



'ONLINE'



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY AUGUST 2018

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY AND ASSOCIATED ORGANISATIONS

'Braunton' joins the Summer line-up;

An express steam locomotive from the great days of steam will be working steam trains on the West Somerset Railway on selected dates in August and September and will also feature in the WSR's Autumn Steam Gala at the start of October.

In addition it is currently in the guise of 34052 'Lord Dowding', named after Air Marshall Sir Hugh Dowding, commander of Fighter Command during the Battle of Britain. This is particularly appropriate in this centenary year of the Royal Air Force although the engine is correctly identified as classmate 34046 "Braunton" (the original 34052 was scrapped in the 1960's). Braunton" was built at Brighton in 1946 as one of Oliver Bulleid's "Light Pacifics" for the Southern Railway. It was extensively rebuilt in 1959 and was withdrawn in the general run down of steam in the 1960's. Its first return to working life from scrapyard condition followed work carried out by West Somerset Restoration at Williton. Today it is an icon of steam and based at Crewe from where it operates on mainline steam excursion trains.



Photograph Don Bishop

During August the locomotive will work the following trains:-

On the 16th, 17th, 21th, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 27th, 28th, 29th and 30th it will work the 11.15am from Bishops Lydeard and the 3.15pm from Minehead, Dates and times of September operations will be available later. On arrival at Minehead, due there

at 12.47 the locomotive will be turned on the turntable. Normal fares and discounts will apply on these trains.

1940's Weekend update:

The West Somerset Railway's 1940's event is coming together nicely, and we are putting the final touches to the programme. The event takes place at locations situated along the West Somerset Railway so the best way for visitors to enjoy the day is to purchase rover tickets, use local residents cards or their annual pass giving you freedom to hop on and off our services, to explore many of the exhibits and attractions along the route.

There are four main locations where the majority of the event will be taking place:- Minehead, Washford, Watchet and Bishops Lydeard. Each location has their own unique 1940's displays and activities as follows:-



Photograph Robin White

At Minehead, we will be displaying an Anti Aircraft Gun which will be on display outside the station, bomb disposal presentations, a sand bagged gun enclosure, home guard garrison re-enactors and vintage style hairdresser. We will also be holding an Evening Dance on the platform on Saturday 15th September. Tickets for the dance have now been released. Before the dance we will also be providing a pre-bookable train service to transport passengers from intermediate stations to Minehead, to enjoy the music, and dance. Help will be appreciated at Minehead station on the morning of the 16th to tidy up any debris from the night before and have the station presentable for the second day of the event.

The attractions at Washford, will see reenactors of the US 1st division and 29th US Infantry Camp, plus a US field Hospital situated next to the station. Watchet will be a hub of activity, with many of the local shops and other businesses decorating their frontages accordingly, to join in with the event. There will also be a street fair on the Esplanade with Air Raid Precaution displays alongside.

The Bishops Lydeard area will see The Spitfire Experience, the Upottery Living History Group, a Militaria Fair and additional car parking.

Throughout the event we will also see appearances from reenactors such as Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill, His Majesty King George VI, and performances from Sallie Phillips, Blitz Time Sally, Ricky Hunter and the Liberty Sisters. Other attractions linked to the event will be a showing of "The Guernsey"

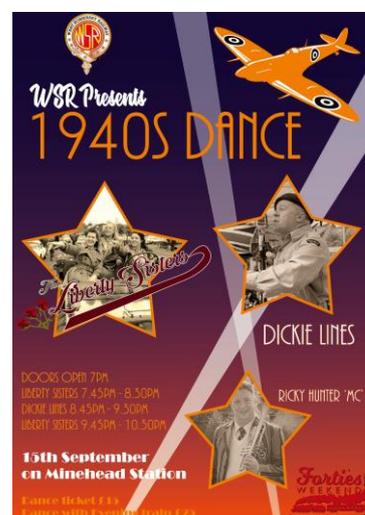
with Watchet Film Club and Deane Big Band performing at the Regal Theatre in Minehead.

And of course steam trains will be running. "Raveningham Hall" dates from 1944. As LMS 13808 the 7F will have worked wartime freight trains as well as its usual coal traffic to keep the home fires burning and the first "Manors" date from 1938 even if our visitors are from the 1950 batch.

So why not purchase rover tickets online today for an advance booking discount and let us transport you back in time, giving you a taste of the 1940s. www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk or call 01643 704996

1940's Dance

Come and join the Liberty Sisters, Dickie Lines and Ricky Hunter as they bring Minehead Station platform to life with the sounds of the 1940s. Bring your best guy or gal and dance the night away while you enjoy fabulous music and entertainment. Doors open at 7.00pm, Liberty Sisters 7.45pm-8.30pm, Dickie Lines 8.45pm-9.30pm, Liberty Sisters 9.45pm-10.30pm and with Ricky Hunter as your MC for the evening. Tickets for the dance are £15. We will be running a special train to and from the Dance which will stop at all stations. Timetable to be confirmed. Tickets on this will be £10 for a return and can only be purchased with a dance ticket. Catering and a bar will be available during the evening.



Blue Anchor Awarded Best kept Station for 2018:



On Friday 27th July 2018, the West Somerset Railway Chairman Ian Coleby and General Manager Paul Conibear awarded Blue Anchor the title of Best Kept Station for 2018. We congratulate Blue Anchor and want to thank everyone who works tirelessly, to ensure that all of our stations are kept to a high standard, in line with our heritage status.

WSRA target 2021 for return to steam of 4561:

The West Somerset Railway Association Trustees have now confirmed their agreement that GWR 2-6-2T no 4561 is the right locomotive for the West Somerset Railway, and will be the first priority of the Locomotive Restoration Fund. The Trustees say:

"We are working on a plan that could see the locomotive back in steam in 2021, as planned. The work is being broken down into three broad phases:-

Motion - work to put the chassis back on its wheels by June 2019
Boiler - work to complete the boiler and pass its first steam pressure test by Spring 2020

Assembly - the final push to get everything back where it should be by the end of 2020

We are targeting the Spring Steam Gala of 2021 for its first outing on the WSR, but we can't do it without your help. We need volunteers with a range of skills to work on the loco, volunteers to work on fundraising and promotion and of course donations. "All offers of help can be directed to the Association via admin@wsra.org.uk or 01823 433856.

Annual Pass Update:

The West Somerset Railway's Annual Pass was launched at the tail end of June, and so far has seen a good take up with over 200 now in circulation. The idea behind the Annual Pass was to encourage local people to use the railway to get to and from villages and towns served by our trains, giving them an easy and relaxing way to get around go shopping or visit local daytime events. We're slower than a car or some of the local buses but we do have buffet cars and toilets on the trains. However we have seen pass applications from places such as Manchester, Cornwall and Didcot! The success of the pass has been brilliant for the railway, and we are still seeing a steady stream of applications. However we need to keep on spreading the word around the communities along the line and in our catchment area. If you are able to place some of the application forms for the Annual Pass in a local outlet please contact the Commercial Office at Minehead by emailing sam.com@wsrail.net

Major HLF grant secured by West Somerset Steam Railway Trust:

The West Somerset Steam Railway Trust is very pleased to announce that it has received a National Lottery grant of £40,000 for an exciting heritage project to relaunch the Gauge Museum at Bishops Lydeard Station. The Trust say:

Made possible by money from National Lottery players, the money will improve the displays in the Museum and widen our outreach to the local community and visitors to the railway. In delivering the Project, we will actively engage with the local community by, for example, recruiting and training volunteers to help manage the Museum and its collections, to research and document the social and operational history of line and to undertake a recording project with retired

railway workers and users of the line. The National Lottery grant will also enable us to employ a part-time Learning Officer to promote the use of the Museum for school visits.

Announcing the grant award, Trust Chairman Chris Austin said:

We are delighted with the grant which, together with our fundraising and volunteer input will allow us to make the museum more interesting and relevant to the railway's visitors. It will also allow us to reach out into the community and inspire a new generation with the excitement of a steam railway and to understand better their role in the life of the nation and the communities they served.

The Trust continues to make progress with the Heritage Carriages Project and during the Steam Fair and Vintage Rally coach 6705 was moved from its restoration base to Norton Platform where visitors could view the work done to date including the first pair of restored compartments.

Yellow Timetable amendments:

As you are all aware the 2018 Yellow timetable has been amended to relieve some of the pressures on staff. The changes only affect a small proportion of our services. Changes to the timetable can be found on our website under the yellow timetable. We can also confirm that Doniford Halt will return to its former status as a request stop only.

Stogumber station progress:

During July work parties advanced further with the work to clear weeds and debris from the former cattle dock as the project to restore this once common feature of country stations progresses. As part of the fund-raising for the station various recipe books have been produced and are on sale there.

Late Summer Weekend update:

As the main summer holiday season comes to an end the Late Summer Weekend will once again be a couple of days when we run an enhanced timetable of steam and vintage diesel trains over our 20 miles of line. Normal fares will apply including those for holders of Local Residents Travel Cards and the newly introduced for 2018 Annual Pass. So apart from the railway interest here is a great chance to use our trains to visit the seaside, medieval Dunster with its castle, the old harbour town of Watchet or to call in at Stogumber for the famous refreshments and station garden.

On Saturday 1st there will be a British Railways Western Region theme to the day to recapture the days when steam was giving way to the first generation of diesel locos. Trains will be headed by 6960 "Raveningham Hall", 7820 "Dinmore Manor",

7822 "Foxcote Manor", D7017 and D9526. Sunday 1st will be more of a mixed bag but diesel workings will include the popular pairing of D6566 and D6575.

There will be a licensed buffet car on most trains and the railway museums at Bishops Lydeard, Washford and Blue Anchor will be open. The Club Room of the Taunton Model Railway Group at Bishops Lydeard will be open to visitors and the model railway in the Gauge Museum should also be in action

Volunteer Nurse Advisor:

We are seeking to appoint a Nurse Advisor as a key member of the medical function of West Somerset Railway.

Somerset GP, Dr Andrew Tressider, joined as Medical Officer earlier in the year and would welcome a colleague to support the WSR to help carry out the on-going medical programme to assess the medical fitness of paid and volunteer staff for safety critical duties.

This is an important volunteer role with a commitment of half a day / a day per month. Actual hours of working may be flexible to accommodate the post holder's other commitments.

Applicants should be a qualified nurse or nurse practitioner, ideally with experience of occupational health or practice nursing.

If you would like to discuss this initially please contact Paul Conibeare, General Manager [telephone 01643 700388].

Further details, including job description are provided in the application pack available from hr@wsrail.net. Completed applications should be returned under confidential cover to the HR Department, West Somerset Railway, The Railway Station, Minehead TA24 5BG by no later than 24 August 2018.

Autumn Steam Gala:

Plans for the Autumn Gala are coming together although booking of guest engines has still to be confirmed. However information about the event is as follows

Locomotives:

British Railways Southern Region Light Pacific 34046 "Braunton" /34052 "Braunton"

British Railways (Western Region) 7820 "Dinmore Manor" and 7822 "Foxcote Manor"

USTAC S160 6046

Great Western Railway "Modified Hall" 6960 "Raveningham Hall"

British Railways (Western Region) 7828 "Odney Manor" (subject to completion of overhaul)

Somerset and Dorset Railway Class 7F 53808

Andrew Barclay saddle tank 1219

Thanks go to locomotive owners and other heritage railways for making their locomotives available to us for hire.

Full details of locomotive workings will be found in the Souvenir Gala Programme which can be ordered in advance now or bought on the day at WSR stations (except Doniford Halt)

Other attractions during the event include:-

The "Quantock Belle" dining car train will offer breakfasts, lunches and teas on selected services during the event. More details and advanced bookings for breakfasts to follow..

The Hawksworth Inspection Saloon attached as an observation car on selected services (supplementary fare payable)

Minehead Workshops being partially open on Saturday and Sunday

The Depot and Heritage Centre of the Diesel and Electric Preservation Group at Williton open on all four days.

Railways Museums open at Bishops Lydeard, Washford and Blue Anchor.

The Club Room of the Taunton Model Railway Group at Bishops Lydeard open on Friday, Saturday and Sunday

Heritage Freight Train.

Planned chimney first running of all locomotives on Saturday and Sunday with Minehead turntable and Norton Fitzwarren turntable in use. Turning may be possible on Thursday and Friday but will be confirmed at a later date.

Licensed buffet cars on most trains plus cafes at Bishops Lydeard and Minehead and refreshments available at stations except Doniford Halt.

Model Railway Sale at Watchet station on Saturday October 6th 10.00 to 15.00

Model railway of Stogumber station in action at Stogumber station

Book signing by Richard Derry at Bishops Lydeard station (details to be confirmed)

Minehead Station Planning Group Formed

The latest newsletter from Friends of Minehead Station (FoMS) reveals the formation of the Minehead Station Planning Group. Representatives from the engine shed, operations, commercial and FoMS will meet under the chairmanship of FoMS chairman, Martyn Snell, and will plan ahead to improve facilities for visitors and staff to the line's largest station. A good start has been made with a FoMS-sponsored professional survey on three particular parcels of land; the newsletter provides more details and it is clear these are indeed priority areas for improvement. Meanwhile, FoMS have again shown commitment to the local and visiting community:

The experiment with keeping the station toilets open seven days a week even when trains are not running has proved very successful and has made our station a much more welcoming place. To help offset the cost of additional cleaning, it was decided to put well signed donation boxes in the toilets and it has been surprising how much has been given by those 'using the facilities'. Whilst not covering the cost of cleaning, it has certainly helped.

Explore the Bridgwater Branch of the S&D;

This August, Dave Bown, a local historian and author of books on the Somerset & Dorset Railway's Bridgwater branch line will be leading both a walk and a cycle ride exploring the route of the branch which closed in 1950.

On Thursday 16 August, a 3.4 mile evening walk will take place in the Bawdrip and Cossington area, followed on Saturday 18 August by a 13.5 mile cycle ride from Bawdrip all the way to Edington Junction and back.

Contact Dave via dbown@hotmail.com The books can be purchased from the SDRT at Washford and may be available from the shops at Bishops Lydeard and Minehead.

D7017:-

The Diesel and Electric Preservation Group's operational Class 35 Hymek has been on its travels again, paying a visit to the Gloucestershire and Warwickshire Railway where it revived memories of the days when the class could be seen on the Honeybourne line. The Hymek is always a popular visitor to other Railways and Open Days and a fine ambassador for the work of the team at Williton.

Real Ale and Cider Guide:-

The Railway and Buses of Somerset, together with the Somerset Branch of CAMRA have produced a guide to Real Ale and Traditional Cider pubs along the route of the 28 bus service between Taunton and Minehead. 14 pubs are listed including 4 in Taunton. Copies of the leaflet can be obtained from Taunton Bus Station, Minehead Railway Station and Tourist Information Centres.

Save the date for the WSR Christmas Ball !!

In collaboration with the volunteer committee, it has been agreed that we will be holding a Christmas Ball for volunteers and paid staff. The event will take place on 17th November 2018, in the Hobby Horse at Minehead. The reason we are holding this in November, is to allow for as many people to attend as possible. There will be a maximum capacity of 150 people. Due to the maximum capacity this will be a ticket only event, and tickets will go on sale very shortly.

The committee has agreed to pay for the fixed costs of the event, and therefore the charge for attending will be to cover the cost of the food.

More details will be released as soon as possible.

Future PTS courses

Information as 25/07/2018

When applying to join a course, please supply:

* A postal address to which material can be sent before the course, and a PTS card sent after the course.

* A contact phone number for small problems with test answers, and for sudden changes of date, time or venue.

* An e-mail address for minor pre-course information and in case of sudden changes of date, time or venue.

Courses can be arranged for groups or departments on other dates than those listed.

To book a course, please e-mail Rhiannon Powis at training@wsrail.net. If you have no e-mail, please call 01643 700396 and leave a message with your name, contact number and preferred course date and Rhiannon will get back to you.

General - All comers

Spaces 28 July 2018	Minehead SEC Training Room	10:00
Spaces 06 August 2018	Bishops Lydeard Station Farm	10:00
Spaces 25 August 2018	Bishops Lydeard Station Farm	10:00
Spaces 15 September 2018	Minehead SEC Training Room	10:00
Spaces 29 September 2018	Bishops Lydeard Station Farm	10:00
Spaces 13 October 2018	Bishops Lydeard Station Farm	10:00
Spaces 27 October 2018	Minehead SEC Training Room	10:00
Spaces 24 November 2018	Bishops Lydeard Station Farm	14:00
Spaces 08 December 2018	Minehead SEC Training Room	10:00
Spaces 05 January 2019	Bishops Lydeard Station Farm	10:00
Spaces 19 January 2019	Minehead SEC Training Room	10:00