



# 'ONLINE'



## THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY AND ASSOCIATED SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS MAY 2018

### [TWO POPULAR DIESEL LOCOMOTIVES SUCCESSFULLY TESTED.](#)

A convoy of diesel locomotives - Class 33 'Crompton' nos D6566 and D6575, Class 14 no D9526 and Class 35 'Hymek' no D7017 - travelled from the Diesel & Electric Preservation Group's Williton base to Bishops Lydeard in the early morning of Saturday, 21 April, 2018 and later, D9526 used the Bishops Lydeard - Norton Fitzwarren section for proving trials of its newly overhauled engine and it seems all was very well. The 'Hymek' headed for the loco shed and the DEPG's team used the pit to access the underside of the loco to change and readjust the brake blocks. Again, all went well. The two 'Cromptons' started off in top/tail formation with a rake of three Mk1 coaches with D6566 leading from Bishops Lydeard to Minehead and D6575 trailing as a dead load (ie not powering). Since this was equal to roughly a seven coach load, this was another proving test for D6566 following its major overhaul and repair works. At Minehead, D6566 ran round, and later worked a 'Crompton' double-headed train of three coaches, although D6575 was not powering. Again, no problems were found, so a successful day of trials for the DEPG.

### [S & D RAILWAY TRUST AND WSR PLC SIGN 50 YEAR LEASE.](#)

At our AGM on Saturday 21 April 2018, Ian Coleby (Chairman of West Somerset Railway Plc) and Ian Young (Chairman of S&DRT Ltd) signed a new 50 year lease for our Washford base. This is a huge step forward for the Trust and we have already been busy with improvements to museum displays, publicity material, etc.

In addition, we are working with the WSR to provide a Beer Festival at Washford during the Diesel Gala on 8 to 10 June and it is hoped that this will be followed by many similar events.

The WSR would like to further the 'string of pearls' concept, whereby each station illustrates a different aspect or time period of transport history and Washford will be part of that.

### **HERITAGE FUNDING FOR STOGUMBER STATION**

At their board meeting on 16th April, the WSRA Trustees agreed to a funding request from Stogumber Station to pay for the upholstery of two benches for the booking office and platform waiting room to match the six seats recently purchased, restored and re-upholstered from station funds. The proposal follows traditional designs, uses traditional materials, and offers a significant improvement in passenger comfort. The Trustees therefore had no hesitation in approving the request and the new benches are planned to be in place towards the end of the Summer.

Bob Preston, Joint Station Master at Stogumber, said "We are all delighted that this will enable us to complete the restoration and upgrading of the seating, and on behalf of all at Stogumber Station, I would like to pass on our sincere thanks to yourself and your Committee"

Jacquie Green  
WSRA General Manager

### **PECKETT 0-4-0ST 'KILMERSDON' OFF TO CORNWALL UNTIL 2019.**



The Somerset & Dorset Railway Trust's Prussian Blue liveried Peckett 0-4-0ST no 1788 'Kilmersdon' - normally based at Washford on the West Somerset Railway - will work trains for the Helston Railway on the restored Cornish line during the 2018 season and will stay until early 2019.

The plan is for 'Kilmersdon' to make her Cornish debut during our popular 'Return to the 40s' event on the 27 & 28 May (late bank holiday) hauling the first steam passenger trains on the Helston branch in over 55 years!

*Details kindly provided by local correspondent and the Helston Railway*

## FIRST AID

For the safety & wellbeing of **all** personnel; Station Masters, Heads of Departments & Team Leaders are requested to check the contents of their First Aid boxes regularly and report any deficiencies **without delay** to Rita Jervis at:-

email: [firstaid@wsrail.net](mailto:firstaid@wsrail.net)

## NEWS FROM BLUE ANCHOR STATION



On Saturday, 5 May 2018 a plaque was unveiled on a bench on the down platform at Blue Anchor Station, in memory of a long serving volunteer, Alan Scott, who sadly died at the end of last year.

## 'ATLANTIC COAST EXPRESS' EVENT POSTPONED UNTIL APRIL 2019.



The West Somerset Railway plans to run a week long Atlantic Coast Express event next April. It had been intended to run it this September but provision of key locomotives was beginning to look challenging. WSR Vice Chairman, Frank Courtney, said:

"We need to get this right and offer as close to an authentic ACE express as it is possible to do on a 20 mile West Country branch. We think we need at least three Bulleid designed locos, preferably including at least one Merchant Navy and two light Pacifics. Putting the event back will give us more time to get these in place."

This event is not a traditional gala and the WSR will be offering its normal range of enthusiast galas in 2019. The ACE event will include non-stop running, fully reservable seats and free light refreshments served at seat. Paul Conibeare, the West Somerset's General Manager, said:

"We all recognise that *Flying Scotsman* is an exceptional loco and hopefully, she will be able to return before long. The aim with the ACE event is to offer a different, but premium day out to many of those people who enjoyed the Scotsman event on the railway. Many of these people are not traditional railway enthusiasts, but simply those who are seeking an exciting and interesting day out and being treated as special passengers."

More information about the event will be released in the Autumn.

### **STOGUMBER STATION STOP SECURED FOR LAST 'UP' TRAIN.**

The folks at Stogumber Station have successfully secured a timetabled stop for the last Up train as they explain:

Those of you who have spotted that the last 'Up' train of the day does not stop at Stogumber, will be pleased to know that it now will stop. West Somerset Railway have announced that this train on the brown and yellow timetables will stop at Stogumber at 18.10. The train is the three-unit DMU. Stogumber remains an ideal station from which to start and finish your journey. We have parking for a number of cars, a buffet and restrooms.

### **EXTRA DIESEL RUNS BEFORE THE BIG WSR DIESEL GALA.**



The WSR's Gala Planning Team has announced:

As a preview to our big 'Vintage Diesels to the Seaside' Gala on 8 to 10 June 2018, we are having a 'Western Region in the 70s' day on the day before, Thursday 7 June, with additional diesel-hauled trains running over and above the advertised steam service for that day.

We plan to operate two additional trains in each direction hauled by 'Western' no D1010 *Western Campaigner* and 'Peak' no 45041 *Royal Tank Regiment* offering an additional 160 miles of diesel haulage to the long Diesel Gala weekend. This will hark back to the mid to late 1970s when 'Peaks' and 'Westerns' worked alongside each other on services in and around Devon and Cornwall. Passengers purchasing a two or three day rover ticket in advance for the Diesel Gala can claim a discount on their ticket for the additional preview day.

## **PROPOSAL FOR A WSR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DAY**



As reported in the recent 'News from the Boardroom' document, the West Somerset Railway Plc Board are considering a 'WSR Community Involvement Day' when the whole community can come together and 'take over' the running of the railway. The Plc Chairman, Ian Coleby, explains:

*In effect, of course, the local community will be shadowing our qualified staff - drivers, guards, signalmen are the obvious jobs but also station staff, PW gangs, working in the buffet and shadowing the many other jobs that need to be done to run the railway. Most shadowing turns will need to be booked in advance, but we will also need a range of activities for those who turn up on the day.*

*The trains would all be free on the day and we will issue souvenir tickets so that the shadow booking clerks and ticket inspectors have a job to do.*

*The plan is to hold this on a Saturday in March or April 2019 which means we have a year to organise it. This event fits very well with the Hinkley Point Community Cohesion money that we are currently bidding for. Alongside the benefits to the local community we would hope to recruit a range of new volunteers from the day.*

*This could be a really exciting event and a great opportunity for us to show off what we do and to involve ourselves more in the local community. We now need a volunteer to organise the event! Not on your own, but to lead a small team to put it all together. If you're interested in being involved or have any other thoughts on the day, please contact the Chairman.*

### **WILLITON (SWINDON) SHED**

A project to review the best way forward for the Williton site, ie the Swindon shed, the activity within it and the immediate environment has been authorised by the boards of WSR plc and WSRA. A number of proposals have been suggested by various people in recent times but no agreement has been reached. The purpose of this review is to find a financially viable solution which is of benefit to the West Somerset Railway and which has the backing of all organisations.

The review will be as objective as possible and will involve consultations with all parties who have a direct interest in or who have activities using the facilities.

This will be coupled with a financial and strategic appraisal of options which emerge from the discussions. The immediate goal is to agree a financially viable way forward but, longer term, the aim is to agree the best ongoing and sustainable use for the site.

The project will be led by Ian Harrison who has been a volunteer in the loco department since 2001 and qualified to drive steam locomotives in 2015. He brings to the project the combination of a very good working knowledge of the WSR's operations and its needs with a business background in Engineering and Manufacturing in the UK, US and Europe, plus a decade of experience of the NHS. He has an honours degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Nottingham. He is well used to dealing with different cultures and working with people in a fair, objective and transparent manner.

He will report to both organisations as soon as possible in the summer. He will be making contact with the many people whose opinions are important in determining a way forward in the next week or two. His e-mail address for this purpose will be [Ian.Harrison@wsrail.net](mailto:Ian.Harrison@wsrail.net)

### **DUNSTER CASTLE EXPRESS RUNS FOR ANOTHER YEAR.**

The West Somerset Railway has had a partnership with Dunster Castle for many years. The partnership offers discounted access when a combined ticket is purchased.

The venture takes place every Wednesday and Saturday throughout the running season, minus a few special event days which are highlighted on the timetable.

Your day starts at Bishops Lydeard, travelling by steam train through the Quantock Hills and along the Coast to the outskirts of the medieval village of Dunster. Whilst on the train, passengers have the opportunity to visit our on train buffet car where light refreshments and beverages can be purchased. Once you arrive at the picturesque station at Dunster all passengers are greeted by a representative from Dunster Castle. The representative will welcome you onto the Dunster Castle Express bus which will take you the short uphill distance to the Castle.

Once at the Castle, you will have time to collect your pre ordered picnic (if ordered) followed by time to explore the National Trust's Castle and its gardens before returning by coach transfer back to the railway for passengers to return back to Bishops Lydeard.

### **DO YOU HAVE ANY SPARE TIME?**

The West Somerset Railway are supported by a vast amount of volunteers who are vital to the successful running of our railway.

There are many roles to suit every personality, including Drivers, Guards, Ticket Inspectors, Shop Staff, Café Staff, Information Office Staff, Station Staff, Gardeners and so much more.

Our volunteers are the heart of the railway, without them we would not be able to function.

If you are interested in joining the railway family, even for a short amount of time, please get in touch with us for an informal discussion to explore your options, either by email [Volunteers@wsrail.net](mailto:Volunteers@wsrail.net) or ring 01643 704996.

We hope to hear from you soon.

### **ROYAL WEDDING PROSECCO AND CREAM**

Enjoy an enchanting steam train journey along the delightful Somerset coast and through beautiful countryside whilst enjoying a traditional West Country Cream Tea served to your seat.

Your ticket will include a cream tea and a glass of prosecco, served on the 14.15 train from Minehead. You can choose to start your journey with the 14.15 from Minehead and return on a later train from Bishops Lydeard, or start at Bishops Lydeard in the Morning and return on the 14.15 from Minehead.

We regret that Cream Teas cannot be provided for special diets, but a slice of Gluten Free carrot cake can be provided as an alternative if requested in advance by calling 01643 700406. Prosecco will be served to over 18s only and proof of ID may be requested. A soft drink alternative will be served to under 18s.

Tickets must be booked in advance.

### **SOMERSET DAY EXPRESS**

On Friday 11th May 2018, West Somerset Railway will be running a Somerset Day Express!

Journey through the Somerset countryside, and along the beautiful coastline, from Bishops Lydeard to Minehead.

This service will depart from Bishops Lydeard at 10.30 and pick up/drop off at Williton, Watchet, Blue Anchor and Minehead. You will then have some free time to spend at your chosen station and town, until your return service which will leave Minehead at 14.15.

Tickets for this service are at a discount price of £12 each.

As this is the only service of the day, we have a limit on the number of tickets available. So don't leave it too late and be disappointed, book today via our website [www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk](http://www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk) or over the phone on 01643 704996

### **HERITAGE RAIL CARDS - PLEASE READ EVEN IF YOU HAVE ONE**

The HRA are keen to find out more about the use of cards – please see the panel at the head of the Participating Railways Sheet which was sent with your card this year.

Surveys are not everyone's idea of time well-spent but please try to find a few moments to complete the survey as requested in that panel. The HRA are hopeful that the results may lead to keeping down the costs of future cards. The survey website address may not have been very clear on some sheets so it is repeated here - [www.hra.uk.com/interrail-pass-survey](http://www.hra.uk.com/interrail-pass-survey).

If you have not yet purchased a Card for the current year (to 28 February 2019), you can still do so but allow at least four weeks for delivery. Details and application form were in the March Edition of ONLINE (Staff Website) or can be obtained by email from me at [ra.green@talktalk.net](mailto:ra.green@talktalk.net). Hard copies are also available from the Minehead enquiry office.

Thank you  
Robert Green

### **INFRASTRUCTURE ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT REPORT – APRIL 2018**

**S&T** (written by Richard Harman)

Readers will recall that a water leak in Crowcombe Heathfield signal box was reported last month. Since then, the box has been dried out using a dehumidifier and thorough testing carried out. Only time will tell, but there have not been any problems so far. In the longer term, the shelf relays will need to be replaced.

As reported last month, Leigh Wood crossing now has a dedicated power supply which is connected now. The old feed from Crowcombe Heathfield will be retained as a backup. General maintenance on Blue Anchor crossing has been delayed due to the snow and then by railway operations. Work is still planned here. Some work has been done to keep points 14 at Williton (trailing connection from the down loop to the South Yard) operational but the trap is in poor condition and really needs relaying. Work is ongoing to revive a couple of old portable generators. The control circuit diagrams for the replacement level crossing at Minehead Seaward Way have been prepared and are undergoing independent checking. The CCT (S&T mobile workshop) is still at Dunster but a request has been made to return it to Bishops Lydeard.

Various minor faults have been resolved: the token release on the Blue Anchor to Minehead section (sticking lock dog on BA No.3 signal lever holding up the

contact in the token circuit), similar issues on a token release at Minehead and BL No.33. One of the barriers on Seaward Way level crossing was knocked off by a careless van driver and had to be replaced. A lever catch at Allerford junction was not holding the lever in the reverse position. A fault which caused a blown fuse at Williton has puzzled the gang for some time. This was traced to a loose lid on a signal contact box which could cause a dead short on the on and off contacts by the action of wind. Members from the team attended first aid training in late April.

### **PERMANENT WAY**

The gang have been performing general and routine maintenance over the past month. Flailing has begun at BL end of the line and the team has recently undergone training, including track dumper. Land Management have been clearing the north side of Washford bank and securing access to allow further work to take place on the cutting. Many of the drainage ditches require extensive repairs to reduce the water in the bank and hopefully reduce the chances of slip.

The tidy train is now booked for 14, 16 and 18 May and the cutting back gang have been out again near Whisky Train cutting back.

The volunteer P-Way gang manned the PW stall on Bishops Lydeard platform during four days of Spring Gala; changed 10 sleepers in the sidings at Bishops Lydeard on the Sunday of gala and two long timbers on the lead at Orchard Junction; removed excess ballast from sleepers between Orchard Junction and Holmes Halt before changing over 50 pads and over 200 biscuits(spacers) to repair damage caused by NR training days; carried out fishplate lubrication of Southern loop at Norton Triangle; concrete MP 179 had a lick of paint.

### **BLACKMORE HOUSE & STATION FARM**

The RAMS continue at BL with work on the kit room and ladies toilet. The fire alarm is due to be installed next week. 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](mailto:leadadmin@wsrail.net) / 01643 700400.

### **DONIFORD BRIDGE**

The work at the bridge is complete and all materials and scaffolding now cleared. The work has received much praise via Facebook!

### **STAFFING**

We have a new member of the gang joining PW as ganger/plant operative imminently, subject to paperwork - more next month...

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

### **IE DEPARTMENT VACANCIES - VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

### **TRACK PATROLLERS**

NEXT TRAINING MAY/JUNE - 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.

### **TRACK RECORDING / MARKING DUO**

We are looking for a couple of staff to walk the whole line, recording track with computer trolley and marking up locations using special track markers to help staff identify their location.

### **TIDY TRAIN**

Last call! A tidy train is planned for the evenings of 14th, 16th, & 18th May. 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.

### **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. The work will involve cutting back around crossings for visibility, repairing fencing and gates and maintaining signs. This is a physical activity and training will be provided.

Please contact Rhiannon for more details on any of the opportunities above - [ieadmin@wsrail.net](mailto:ieadmin@wsrail.net) or leave a message on 01643 700400, giving your contact number.

Andrew Young Head of Infrastructure Engineering

### **Future PTS courses**

Information as 25/04/2018

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](mailto: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 | 12 May 2018    | Bishops Lydeard Station Farm | 10:00 |
| Spaces | 26 May 2018    | Minehead Training Room       | 10:00 |
| 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**

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Paw Patrol Sky and Rubble | 2 <sup>nd</sup> June 2018                          |
| Classic Car Run           | 3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2018                          |
| Diesel Gala               | 8 <sup>th</sup> – 10 <sup>th</sup> June 2018       |
| WSRA Rally                | 4 <sup>th</sup> - 5 <sup>th</sup> August 2018      |
| Late Summer Weekend       | 1 <sup>st</sup> – 2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2018   |
| The Gruffalo              | 8 <sup>th</sup> September 2018                     |
| Autumn Steam Gala         | 27 <sup>th</sup> – 30 <sup>th</sup> 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.