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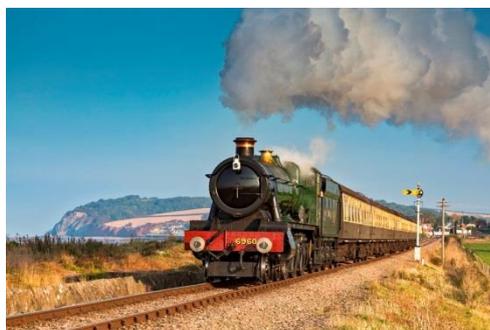


THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY JUNE 2018

UPDATE ON HOW THE RAILWAY HAS BEEN PERFORMING.

After a slow start to 2018 the West Somerset Railway is pleased to inform you that special events such as Peter Rabbit, Paw Patrol and the Diesel Gala have performed well and have seen many visitors enjoying their time with the West Somerset Railway.

We are looking forward to the Forties Event which will be taking place over the weekend 15th - 16th September 2018.



Picture Don Bishop

DONATING TO THE WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY

Did you know that you can donate money to the West Somerset Railway?

All donations are gratefully received. We use the funds to support important projects such as overhauls of locomotives, important and vital track and bridge, and carriage improvements.

If you would like to donate to the West Somerset Railway, or would like information on purchasing shares please either contact us by phone 01643 704996 or visit our website.

ANNUAL PASSES

We are very excited to announce that we will be launching an annual pass in the next few weeks.

The annual pass will permit holders to travel on the railway throughout the year (not including our special events).

The Annual Pass for a family will cost just £129 as an introductory offer with an individual adult pass at £63.00 per pass.

Keep an eye on our website for more information.



GIN TASTING EXPERIENCE

The West Somerset Railway's inaugural Gin Tasting Experience will be taking place on Sunday 17th June 2018. The ticket enables you to take a return trip on the West Somerset Railway. Your gin experience will begin on the 14.15 Bishops Lydeard to Minehead, where you will sample several gins and learn about the best botanicals to use to enhance your tasting experience.

You will then be offered full measures of your 3 favourites.

Tickets can be purchased up until Friday. This event is perfect for the unique Father's Day experience. More information and tickets can be purchased from our website www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk

AWARD ENTRIES



The West Somerset Railway has entered the Bristol, Bath and Somerset Tourism Awards for 2018 for the large attraction of the year. We pride ourselves on the service we offer to all visiting the railway. All the hard work from our volunteers and staff combined truly does make the West Somerset Railway the railway that it has become. We feel that the award entries confirm what we already know, and are a testament to the work that we do.

WSRA FUNDS NEW LEVER LEADS FOR HISTORIC WILLITON SIGNAL BOX

The West Somerset Railway Association have confirmed that they will be purchasing new leads for the Williton Signal Box.

Over the years Williton Signal Box has seen some changes, and over time along with new layout of the site several of the levers needed new lever leads. The WSRA have agreed that the situation is detracting from the educational and heritage value of the signal box and have agreed to fund the complete set of 25 new levers.

The West Somerset Railway PLC are grateful for the WSRA's support on this project.



Picture Robin White

Williton Signal Box is a Grade II listed building and the only original Bristol & Exeter Railway box on the West Somerset Railway.

RESTORING A 1942 MOD GOODS BRAKE VAN

The West Somerset Railway Association are supporting the restoration of an ex-MoD Brake Van:

Following the successful restoration and fundraising for two open wagons, the Wagon Restoration team have turned their attention to a 1942 MoD Goods Brake Van owned by the WSR Plc. This brake van needs replacement tongue and grooved timber boards for the body, new roofing materials, paint and a tarpaulin. Once again the team turned to the WSRA for funding and again the Trustees agreed to fundraise for the costs. There were enough funds left from the first campaign to pay for the tarpaulin for the Brake Van, so the remaining funding requirement is £473.

The Association is now looking for donations to help with this particular funding.

THIS WEEK ALONG THE WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY

Our trains will be running every day this week over the 20 miles of line between Bishops Lydeard (near Taunton) and Minehead giving a great chance to unwind as the trains run through the Quantock Hills and along the coast. If you are close enough to Minehead to catch the 10.15 train we have our bargain "Explorer" tickets to save money. On Wednesday and Saturday the Dunster Castle Express leaves Bishops Lydeard at 10.15 with inclusive tickets for the train ride, admission

to the Castle and a coach link between Dunster station and the entrance gate. In Watchet on Wednesday, there is the weekly market five minutes walk from the

station. On Saturday 16th the adventurous can try a World War 1 assault course in the grounds of Dunster Castle and between 14.30 and 16.15 there are posh teas being served at the Phoenix Centre on the Esplanade in Watchet as a fund raiser for the annual town carnival. Fancy going out in the fresh air? We produce books of country walks that can be taken from our stations or why not enjoy some home-made refreshments in the station garden at Stogumber – where they have recipe books for sale.

WATCHET MARKET CONNECTION

Why not visit the Historic harbour town of Watchet for its Wednesday Market, with stalls offering a variety of local produce and craft. Travel from any station along our line on selected Wednesdays in the comfort of one of our heritage carriages and receive 10% advance discount (when purchased online) on our standard return prices.

There has been a market in Watchet since the 13th century and this tradition continues today with the lively and colourful Watchet Summer Market. Every Wednesday, from May to September, brightly-coloured gazebos are erected on The Esplanade, overlooking the harbour and marina, and traders arrive to offer the best of local produce and craft.

The main 2018 season runs from 5th May to 29th September, with stalls trading from 9.30am to 3.30pm offering fruit and veg, cheeses and chutneys, bakery goods, cakes and chocolate, garden plants, books, local art and crafts, gifts, antiques and curios and introducing a fresh fish stall.

BRUNEL VISITS LYNTON AND LYNMOUTH

Earlier in the month our character, Brunel, had a visit to the Lynton and Lynmouth Victorian Family Fun Day. He travelled on the Cliff Railway and promoted the railway by handing out our leaflets for our Paw Patrol Event, and his minder answered questions relating to the railway. It was a fun day and everyone enjoyed themselves.



It is our intention to utilise Brunel more throughout the year, and we are looking for people to assist us in doing this. If you are interested, please contact Samantha White (01643 700382) or Ally Roe (01643 700406) in the Commercial Department, where we can discuss.

CANCER RESEARCH UK

On 20th July 2018, Cancer Research UK will offer a ticket to ride behind a steam locomotive between Bishops Lydeard and Minehead station on the West Somerset Railway. The return journey will also include a delicious, locally sourced Cream Tea.

All proceeds of ticket sales will be going directly to the charity, to help support the vital work that they undertake.

The West Somerset Railway's General Manager Paul Conibeare says, "We are delighted to welcome Cancer Research UK to our railway. We have offered the use of our train services to help support the fight against cancer which affects so many people."

Tickets for this event are limited and are available to be purchased now. To find out more or to book your tickets, please visit the Cancer Research UK website <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/support-us/find-an-event/west-somerset-railway-cream-tea-journey-for-cancer-research-uk>

NEW VOLUNTEERS LEAFLET

The West Somerset Railway has started a new campaign to attract more volunteers. The campaign has started with the creation of the new volunteers' leaflet which has already been sent up and down the line.

The PLC Board have put together a Volunteers group, led by Rodney Greenway to support our current volunteers, and look into ways in which we can attract more people to come and join our railway family.

The group have organised stands in Morrisons Minehead, and intend to do more of the same elsewhere.

You should start to see banners and posters going up around the railway shortly.

If you are interested in helping in any way, by taking some leaflets and posters to any local groups that you attend, or local shops and pubs, please get in touch with Samantha White in the Commercial Department sam.com@wsrail.net or 01643 700382.

MURDER MYSTERY EVENT

We have availability on the Murder Mystery on 23rd June. Starting at Bishops Lydeard at 18.45, aboard the Quantock Belle dining train.

Plot:

The next train might be delayed – there's a dead body in the waiting room! Travel writer, Miles Suppertrak has written his final chapter but which of his travelling companions is cutting short his career? Is publisher, Mack Millan pressed for a deadline? Is fiancée, Bree Fenn-Cownter hiding something in her dust jacket? Or is secretary Celia Wholesupp looking for something between the covers? Archie is on hand to guide you on your journey to the solution.

Menu:

SHARING STARTER

Parma Ham, salami, mozzarella, homemade pesto, marinated olives, olive bread

(V) without meats and with sunblushed tomatoes

MAIN

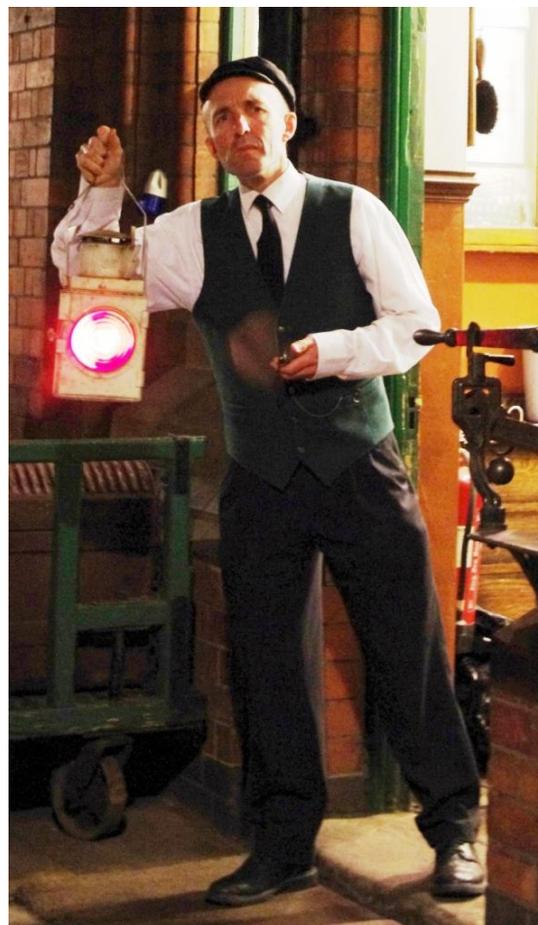
Marinated Chicken with smoked paprika, white wine, rosemary, slowly cooked and served with tray roasted peppers, onions, roasted potatoes, with smoked paprika and rosemary, seasonal vegetables and a delicious Mediterranean style reduction

(V) Spinach and leek creamy penne pasta with a herb salad and basil oil

DESSERT

Summer Fruit and white chocolate Cheesecake (can do Gluten Free - please advise on booking)

Tickets cost £75 per person and can be booked through our website. www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk



INFRASTRUCTURE ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT REPORT – MAY 2018**PERMANENT WAY**

The gang have been carrying out routine maintenance over the past month. Flailing continues and the weeding RRV is due to spray the line over the coming days. Part of the delay in weeding (which is a couple weeks later than planned) is partly due to other safety-related work taking priority, and also conformance with new spray equipment regulation which has come in since our last in-house spray in 2016 - our rig passed with flying colours.

Land Management have continued to clear the north side of Washford bank to improve service access. They have also been repairing approximately ½ mile of seven strand fencing at Kentsford. The S&D at WD have kindly offered their yard as work space for repairs to WD cutting, after the Diesel Gala weekend.

The tidy train gangs have successfully collected three train-loads of mostly felled timber over three evenings this week. We had a good turnout of around 10 people each night and we plan to repeat these trains in June, subject to Ops support, which has been excellent over the past week.

Our volunteer gang have lubricated all fishplates on the triangle before starting on running line at Barnstaple Junction and getting as far as signal BL2 at the end of the down platform in Bishops Lydeard. They will continue with the work over the coming weeks working towards Nethercott. They have also drilled holes for the chairs in 72 new timber sleepers in preparation for spot resleepering.

S&T (written by Richard Harman)

The CCT (S&T mobile workshop) was brought back to Bishops Lydeard and items of stock have been put into store. The CCT now contains just the workbenches and a few odd tools. It will be retained as a mobile workshop, but can now be stored anywhere on the line without the need for access.

Cable has been recovered from Bristol for future use on the railway. A new telephone cable has been run out from No. 4 signal to the up distant signal at Bishops Lydeard. When it is brought into use, this will complete the telephone cable run between Minehead and Bishops Lydeard (at the present time the Bishops Lydeard phone uses the signal cable). Thanks are due to the Permanent Way gang for their help using the road-railer and trailer to complete this job. Work has continued on the new telephone concentrator and the signal post telephone has been replaced on signal No. 6 at Williton. There is a telecoms cable fault between Blue Anchor and Dunster which may require some new cable.

The planned maintenance for Blue Anchor level crossing will be rescheduled for a future date.

A number of gang members attended a first aid training course on 30th April which means a qualified first-aider should always be available while working.

The token machine at Blue Anchor for the section to Minehead stopped working again. The commutator was cleaned as it had picked up quite a bit of dirt. The main cause appeared to be that the electric lock on signal No. 3 (the section signal for the section to Minehead) was sticking. There is some concern that this is the second occurrence of the problem in a matter of weeks and it will be monitored.

The level crossing gates at Williton had dropped. This problem has now been fixed as far as possible but the down side gate has rotted through at the bottom furthest from the hinge. Paul Harris has asked RAMS to take a look and suggest a way forward. Paul has also spent a day moving tokens to balance the instruments. High winds caused a bolt in the up side barrier at Minehead level crossing to break.

BLACKMORE HOUSE & STATION FARM

The RAMS continue at BL with work on the kit room and ladies toilet - electric install is imminent and water is now available in all rooms. The fire alarm has been installed in the workshop and staff have been trained in its use. RAMS continue to support the stations along the line with various jobs - BL has recently had its platform lights painted and the PW gang at DR are getting a new internal office and improved welfare facilities. However, due to falling volunteer numbers the team are now only meeting on Mondays and Fridays. Anyone interested in joining RAMS please contact leadadmin@wsrail.net / 01643 700400.

More information and photos on these jobs, and more, now at <https://facebook.com/WSRInfra>

SAVE THE DATE! Sunday 15th July and Monday 23 July 2018

We are planning two IE department gatherings on Sunday 15th July and Monday 23 July where we will invite public and local groups in to see what our department (and wider Railway) does. Our gangs who normally work on those days are invited for a short department update and will have an opportunity to talk with other teams and potential volunteers about the work they carry out (over a cucumber sandwich and cuppa).

STAFFING

We welcome Phil Sizer into the Permanent Way (full-time gang) working out of DR. Phil is already a signalman with many years of WSR volunteering behind him. Adam Russell will also be joining the team in July. Adam has had a variety of plant experience in the past and more recently has been working as a windscreen fitter. They both join John Jones-Bartlett's PW track gang.

IE DEPARTMENT VACANCIES - VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

TRACK PATROLLERS

NEXT TRAINING JULY - last call! During the running season we patrol all 23 miles of our railway on foot, visually inspecting the condition of the track. We are looking for volunteers who are interested in engineering, but not necessarily experienced or qualified, to join our team of patrollers. You will need to be physically fit, pass a basic medical (including sight and hearing), and be willing to take part in PTS and technical training which will prepare you for the role.

LENGTHSMEN NEEDED!

Similar work to the Cutting Back gang: we are looking for volunteers (individuals or small groups) to "own" a stretch of the line and keep it cleared back beyond the flail lines. As well as cutting back, the work may involve maintaining visibility around crossings, repairing fencing and gates and maintaining signs. This is a physical activity and training will be provided. Currently only four gangs operate on the line (as well as the station groups in station limits) - but there are plenty of opportunities to choose a preferred or favourite length to set up shop. Tools and equipment will be supplied. There will also be a competition (starting this year) and prizes for the best kept length.

TIDY TRAIN

We are planning more tidy up trains in June. It will most likely be a Monday, but we are yet to confirm details with Ops. We're looking for volunteers with PTS to help out.

FISH AND CHIP GANG

We are setting up a new gang dedicated to changing fishplates, oil plates and maintaining flange oilers. It's a messy, physical, outdoor job which will take you to every corner of the line. Training will be provided.

BRIDGE MAINTENANCE TEAM

We are looking for volunteers to assist our experts with clearance and general maintenance of our masonry arch bridges. With 45 bridges and many more culverts, it's a year-round job. If you are interested in learning skills in lime mortaring and masonry conservation this is an ideal opportunity.

Please contact Rhiannon for more details on any of the opportunities above - leadadmin@wsrail.net or leave a message with your contact number on 01643 700400

PTS**General - All comers**

Spaces	09 June 2018	Minehead Training Room	10:00
Spaces	30 June 2018	Bishops Lydeard Station Farm	10:00
Spaces	14 July 2018	Bishops Lydeard Station Farm	10:00
Spaces	28 July 2018	Minehead Training Room	10:00
Spaces	25 August 2018	Bishops Lydeard Station Farm	10:00
Spaces	15 Sept 2018	Minehead Training Room	10:00
Spaces	29 Sept 2018	Bishops Lydeard Station Farm	10:00

Upcoming Events

Gin Tasting Experience	17 th June 2018
Murder Mystery Events	23 rd June, 14 th July, 15 th September, 20 th October, 1 st December
Cheese and Cider	29 th June, 13 th July, 7 th & 21 st September
Steam and Cream	29 th June, 13 th July, 7 th and 21 st September
WSRA Rally	4 th - 5 th August 2018
Late Summer Weekend	1 st - 2 nd September 2018
The Gruffalo	8 th September 2018
Forties Weekend	15 th - 16 th September 2018
Autumn Steam Gala	27 th - 30 th September 2018

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