

# WEARDALE RAILWAY

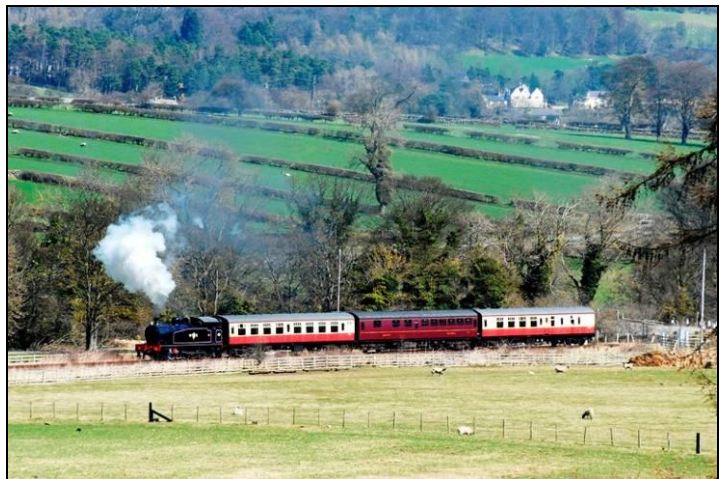
## NEWSLETTER No. 38 : 25 APRIL 2010

### **NEW GENERAL MANAGER APPOINTMENT ANNOUNCED FULL AND PART TIME POSITIONS FOR TRUST MEMBERS MORE COMMUNITY SERVICE DETAILS**

- **WRCIC GENERAL MANAGER POST (1) : ALISTAIR GREGORY:** Alistair, who has been the Railways Interim General Manager for the last year will be leaving us on April 30<sup>th</sup> to go on a well deserved holiday before taking up his main post as Head of Traction and Rolling Stock of the BARS group of companies. Alistair has seen us successfully through a hectic period of development of the railway and major changes in the Wolsingham Depot, we wish him well in his new position.
- **WRCIC GENERAL MANAGER POST (2) : DAVID MILLION :** David, the Weardale Railway Trust's Volunteer Liaison officer and Junior Club Training Officer is taking leave of absence from his position with the East Coast railway to take up the position of Acting General Manager from May 1<sup>st</sup> until the arrival of the new full time General Manager.
- **WRCIC GENERAL MANAGER : ANNOUNCEMENT :** The Company has appointed Malcolm Dean to the position of General Manager, this will be effective from late May. Malcolm is a very experienced railway operator and strategist who has spent over 20 years with London Underground developing strategic business plans and latterly as a consultant to railways around the world. Whilst working with London Underground he was involved in operating the "Steam on the Met" services along with a team of volunteers. He is member of several Heritage Railway Societies.



SR Class U 2-6-0 No. 31625, near Amersham on a 'Steam on the Met' train in 1999 (Photo G King, see :<http://offshed.com>)



No 40 heading up the dale on 11 April between Holbeck 3 and Landieu ( Photo : J Lewins)

- **WOLSINGHAM COAL LOADING FACILITY :** The planning application process continues with the Company and UK coal continuing to provide further information as requested by the planning authorities. Although no date has been set, as far as we are aware the mid to late May timing for the planning decision meeting still holds. There have been press reports that UK Coal may merge with Durham based coal and transport group Hargreaves and also an unconfirmed report of a possible takeover by the Peel Group a Scottish group of companies.

- **COMMUNITY RAIL SERVICE TO BISHOP AUCKLAND** : Final detailed planning is underway on the timetables for this service – a basic weekday service of five trains per day is envisaged using the 141 DMU, starting on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. It is planned to try to supplement this service with loco hauled trains on some weekend services. The trains will run to and from a temporary platform on WR land. It will be a prefabricated modular steel platform, built to an RMS design – it will be capable of being and also can be moved to another location once the design and building of a permanent platform adjacent to the main platform can be agreed with Network Rail.
- **VOLUNTEERS AND PAID STAFF TO OPERATE NEW SERVICE** : The operating hours of the new service will be from approximately 7.30 am to 7.30 pm . First choice of shifts would be for volunteers to work a ‘middle turn’ roughly the same hours as the Heritage service, with the ability to work early and late turns also on an ad hoc basis. To man the full service a nucleus of paid staff will also be utilised - and these posts are first being made available to existing volunteers – either on a full time or part time basis. Of course, as is the case with our present paid staff , individuals could still do volunteer work as well. Volunteers are asked to contact Donald Heath , Operations Manager with their preference as to shifts ( early, middle or late) or if they wish to apply for paid full or part time work.



Easter Monday at Stanhope with No 40 suitably decorated (photo (D Scott))

- **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT** : At the Trust Board meeting on April 13<sup>th</sup> , David Scott gave his report on the presentation given by WR management the previous week. “One of my original objectives was to continue the improvement of communications between the Company and the Trust volunteers/Directors. Thursday evening’s meeting at Stanhope did not answer every question BUT it gave everyone a picture of the aims and objectives of the Company. Mike Fairburn, Mark Westerfield and Alistair Gregory gave us their vision of what they expected to achieve in the near future. I realise that there are some of us who are not happy with all of the changes. Management have to set challenging targets and are judged on their results. My personal view is that this is a very exciting opportunity for all of us.” Mark Westerfield says that he will repeat these meetings on a regular basis.
- **LEVEL CROSSING WORKS** : Dave Payne, Safety Manager, reports that work continues on the level crossing orders for Witton le Wear and Engineman’s terrace, with risk assessments being carried out for Mc Neil’s, Holbeck 3 and Abattoir to identify the necessary controls to be put in place before regular services can take place. The road over Witton le Wear level crossing will be closed on May 12<sup>th</sup> to allow work to be completed on the crossing.
- **WR CAN NOW OPERATE PUBLIC SERVICES OVER THE FULL LINE** : The original operating notice in 2004 was confined to the Wolsingham – Stanhope stretch of line On April 12<sup>th</sup> the exemption from ORR licensing was granted. This will allow WR to run it’s full infrastructure length (Eastgate to Bishop Auckland) This also includes a station at Bishop Auckland. This is subject to a satisfactory inspection of the line by the ORR and the work on the level crossings being completed. The ORR /HMRI final inspection is now scheduled for May 17<sup>th</sup>. (Dave Payne) . Mike Fairburn has asked if volunteers could hold themselves ready for a big final push to complete any remaining work in the final week before the official opening

- **STEPHENSON RAILWAY GROUP VISIT** : Bob Stapeley, who as well as being a WR volunteer is a member of the North Shields based Stephenson Railway and Museum Volunteer Association reports on their group visit. “Our visit to the railway was first-class. On arrival at Stanhope, the station staff came out to greet us, and we received equally fine treatment by the train crew. This set us up for a very pleasant journey to Wolsingham and onwards to the depot. Many of the group had never been to the railway, and some had not even been to the dale before, and so they were surprised at being able to make a rail journey through such magnificent scenery. The bright sunshine showed off the railway and the dale magnificently. Having spoken to some of the volunteers after the visit, there is no doubt that we hit a winning combination with Locomotion and Weardale Railway. Many thanks go to the station staff, the train crew, those on duty at Wolsingham depot, and to Alistair Gregory for arranging our depot visit.”



The Stephenson Railway Group posing alongside the re-liveried No. 40 outside the Wolsingham Depot (Photo : J Hargreaves)

The Group boarding the 141 at Stanhope after their visit to Locomotion at Shildon. ( Photo : J Hargreaves)

- **WR JUNIOR CLUB : PROJECT 5226** : David Million reports :The Junior Club coach restoration project is steaming ahead with new flooring and wall surfaces now being installed and body work repairs have started. John Hargreaves and Steve Raine have donated their time during May to install the new electrical supply, lights and power sockets, so if all goes to plan we expect the coach to be ready by the beginning of June. The next task will be to construct platform 3 at Stanhope. The juniors are very keen for the coach to be named, and therefore, it has been decided to hold a competition to help us decide upon a fitting name. So, we are asking Trust members and the public to put on their thinking caps and submit their suggestions to the WRjc judging panel, the winning entry will receive a goody pack. See below :-

#### **WRjc : NAME THAT COACH COMPETITION**

The closing date for entries will be **Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2010**. For an entry fee of just £2 (with profits going towards project 5226), the winning entry will receive a goody pack including; Weardale Railway Tie, set of 4 GNER branded wine glasses, 4 rare GNER branded tumblers, National Express ice bucket, National Express mug and an East Coast trains mouse mat.

Entries, and cheque, payable to “WRJC”, should be sent to:- Project 5226 Competition, Weardale Railway Junior Club, Stanhope Station, Station Road, Stanhope, Co. Durham. DL13 2YS.

- **TORNADO ARRIVES AT SHILDON** : After hauling an excursion from Gloucester to Tyneside on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> April the A1 Pacific Tornado returned to Darlington before heading up the branch to Shildon for its stay at Locomotion. It will be on display from Monday to Friday. Visitors will be able to access the footplate. Over the bank holiday weekend, from Saturday to Monday, May 1 to 3, Tornado will be standing alongside other engines with links to the region, including K1 locomotive Lord of the Isles, and J72 locomotive Joem in the North- Eastern Giants of Steam event. There will be a chance to access the cab, early bird photography sessions and steam rides. For tickets and information call 01388-771439, or visit [nrm.org.uk/locomotion](http://nrm.org.uk/locomotion) or [alsteam.com](http://alsteam.com)

- GEORGE GENTLY FILMING COMPLETED** : Norman Swindle reports : No 40 appeared in a new guise for the April 19<sup>th</sup> filming contract for the BBC George Gently series. It had been adapted to look more like a BR engine by sticking flexible magnetic coverings on the tank sides showing the BR logo and number 68692, a former J72 engine. The number also appeared on the smokebox together with the shed code of 51F depicting West Auckland. The “No. 40” painted on each buffer beam was also covered with similar red material. Hauling the three MK1 blood and custard carriages we arrived at Stanhope to fill the tanks with water and then proceeded to the filming location at Bridge 32 to the west of Unthank crossing. The filming took place over several hours in very changeable weather. A fuller report will appear in the Trust magazine “Between the Lines.”



No 40 on Bridge 34 during the filming of the George Gently TV Series ( Photo : N Swindle)



Furthest west for No 40 – standing at Eastgate after the filming ( Photo : N Swindle)

- FIRST STEAM TO EASTGATE FOR 17 YEARS** : After it had finished its filming duties on the 19<sup>th</sup> April, No 40 was taken up the line to Eastgate for the first time. In fact this is the first appearance of a steam engine there since 28 March 1993, when K1 2005 visited on a special train. Incidentally it was a long day for staff and volunteers as well. . Steve Race came in at 02:00 to raise the steam pressure and oil up which allowed the footplate crew of Keith McNally and Norman Swindle to arrive at 05:40 to prepare for departure from the depot at 06:10 with Brian Cox as guard. After the Eastgate visit the crew headed back to Stanhope where they took on water and then returned to the depot. After dropping the fire and filling the boiler, they finally headed for home at 19:30. Thanks have also to go to Ian Jowett for operating Broadwood and Unthank crossings in the early morning and evening, and also to Kelso Yuill as controller, Brian Mills as COSS, Steve Goodwin, Alistair Gregory and Munro Odell.



No 40 pauses with its train during the filming session adjacent to Unthank Crossing on April 19 (Photo : J Lewins)

- **COACH RESTORATION** : David Scott reports : The Trust owned Mk 1 coach 25307 “Nina” is again being worked on. Volunteers and some of the new recruits are working with Graham Richardson and myself, (when I can fit it in), to try and get this long standing project completed. The seats and fittings were taken out in December 2006 ready to start the restoration. Most of the welding has now been completed and we are now refitting windows etc. and “rubbing down” before painting can start. Progress photo below.
- **WITTON LE WEAR LINESIDE FOOTPATH OPENING** : Victoria Lloyd of DCC Rights of Way group reports : “As you are aware we have been working with the community in Witton le Wear and with Weardale Railway to create a new safe off-road route linking the village to Low Barns Nature Reserve. Local Transport Plan funding has enabled this fantastic new path to be created alongside the railway and we hope this will be the start of a new era of access provision in the County.” The opening will be on the morning of May 12<sup>th</sup> , note that this is the day work starts on the crossing at Witton le Wear and the road over the crossing will be closed for the day.
- **BISHOP AUCKLAND BRIDGE RENEWAL** : Train services between Darlington and Bishop Auckland resumed on April 12<sup>th</sup> after replacement of the Cockton Bridge main spans. The work on the roadway and services is expected to finish at the end of the month. See photos.



Recently completed welding on the coach ends of ‘Nina’ in the Depot at Wolsingham . (Photo : D Scott)



The huge crane lifting one of the bridge spans into position on the Cokton Bridge at Bishop Auckland ( Photo : K Hillary)



Another view of the span being lowered into position (Photo : J Lewins)



From the platform, the span in place ( Photo : D Scott)

• **FINALLY : A WEDDING, SOME MILEPOSTS AND A MURDER :**



On the 24<sup>th</sup> April a couple held their wedding reception in the Griddle Car whilst on the return trio between Stanhope and Wolsingham. Dom and Andrea Murphy are standing beside no 40 on the left ( Photo : J Lewins) and John Hargreaves caught the Wedding Soecial passing Broadwood Level Crossing.



Mileposts and markers collected in the depot for repainting prior To the Official Inspection and line opening (Photo : S Goodwin) The livery it never wore, No 40 as BR 68692 ( J Hargreaves)



The scene of the crime : No 40 and its coaches poised above bridges 33 and 34 west of Stanhope station during the George Gently filming - The film sequences took over five hours . (Photo : J Lewins)

- **SITUATIONS VACANT :** The positions for employment are being advertised first to existing volunteers and staff to whom priority will be given. If you are interested or want more information please contact Group General Manager Mike Fairburn , via Stanhope Station. If you wish to participate in the Community venture as a volunteer please communicate with Donald Heath, Operations Manager via email ([jedecoine@aol.com](mailto:jedecoine@aol.com) ) . The full advert is reproduced on the next page.

Edited by G C Mudd. April 25 , 2010.

Comments, suggestions and contributions please to

[gcmudd@ntlworld.com](mailto:gcmudd@ntlworld.com)



## SITUATIONS VACANT

Weardale Railway CIC and Devon and Cornwall Railways Ltd are co operating to establish a community rail service between Stanhope and Bishop Auckland commencing Sunday May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Opportunity for employment in a number of new positions will be created by this development, existing volunteers and staff are invited to make application for one or more of the positions described below.

Crossing keepers  
Operations controllers  
Ticket office attendants  
Guards  
Drivers

Full training will be given to candidates who can demonstrate appropriate aptitude for the positions required, all positions are available to applicants for part or full time employments. Successful applicants will be required to work shifts to cover morning, day and evening hours of work

Applications should be made in writing and include a curriculum vitae to Weardale Railway at the address below and referenced "Community Rail Service Staff"

This opportunity will remain open to applicants until June 1<sup>st</sup>. Interviews and selection will be scheduled subject to the level of applications received.

Mike Fairburn, General Manager  
British American Railway Services Ltd  
23/04/2010