



"ONLINE"



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

9466 COMPLETES THE LINE-UP FOR THE SPRING STEAM GALA

Dennis Howells's 94xx pannier tank has been announced as a 'guest' locomotive for the 'Great Western Routes and Branches' Gala between March 22nd and 25th. This means that the full line up is as follows:-

'Modified Halls' 6960 "Raveningham Hall" and 6990 'Witherslack Hall'

GWR 57xx pannier tank 7714

GWR 'Manor' 7822 'Foxcote Manor'

GWR 94xx pannier tank 9466

GWR 14xx tank engine 1450, which will work with autocoach 178

USATC S160 6046

SDJR 7F 53808

Plus 'Kilmersdon' and 'Caledonia Works 1219'. The latter will be shunting at Minehead.

Other attractions include:-

Special £2 fare for young persons aged 5 to 17 on Sunday 25th (must be accompanied by an adult or senior citizen)

USATC S160 class no. 6046 hauling a 'military train', typical of the sort that was operating around Taunton and on the Minehead branch in the run up to D-Day.

Display of Military Vehicles at Minehead station to complement the military train.

1931 Sentinel steam bus 'Elizabeth' operating shuttles on Saturday and

Sunday between Minehead, Dunster Village (set down only) and Dunster Station

(supplementary fares apply) - courtesy of Crosville Motor Services, this is the only steam bus in Europe still in revenue-earning service.

The 'Hawksworth' Inspection Saloon will be available to travel in on the 11.00 and 15.45 from Bishops Lydeard and the 13.45 and 17.40 from Minehead. Travel in the saloon will be for an additional charge of £5.00

Other attractions will include the Great Western exhibits cared for by the West Somerset Steam Railway Trust at their Bishops Lydeard and Blue Anchor Museums. The largest, to be found at Bishops Lydeard, includes a superbly restored sleeping car which once took passengers from Paddington to Fishguard for onward ferry journeys to the Republic of Ireland. We should also mention the Somerset and Dorset Railway Trust's museum at Washford - not strictly GWR, but is always a rewarding visit and there will be a burger tent onsite.

Buffet cars will be available on most trains, with refreshments available at most stations (excluding Doniford). The 'Quantock Belle' dining car set will operate several services each day, offering cooked breakfasts and other options. For more details see below.

There will be access to the workshops at Minehead and Williton stations on the Saturday and Sunday for a look behind the scenes and a chance to see locomotives under overhaul inc. 'Mogul' 9351, 6024 'King Edward I' and 7828 'Odney Manor' at Minehead and GWR 4561 and 6695 at Williton.

Quantock Brewery will be open to visitors adjacent to Bishops Lydeard Station and will have a real ale bar on the platform at Minehead station. The Diesel and Electric Preservation Group will welcome visitors to their Depot and Heritage Centre at Williton on all four days.

Refreshments will be available from the cafés at Bishops Lydeard, Williton, and Minehead stations plus a pasty van at Minehead station. Home-made refreshments will be available from Crowcombe Heathfield and Stogumber stations. Light refreshments are available at other stations except Doniford.

The Bishops Lydeard Station Model Railway will be in operation in the Gauge Museum on all four days. Taunton Model Railway Group clubhouse at Bishops Lydeard station will be open on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Model railway equipment can be purchased at Bishops Lydeard and Minehead station shops. Second-hand model railway equipment and railwayana is also sold at Dunster station.

THE 'MORNING EXPLORER'

There is a special offer available over the next few weeks for folks looking to start their day on the 10.15 train from Minehead. The discounted 'Morning Explorer' ticket is available for the 10.15am service from Minehead. The ticket costs £10 return for adults or £5 for accompanied children and can ***only*** be purchased

online, prior to the day of travel. Available until the end of April 2018, the 'Morning Explorer' ticket is valid on Red, Green and Blue timetable days only.

SOMERSET WEST LOTTERY

The West Somerset Railway Association has joined Somerset West Lottery and is now one of the 'good causes' available for you to choose as your beneficiary when you buy lottery tickets. To support the WSRA and take part in the weekly lottery visit

<https://www.somersetwestlottery.co.uk/support/west-somerset-railway-association>

and buy your tickets. The prizes in the Somerset West Lottery are not in the same size bracket as national lotteries, with the highest value being £25,000, but the chances of winning are much higher.

6695

The boiler of the 56xx tank engine has arrived at the Flour Mill workshops in the Forest of Dean for overhaul which has commenced with a stripping down before a full assessment of the work required and the cost. Work continues on the rest of the locomotive at West Somerset Restoration in Williton.

GOOD PROGRESS ON HERITAGE FREIGHT TRAIN WAGONS

Both the Minehead and Washford-based teams who are restoring the wagons from the heritage freight train have made excellent progress in recent weeks. At Washford, rotting planks on the open wagons have been replaced, painting has been carried out and thanks to an excellent response to a crowd funding appeal, tarpaulins have been purchased and once fitted will greatly reduce water ingress and subsequent timber rotting into the future. Meanwhile, the Minehead workforce has taken the GWR 'Mink' van in hand and it, too, will now look excellent in Gala trains and when used on Driver Experience Courses. At Bishops Lydeard 5542 Ltd volunteers have also been busy. Winter work on the 12 Ton van 752355 is almost complete. The team has managed to replace all six end panels and two of the side ones, which just remain to have the final coat of topcoat finished, along with repainting the numbers. Very many thanks to all who have helped in any way at all. It should rejoin the Heritage Freight set ready for the new season.

THE 2018 STEAM AND VINTAGE RALLY

The Rally will be held at Rally Fields, Norton Fitzwarren, on August 4th and 5th. It promises the usual array of vintage vehicles and machinery (over 700 in number), children's entertainment, inc. a miniature railway, craft and market stalls, refreshments, and a real ale and cider bar, and plenty more to make for a full day out. Promotional leaflets are available from the WSRA office at Bishops Lydeard (01823 433856 Tuesday to Saturday) if you wish to spread the word. Advanced tickets - both days for the price of one can be purchased via www.steamrally.org.uk

2018 DIESEL GALA

The event will run from Friday 8th to Sunday 10th June, and possibly a preview day with limited diesel hauled services on the Thursday, with an intensive timetable of heritage diesel-hauled trains to fit our theme of 'Vintage Diesels to the Seaside'. The theme is planned to celebrate the 1970s and 1980s when a great variety of diesel locos were called on to haul holiday trains to the seaside all over the UK, and in particular (but not exclusively) in the west country. On the Friday and Saturday all services will be diesel-hauled with possibly a limited number of steam-hauled trains booked for the Sunday along with the diesels. Visiting locomotives will be confirmed shortly.

So put the dates in your diary to enjoy a good weekend of vintage diesel haulage and some good beers.

Don Bishop –Chair Gala Planning Team

SOMERSET AND DORSET RAILWAY TRUST

In order to rearrange and increase the number of exhibits on display at the Washford Museum, the SDRT has purchased BG 80792 from the West Somerset Railway Association. This will provide 56 feet of extra space for exhibits. Before the vehicle moved to its new home, it was given some repair work and painted by West Somerset Restoration.

PERMANENT WAY

S&T (written by Richard Harman)

There were no major S&T projects during the closed season in early 2018, but the team have been assisting with the relays at Minehead, and Roebuck level crossing. At Minehead work was carried out to remove and replace track circuit bonds. With the replacement rails being 60ft in length, the location of the insulated rail joints (IRJs) had moved which needed the associated connecting cables being extended.

Roebuck crossing surface and track has been relayed which required disconnection and reconnection of S&T track circuits to allow the rail to be removed. The power to Leigh Wood was also isolated as a precaution and both crossings were successfully put back into use on time and without any issues.

The opportunity has been taken whilst there are no trains running to walk the entire line and note the position, using GPS, of all S&T equipment, including poles and location cabinets. An inventory of all equipment is being created (this does not include signals as we already know where these are).

The areas beneath the signal boxes have been cleaned as well as the signal quadrants and the slots that the levers run in. Maintenance and checking was carried out as time permitted in preparation for half-term running.

Planning continues for the road light renewal at Leighwood level crossing and a new telephone concentrator is being built as an exercise to improve telecommunications. This will allow for future capacity increases and will permit the use of standard telephone sets.

Minehead relay got underway in the first week of January and over five weeks, 220 metres of formation has been dug out, new drainage installed and a fresh bed of ballast laid. The bullhead rail has been replaced with a flat-bottom track system using serviceable rail and concrete sleepers with new fittings. At the same time, the P-Way gang repaired a number of substantial dipped joints between Alcombe Crossing and the Sewage works while the ground contractor was installing the formation.

The relay was extended over Alcombe Crossing due to the condition of the ground found there. Further work is planned to remove the remaining wet beds along this stretch. Thanks to our volunteers Paul Haines and Julian Butter, who set out the site for the groundworks, and advised on a number of conditions found during the works.

In the final week before reopening, the gang also reinstalled the track at Roebuck Crossing and carried out line patrols in preparation for the half-term running - thanks to Mike and Ric our volunteer track patrollers for assisting. It should be noted that John Jones-Bartlett and his somewhat reduced team of Gary Hall and Matthew Brewer have gone over and above their duty and put in many extra hours to get these jobs done. Their willingness and determination has certainly been appreciated and all planned work in this period has been carried out to a high standard.

Tree felling has taken place at Kentsford where overhanging branches have been removed and trees that were in poor condition felled. The fencing, which is poor between the crossing and Bye Farm, will be reinstated. A tidy train is planned in March to collect the cut logs.

The Volunteer gang have been working within station areas this month while possessions have been possible. Eight sleepers were replaced at Williton Station and fifteen sleepers replaced at Crowcombe Heathfield Station, enabling three temporary tie bars to be removed. The Stop blocks at the end of Norton Platform have been painted and the gang carried out the removal of tarmac and track at Roebuck Crossing: using manual methods, the gang managed to lift out the check rails, running rails and sleepers ready for contractors to dig out the old

formation the following day. They also drilled the new timbers and check rails into place allowing for the quick reinstatement of track by the P-Way gang. The whole job was completed in the allotted 5 day road closure - a thoroughly successful job and a real team effort - well done to all involved.

BLACKMORE HOUSE & STATION FARM

The RAMS continue to refurbish the facilities at BL and have moved on to restoration work, such as the window frames for WT. Work continues on the ladies' toilet and cleaning/drying facilities for all staff.

DONIFORD BRIDGE

Work continues at Doniford to repair the damaged masonry on the bridge. The scaffolding was adjusted to allow trains to pass during half-term, as work moves to the opposite side. A specialist contractor is working on site, overseen by our volunteer engineer David Depoix, and if anyone is interested in helping out and learning the art of lime mortaring, then please get in touch - see details below.

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

LOOKING AHEAD

Over the coming months, the Company will release a refreshed Corporate Plan and later in the year we will refresh our IE Business Plan. During this time, we will be consulting with staff to determine priorities for the department and ensure that we cover all aspects of maintenance and proposed developments. Although no capital money has been allocated this year for any substantial track renewal or other projects, it is the intention to plan work in 2019: a substantial relay at Blue Anchor, painting one of our steel bridges and repairs to the slope at Stogumber.

Seaward Way level crossing road surface has been renewed by contractors, supported by PW. The replacement of crossing controls is a larger project for S&T due early 2019, relating to the £800k mentioned in the press. This is entirely funded by Somerset County Council.

We have been allocated money to carry out further structural inspection at Black Monkey bridge to investigate how we can strengthen the bridge. We also have a small budget to design the retaining wall at Stogumber to repair the land slip.

IE DEPARTMENT VACANCIES - VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

FISHPLATE AND FLANGE GANG

A dedicated team to change fishplates, oil plates and maintain flange oilers. This is a new team we would like to establish that will meet on a weekly basis. It's a physical job which will require PTS as well as Rule P training for those leading the group. It is likely to be a weekly team, but the working day is not yet determined until we have volunteers come forward. It will not be a Sunday since this clashes with the PW Volunteer gang. You do not necessarily need previous experience in Permanent Way work, but an interest in trackwork is helpful.

BRIDGE MAINTENANCE TEAM

We are looking for volunteers to assist contractors with clearance and general maintenance of our masonry arch bridges. There are 45 bridges on the line (larger than 6ft span) and many more culverts with masonry entrances and barrels. Work generally takes place between November and March, but clearance work is carried out all year.

CROSSINGS GANG

Similar work to the Cutting Back gang: we are looking to set up an additional gang to operate on the fourth Saturday of each month. It will be based at Bishops Lydeard or Dunster depending on the majority coming forward. The work will involve cutting back around crossings for visibility, repairing fencing and gates and maintaining signs. Requirements: PTS, orange hv and safety boots and fitness to manual handle.

INCIDENT AND ACCIDENT REPORTING

Once these reports are received they are entered into a log and part of the action is analysis by the company Safety Advisor. The information is then used to advise the General Manager and the main Board of overall types of occurrences and trends.

These statistics are invaluable in planning the future safety strategy of the Railway.

Below is the list of things to report: -

- **ACCIDENT** this is an unplanned event, or series of events caused by unsafe conditions or acts that result in damage or injury.
- **INCIDENT** this is an unplanned event, or series of events caused by unsafe conditions or acts that have the potential to cause damage or injury.
- **NEAR MISS** an event, or series of events that could have, but did not, cause an incident or accident.

· **RECURRING** refers to an incident that has been occurring more than twice within a reasonable period, typically faults on equipment.

So for example,

· If a visitor trips on a loose platform edge stone and falls, grazing their knee, that is an ACCIDENT.

· If a member of staff reports the loose stone before anyone trips that is an INCIDENT.

· If the visitor tripped but did not fall and was uninjured that is a NEAR MISS.

All the above can be reported via the accident/incident form and can be marked as one of the above. Please, where possible, add contact details e.g. telephone number/address of the injured party & witnesses etc.

All completed reports/forms should be marked 'for the attention of Assistant to the General Manager at Minehead Station' and forwarded without delay to:-

Email: stephen.jervis@wsrail.net

Tel: 01643 700403

P Conibear

General Manager

FUTURE PTS COURSES

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.

General - All comers

FULL 17 March 2018 Ash Priors 10:00 149

Spaces 24 March 2018 Minehead Training Room 14:00 158

FULL 24 March 2018 Minehead Training Room 10:00 150

Spaces 14 April 2018 Minehead Training Room 10:00 151

Spaces 21 April 2018 Ash Priors 10:00

VACANCIES:

Head of Human Resources

We are seeking to employ a senior manager to take forward the HR function within West Somerset Railway plc.

The WSR is a premier UK Heritage Railway with some 60 employees and 1200 volunteer staff. It is very much a 'people organisation' and our paid and volunteer staff are vital to the railway's continuing success. Our 2018-2023 corporate plan indicates that a key component is to retain and build our workforce.

Reporting to the General Manager, you will be a member of the senior management team, leading HR at operational level. Supported by a volunteer part-time team you will provide advice and guidance on staff relations, staffing and non-technical training issues.

With a functional link to the HR Director you will develop and contribute to HR strategy and the corporate plan aspects of people management and people development.

Applicants should be educated to degree standard, IPD qualified with continuous professional development. You should be an experienced manager and ideally have worked with volunteer staff.

You will have a pro-active approach, be an effective communicator with good written and verbal skills. You should possess good interpersonal and team skills to effectively engage with Directors, and with managers and staff at all levels.

This is a paid part-time [24 hour/3 day week] role, based at Minehead. It requires a willingness to travel, with a full UK driving licence, and to work occasional unsocial hours. This senior management post attracts a commensurate remuneration and benefits package, including membership of a non-contributory pension scheme.

For an information pack, including application form contact hr@wsrail.net or call 01643 700390. If you would like to informally discuss the role, please contact John Robinson, Head of HR on 01823 257448.

Completed applications should be returned under 'confidential' cover to Paul Conibeare, General Manager, West Somerset Railway plc, The Railway Station, Minehead, Somerset TA24 5BG, by not later than 30 March 2018.



West Somerset Railway Association

Supporting the Heritage of the West Somerset Railway

Did you know you can raise money for the WSR simply by shopping online?

Here are a couple of ideas to get you started.

EASYFUNDRAISING

If you shop online, book hotels or even holidays, and would like to support the West Somerset Railway financially, without a cost to yourself, then www.easyfundraising.co.uk should be of interest to you.

You will need to register on the website, and choose the West Somerset Railway Association as your 'cause'. It's just like registering for shopping online with any retailer.

The trick is to always go through www.easyfundraising.co.uk and click on the retailer of your choice via the scheme, rather than going straight to your preferred shopping site. You just need to think 'WSR' every time you go shopping online! Bookmark www.easyfundraising.co.uk or download the Easyfundraising Donation Reminder plug-in for your browser.

You pay nothing for this, as the retailer pays a percentage through to your chosen project. The sums are small, 25p here, perhaps a £1 there, on small items, but can be significant with larger purchases.

AMAZON SMILE

Launched on 1st March, this is Amazon's own charitable donation scheme. Access your Amazon account via the new <https://smile.amazon.co.uk> website and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the net value of every purchase you make to the WSRA.

How to join in:

1. **Visit** <https://smile.amazon.co.uk>
2. **Choose** your charity – under 'pick your own charitable organisation' type in West Somerset Railway Association and click search
3. **Select** the WSRA when given the option

4. **Shop** via <https://smile.amazon.co.uk> and you will notice that under the search box in your browser it says 'supporting: West Somerset Railway Association'
5. **Donation** of 0.5% of your net purchase price is made by Amazon to the WSRA.
6. **Bookmark** <https://smile.amazon.co.uk> for future purchases.

Please note that this is a new service and we're still waiting for marketing materials, logos etc. to be made available by Amazon. The WSRA Organisational Information has been 'gleaned' by Amazon and we would hope to be able to update and modify it in due course. However, the scheme is live, the funds are there and Amazon is ready to donate so please don't let a few teething issues put you off.

Whilst these schemes won't solve all the financial challenges of the WSR they can help, and they cost nothing! **The funds are there waiting and we need your help to claim a share for the railway.**

Jacque Green
WSRA General Manager

UPCOMING EVENTS

Spring Steam Gala	22 nd – 25 th March 2018
Peter Rabbit	31 st March 2018
Paw Patrol Skye and Rubble	2 nd June 2018
Classic Car Run	3 rd June 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

Details of HRA Cards are given below and applications may now be made for the Cards 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 - If you intend to apply, please do so NOW !

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

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

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

OR

Leave it in Robert Green's 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 ASAP as later applications may take longer to process.

(Robert Green)

HERITAGE RAILWAY CARDS 2018-19 - Form Valid on and after 1st March

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 to Heritage Railway Association - if sent on/after 1st March
- a stamped self-addressed envelope.

NAME (including forename for the card please)

ADDRESS

.....

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

CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBER (just in case !)