



Wensleydale Railway Association Volunteers Newsletter

A longer newsletter this month. Thanks to all contributors – is this a New Year Resolution? Although all items received have been included, some have had to be shortened somewhat. Apologies if yours is one of these!

CANCELLATION – please note that the social evening at Bedale Station planned for 10 January has been cancelled

FROM RUTH

John Ozelton is now a third of the way through his six month period as Acting General Manager. On January 7 the advertisement for a full-time General Manager will be placed on the website www.wensleydalerailway.com and on notice boards at Leeming Bar and Leyburn stations and during the month it will be published in Railnews, Railstaff, Heritage Railway magazine and the Yorkshire Post. The next Relay magazine will also include the advertisement and will reach WRA members at the end of February. If you know someone who might be interested in applying for this post, please draw their attention to the plc website in the first instance. The closing date for applications is March 14.

(Note: John will continue his work for the railway in a voluntary capacity, as Project Manager for the western extension)..

Christmas Eve saw the end of another Santa season, and probably the best one so far. Passenger numbers were up by a third, so a big thank you is due to all those who helped in any way: putting up posters, taking bookings, decorating trains, dealing with food, presents, banking and accounts - and the additional operations required to run a two train service and the special weekday trains for party bookings. Congratulations to all those who were involved for the first time - we hope you enjoyed it - as this enabled us to expand the service to include Leyburn/Redmire Santa Specials. It's a specially tiring time for Santa, to whom a personal thank you!

For the first time, we also ran a significant (i.e. costly) advertising campaign in local newspapers. This offered a discounted ticket price of £8.75 (instead of £10) for 7 days after publication of each advert, provided an identifying code was quoted by the customer at the time of booking. Analysis of the results will allow us to quantify the effectiveness of the paid advertising (judged by number of passengers booked from each newspaper per £100 spent on the advert) and its profitability (bearing in mind that each of these passengers received the same presents and refreshments but paid £1.25 less than those who paid the full price). This will provide useful feedback to help in planning the promotion of future special events. Meanwhile, thank you to everyone who supported the Santa Specials, whether behind the scenes or front of house - and with best wishes for a Happy New Year.

Ruth Annison

FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

The Santa Specials were the main event of December and I believe that it was very successful. My thanks to all

concerned, particularly Amanda and the office staff and the all important Santa and his elves. The feedback from passengers was excellent and many commented on how warm the trains were! All credit to the operations and maintenance people for getting the systems working. We put on a special train to deliver Santa to Bedale for their celebrations and we have had a very enthusiastic response from their organisers who would like to build on the success in future years.

We are now preparing for Operation Spring clean and this will include work on the rolling stock as well as the infrastructure and stations. Thanks to the effort of the minor works group, Bedale station is now ready for a final check by the local authority inspector and then the newly formed support group will start their activities in January.

From the Western Extension Steering Group - the group has held its second meeting and has begun to form recommendations for the first phases of the potential extension and these will be publicised as soon as they are finalised.

Important Notice - To ensure that your car insurance is valid, you should contact your insurer and confirm that your policy covers you for using your vehicle in connection with your activities on Wensleydale Railway PLC. Examples of such use include:

- Driving to your normal base on the railway (e.g. Leeming Bar).
- Driving from either your home or normal base to other parts of the Railway (e.g. to Bedale signal box).
- Driving to other parts of the country, for example to collect parts.
- Carrying other volunteers or paid employees and, possibly, tools and equipment.

You should be aware that the insurance policies of Wensleydale Railway plc do not provide motoring cover for employees or volunteers.

May I take this opportunity to thank everyone for their contribution to the railway during 2008 and to wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year.

John Ozelton

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

This month's nomination is **Betty Ackrill**.

Betty's main role is the efficient running of Leyburn Station, combined with excellent customer care and concern for her colleagues. The Friends of Leyburn Station (several of whom have sent in the nomination) say they never fail to be amazed at the organisational skills and attention to detail of Betty, and her capacity for very hard work; also as a fantastic motivator. She was instrumental in setting up FOLS (of which they are very proud). She works in Arthur's Teabar at the Station, is a member of the Marketing Group, paints and decorates, amongst many, many other things. Congratulations to Betty!

Why not send in your nomination for February volunteer of the month?

FUNDRAISING

Our internet fundraising has so far raised over £600. Can I ask all of you who use the internet to shop or search to use our two sites and that way we can raise more funds. Don't forget to get your family and friends involved.

www.easyfundraising.org.uk/wra (our internet shopping site)

www.wra.easysearch.org.uk (our search engine, gains approximately 1p per search.)

(See also item below from Joe Skimming)

Coin Challenge

Our aim is to collect 40 miles (70400 yards) of coins. To date we have 777 yards and have raised £1661.15. Why not save your 1p and 2p coins for this challenge and put them to good use? All the coins collected for this year are going towards the Track Appeal. You can leave the coins at the office. Please put them in an envelope or container and mark it "coin challenge" or place them in the collecting tins in Leeming Bar buffet coach or in Arthur's Tea room at Leyburn. Every penny counts!

Track Appeal

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this vital appeal. We have raised £12,837 so far; please keep the money coming in. Colin has already spent what has been raised on sleepers and ballast. Much more is needed, especially with the winter maintenance period coming up. If anyone has an idea for fundraising or would like to get involved with fundraising please give me a call (after 6pm please) on 01325 251204 or email me at kennethmonkman@yahoo.co.uk

Thank you to everyone who has helped this year's fundraising; since we started the fundraising group in March 2007 we have raised over £20,000.

Ken Monkman

MESSAGES FROM VOLUNTEERS

Fund raising – Track Appeal...

It doesn't take a lot of logical thought to work out that, however appealing the idea of the Westward extension is, before that idea can become a reality, we have to make our existing track into an excellent standard and, as you know, that is the whole idea of the track fund. The reality is, no matter how deep we dig into our pockets, we will not achieve that goal; we have to dig into the pockets of the general public. Ken does wonders with his draws and raffles, but there is always scope for more to be done.

The latest venture has been the stalls at Bedale Station; so far some £250 has been raised through this venture and there is scope for much more. We are hoping to continue this source of income for at least a few more months.

The big problem is rounding up stock; after nearly a year of collecting for our next St Crux (York) event, I brought it all to Bedale and it has now been well picked over and needs replenishment. If we are to have a fortnightly sale at Bedale, I haven't a cat in Hell's chance of rounding up the necessary goods without your help. This type of venture is very low cost to set up and I wish to appeal to all of you to help me make it a success. Begging for unwanted bric-a-brac and other small household items is no big deal; for example, if I hear of someone moving house I approach them and ask, as tactfully as I can, if we can relieve them of any surplus items. On several occasions I have done very well (sometimes you do come away with items which have to be quietly disposed of – eg two non-working vacuum cleaners spring to mind!)

Just as an example of what can be done, when our WR workshop was relieved of its entire stock of tools early in the

year, I put adverts in various York shop windows and eventually rounded up well over 100 replacement spanners.

I also take the leftovers from fund-raising jumble sales – most goes to the tip but there are always a few items worth adding to our collection. I am not suggesting everyone follows this route but I am making the point that there are more ways than one to achieve a goal.

As I said earlier, there is no way I can do this single-handed; please do your best to come up with a steady flow of items for our second-hand stalls. No clothing or shoes, please and nothing that cannot be lifted by one person. It is surprising what can be sold – just ask Ken Monkman!

Most weeks I am at Leeming Bar and can attend to any items left there; another option is to ask someone to enable items to be left at Bedale station. If in doubt, phone me first on 01904 701170.

Thank you for your anticipated support.

Brian Ledger

Easy Fund-Raising

I would like to encourage members and all our supporters to use Easy Fund-raising as much as they can, and ask their family and friends to use the site as well.

It is a great way of raising funds; the web address is www.easyfundraising.org.uk. Register with them and give the WRA as your cause, then when you buy via the site the companies automatically donate to the WRA. A whole list of well known companies are listed on the site, 100s of them supplying all sorts of goods and services. I have checked prices on the companies normal web site, and the price via easyfundraising, and they are the same, **you are not paying any extra.**

Buying your Insurance (home, car, pet etc) via the site is a particularly good way as Insurance companies give good donations. To give an example I bought my home and contents Insurance last year from the AA and they donated £17.50 to the WRA. This year, I had a look on line via Easy Fundraising. Good job I did, I got the same cover for almost £40 cheaper and the company donated £40 to the WRA, so it was a win win as they say!

So please think hard about using this great fundraising tool. Thank you all.

Joe Skimming

NORTHALLERTON LINK

The WRA volunteers from Corus Rail Infrastructure Services successfully started the latest stage of their survey work in December on the East Coast Main Line at Northallerton and will be returning for another day in the New Year to complete their work. They can now start undertaking drawings of the various options. We are having to pay for their COSS support but it is worth it to move ahead, the fundraising that has been done over the years (e.g. by the WRA Northallerton branch) will hopefully now reap dividends. 2008 was also notable for the work of John Graham who has transformed our approach to Project Management of the Northallerton Link project.

We will need increasingly to find funding for stages of the Northallerton Link work which up to now we have done at little financial cost.

I am also working on bringing the business case for the Northallerton Link nearer to completion – this is a massive document trying to make the whole case in terms of physical options, service plans, income and expenditure projections and funding sources.

Wensleydale Railway Association Volunteers Newsletter

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We need to collect any evidence that we can use for the extended service to Northallerton so if colleagues spot any articles or reports that suggest any possible new business for the railway please let me know (I will be going through all the relevant documents on the local authority and Yorkshire Forward web-sites.

I am also thinking that we may need to do some survey work on trains, at Northallerton station and of local businesses etc. If anyone wishes to help with this let me know – some of this might be something that colleagues could do during the winter shut-down but only if it is definitely not taking you away from other tasks on the railway. You can contact me at ian@iansesnan.co.uk or on 0797 1528207.

Ian Sesnan

ADVERT IN AID OF FUNDS

Lift up & over garage door-complete
To fit doorway-Width2290mm X 2015mm
In top condition-Painted mid-blue
Ready to collect now- need it to be gone
Goes to highest bidder-Phone 01677 427809
Proceeds to WDTG (WR)---Tubby

250 CLUB

Winners in recent draws:-

November – 1st Mrs CM Harris £66, 2nd Mr Barker £33, 3rd Mr R Chambers (£16), 4th Miss G Lewis (£10)
December – 1st Mr F Hall (£100, 2nd Mr KW Cooper (£50), 3rd Miss MA Bellamy (£25), 4th Mr RG Salmon £15)

Peter Blakey

BEDALE STATION

As the building has not yet had the final inspection by the Local Authority inspector and we have not completed all risk assessments etc. we cannot use the building for any events or meetings. Until all formalities are completed, only the Bedale Station Group can access the building.

Bedale Station Group has recently been set up with the long-term objective of promoting the development and operation of the station in ways which will be of benefit to both the Railway and the local communities in Bedale and Aiskew. The plc has invited the Group to submit ideas for the use of the station building and this is currently being done. There are also plenty of immediate practical tasks -if you are interested in joining the Group, contact Peter Harbord on 01609 761059 or email

bsg@wensleydalerailwayassociation.com .

Peter Harbord

WENSLEYDALE RAILWAY WEBSITE

Peter Williams, who runs the railway's public website wensleydalerailway.com, is planning to expand the website in two aspects, for which he needs help. First, we need an on-line shop: does anyone have personal experience of setting one up? Secondly, he is planning to expand the "Wensleydale Attractions" section and needs help with compiling information about local attractions and events and - just as importantly - keeping it up to date. No experience of websites is needed for this second role. If you can help with either role, please

contact Peter at

peterwilliams@wensleydalerailwayassociation.com

REQUEST

The Outside Events Display Team are looking for a copy of a photo of a train using the South Curve itself (not Northallerton station) for part of next year's display. The NRM archives

didn't have anything. Can anyone help?"

John Davies

PTS COURSE 31st Jan 2009

There will be a Personal Track Safety (PTS) course on Saturday 31st Jan at Leeming Bar/Bedale (depending on numbers) for new volunteers and re-tests.

The course will start at 09.30 and will be followed by test and certification.

The course is based upon Railtrack Personal Track Safety Handbook RT3170 Issue 6. If you require a copy call Leeming Bar office. These are free to Volunteers; however they cost the Railway £1 each (donations welcome)

Relevant pages: 3, 10-14, 23, 25-33, 38, 40-44, 47, 48, 51-53.

Names to Leeming Bar office or John Thompson

john@airborneit.co.uk

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

A recent visitor to Hawes has written in asking for details of the industrial tank loco at the Y D museum. A photo by Beryl Gould was on the back cover of Relay 23, February 1999. Can anyone please supply me with any/all details? Please leave details at Leeming Bar, addressed to me.

Barry Wetherell

OPERATION DALESMAN 2009

Planning has started for the 2009 event, which will take place on 18th & 19th July, and we can confirm that there will be steam haulage. As usual, many more volunteers will be needed and period dress would be appreciated. Please book this weekend in your diaries

Mike Sheehan

RELAY BACK NUMBERS

RELAY BACK NUMBERS from edition No. 10 are available for sale, Half Price - Min 50p, from Leyburn Shop.

Alternatively contact Paul Kenyon Tel: 01748 824249 or

Email: pkenyon@dsl.pipex.com."

INDUCTION COURSES

I am planning to run Induction Courses at Leeming Bar for new volunteers on pre-determined dates each month (subject to demand). They will also now include a talk by a COSS and a visit to the station yard. If any existing volunteer would like to attend one, you must book with me. The first courses of the New Year will be on Thursday 8th January and Saturday 7th February from 9am to 12 noon. (see contact details below).

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

Deadline for contributions (welcome from anyone) for the next newsletter is 31st January. Send to:-

Philip Smith Tel 01609 774733

Email pandmsmith@galtres.eclipse.co.uk

Any volunteer who currently receives this Newsletter in hard copy but who now has access to e-mail is asked to forward their email address to me. This helps reduce the number of copies sent out by post. Similarly if your e-mail has changed please let me know.

Philip Smith