

RAIL LINK

Edition 71

Updated with Supplement at Page 4

May 2010

Wensleydale Railway Association Volunteers Newsletter

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Wednesday 5 May at 7pm – packing envelopes for WRA AGM at Bedale – see below
Tuesday 11 May – Volunteers Meeting, Bedale
Saturday 15 May – 9.30am at Bedale Station – induction course for new volunteers
Saturday, Sunday, Monday, May 22, 23 and 24 – 20th Anniversary of WRA – please publicise and support - see leaflet.
Wednesday 26 May – special working party – see below

CHAIRMANS 20TH ANNIVERSARY CHALLENGE.

As part of the WRA 20th anniversary celebrations I am issuing a challenge to all members, volunteers and the local community. Over the weekend of 26/27 June 2010 I want to collect and lay out at Leeming Bar station 40 miles of coins. (70400 yards.) I have made a start already as I have placed coin collecting tubs in several local businesses. Local schools, sports clubs and any other organisations I can think of are in the process of being invited to take part in the challenge.

The idea is to ask people to donate 1p and 2p coins to the challenge. This is a good way of publicising WRA to the public and will hopefully bring in much needed revenue to the PLC.

This is a 36 hour fundraiser, so I am asking for volunteers to help over the weekend, collecting and laying out coins. We have chosen this weekend as it is the last weekend for children to travel free, so hopefully we can inform people of this and encourage them to participate. Anyone donating more than 1 yard of coins over the weekend will receive a discount on that days travel. Coins can be donated prior to the event. All the proceeds are for the track appeal.

Please RISE TO THE CHALLENGE ask your family and friends for their help. Tell members of the public you meet on the trains about the event and lets raise some money.

Ken Monkman (Chairman WRA)

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

This month's volunteer of the month is *Peter Harbord*. Long-serving volunteer worker, Peter knows most aspects of the Wensleydale Railway inside out, from experience on trains, tracks, signalling, stations (and probably much more). Founder/Co-ordinator of Bedale Station Group in 2008, he steered the group into a team of volunteers through 2009 and is often the first to arrive at Bedale (from his Northallerton home) for the weekly working party at the station.

Typically, Peter was first on scene to clear snowdrift, first to roll up sleeves and plunge up to his shoulders into a blocked drain during a rainstorm, and is invariably first to break up a potentially long coffee-break with "Come on chaps, chop chop!"

Instrumental in drawing up Bedale Station's Development Plan, his commitment to WRA is summed up by a BSG member. "I don't know what we'd do without Peter!" It's even rumoured he wears his fluorescent *high viz* tunic over his pyjamas in case of an emergency call-out.

Congratulations and our thanks to Peter. Why not nominate someone for next month's volunteer of the month? Just send your "citation" to the Editor

OPERATION / ENGINEERING

Again we have been running works trains for sleeper replacement, embankment stabilisation and ballasting, using the class 20.

On Thursday 22nd April we had a training day at Constable Burton with signallers and train crew to practice passing trains ready for the first day of passing passenger trains on 1st May.

The class 03 shunter has for some time had a knock on a connecting rod bearing. The connecting rod has now been removed and will be sent to the midland railway centre for repair. WRA are covering the cost.

Late last year 47703 was stopped for various reasons; we have now repaired an earth fault, cured a power control problem and we are left with a traction motor bearing fault. We have agreed with the owner that we will lift the locomotive off one bogie and replace the traction motor with a reconditioned unit supplied by the owner. This should give us two working class 47 loco's for the summer season as 47715 is in full working order following some minor attention during the shut down. Thanks should go to Craig Armstrong of West Coast Railways for his help on Class 47 maintenance and repair.

We are looking forward to the Wensleydale food festival weekend. We intend to run 47798 "Prince William" pulling the Mk2a coaches and 47715 "Posiden" dragging the DMU stock on an intensive 2 train timetable on Saturday 1st May, with a 2 train service 3rd and 4th May using loco hauled and DMU.

Our future plans are to have the DMU centre cars ready for the steam service, and to continue work on the WRA Mk1 buffet coach and the other Mk1 coaches that should arrive in the near future.

Tim Williamson

VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

The very large number of excursions, guided walks and on-board events (jazz and Alesman trains, for example) is creating an apparently insatiable demand for volunteers!

Perhaps YOU know someone who would like to become involved? Volunteering doesn't suit everyone but it can be great fun when things are going well! And very satisfying too to work for such a "noble cause" (that's a quotation from a newspaper). So please look at the list of dates on the new leaflet (coming shortly, with your AGM mailing) and consider whether you know anyone who might enjoy the work, the companionship, meeting customers and so on. And meanwhile, can you think of someone who might become a customer of the Wensleydale Railway and pay to ride on our trains? Please read through the new leaflet when you see it around and help to promote WR's services and events.

Ruth Annison

THE LATE ERIC HALL

Eric passed away suddenly on Friday April 23rd while walking on the North Yorkshire Moors. A memorial Service will be held at Wetherby Methodist Church on Friday May 7th at 1pm.

Eric joined the Association shortly after its formation and undertook many tasks in the earlier days, the restoration of the Toad Brake van in particular. In latter years he found it difficult to attend the Railway but continued to work on our behalf. The Signal Box windows at Leeming, which Eric constructed, will be a lasting memory to his dedication and skills. Eric was Chair of the York / Knaresborough Branch, he will be sorely missed and our condolences go to his wife and family.

John Mazzucchi

THANK YOU!

A big thank you to all who helped at the Richmond Town Hall coffee morning (while I was in hospital!). £212 was raised, so a bit down on last time due to the very foggy weather. There is another booked for 18th November. Why not come along and make it a social occasion to meet other volunteers? Where else can you get tea/coffee and biscuits for 70p?

Maureen Stockbridge

SPECIAL WORKING PARTY

On Wednesday 26 May, a party (possibly 30 or more) of "extra" volunteers is coming from Menwith Hill – the RAF listening/tracking post near Harrogate. They will be a mixed group of civilian support staff and possibly some USAF personnel. Some will be going to Aysgarth and others to Bedale and a programme of vegetation clearance is being planned. (No trains on that day). This is being organised by the Direct Works Team and they would welcome any other volunteers who would like to be involved. It should be a good social occasion! Please

contact John Tong if you want more details - jandmtong@hotmail.co.uk or any member of the DWT.

MONTHLY POSTERS

Each month Peter Williams, our web editor, produces an A4 sized colour poster of the next two months' activities, which is e-mailed to all Yorkshire and Humberside tourist information centres. Could YOU display the poster anywhere, or arrange for a shop or other local business to display it for us? You can find a link to the poster on the home page of the Wensleydale Railway website (www.wensleydalerrailway.com) in one of the blue boxes in the right hand margin

250 CLUB

April prize winners - 1st £78 Philip Smith, 2nd £39 Peter Blakey, 3rd £21 M.J. Barker, 4th £13 Alan Koolman.

May prize winners - 1st £78 Brian Walmsley, 2nd £39 Ian Wray, 3rd £21 Oliver Richardson, 4th £13 B.D. Seymour

During the past year the Club Committee have made two donations, on your behalf, towards specific projects. In April £750 was donated towards the repair and refurbishment of Aysgarth Cottage then in October a further £750 was donated towards the cost of purchasing sleepers. Moving on to the current year £450 has been donated to purchase 4 new Burco Boilers and items of crockery for Catering. The Club Committee takes this opportunity to thank the 250 Club members for making these donations possible. Renewal/Application Forms will be circulated from May/June time. Watch out for them.

Peter Blakey (Club Secretary)

AYSGARTH STATION

The Direct Works Team has started on the refurbishment of the site and in particular the buildings. The first element to receive attention is the Weighbridge Office which has had the roof and roof structure replaced. Work will continue on the other buildings towards protecting them from any further deterioration before beginning their refurbishment. Part of this programme is to clear out the contents of the buildings which have amassed over a number of years. So -

Do you have anything stored at Aysgarth Station?

If so please contact Paul Markie (01969 663811 or paul.markie@tesco.net). If no one contacts me we will assume the items are no longer required and will disperse or dispose of them accordingly.

CASH FOR CARTRIDGES

The 'Cash for Cartridges' fundraising scheme has now been closed. David Haxby, who ran the scheme, would like to thank all those who contributed their used cartridges. Over £152 was received, and a final sum is still due, but it is now felt that there may be better and more efficient ways of raising money. I would also like to thank the Northallerton Computer Shop, which provided space for a collection box.

DIRECT WORKS TEAM

For all of April our efforts have centred on Aysgarth. Paul Markie who lives in the village noticed that the roof of the weighbridge office was bowing in as a result of no maintenance for decades and the recent weight of snow over a protracted period. 2 grants from FOAS and the 250 club have enabled us to strip off the slates, ridge tiles, and all the rotten timbers. The reroofing has started with new wood, and roofing felt being used.

In the meantime a big clear up has occurred at the entrance with lots of scrub bashing removing years of growth and tree stumps. Warmth was sustained with large fires each week. The whole of the outside of the fence on the main access has had preservative painted on it.

Paul is also surveying all the buildings to determine the cost for repairs to prevent further deterioration. Complete preservation is in the long term future.

In the Goods Shed and the Portakabin there are several years' worth of 'things that we ought to keep just in case!' The time has come for a sort out and artefacts that are deemed of historical interest, future use and the like will definitely be kept. If you have any claims or feel you need to extract your items please contact Paul soonest, and certainly before Wed 19 May 2010. (See item on Aysgath Station above).

Scruton station rebuild (with a lot of help from Darlington College); restoring Bedale Signal Box; making a water tank for Leyburn are imminent jobs, and continuing our work at Redmire Dairy will keep us busy for many months.

Our liaison continues with Darlington College and their recent visit has proved particularly successful as they wish to do some practical work by restoring the old Morris Commercial coach in Aysgarth goods shed; sorting out the 'crunched' Wickham trolley; and refurbishing a DMU diesel engine back at the college.

John Tong

ROLLING STOCK GROUP

Work continued on the mark 1 RMB – no. 1879. The plan is to have it ready for use with the first steam loco service on July 17. Effort has been concentrated on the smaller west compartment, the most noticeable improvement being the cream ceiling.

The main bulkheads have been sanded and given the first coat of mahogany stain. More work is needed on the west bulkhead, which suffered fire damage at Weardale when vandals set fire to the end seat. The damage to that upholstery and other badly faded seats means that we are looking for 'new' matching upholstery for 1 seat back and 4 squabs.

The large radiators, one in each of 3 vestibules, have been rubbed down and the centre one repainted with metallic silver, which matches the ribbed aluminium wall panels. The south roof was rubbed down and primed and a start made with the hi-build black roof paint at the west end.

The cream/red mark 2s were positioned at the platform to prepare them for the May Bank Holiday weekend 2 train operation. Opportunity was taken to finish rubbing down, prime and black paint the whole of Madison's south roof. Only Sarah needs the south roof painting, but on 5 of the 6 coaches the north roof is still to do.

A preliminary investigation into the instability of the Shark ballast plough brake van's verandas was carried out on the 7th of the month. Sadly, this turned out to be Eric Hall's last job on the railway as he died later in the month.

Barry Wetherell

THE USE (OR MIS-USE) OF THE TOWER

As reported in the last news letter the clamps on the stabilisers have been found to be broken. These clamps are made of cast aluminium and under NO circumstances must they be hit by a hammer. This tower was provided by the WRA (at an approx cost of £1500) such that members may work safely and within the law. If any part becomes broken / defective either accidentally or otherwise; please do the honourable thing and report it!

John Mazzucchi

VOLUNTEERS TEAM

There still seems some confusion (what's new?) about who is involved in volunteer induction and training. The new team comprises Dave Elliot as Volunteers Coordinator, Sue Scurlock as Induction Coordinator, (who keeps the address details, etc on the database and will organise the inductions); Dave, Joe Skimming and myself will take turns to run inductions and will mentor new volunteers through their first few months and I will continue to edit the newsletter (though if anyone is interested...?!). Please note the email addresses as follows:-

For General Volunteer issues -

Volunteers@WensleydaleRailwayAssociation.com

For Induction issues –

Induction@WensleydaleRailwayAssociation.com

For Newsletter issues –

Newsletter@WensleydaleRailwayAssociation.com

There is a communications tray in the general office at Leeming Bar, in which papers for all of the Volunteers Team can be left.

Philip Smith

HELP WANTED!

Wednesday 5th May at 7pm at Bedale Station, to help pack the envelopes for the WRA AGM. It is a good social event – with coffee/tea provided. Please come!

Deadline for the next newsletter is 31st May

Send to:- Philip Smith c/o Leeming Office or Newsletter@WensleydaleRailwayAssociation.com

NEWSLETTER SUPPLEMENT

The following items were inadvertently omitted from the original Newsletter:-

WELCOME to new volunteers who have completed their induction – David and Jennifer Blakeley, Jonathan Coustick, Anthony and Barbara French, Dan Froggatt, Peter and Susan Dew, Russell Lord and, also David Haswell, who has returned after a period of absence! We hope they will all enjoy their volunteering with the railway.

WR Calendar 2011 and Postcards The WR Retail Team invites landscape images of the Railway in all its forms for consideration for inclusion in the WR Calendar 2011 and as future postcards. Closing date for submission of calendar photos is **end May 2010**. Full details are at www.wensleydalerailwayassociation.com/NoticeBoard.html.

Cinerail and Marsden DVDs The WR shops are pleased to be able to offer the full range of Cinerail and Marsden Rail DVDs. There is something for everyone from profiles of modern diesel locomotives to vintage footage from the 1950s, including some of our own area and a future release will include some interesting shots of the Wensleydale line. The Retail Team hopes to provide a mail order service; details will be published on the WRA website when finalised.

Pre-Owned OO Gauge Model Railway Stocks of these very popular items are still available at Leyburn Shop. Buy now and support the Track Appeal!

Train Sounds Leyburn Shop has recently been the lucky recipient of a collection of train sounds on vinyl. Many of the LPs are on the renowned "Argo Transacord" label; call in to check out these very rare and highly collectable records.

Magazines, Videos and Cassettes The WR Shops are regrettably unable to accept further donations of these items. The exceptions to this general rule are railway videos and small format (A5) transport-related magazines which can be accommodated in limited quantities. **DVDs, CDs, jigsaws and books in good condition are welcome at all times.**