



"ONLINE"



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY AND ASSOCIATED SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS FEBRUARY 2018

FEBRUARY HALF TERM.

We have been working hard over the winter months to ensure that we are ready to run on 10th February 2018. A full steam service between Bishops Lydeard and Minehead will be in operation. Our annual Snowdrops and Steam will be running alongside our services, taking passengers from Minehead to Dunster with bus transfer to Wheddon Cross to explore the wonderful sites of Snowdrop Valley. You will return to Minehead with just enough time to visit the Buffer Stop Shop on the Minehead station before your journey back to Bishops Lydeard.

Our Buffer Stop Shop and Café will be open on all days when we are running.

GREAT WESTERN ROUTES AND BRANCHES

The Spring Steam Gala will take place between Thursday March 22nd and Sunday March 25th and the various pieces and plans are coming together. The planned loco line-up includes:-

GWR 'Modified Halls', 6960 'Raveningham Hall' and 6990 'Witherslack Hall'

GWR 57xx Pannier Tank 7714

GWR 14xx 1450 and Autocoach 178

GWR 'Manor' Class 7822 'Foxcote Manor'

USATC S160 6046

SDJR 7F 53808

Industrial Tank engines 'Kilmersdon' and 'Clydesdale Works 1219'

Plus one more Great Western 'guest' engine.

A further infusion of steam will come from Crosville Motor Service's 'Elizabeth', a 1931 Sentinel steam bus which will operate between Minehead and Dunster stations and Dunster village on the Saturday and Sunday of the Gala.

Other planned attractions include:-

WORKSHOP OPENINGS

The workshops along the West Somerset Railway are not normally open to the public, but the doors of the loco shed at Minehead and West Somerset Restorations at Williton will be open on the Saturday and Sunday of the Gala for a chance to see behind the scenes.

EATING AND DRINKING

On the move: There will be licensed buffet car facilities on most of the trains during the Gala offering a variety of things to eat and drink. On certain workings over the four days the 'Quantock Belle' dining car sets will offer breakfasts, lunches and afternoon cream teas. Seats for first breakfast servings can be booked in advance at www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk

At the stations: Quantock Brewery will have their premises adjacent to Bishops Lydeard station open on all four days and will also have a real ale bar on Minehead station platform. The cafés at Bishops Lydeard, Williton and Minehead will be open and at Minehead there will also be a pasty van. Crowcombe Heathfield and Stogumber always do a good trade in their home-made treats and there are light refreshments at all stations except Doniford Halt.

WORKSHOP OPENINGS

The locomotive workshops at Minehead will be open on the Saturday and Sunday to give a look behind the scenes and to see 6024 'King Edward I', 7828 'Odney Manor', 'Mogul' 9351 and 44422 under overhaul. Similarly, West Somerset Restoration will open their doors at Williton on the same two days where loco restorations include 4561, 6695 and industrial steam engines, plus an autocoach and other projects. The Diesel Depot and Heritage Centre at Williton will welcome visitors on all four days of the event.

MUSEUMS

The West Somerset Steam Railway Trust will open the Museums in their care at Bishops Lydeard and Blue Anchor on all four days and the Washford Museum of the Somerset and Dorset Railway Trust will also open on these days.

MILITARY VEHICLE DISPLAY

Amongst its Gala duties the S160 will haul a military train, to reflect the work which the class carried out on the GWR, and there will be a display of military vehicles at Minehead station.

MODEL RAILWAYS

The model railway on the mezzanine floor of the Gauge Museum at Bishops Lydeard will be in action on all four days, no doubt featuring Great Western equipment in 4mm scale and also at Bishops Lydeard, the Taunton Model Railway Group will welcome visitors on the Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Discounted Rover tickets are on sale now from www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk or from 01643 704996 and once again on Sunday March 25th there will be £2 a flat fare for young persons aged 5 to 17 accompanied by a fare paying adult or senior.

Spreading the word: Please help to get the word out about the Gala. If you would like a supply of leaflets for local display please contact the Commercial Dept. at Minehead via 01643 700398.

SOMERSET AND DORSET RAILWAY TRUST IMAGES COLLECTION ONLINE

The Somerset & Dorset Railway Trust has 3000 S&D images in its archive and over 80 are now available in their online shop for immediate download. Many hundreds more have already been scanned and will follow in due course. Should any image be of particular interest, we can supply high resolution versions upon request.

The initial images are taken from the John Woods colour collection (300+ images) and the David Milton collection (600+ images); on these, the Trust holds all rights. The starting offering includes 57 images from Evercreech Junction, covering all sorts of locomotives, services and scenes right through to the last weekend of the S&D, 5th & 6th March 1966, and a further series of double-headed trains 800-pixel wide images for personal use can be downloaded immediately and are priced at £1.50. The Trust can also supply 3000-pixel wide images for personal use at £6 and full resolution scans at £10 upon request. Trust members will be able to obtain shortly all image sizes with 20% discount.

6695

On Friday 26th January 2018, 6695's boiler was moved, courtesy of Triple H Haulage, from Williton to The Flour Mill workshops in the Forest of Dean for the overhaul to commence. Work will begin straightaway to remove the foundation ring and wasted steel plate from the firebox outer wrapper. The overhaul will include any necessary repairs to the foundation ring, replacement of wasted steel platework on the outer firebox, attention to the laps on the inner copper firebox, replacement of steel side stays as necessary, replacement of

crown stays as necessary, replacement of lap rivets and patch screws on inner firebox, re-riveting of safety valve mounting pad, repair/reclamation of internal steam pipes, new tubes and superheater elements (current elements are all ex BR) and any other work found necessary as we progress with the overhaul. This list is by no means exhaustive but gives an idea of the work required to put this boiler back into a suitable condition for a further 10 year's service. Now that work has commenced we need to ensure sufficient funds are available for the overhaul to steadily progress without interruption. Work on the rest of the engine continues at Williton by Group volunteers and with the ongoing assistance of WSR Restoration. Please help us to complete this overhaul and get 6695 into service on the WSR sooner rather than later. If you would like to support us, please contact us by e-mail at Locomotive6695@btinternet.com for details of share applications, sponsorship of parts, donations/loans etc., or alternatively visit our 6695 Loco Group Facebook page.

(Nigel Clarke)

1940's WEEKEND IN SEPTEMBER

On 15-16th September the WSR will be running a '1940s Weekend' centred around Minehead and Watchet. This will include the military train plus a 1940's dance on the Saturday evening under the canopy at Minehead, a replica Spitfire and RAF display at Minehead, military/civilian vehicles at Minehead and Watchet plus hopefully, lots of 1940's civilian, home front displays and re-enactments. We are even looking to secure a 1940's hairdresser to be available in a coach at Minehead before the evening dance so people can have their hair done.

We are arranging a number of accurate WW2 vehicles for the flat wagons and correctly uniformed 'guards' to ride in the brake vans and look after the train, so this, coupled with accurate wagons and the S160 all running on a line that saw a lot of military traffic results in what we think will be the most accurate train that can be run.

If anybody would like to come along and help, bring vehicles (military or civilian) or just wants to come and look, please get in touch with me and I will pass details on. There is also a Facebook page 'WSR Forties Weekend 2018' which you can join to keep you updated and of course, the WSR will be issuing tickets for the 1940's Weekend as normal.

(Andy Norman)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY HEIN

Everyone who has worked on the Railway in the last five decades will know Hein Burger and enjoyed his affable company. During that time, Hein has managed a whole range of administrative and managerial tasks along with driving DMUs and guarding trains, and lots of other duties in between. Hein's 90th birthday celebrations at the Turntable Cafe in Minehead were on Thursday 4th January 2018 - his birthday was actually two days earlier but due to family commitments, his WSR friends and colleagues had to delay their celebrations. The General Manager, Paul Conibeare, presented Hein with a card and gifts on

behalf of the Railway and Hein's many friends. He also thanked Hein for his 38 years of exemplary, voluntary service to the Railway.

DIESEL NEWS

During January, the Class 14 D9526 was given a test run after a period of overhaul by the DEPG at Williton, making two climbs through the Quantocks to Crowcombe Heathfield and propelling Class 47 D1661 'North Star'. With no regular traffic on this section since January 1st there were some problems with adhesion which saw the sanders in use but both climbs and descents went well and it should not be too long before the 0-6-0DH is ready for traffic. Meanwhile, the complete strip down and overhaul of classmate D9518 continues with the removal of the side rods. As the engine has never run in preservation, all stages of the stripping down require hard physical work and patience. Winter work has continued on Class 33's D6566 and D6575 and 'Hymek' D7017 ahead of the new operating season.

WEST SOMERSET STEAM RAILWAY TRUST

When the doors closed at the Steam Trust's Gauge museum on December 31st, an all time record of 13,026 people had visited the model railway. The young and enthusiastic team had met their target and to do it had opened every operating day during December, which saw 1,751 visitors. Visitor feedback has been positive both for the layout and its operation, with varied rolling stock reflecting the theme of the railway's special events. The (model) railway is closed for engineering work (improving line and level on part of the track, and making access to the southern end of the layout easier), but will be back in service in March.

After months of careful study, research and comparisons, the flooring has been laid in GWR carriage 6705 and is ready for the lino to be laid on top. Why has it taken so long? Well, the GWR laid a slurry of brick dust and cement on top of the floorboards, both to provide a fireproof layer, to reduce noise levels and to provide a firm base for the linoleum that was laid on top. For the Trust, this was not so easy as it did not have the dead level base needed for the slurry to be laid, and in service, such a base cracks as the coach body flexes in traffic. So, the decision was made to lay the floor in wood and the volunteers set out to search for material to use as a fireproof barrier. After a lot of searching, they found a suitable fireboard, and this has been laid, sandwiched between two layers of plywood to form a smooth base that will not crack. It has been laid in each compartment, and along the corridor. The two toilets have been left with their original base and tiles with some careful restoration and replacement of damaged tiles planned. All is now ready for the lower panelling to be completed and there is a lot of painting and varnishing to be done. The seats were due back from the upholsterers in mid-January, and then the compartments can be completed. Work is well-advanced on the lavatories, but pipework needs to be reconnected, with some repairs while there is more painting to do both here and in the guard's van. Door locks remain to be fitted to the gangway doors which are being repaired. 2018 should be the year she can carry passengers again, in time to celebrate the old lady's 80th birthday.

Sincere thanks go to the corps of determined volunteers who have got us this far. Having honed our skills on 6705, the team is looking forward to moving on to 3639, where they can do it all over again!

FUTURE PTS COURSES 05/01/2018

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 less 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, but not otherwise, please telephone Rhiannon on 07766 306 624 during office hours only.

General - All comers

Spaces 11 February 2018 Minehead Training Room (SEC) 10:00

Spaces 17 February 2018 Bishops Lydeard Station Farm 10:00

Spaces 17 March 2018 Ash Priors Village Hall 10:00

Spaces 24 March 2018 Minehead Training Room (SEC) 10:00

Spaces 14 April 2018 Minehead Training Room (SEC) 10:00

Spaces 21 April 2018 Ash Priors Village Hall 10:00



West Somerset Railway Association

Supporting the Heritage of the West Somerset Railway

Did you know that as a working volunteer on the railway you can join the WSRA for just £15 per year?

As part of the new membership structure, introduced from the beginning of January, a new 'Working Volunteer' class of membership was introduced. This takes into account that as a working volunteer the reduced price travel that comes with other memberships is not required. It is also a condition of working volunteer membership that all communications are by e-mail, including AGM papers. Your copy of the journal will be via a link to an electronic version, rather than a paper version landing on your doormat 4 times a year. Membership of the WSRA helps to support heritage and educational projects on the railway.

The WSRA is organising a **Fundraising Pub Quiz in Bishops Lydeard Village Hall on Friday 9th March**. This is in association with Pub Aid's 'world's biggest pub quiz' and all proceeds will go to the WSR Locomotive Restoration Fund. Teams of up to 6 people are asked to register with Keith in the WSRA admin office by 3rd March. £6 per head to include the quiz and nibbles. Tea and coffee available but please bring any other drinks with you. It promises to be a fun night with friends, as well as raising funds for the railway.

In mid January, the WSRA was approached by Ken Davidge on behalf of the group restoring two open wagons at Washford, to run an authentic WWII goods train, both at the Spring Steam Gala and at the 1940's event in September as well as at other times. The two wagons needed authentic cotton tarpaulins, both to protect the restored wagons and also to secure the loads they carry in the train. We thought this was a project that a lot of people would like to contribute to if they knew about it, so the decision was taken to fundraise for it on a popular and efficient fundraising platform. The WSRA would underwrite the project in the event that insufficient funds were raised. The fundraising platform went live at 6:00pm on 27th January and we used social media (and of course [wsr.org.uk!](http://wsr.org.uk)) to spread the word. It was thrilling to see people get behind the campaign and within 48 hours the full £400 had been raised. Thank you to everyone who contributed.

The WSRA is available for all WSR stations and groups to apply for funding for heritage and education projects on the Railway. There is an application form on the Documents page of our website, and you will need to explain how your project supports the heritage of the railway.

After a long period of re-adjustment, the WSRA is now moving forward with renewed confidence and a confirmed strategy to support the Railway. Watch this space, or better still come and join us!

Jacque Green
WSRA General Manager

February Half Term	10 th , 11 th , 13 th , 14 th , 15 th , 17 th , 18 th February 2018.
Spring Steam Gala	22 nd – 25 th March 2018
Peter Rabbit	31 st March 2018
Diesel Gala	8 th – 10 th June 2018
Late Summer Weekend	1 st & 2 nd September 2018
Autumn Steam Gala	27 th – 30 th September 2018

CONNECT WITH THE WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY

- Like our page on Facebook @WSrail, 
- Follow us on Twitter @WSomRailway 
- Subscribe to our monthly e-newsletter.

HERITAGE RAILWAY CARDS 2018-19

Applications for HRA cards may now be made using the form below. **Please note the details.** The price remains the same as last year at £30 and is good value for money if you and one other intend to visit two or more Railways during the year.

If you are a member of staff or a registered volunteer on the WSR, you qualify for the scheme which offers free or reduced rate travel on the majority of the Heritage Railways and various Narrow Gauge and Minor Railways in the British Isles.

If you know of anyone who does not see 'Online', please make them aware of the Card scheme. Hard copies of this form are available from the Information Office at Minehead.

PLEASE NOTE the following :

- 1 WSR does NOT have reciprocal travel arrangements with any other Heritage Lines.
- 2 Cards are valid from **1st March 2018 to 28th February 2019** – a fixed 12 month period, NOT for 12 months from the date of application.
- 3 Cards cost £30 and are valid for the **Holder (alone) or with one other person** if travelling together.
- 4 Some of the participating Heritage Railways (especially the larger ones) make a charge for the use of the cards which may be up to 50% of the normal fare and there are usually restrictions on the use of cards for Special Events Days.
A full list of participating Railways will be provided with the card.
- 5 **IMPORTANT - Please note the change from previous years regarding payment.**

HOW to APPLY - Early application is requested and encouraged !

You should allow at least four weeks for processing and for the card to be sent to you.

Complete the form below and send it to Robert Green with cheque and S.A.E.

by post to 1 Paganel Way, Minehead, TA24 5HA

OR

Leave it in my marked pigeon-hole in the Information Office at Minehead Station.

A stamped addressed envelope **must be enclosed** for the return of the card.

Please note that there is no facility for the collection of cards from Minehead Station unless you have a pigeon-hole there, in which case please mark envelope accordingly.

If you intend to apply for a card, you are urged to apply soon as later applications may take longer to process.

(Robert Green)

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HERITAGE RAILWAY CARDS 2018-19

Send this completed form to - Robert Green, 1 Paganel Way, Minehead, TA24 5HA

I am a Member of Staff or a Registered Volunteer on the West Somerset Railway.

I apply for a Heritage Railway Association Inter-Rail Card and **enclose** :

- my **cheque for £30** payable **West Somerset Railway Plc - if sent before 28th February**
OR Heritage Railway Association - if sent after 1st March
- a **stamped self-addressed envelope.**

NAME (including forename for the card please)

ADDRESS

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STAFF ID NUMBER.....DEPARTMENT.....DATE

CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBER (just in case !)