



SUPPORTERS'  
**DARTMOOR RAILWAY**  
ASSOCIATION

## THE DARTMOOR PONY

The Magazine of the Dartmoor Railway  
Supporters' Association

No.8

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Santa Express  
T9s on the Atlantic Coast  
The Permanent Way

## The DARTMOOR PONY

Issue No. 8

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The views expressed in the newsletter are not necessarily those of the Dartmoor Railway Supporters' Association.

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**FRONT COVER:** 31454 stands at Okehampton in appropriate weather conditions with the Santa Express *Photo: P Wagstaff*

#### BACK COVER:

**Top:** 31190 at Bow on a trial run

**Bottom:** The first Santa Expresses were with 31190 seen here at Okehampton *Photo: P Ritchie*

## CONTENTS

Editorial	Page 4
From the General Manager	Page 6
The Railway	Page 7
General	Page 7
Volunteers	Page 9
Santa's Preparations	Page 11
The Permanent Way	Page 13
Book Review	Page 16
Caption Please	Page 16
T9s on the Atlantic Coast	Page 17
Presentation	Page 20
A day Out bashing the Foliage	Page 21
Dartmoor Railway 12 <sup>th</sup> September 2010	Page 26
Railway Labels	Page 25
Committee Members	Page 26
Mince Pie Specials Timetable	Page 28

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DRSA Membership Matters	01837-840670
Westcountry Models	01837-55330
Buffet at Okehampton Station	01837-55667

DR/DRSA Website [www.dartmoor-railway.co.uk](http://www.dartmoor-railway.co.uk)

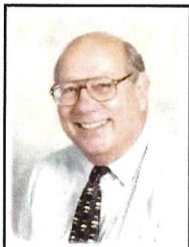
## **Editorial:**

*By Peter Ritchie*

It's that time again and the deadline for the magazine resolutely refuses to budge. So, here we go again.

What an extraordinary couple of months we have just had. As forecast, Thumper was taken out of use for some badly needed maintenance on its engine and Bluebell Mel, our 08 shunter, was drafted in to operate the Dartmoor Pony throughout November. 2 Class 31s were due to reach us in time for the start of the Santa season. Murphy's Law intervened in the shape of the first batch of winter weather and 31454 was stuck in two feet of snow at Derby. 31190 made it down here but, again with Murphy's connivance, this was the locomotive without electric train heating. What heated the Mk 2 coaches which had been spruced up for Santa. Yes, you've got it, electric train heating. To cut a long story short, and after an heroic effort by all the C&W staff up at Meldon, the first weekend of Santa trains was operated by 31190 with the Class 117 coach and the Courier Coach in tow. The corridor connections between both vehicles were incompatible and the call at Sampford Courtenay was used to get the children to Santa's grotto for their presents. Train heating was by fan heater inserted into the carriage during the stopovers at Okehampton. Nevertheless, the trains that weekend were very cold. The vast majority of our passengers, having been forewarned by a letter explaining the situation before they boarded, managed to enjoy themselves and the looks on the children's faces was sufficient reward for the effort. I don't want to say too much about Santa's grotto here, there are photographs later. Needless to say, it was a superb effort to create the right atmosphere for Santa. Well done everybody. The second engine, 31454, duly arrived towards the end of the next week and the train was then made up of two Mk2s and the courier coach. The passenger compartment was warm, almost too warm at times, and the decorations gave it a truly Christmassy atmosphere. The elves and Santa's helpers who had suffered the cold of the previous weekend must have thought it was heaven in comparison.

Dave Clegg mentions that we have been given a grant by a local charity. This can only be good news because it indicates that the railway is becoming better known in the area. We now need to make ourselves more visible to the general public and I'm delighted to report that Peter Chapman, one of our regular volunteer drivers, has volunteered to be our Publicity Officer and, as such, your committee has co-opted him onto the committee. He also takes



some very good photographs as evidenced in this magazine from time to time. Welcome, Peter, we look forward to seeing the Dartmoor Railway's profile improving in the local and railway press. Talking about the railway press, I noted that a picture of 31190 on arrival at Okehampton after its journey south appears on page 31 of the latest edition of RAIL magazine. The photographer is David Hunt who is a great friend to our railway. David has been doing a lot to help out with the Santa trains.

After Christmas it is on to the Mince Pie Specials. And, after the New Year we cease operations until Easter. Of course, the work on refurbishing and maintaining stock will continue throughout the closed season and there might well be a surprise or two for us on the way.

The situation vis-à-vis the Devon & Cornwall operations seems to remain static. The Company must be careful not to lose the evident enthusiasm of the local populace for the service to Exeter which will evaporate if nothing is forthcoming soon.

Thanks to those of you who sent me their best wishes when I lost Jess. Your thoughts were very kind. It only remains for me to offer everybody

Best Wishes  
for a  
Very Happy Christmas  
and a  
Happy and Successful New Year

### **MONTHLY GATHERING**

Staff, Volunteers and Association Members gather on the evening of the third Thursday of each month at the  
FOX AND HOUNDS  
On the A386 Okehampton to Tavistock Road.

If you can make it you will be more than welcome to come and chat.

## FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

*By Graham Isom*

Here we are again at yet another edition of the 'Dartmoor Pony' the magazine of the DRSA and it is the 'Santa Specials' and the 'Mince Pie Specials' season. I must thank all the volunteers who have assisted as a 'Santa', Elf, Reindeer, Driver, Guard, Ticket Office Staff not to mention a Penguin, and provided all the support necessary, to make a success of the service that we have offered. The Families have thanked you for an enjoyable journey through the snow covered areas of our Dartmoor Railway line and the children (adults) who visited the 'Santa's Grotto' on board the train really loved it.



Whilst on the subject of the 'Santa', thanks go out to all the helpers in producing another successful grotto. It has been commented on by all who have visited it during the 'Santa Specials'. Well done, because it is those very people who remember it more and pass on their experiences to others. This reflects the great work you all do to make this event a success. Thank You.

Well, as stated above the time and year has passed by so fast again. It must mean I am getting 'Older'. Please look back and see what you have all succeeded in accomplishing over what has been another a very successful year.

The Dartmoor Railway, through the DRSA, will continue to go forward. I am reminded that 2011 subscriptions are now due (including mine), so, Mr Flick, be ready for a big post bag in the next few weeks.

I have kept this short for now, as the Honourable Mr Ritchie, is awaiting my article for the magazine. Then the 'Lucky Devil' is off to warmer climate of 'Dubai' for Christmas. Good luck to you, have a lovely time, you will have deserved the rest.

Lastly may I wish you all a 'Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year' and I will be looking forward to seeing you at Okehampton in 2011

## THE RAILWAY

### General Activities

In the last issue we left the railway with Thumper about to be withdrawn to allow for work on the engine. This went ahead and the 08 0-6-0 diesel shunter, Bluebell Mel, was pressed into service together with Julian's DMU coach and the LMS goods van. Because of its lack of speed the timetable



*31190 and Santa consist*

*Photo: P Wagstaff*

had to be revised with the service running between Okehampton and Meldon only leaving Samford Courtenay to itself. This service was maintained throughout November and the Railway was looking forward to the arrival of two Class 31s from BARS to facilitate the running of Santa services over weekends in December. Their trip south coincided with the start of the first cold snowy spell of winter weather with the result that 31190 reached Okehampton whilst 31454 was stranded at Derby by a couple of feet of snow. This would have been fine but for the fact that 31190 has no electric train heating (ETH) and the coaches prepared for Santa were fitted with ETH. There followed proof that miracles do happen as the Meldon crew tried to prepare the DMU coach and the courier coach (where Santa has his grotto) for the task. Regretably, no amount of cajoling, battering or persuasion could make the recalcitrant coach's heaters function. Hence it was that, when the train reached Oke fan heaters were put in the carriage in an attempt to raise the temperature above zero. Because they were powered by shore supplies, they had to be removed before the train could move. As the Santa passengers arrived they were offered the chance of changing the date of their train or a refund if they felt things were too cold. The vast majority of families carried on and the beaming faces of the children showed that, despite the freezing temperatures, the draw of Santa still has a magic of its own. There was a further difficulty with this consist,

the courier coach corridor connection was incompatible with that of the DMU. This difficulty was overcome by having the children visit the grotto during the stop at Sampford Courtenay. There is a vast Thank You due to all involved with this first weekend. The working conditions up at Meldon were atrocious and, of course, all the elves and helpers had to endure the freezing train. Where would we be without these magnificent volunteers.



*Mk 2 for Christmas*

*Photo: M Ellis*

31454 duly arrived towards the end of the following week and the Mk2 coaches were in action. What a contrast, lovely warm coaches. In fact, the heating in the main coach was almost too hot. Overall, the Santa trains appear to be very successful and the reactions of the families seem to be very positive. It bodes well for the Mince Pie Trains after Christmas

Looking back on the operating year, it has certainly been a bit of a roller coaster. The promise of steam raised spirits earlier on which were then dashed by 30075 going u/s. Then 30075 was serviceable again and arrived with us for a shorter period. Steam is expensive but the returns from 30075s visit indicated that, had it been with us for the original period, it would have fully paid its way. Then there was the situation outlined above. The dispatch of the locos to Okehampton was delayed until it seemed that they wouldn't get here in time. Enter the weather and only one got to us. Now, of course, all is well and looking good. The 31s are due to power a rail tour late in January 2011 so they won't be staying down here for long. 2011 is a new year and much is being achieved with minimal equipment. The news of a grant to the DRSA is most welcome and will raise the spirits of the Meldon volunteers.

**Articles/photographs for the Magazine**

If submitted in hard copy, photographs should be of at least 6"x4" size and of good quality. Copy submitted electronically should be in Microsoft Word format (pre 2007 edition) with any associated photographs in jpeg format no smaller than 2Mb when expanded.

**Volunteer Report 1:**

*Dave Clegg Volunteer Coordinator*

Well, there's bad news, and some very good news! The bad news has been the appalling weather recently which has made working up at Meldon for the C&W group quite unpleasant and has caused us to cancel on a number of occasions. However, all bodywork on the ex-EMU Driving Trailer S61743



*EMU Driving Trailer*

*Phot: P Wagstaff*

has now been completed and it looks magnificent in Meldon Yard in its smart blue/grey livery. It now awaits resolution of heating and lighting issues. Once the Santas are over, the C&W team hope to give the Thumper a deserved 'refresh' while its diesel engine receives attention in the shed. Meanwhile, Martin

Kent and Julian are working on the installation of lighting in the shed which will improve working conditions greatly. (Yes: we have been working in the dark – in more ways than one!)

It hasn't been much warmer on the platform at Okehampton either, so again this has impacted on outside work. The freezing temperatures have also created problems for the 'Santa Specials' rolling stock and caused water in the train toilets to freeze. I can see now why Santa normally uses a sleigh'. Volunteers put an enormous effort into converting the 'Courier Van' into Santa's Grotto



*Phot: P Ritchie*

(including a fireplace for Santa) which should mean he'll want to visit us again next year - and hopefully our customers will too!

The very good news is that we have been successful in gaining a substantial grant from Okehampton United Charities to purchase equipment and tools which will help the volunteers in a variety of areas. We are focusing much of



Santa's finished fireplace

Photo: M Ellis

the grant on buying equipment and tools that will bring Health and Safety benefits, e.g. better working platforms, plumbed electrics/ compressed air to reduce potential trip hazards, and proper storage facilities to enable materials to be more efficiently housed - which again will help avoid trip hazards. The grant will also enable us to buy industrial quality tools

which will have a longer working life and be more efficient. We are most grateful to the charity for helping us in this way.

Can I just say a huge "Well Done" to all of the volunteers who have helped this year. There wouldn't be a railway without you. And I'd be twiddling my thumbs at home.

### Volunteer Report 2:

*Tom Baxter*

Not too much to add to this but Oke Station Team have been replacing woodwork on Platform 2 Access Ramp. This is proving to be an extensive job as much of the woodwork has rotted quite badly. We are repairing and replacing damaged sections on a patch and mend basis but trying to keep and reuse existing timber where it is still sound. Members of the team have also assisted with vegetation clearance around the buffet at Meldon, and in the Okehampton and Sampford Courtenay station areas.

The gardening programme at Okehampton has inevitably ceased for the moment and has literally gone into cold storage. The flower fairies have though for the time being metamorphosed into elves and are assisting Santa in his grotto. (*and they are doing a great job there too: Ed*)

### SANTA PREPARATIONS:



A lot of hard work went into converting the Courier Coach into Santa's grotto as can be seen from these photos





The end result is quite extraordinary and very effective



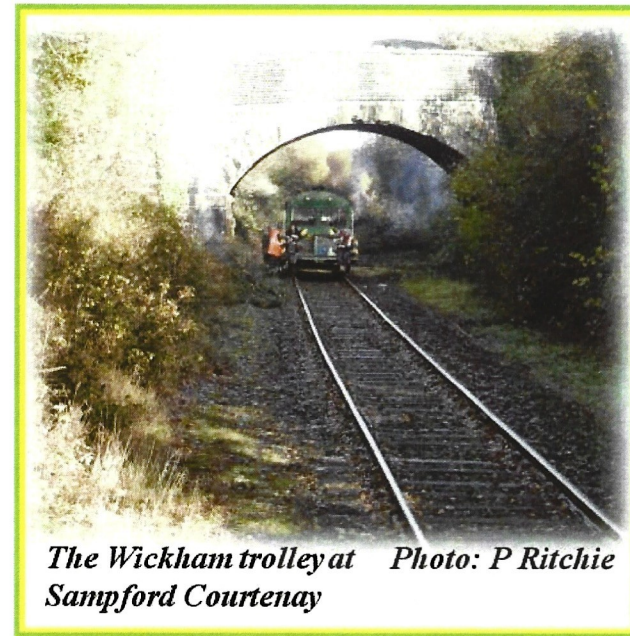
Somehow a penguin has joined Santa's staff to keep Rudolph company

## THE PERMANENT WAY

*By Leading Trackman Alan Cocker*

I am responsible, together with Andrew Webb, for maintaining the 15 miles of track from Meldon to Coleford Junction. The infrastructure is owned by Aggregate Industries but maintained by the Dartmoor Railway to near mainline standards so that freight and passenger trains can use the Meldon branch at line speed which is currently 55mph for passenger and 40mph for freight traffic. We are also contracted to maintain all the sidings at Meldon Quarry on behalf of Aggregate Industries.

Work on the track is nearly always carried out by taking a T(3) possession, which effectively blocks the line to all rail traffic. The possession is planned in advance and published in the weekly engineering notice. For my



*The Wickham trolley at Samford Courtenay Photo: P Ritchie*

protection, the Crediton to Okehampton staff is taken from the signaller at Crediton, which I have to sign for. This prevents any train from entering the Crediton to Okehampton section. In a similar way, I also take the Okehampton to Meldon staff from the Duty Manager at Okehampton, which prevents any train from entering the Meldon to Okehampton section.

Additional detonator protection is put down at Coleford and Meldon, together with 'Stop' boards on the line. When all this has taken place I become the PICOP (Person in Charge of Possession) and can authorise an engineering train to work within the possession, which is generally a Wickham trolley and trailer which we use to transport personnel and tools to the worksite. Once at the worksite I also take on the role of a COSS (Controller of Site Safety) and brief staff on safety and any particular hazards at the site and make sure that work is carried out safely.

One of the major tasks is to control the lineside vegetation which was allowed to grow almost uncontrolled following the closure of the line to regular passenger trains by British Railways. Regular tree felling is carried out to open up the line at the most vulnerable areas. Apart from reducing the hazard of leaves on the line during the autumn, it also allows sunlight to penetrate the track bed and helps to dry out the track...

There are 61 bridges and culverts, all of which are over 100 years old and have to be regularly checked. There is an ongoing schedule to repair culverts, some of which are in danger of collapse. The 30 miles of lineside fencing is also the responsibility of the railway and has to be repaired or replaced on a regular basis. This requires a good relationship with the landowners next to the railway as any breaches in the fencing risks the possibility of animals getting on the line. We quite often work together with the local farmers to keep the fencing stock-proof.

There are 9 crossings between Meldon and Coleford, consisting of accommodation, occupation and foot crossings. All of these have to be maintained, including the crossing itself and the associated signs and gates. The vegetation also has to be controlled so as not to restrict the sighting of the crossing by train drivers.

A planned programme of renewing sleepers is carried out and mostly involves wooden sleepers that have become rotten. These are replaced as an ongoing process and affect most of the line apart from two sections of CWR (Continuous Welded Rail), which is mounted on concrete sleepers. These are at Coleford Junction where the railway interfaces with Network Rail and the other is the recently laid section at Bow station.

Once a year, generally in March, every other fishplate has to be removed and oiled. These are the plates that hold together the jointed sections of track and, without oil, would not allow the lines to expand and contract in hot and cold weather. Failure to carry out this important task could result in a buckled rail. Believe me, there are a lot of fishplates between Meldon and Coleford where an average rail length is either 30 or 60 feet. Mathematicians, I am sure, could work out how many sections there are in 15 miles and how many fishplates have to be undone, oiled and done up again!

Every two weeks, I personally patrol the entire section of line, looking for any defects to the infrastructure, making a note of them as I go and then prioritise them on my return. This is generally carried out over two days and

is repeated every month when I am accompanied by the railway's civil engineer paying special attention to structures.

We are also responsible for the maintenance and visibility of lineside furniture such as signals, speed and whistle boards, and mileposts of which there is one post marking every quarter of a mile. The miles represent the distance from London (Waterloo).

The deep cuttings on the line have drainage channels in the area at the side of the track known as the cess. These are designed to carry away water that flows into the cutting from adjoining fields during heavy rain. The importance of these drains is to prevent areas known as wet beds from forming, where water is allowed to pool and be held under the ballast. The drains therefore have to be kept clear to prevent this from happening.

Occasionally, drivers will report a dipped joint, causing an uncomfortable ride for passengers. This happens when regular traffic over a jointed line causes the ballast underneath a joint to be compacted and has to be corrected by manually packing the joint to bring it back up to the correct level.

I can't escape the dreaded paperwork either! Once a week I have to submit records of possession taken, COSS briefings carried out, patrol surveys of the line and work completed forms. All these forms are submitted to the Duty Manager at Okehampton signal box where one copy is filed and the other is sent to the Track Maintenance Manager at BARS Ltd.

So, the next time you travel on a train from Exeter to Okehampton or from Okehampton to Meldon, please spare a thought for the two of us that maintain the **Permanent Way**.

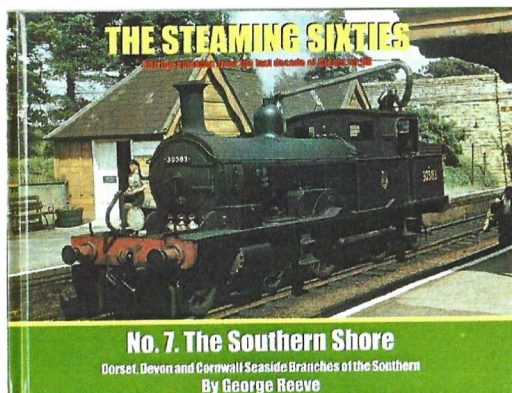


Photo: B Jones

Perhaps a candidate for a caption contest – Ross Henrywood deals with a burning sleeper after the passage of 30075



## BOOK REVIEW



*The Steaming Sixties – Stirring Episodes from the Last Decade of Steam on BR*

*7. The Southern Shore – Dorset, Devon and Cornwall Seaside Branches of the Southern*

*George Reeve*

Published by Irwell Press Ltd  
ISBN 978-1-906919-25-2

£11.95

Unlike Volume 4 of this series, reviewed in the last “Pony”, these are not the author’s photographs. They are taken from the collections of George Powell and John Eysers via the South Western Circle. Inevitably, there is not such a personal touch to the captions attached to the photographs as in Volume 4, which is a minor shortcoming. It actually starts in Salisbury and covers most of the main line and branches off through to Padstow. But a photograph of a Beattie well tank on the Wenford branch is included. This is another super little book of rare colour photos of the Southern in the south west.

Recommended.

PGR

### CAPTION PLEASE!

Keith takes to the dance floor? Nobody tried to provide a caption to the last picture. Surely someone can label this!



*Photo: M Ellis*

## T9s ON THE ATLANTIC COAST

*Monday 22nd August 1960*

Bodmin Road station sweltered in noonday sunshine as I joined 5564 and its ‘B’ set for the climb to Bodmin General but we had hardly steamed away from the main line before we were engulfed in a torrential cloudburst. Rain drumming on the carriage roof quite drowned the Great Western bark of the engine as it tackled the stiff 1 in 37 gradient and all that could be seen from the window was a wall of water.

A brief lull at Bodmin General allowed me to photograph the train before it set off for Wadebridge then the heavens opened again and sent me running for cover. 4565 with a train for Bodmin Road had been waiting to cross with 5564. There being only one platform, it stood in a siding by the engine shed before backing down into the station after the first train had departed. A porter with a barrowful of parcels to load naturally thought that the driver would bring his train under the canopy but that gentleman had other ideas, stopping it just short. The more irate the porter became, the louder he shouted and the more humorous the driver found the situation but the train still didn’t move an inch.

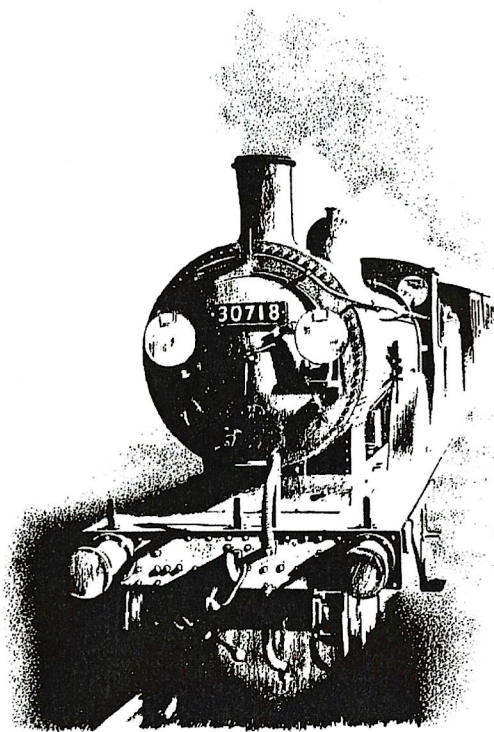
Eventually the rain eased, watery sunshine lit the streaming granite and while waiting passengers made a mad dash for compartments the swearing porter hastily piled parcels in the van. 4565 made a belated departure for Bodmin Road where no doubt all the connections were missed.

It seemed an idyllic summer day again as I walked down into the town towards the towering greystone walls of the forbidding jail and the little LSWR station which nestled almost beneath them. To my dismay GWR pannier tank 4666 was heading the 2pm to Padstow instead of the smart little 02 I’d expected. According to the pannier’s fireman, who was washing himself in a bucket full of steaming water from the engine, the Adams loco was having the week off. Seeing my disappointment he tried to cheer me by spluttering between mouthfuls of soap that a goods was due soon and SR mogul 31845 climbed slowly into view with a lengthy train as he spoke.

The 2pm was fairly full by this time and I shared the compartment with a group of locals who obviously knew one another and no doubt put on something of a performance for the foreigner in the corner. One chap, a fisherman, in thigh-high waders somehow managed to manipulate three rods and a huge basket into the compartment without damaging two middle-aged

ladies with laden shopping baskets, rosy cheeks and straw hats. Opposite me sat an elderly gent in a crumpled suit and after a few nods and winks one of the others asked him the time. This triggered off an act which eventually culminated in the production of a beautiful gold pocket watch which had been carefully wrapped in layer upon layer of old newspaper and secreted in some inner pocket.

At Wadebridge the others detrained, leaving me to watch 4666 being relieved by stately Drummond T9 No 30709 and my spirits rose as we clanked off to the blue and gold vistas of the Camel Estuary and the massed fishing nets of Padstow. Here, sister engine 30718 was fussing around with the train which I intended travelling on to Exeter and my excitement knew no bounds.



30709 ran on to the rather exposed, seaside turntable which served as a sort of grubby roundabout when the friendly crew gave some holidaymaker's children an unofficial ride round with the engine. I was able to photograph the two veteran locomotives together before 30709 returned to Wadebridge and then 30718 brought the stock for the 3.13pm departure into the single platform. The train comprised two elderly brake and corridor coaches labelled 'Waterloo', a PMV van and a 4 wheel goods van. The driver had a really good oil round his engine

since to my delight the T9 was booked to work right through to Exeter, over 87 miles and three hours away.

At Wadebridge one of the ancient Beattie well tanks appeared and attached another 4 wheeled van to the rear of our train. Getting rather close in order to photograph the proceedings my nose told me that it contained fish! We

ambled off up the North Cornwall line, calling at all stations so that nobody should be denied the privilege of a direct link with the capital. St Kew Highway, Port Isaac Road, Delabole, Camelford, Otterham, Tresmeer, Egloskerry, Launceston, Tower Hill, Ashwater, Halwill Junction, Ashbury, Maddaford Moor Halt and on to the main line at Okehampton. 62 miles in 2 hours 40 minutes, at an average speed of about 23mph seemed hardly likely to tax the locomotive but station stops were often quite lengthy affairs involving conversations between railwaymen and the T9 had to work hard in between. Very few people got on or off the train.

Just south of Launceston we lurched to such an abrupt halt that I looked out of the window fearing some sort of accident, although what we could have run down in this vast, empty landscape I couldn't begin to imagine. What I saw was about a dozen permanent way men, their day's work done, clambering aboard for a ride home; the PW Wickham trolley was perhaps unknown in these parts?

An Ivatt 2-6-2T with the single coach Torrington train met us at Halwill and of course it being Halwill, shunting was called for, another goods van was attached to our train. Vans now outnumbered coaches, and as they were all different shapes and sizes, made for a rather interesting looking combination. We paused at tiny Maddaford Moor Halt and I searched in vain for some source of passenger traffic nearby. Soon we were easing round the long curve and crossing the viaduct to arrive at Okehampton more or less on time in spite of the apparent delays.

According to the timetable only three minutes were allowed here and I was amazed to see that a further supply of 4 wheeled vans was being coupled to the rear, making a total of nine altogether. We now looked and certainly smelt, more like a goods train than anything else. A note of urgency now became apparent as we were due in Exeter St Davids, 25 miles away, in about 30 minutes which meant we needed to average over 50mph. This was the moment our driver had been waiting for, the chance to open the throttle and show that Dugald Drummond's T9s were not called 'greyhounds' for nothing. 30718 rattled up to Exeter in fine style, whistle screaming and speed well into the sixties. I had an exciting ride in the leading coach.

That the little fish ven stayed on the track was a miracle but it was still there, reeking, when we reached St Davids and I jumped off to watch the fun as the hefty Z class banker shuffled up behind. The 'Greyhound' sent pigeons fluttering in alarm with a series of ear splitting shrieks, answered by the 0-8-

OT at the far end of the station, then both drivers threw their regulators open and the strange cavalcade from Cornwall blasted up the gradient to Central station in an explosive culmination of this exhilarating epic run.

**PRESENTATION:**

This delightful bench seat has been donated to the Dartmoor Railway in memory of Ron Winger by his wife Jean. It's a wonderful way of keeping his memory fresh.



I am sure the seat will be well used

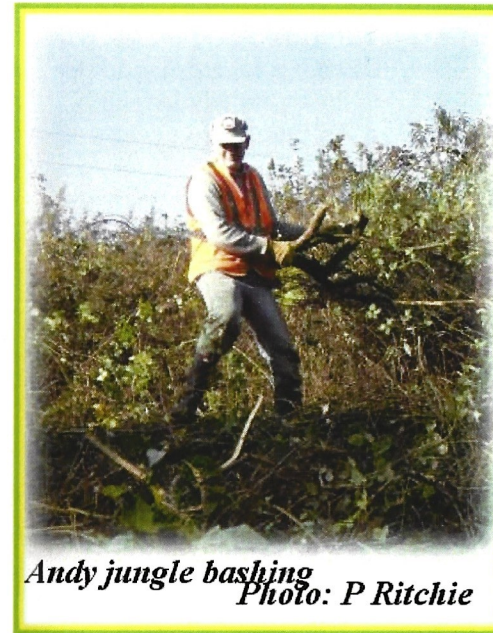


The dedication plaque.

**Wanted**

A volunteer to design and construct a stand/display for the DR/DRSA for use at village shows etc to publicise the Railway.

**A DAY OUT BASHING THE FOLIAGE;**



*Andy jungle bashing  
Photo: P Ritchie*

Taken during a recent exercise to control foliage near Sampford Courtenay station

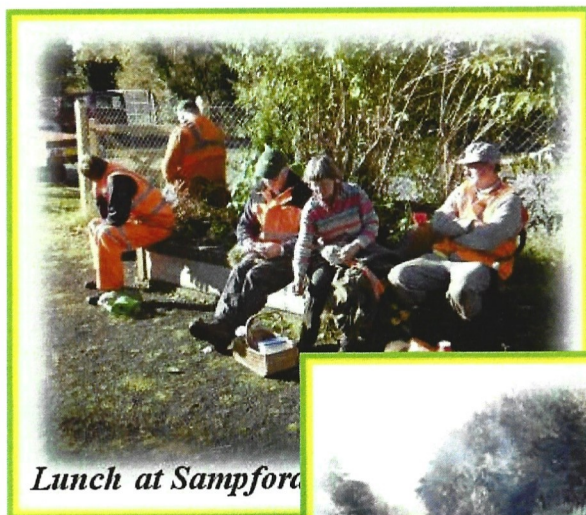


*Sue  
Photo P Ritchie*



*Short Break  
Photo: P Ritchie*

Despite some appearances to the contrary, everybody was working hard and achieved quite a bit



*Lunch at Sampford*

There is a lot more work to do down the whole length of the line



*Clearance*

The volunteer parties do make a small difference. A rail mounted flail would go along way towards establishing control.



*Tony in repose*

*Photo: P Ritchie*

## DARTMOOR RAILWAY-SUNDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2010

*Photos by the author, Dana Wiffen*

We caught First Great Western's first Sunday Rover special from Exeter St.Davids to Okehampton. Taking about 40 minutes it stops at Crediton, passes through Yeoford and stops at Sampford Courtenay before reaching the wonderful Okehampton Station.



Its always a pleasure to visit this great little railway hidden on the edge of the wonderful Dartmoor. There was only time to quickly grab our tickets before departing on their faithful old Thumper to Meldon Quarry Station. We then crossed the viaduct at Meldon and with its breathtaking views slowly

carried on along the former railway track (now a cycle and walkway) towards Tavistock.

There is something special about this journey which is both peaceful and wonderfully nostalgic for a train enthusiast like myself. By the numbers of both walkers and cyclists passing along the way plenty of others enjoy this route as well. As we headed towards Sourton we passed under several old railway bridges until we reached our destination at Sourton about an hour later. After a short rest we returned to Meldon Quarry Station and caught the train back



to Okehampton where we grabbed a snack in the delightful station buffet before walking to Okehampton Castle. We then walked the steep route back to Okehampton station where we once again boarded Thumper back to Meldon and its Buffet.Car.



Here we enjoyed the superb views from the Buffet's decked area and ate a tasty scone and drank a nice mug of tea. We spent some time there and had another cuppa before tearing ourselves away from the views and retuning to Okehampton.

The buffet at Meldon is a potential goldmine in terms of income for the railway. The volunteers have worked hard to get it reopened and it is proving very popular with cyclists and hikers travelling both ways as well as those passengers using The Dartmoor Railway.

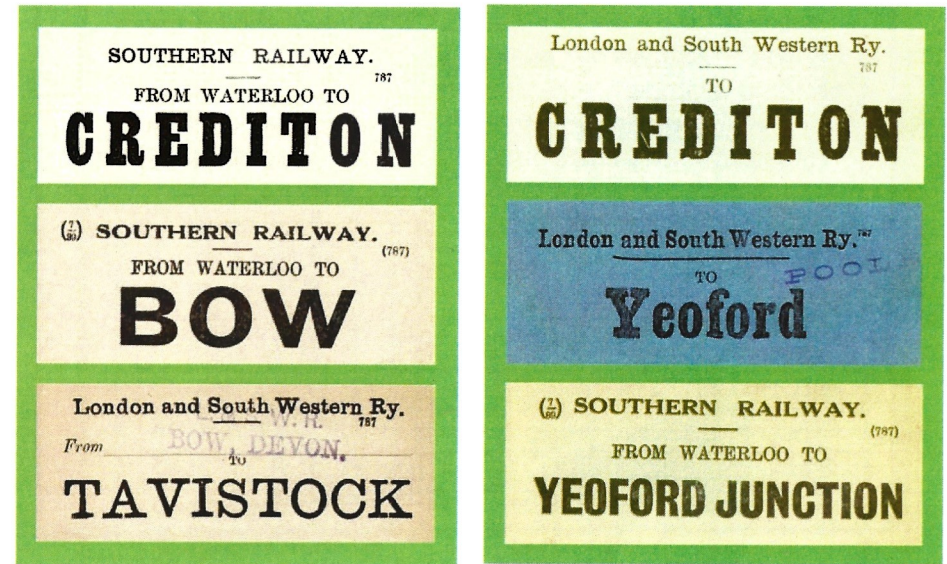
Back at Okehampton we grabbed a few more photos before catching the last train 18.00 back to Exeter.



This wonderful railway on the edge of Dartmoor is a must for all enthusiasts, walkers and holidaymakers alike, the facilities are superb and the staff helpful we will be back soon, thanks for a wonderful day.

*(Mr Wiffen does an annual pilgrimage down to the West Country and always visits the Dartmoor Railway. Thanks for this personal view of the railway, Dana; Ed)*

### RAILWAY LABELS:



A reminder that the railway is not just about engines and rolling stock. The above labels used on our railway are from the collection of Ross Henrywood.

**WESTCOUNTRY MODELS**

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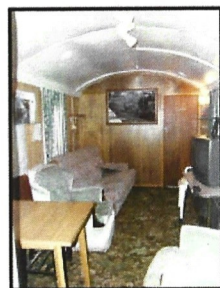
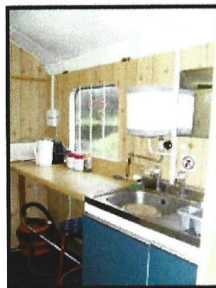
**THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE**

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Mail Order available • Collectables • Gifts

### MK 3 SLEEPING CAR AND CCT

This privately owned stock, situated next to the Meldon buffet coach is for the use of volunteers working on the Dartmoor Railway. Occupancy is on trust and it is essential that users are prepared to properly respect the facilities. Rooms are £3.00 per person per night. Further information can be obtained from Clive Warneford on 01747-825810 or David Clegg on 01626 867210



### Committee of the Dartmoor Railway Supporters' Association

**Chairman:-** Dick Henrywood

**Secretary:-** Philip Wagstaff

**Treasurer:-** Richard Proctor

**Membership Secretary:-** Peter Flick

**Joint Volunteer Coordinators:-** David Clegg, Dennis Barnes

**Dartmoor Railway Representative:-** Graham Isom

**Committee Members:-** Robert Joint  
André Farmar  
Peter Ritchie  
(Magazine Editor)  
Geoff Horner

## DARTMOOR RAILWAY



## MINCE PIE SPECIALS

Dates:

27th, 28th, 29th & 30th December 2010

Station	a/d	Time	Time	Time	Time
Meldon	d		1120	1350	1620
Okehampton	a		1130	1400	1630
Okehampton	d	0930	1200	1430	
Sampford Courtenay	d	0945	12.15	1445	
Bow*	a	1008	1238	1508	
Bow*	d	1012	1242	1512	
Sampford Courtenay	d	1038	1308	1538	
Okehampton	a	1050	1320	1550	
Okehampton	d	1100	1330	1600	
Meldon	a	1110	1340	1610	

**Bow\*** - Passengers may neither join nor leave the train at Bow

Tickets: Adults - £9.00 Senior Citizens - £7.00

Children - £5 (Under 5 years carried free)

(\*Infants classed as under 1 year old)

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