and thus provide long term employment beyond the initial six months of the Future Jobs Fund Scheme.



Gusher : The water well on test in the Wolsingham Depot
(Photo : S Goodwin)



Emma Page – new recruit, at Stanhope Station café (Photo : M Westerfield)

GUSHER : WATER WELL AT WOLSINGHAM : Making extra use of the already mobilised drilling rig utilised by the geological consultants engaged to survey Broken Banks, the Railway commissioned a borehole in the Depot area. It was drilled to 60 metres and water was first encountered at 21 metres. The water tested as being pure and will only require filtering for sand particles etc. The allowable production will enable the railway to supplement supplies from rainwater and our drawing rights from the River.

- **MAIN LINE STEAM ON THE WEARDALE RAILWAY** : October 16th will see the first visit of a main line steam locomotive to the line. It will be hauled by former LME Jubilee 5690 Leander (seen below on Settle and Carlisle Line). The excursion starts at Newcastle (9.00am) and heads north on the main line to Benton Junction, and then north eastwards to Northumberland Park and then towards Bedlington and Morpeth. The train then travels via Newcastle and Ferryhill to Darlington via the freight only line through Norton Junction and Stockton. The train then proceeds through Bishop Auckland to Stanhope where a 2 hour stay is planned from 13.30 to 15.30. On the return the train will reverse at Darlington and is due back in Newcastle at 18.00hrs.



For details of fares and how to apply for tickets visit
<http://www.railwaytouring.co.uk/index.php/the-weardale---161010.html>
 Premier dining, First and Standard class fares are available

NORTH EAST RAILTOURS : JUNE 20 : To STANHOPE : SOME SEATS STILL AVAILABLE

CONTACT : 0191 252 3774 : billmiller@tiscali.co.uk : or at 30 Glendale Avenue, Whitley Bay, Tyne & Wear, NE26 1RX
FARES : From Alnmouth, Newcastle, Durham, 1st Class: £39 (Child £30) Standard: £29 (Child £20)
From Darlington : 1st Class : £29 (Child £20),. Standard 1st Class : £19, (Child £10)
Make out Cheques to W S MILLER , and enclose a SAE for tickets which will be forwarded 7-10 days before the trip

- **CORRECTION : STEAM DAYS** : In the last Newsletter it was stated that No 40 would be operating on April the 29th. This was for a special charter, not a public service. The charter has now been rescheduled for another date. Non 40 will be running this coming weekend (April 10 and 11) on the other two weekends this month it will be the 141 diesel unit. On the 17th April a special group booking will convey members of the North Tyneside Steam Railway (see separate item).
- **No 40 : ANNUAL INSPECTION** : The annual inspection of the WR Trust owned steam locomotive was undertaken by the Insurance Company representative at the end of March, Both a cold and a hot inspection were held on different days and the Loco has been given a certificate for a further 13 months.
- **BROKEN BANKS** : The British Geological Survey team and their contractors have completed their survey of the Broken Banks location and their final report is awaited. They have installed inclinometers and in future the location will be monitored by regular readings.

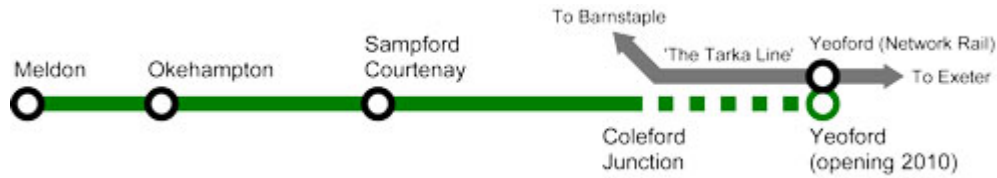
- **WEARDALE RAILWAYS WOLSINGHAM FREIGHT PLANS** : The formal deadline for submitting written submissions to the County Planning authorities was March 16th . According to recent reports 1281 letters of support for the temporary coal loading plans were received, as against 446 letters objecting to the proposal. At the moment the Company is responding to follow up queries and clarifications from the Council who are aiming to hold the planning decision meeting in late May, although this may change.
- **WITTON LE WEAR PATHWAY** : The multi user pathway built on land leased from the Weardale Railway is due to be opened on May 12th . There will be a special ceremony in which the Railway will participate – more details later.
- **DARTMOOR GETS 125MPH TRACK** : Network Rail approached the Dartmoor Railway with a view to using the Meldon branch line to trial its High Output Track Renewal Equipment. Work began on 14th December when rail and sleepers were brought in from Thingley Junction and dropped on site, in preparation for track relaying which started the following week. When the work was finally completed in February 2010, the track was handed back by Network Rail having been relayed, tamped and regulated to main line standards. Amey Colas, who are contracted by Network Rail to carry out track renewals on the main line, have gained experience from the trials and the Dartmoor Railway now have one mile of brand new track, capable of supporting 125 mph trains. It's a pity that the maximum line speed is 55 mph!



COCKTON BRIDGE at Bishop Auckland is now being replaced, necessitating both traffic diversions and train service substitution. On the left a photo from J Lewins showing the last section of the old bridge being lifted clear (April 3rd) and on the right one of the deck sections being lowered in the parking area at the rear of the station – photo : K Hillary.

- **FURTHER BARS GROUP PLANS UNVEILED** : In an article in the latest issue of Railways Illustrated Mark Westerfield and Alistair Gregory mentioned some of the future plans. Running the Community services on both the Dartmoor and Weardale Railways will require 10 new jobs on each railway working in conjunction with volunteers. They emphasised that both railways will continue to operate also as Heritage Railways with the Dartmoor using their Thumper units and Weardale No 40 and the Class 73 plus either Class 31's 31422 or 31468 and use the 141 DMU to operate the community service. A grant from Devon County Council will enable a Park and Ride facility to be built at Okehampton East where a freight terminal is also planned. The Dartmoor community services will be operated using 2 Class 31's (31452 and/or 31454 or 31601) and Mk 1 coaches , although later DBSO's already purchased will operate the service in push pull mode..
- **JUNIOR CLUB NEWS** : WRjc members will be displaying their "Stanham" display at the Newton Aycliffe Rotary Club, model railway exhibition on Saturday 17th April 2010 at The Youth Centre, Burn Lane, Newton Aycliffe. DL5 4HT - why not come along! This exhibition will probably be the last time that the Stanham display is exhibited externally as during 2010 the layout will become permanent at Stanhope station.

- DARTMOOR SERVICES TO NETWORK CONNECTION DELAYED :** The Regular heritage service on the Dartmoor Railway runs on the 6 miles between Meldon and Sampford Courtenay usually using a diesel multiple ‘Thumper’ unit. The railway was targeting a May opening for services to Yeoford where connection would be made with to the Barnstable – Exeter service. However the expected introduction of Dartmoor Railway services has been postponed for several months as it has not yet been possible to finalise arrangements with Network Rail. See map below.



- COACH RESTORATION UNDERWAY :** David Scott, Trust chairman reports : It was nice to welcome back recently Graham Lord who has been unable to volunteer for some time. Graham has been working with Graham Richardson on the restoration of coach 25307 “Nina”. This coach needed many panels cutting out and new welded in and then refitting all the windows, doors etc. Next will be the painting preparation, painting and fitting out the interior



Work continues on the restoration of the Mk1 coach ‘Nina’ in the depot at Wolsingham (Photo : D Scott)



The interior of ‘Nina’ as it was in 2007 and as it will be when restoration is complete (Photo : D Scott)

- DO YOU TWITTER ? :** The Weardale Railway Twitter site now has over 430 followers and is steadily gaining new members. It is run by volunteer Clive Elsdon and provides useful up to date information on services, events and even the weather. See it at : <http://twitter.com/WeardaleRailway>



In a cold Easter, steam heating is very welcome as No 40 waits to depart from Wolsingham. (Photo D Scott)



The sun catches the now well polished rails at Stanhope as No 40 runs round the loop (Photo : D Scott)

- **ACTING GENERAL MANAGER PASSES WRjc TEST :** Most operational volunteers will be aware that new Junior Club members take a track safety awareness course as part of the training program that is provided to all Junior volunteers as a way of ensuring that they are fully aware of the risks and prepared for the hazards associated with an operational railway. On Wednesday 7th April 2010, WRjc newcomer Scott Greensmith attended his training course along with a surprise attendee, Acting General Manager Alistair Gregory. The course includes a presentation and a trackside visit which is followed by an examination which is based on the same examination that members of national network staff take. Both Scott and Alistair passed with flying colours! Pictured is Alistair receiving his WRjc Certificate from David Million.



- **TRUST EASTER DRAW : THE WINNERS :** Mark Westerfield conducted the Draw on Easter Monday in the presence of Trust Chairman David Scott – the results are given below. Congratulations to the winners and thanks to all who took part. The net profit goes to the N0 40 fund. (T Hewitt)

PRIZE	PRIZE AWARDED	TICKET NUMBER	NAME OF WINNER
1st	DISNEYLAND PARIS VOUCHER-VALUE £175	1347	Mr. D. G. Jordan
2nd	£100	0400	Mr. R. Killick
3rd	£75	4037	Mr. P. Robson
4th	£50	1475	Mr. T. Hewitt
5th	£10	0264	Mrs. I. I. Thexton
6th	£10	0758	Mr. A. Lawson
7th	£10	1312	Mr. J. Carpenter
8th	£10	1751	Mr. J. Rodwell
9th	£10	4651	Mrs. C. Scott
10th	£10	0367	Mrs. W. Hedges
11th	£10	1349	Mr. D. G. Jordan

- **SAFETY BULLETIN** : Dave Payne, Group Safety Manager, recently circulated the latest Bulletin (No 7) to all volunteers via email and it will be displayed on the usual operations notice board. As a reminder here is one excerpt:

MEDICATION

WR must ensure that their safety critical documentation is up-to-date, which includes your personal medical declaration.

Please ensure that your manager or supervisor is kept informed of any changes in your health or prescribed medication which may affect your personal safety and the safety of those who work with you. All information will be kept in confidential.



Finally a John Lewins panorama of the Classic cars at Stanhope on Easter Sunday

Edited By G C Mudd : 9 April 2010 : Comments , suggestions, contributions welcomed.
gcmudd@ntlworld.com 01932 889 811 07773 800554