



SUPPORTERS'
DARTMOOR RAILWAY
ASSOCIATION

THE DARTMOOR PONY

The Magazine of the Dartmoor Railway
Supporters' Association

No.10

Summer 2011

£2.00



Breakfast in Bude
Thunderer for Dartmoor
Railway
AGM and Annual Report

The DARTMOOR PONY

Issue No. 10

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

This magazine will be published four times a year in the following months: March, June, September and December. Copy should be sent to the editor by last day of the month prior to publication date.

FRONT COVER: The nameplate of Class 50 008. Note that the old style ship's crest is mounted above the nameplate

BACK COVER:

Top: Yeoford: Exeter – Okehampton DMU 2nd June 1972
Photo B Mills

Bottom: North Tawton: Last day 1845 Oke - Exeter St David's 3rd June 1972
Photo B Mills

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**Whether cantankerous old curmudgeon,
Or hyperactive whelp,
The thing your railway wants the most,
Is a little bit of help!**

To volunteer on the Dartmoor Railway
please contact:-

Dave Clegg :- 01626 867210

Martin Kent :- 07866 210399

Editorial:

By Peter Ritchie



The Spring edition of the Pony was published with all involved with the railway on a tenuous 'high'. It looked very much as though ballast trains were about to start running again. As the magazine became available we heard the bad news that Meldon had not been awarded the anticipated contract due to a much higher prices quoted, it is believed. Freightliner, who were also led to believe that the contract had been awarded, continued with their planned driver refresher route learning trip sending 66551 up to Meldon with Peter Chapman at the controls with a number of drivers with him. So, it was not to be.

What of the future? We got some excellent news at the AGM. 50008 'Thunderer' will be based on our line from September onwards. The locomotive belongs to Garcia Hanson and is currently at Washwood Heath undergoing repairs. I'm sure we are all looking forward to its arrival. D&CR has it's freight operators licence and is still in negotiation over the passenger open operators certification. I've got a 'feeling in my water' that we might just see passenger services begin in 2012. Mind you, to put things in perspective, I thought they might just have started earlier this year. Hey ho!

It was heartening to see that 52 members attended the AGM in the Ockment Centre. The room was quite crowded and we are already looking towards booking one of the larger rooms next year. A presentation of photographs of the line was given by Bernard Mills whose photographs frequently appear in the railway press as well as our own Pony. Who present will forget the nickname he gave to the Class 143 – 'Bouncy Castles'?. Bernard, I will be unable to look at 142s and 143s in the same light again.

It has been a great boost to morale to see the new leaflets about both the DR and the DRSA in evidence. SPREAD THE WORD!

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

Did you notice? This is issue No 10 of The Dartmoor Pony and the twelfth magazine that your editor has edited!!!

FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

By Graham Isom



Well here we are again at another edition of the 'DRSA Pony' magazine and while we wait for the 'Summer' to arrive let's take a look at where we are since the restart of activities in the Spring.

The number of events that have occurred since the 9th April are many and have only been achieved by the hard work of the 'Working Volunteers' in all departments of the DRSA at the Dartmoor Railway, and the support shown by other members, both far and wide.

The visitor numbers are improving all the time and the work of the DRSA committee is beginning to bear further fruit in taking the railway and the DRSA to the public at Model Railway Shows, Country Fairs and other Exhibitions. Publicity Officer Peter Chapman, and his team of helpers, are making sure that the railway is 'visible'.

The floral displays are again looking excellent and receiving plenty of compliments - well done to the 'Station Team' and extra praise to our own 'Flower Fairies' in Sue Baxter and Wendy Ware along with the others in the team. We must not forget the supplier, 'Westcountry Fish & Garden Centre' at Bow (especially Sharon), whose help and assistance is very much appreciated.

The 'Atlantic Coast Express' run of the MG Car Club took place on Sunday 19th June. They had over 90 vehicles on display before the start from the car park at Okehampton Station. It was a delight and a pleasure to see the enthusiasm of the MG members. Thanks must go to our very own Buffet Team both inside the buffet and on the platform serving over 160 MG members with bacon baps and drinks.

Well, I am still trying to obtain a 'Steam Locomotive' for the period of the season through August. Garcia Hanson has moved his Class 50 locomotive 'Thunderer' 50008 from the East Lancashire Railway to the BARS depot at Washwood Heath for final repairs before it makes its journey to us at the Dartmoor Railway.

Whilst on the subject of August, a date for your diary, would you all keep the evening of August 20th free. It has been decided to have a member and guest night with a barbeque at Okehampton station. A train ride will be arranged to include a visit to the Meldon station area with a viewing of the model

railway layouts and also a possible insight to the 'Dartmoor Railway' workshops for those interested. The event will start at 17.30, more details to follow.

Once again my very heartfelt thanks to you all in keeping the railway running and in the eye of the visitors. An excellent job being well done and in pleasant surroundings.

Thank you

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual general Meeting of the Dartmoor Railway Supporters' Association took place at 1900 on Saturday 21st May in the Ockment Centre, Okehampton. With 52 members present this represented a considerable increase in numbers since last year's meeting (35). Full minutes of this meeting are available on application to the Secretary via the station. No elections to the committee were required since the number of candidates equalled the number of vacancies. The outgoing treasurer's Report was accepted and the chairman then submitted his report (see below). Mr Garcia Hanson then gave a short introduction to his rôle within BARS and the prospects for the future. He also assured the assembled company that he would definitely be basing his preserved Class 50 locomotive, *Thunderer*, at the Dartmoor railway. In the meantime BARS were attempting to find a steam locomotive to use on the DR. Mr Bernard Mills then gave an informative and, at times, highly amusing presentation of his photographs over the years of the line we know now as the Dartmoor railway. The meeting was then concluded and light refreshments were available.

Annual Report 2010-2011

Presented by Dick Henrywood, DRSA Chairman, at the Annual General Meeting held at the Ockment Centre on 21 May 2011

In my Chairman's report to last year's AGM, I was able to reflect on quite a range of events and noted that significant progress had been made, although much of it had not necessarily been apparent to the casual observer. I have to say that this year has again seen much work behind the scenes but some which has also been much more visible.

We ran the usual Dartmoor Pony services between Okehampton, Meldon and Sampford Courtenay through the summer, and also again had the Sunday Rover service with five return trips between Okehampton and Exeter,

financed by Devon County Council. The Santa Special and Mince Pie trains ran once more over the festive season, this time hauled by one or other of the BARS Class 31 diesels and again they proved very popular and worthwhile. Santa's Grotto, in particular, was a revelation!

But there is no doubt that the operational highlight of the season was the visit of the Yugoslavian USA Tank, number 30075, which was with us for a relatively short time in August and early September, initially somewhat curtailed by loco failure at the Watercross line, but once here it met with huge enthusiasm. The efforts made by the crew cannot be underestimated, and I was thrilled that Alistair Gregory was passed out as a driver while 30075 was here. It was so good to see steam along the line again, and we are using all our persuasive efforts to get a suitable loco back again this year.

Incidentally, I am delighted to be able to report that the Sunday Rover service has escaped the severe cuts within Devon County Council and will run again this summer, starting on 22nd May. Please support it by taking the opportunity to run the whole length of the line. You should get at least a wave as you pass through Bow. While talking about this summer's services, the line is scheduled to host two visiting railtours, one of which is due to be steam hauled. Watch this space!

One of the most important events of the year has to be organisational rather than operational. The committee worked hard to submit bids for finance to the Okehampton United Charity and as many of you will know we were successful. Initially we were granted some £3,000 for the purchase of tools and equipment for use in the workshop at Meldon but we subsequently received approval for three further projects involving £2,250 towards the restoration of a coach which has been gifted to us (a Mk.2a), £7,500 towards the purchase and restoration of a further coach (unspecified at the time), and another £2,000 for restoration of the restaurant coach at Meldon. We are hugely grateful to the Charity for their support.

We also took the step of appealing to the membership for funds to support our rolling stock acquisition program, and again this met with excellent response. We raised nearly £2,200. Part of this will go towards the projects mentioned above (none of which are completely funded by the charity), but we have also purchased a Southern Region 20-ton Brake Van, which has arrived up at Meldon and is in the rapidly lengthening queue for restoration.

I can give some further detail here. The Mk.2a is an FK, numbered 13436,

and has now been delivered to Meldon from Chinnor and restoration work has already started. The other coach has now been identified and purchased and is a rather exciting find, being a Mk.1 which formed part of the Derby Research & Development Division's Tribometer Train, this particular vehicle being "Laboratory 11" RDB 975046. It has been purchased from the Great Central Railway and should be at Meldon shortly. The Brake Van is number LDS 55625, built in 1947, so BR rather than Southern Railway but still very much Southern related. There are some repairs needed and some minor asbestos treatment is required but it should be a useful vehicle in due course.

With so much restoration in the pipeline, it seems appropriate for me to appeal for more volunteers. The railway itself is a commercial concern and cannot be expected to run trains for us enthusiasts. They are hugely supportive, and recognise the value of a heritage operation but we need to provide the wherewithal. We have made great strides with finance but it is volunteer effort which underpins everything. Much of the restoration work we have in hand is now almost entirely dependent on man (or woman) time. If you have any skills you can offer or even if you feel that you would just be a useful gopher, any time you can give us to help out would be valuable. Please get in touch with one of the Volunteer coordinators, either Dave Clegg or Martin Kent. I must mention here that the standard of workmanship on the rolling stock we have turned out has met with much praise.

On the financial side, we still have £2000 put aside for a water tower and we had a similar figure targeted for the reopening of Yeoford although the membership has accepted that this should be used for rolling stock in the absence of progress on Yeoford itself. I hasten to add that the Yeoford project is not dead, but red tape and possible developments of a parkway station at Okehampton have had an effect, with politics much involved. I might also mention here that the much-heralded Exeter service is also not dead. It is up to the Railway to keep us in touch here, since it is a commercial venture and not a heritage operation, but we understand that BARS have now been granted their Freight Operator's licence by the Rail Regulator and the equivalent Passenger licence is progressing.

A couple of other highlights from the year: One was the bonfire party, held for the second year running for staff and volunteers at Okehampton station, which once again proved to be a truly British occasion, held with fortitude despite inclement weather. And another was the reopening of the Meldon Buffet, run entirely by the volunteers, which has proved hugely successful

and a good fund earner. If you haven't had a good walk around the Meldon reservoir topped off by tea at the Meldon Buffet your life is incomplete.

I will also mention the development of a model railway centre up at Meldon. Mike Ellis has been working hard with help from several others and we have three local layouts depicting Okehampton-Meldon, Halwill Junction and Ilfracombe. We also now have a major American layout, very kindly donated, and although the installation of all to a display standard will take time, great progress is being made and the centre should become a significant attraction on our railway.

In a voluntary organisation such as this there will inevitably be changes of personnel from year to year and this time I would like to record thanks to Dennis Barnes who resigned earlier this year due to his move within EWS to East Anglia, and also to Robert Joint (previous Chairman) and Richard Proctor (Treasurer) who have decided to stand down now after several years sterling service. I shall miss them both. I don't want to start a precedent by thanking a long list of committee members and volunteers, but suffice it to say that we are blessed with many who deserve thanks. I must, however, single out Andrew Turner and Kay Mills who have now decided to retire from running the regular Tombola and book stall which has raised significant funds for the railway. We are looking for someone to take over so that this hugely worthwhile task can continue.

We are also indebted to the staff of the railway. Graham Isom, our General Manager now runs the operation almost single handed and tolerates us all with great good humour. Mary Trant you will all know for her work running the Buffet at Okehampton which is one of the most congenial railway watering holes that I know. Incidentally, although not involved in person, Mary is very much involved in spirit with the reopened Buffet up at Meldon for which she has catering responsibility. I have seen the red tape with which she is entangled and can only bow down in awe to anyone who has to cope with such tedium. If she puts a foot wrong we would be closed down so we must all follow her instructions. The track gang, Alan Cocker and Andy Webb, rarely seem to stop for a cup of tea (even when passing Bow out of sight of Graham) and we owe them much gratitude for their work.

I feel like pirating a BBC Radio 2 phrase and say that "This has been a Smooth Operations production for ..." and while our road has not always been as smooth as we would like, we are making great progress. Please continue to support us.

DARTMOOR RAILWAY SUPPORTERS' ASSN - ANNUAL REPORT v/e 31 March 2011

		2009-2010	
		£	£ (if applicable)
RECEIPTS	Membership subscriptions	5702.00	4276
	Donations: with membership renewals	979.00	1297
	general (collecting boxes etc)	682.65	559
	specific: Dartmoor Railway for paint	57.95	
	Robertson (Noodle Books)	60.00	
	Okehampton Town Council	600.00	
	Anonymous (for D.R. steam event)	500.00	
		<u>1217.95</u>	<u>1627</u>
	Sale of Magazines	434.00	375
	Sale of stock bought for re-sale	752.00	58
	Tombola stall	210.00	1618
	Coach appeal	2198.00	
	Okehampton United Charity Grant of £3000 - received so far	1328.00	
	Bank Interest	7.08	6
	TOTAL	<u>13510.68</u>	<u>10015</u>
PAYMENTS	Magazine printing	2404.50	2055
	Stationery and postage	1317.85	1110
	AGM and admin costs	72.75	63
	Carriage & Wagon Refurbishment costs	1329.28	1582
	Station Maintenance Okehampton costs	160.94	53
	Purchase of stock bought for re-sale	590.00	0
	Donation to D.R. for steam event (from received donation)	500.00	
	Purchases Generator	339.00	
	Brake Van	1900.00	
	Meldon Buffet Water Purification System	427.94	
	Exhibition Tables	46.96	
	Okehampton United Charity Tools & Eqpt	2181.40	
	Scenery for Model Railway at Meldon	205.90	
		<u>5101.20</u>	<u>2480</u>
	Volunteer travel expenses to view various rolling stock	190.01	
	Road transportation (2 vehicles)	2693.12	
	TOTAL	<u>14359.65</u>	<u>7344</u>
LOSS FOR YEAR		<u>-848.97</u>	surplus 2671

Note: £847 received on 4th April 2011 from Okehampton United Charities, based upon claim dated 22nd March

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT	31Mar11	01Apr10
	£	£
Bank accounts	14644.85	15545.04
Petty cash	0.94	11.35
C&W Refurb float	140.67	32.22
Station M'ce float	0.00	46.82
	<u>14786.46</u>	<u>15635.43</u>
Summary of Funds:		
Restricted Funds: Okehampton Charities	-853.40	
Designated Funds: Yeoford	1517.00	
Water Tower	2000.00	
Coach Appeal	2198.00	
General Reserves	<u>9924.86</u>	
	<u>14786.46</u>	

R.E. Proctor
Treasurer 01Apr11

I have examined, without carrying out an audit, the Receipts and Payments Summary and Balance Sheet of the Dartmoor Railway Supporters' Association for the year ended 31st March 2011 and find them correct and in accordance with the accounting records.

Michael White FCA
Chartered Accountant
May 2011

THE RAILWAY

General Activities

It didn't happen, did it? Meldon Quarry lost out on the ballast contract and the expected freight trains didn't run. Since then, the quarry has been



2 coach train
1600 Oke - Meldon

Photo: B Mills

mothballed and most portable equipment has been removed. The Dartmoor Railway has full use of the 08 Bluebell Mel, which is just as well because the Thumper top end refurbishment has hit snags and its return to service is still some way away.

Bluebell Mel has been our sole source of locomotion for the line with a consist of the

Courier Coach and the smart blue and grey driving trailer 61743. This particular vehicle appeared in several organs of the railway press thanks to Bernard Mills and Peter Chapman. Later on a third coach was added when a quick shamfer up and a repaint into DR Green, saw one of our newly acquired coaches brought into passenger traffic.



3 coach train
1635 Meldon-Oke on 19.06.11

Photo: B Mills

Working parties of volunteers have been in action in all spheres of activity from the gangs at Meldon to the vegetation control parties. Theirs seems to be a never ending task and we could certainly do with some kind of mechanical assistance to cut back the trees in many places along the line. The whole line has to be kept in good order for the Sunday

Rover services as well as anything DR might run! The timetable has been somewhat curtailed because of the use of Bluebell Mel who can't travel as fast as Thumper. Sampford Courtenay was removed from the itinerary because calling there would result in fewer trains being

able to run. A mid-week timetable comes in to operation during the last week in July. I suspect the call for more volunteers will become more strident then as the service 'ramps up'.

Inevitably, as the number of vehicles available increases, more volunteers will be required in the maintenance area as well as operations. The contact numbers are appended elsewhere in this magazine. Please feel free to offer your services.

Volunteer Report 1: C&W Group

Report and photos by Dave Clegg

The Carriage and Wagon group meet up at Meldon on most Wednesdays and Thursdays and we would also like to get a weekend group up and running. Most of our attention is focused on the Mk2a FK (First Class Corridor Coach) donated to DRSA by a member. As always, there has been much more to do on the coach than was initially apparent, but good progress is being made. All the external doors and drop



light windows were totally seized when the vehicle arrived, caused by the metalwork inside the fibreglass doors expanding through corrosion, and distorting the fibreglass. Each door takes at least 3 -4 days' work to sort out but we are now almost complete with this task. The end gangway doors also needed removing as these



were jammed due to the floor lifting (corrosion). Most of the welding work on the coach body has been completed and minor rust areas are now being dealt with. Fortunately, only one compartment window needed replacing (due to water ingress). Internally the two main tasks dealt with so far have been the jammed compartment doors and the re-panelling of the corridor side. When we come on to the external painting (in 'Southern' green) this should be rather easier than some other coaches we've worked on as there are fewer doors and more uninterrupted areas. Later, attention will be given

to the items 'under the floor' including vacuum and steam pipes, new batteries, dynamo etc. – probable costs will be in the area of £2000. At the time of writing, Mk1 Laboratory Coach 11 was expected to arrive from Ruddington. This will be an interesting challenge as it will require total stripping inside and replacement of side and ceiling panels and seating. We also need to start work on refurbishing the restaurant car at some stage. So there is plenty of scope for volunteers with or without skills.

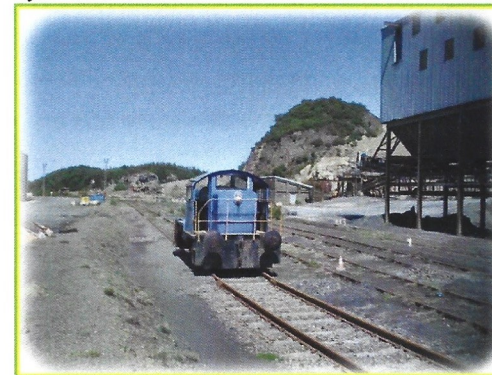
If you would like to help but feel you haven't got the time or the skills, could you help us in another way? All this restoration costs, so we'd like volunteers to get the tombola going again, man a stall on the station, and also our occasional travelling stand.

We also need small items of bric-a-brac, books etc. So if you can donate any books, old OS maps, small saleable items etc., this would help, and also provide interest for visitors. Second hand railway books/videos and DVDs are particularly good earners at shows (Peter Chapman and colleagues recently took over £200 at the Exeter Model Railway show). So have a look at your shelves. Are you really going to read that railway book again?

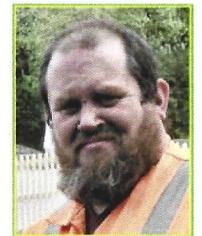


Volunteer Report 2: T&RS Department

By Martin Kent



Although it appears that not much has been happening, general repair and maintenance of traction and rolling stock in use has continued unabated. 08937 has had a tune up, thanks to Julian and one of his workmates. It now 'redlines' by the end of platform 3 with two



coaches! The Flying Falcon has had its first self powered outing in a long time. 'Flying Falcon at Dartmoor Railway' typed into u-tube will provide proof! It will be a while before it is ready for use on the line. However, it has been passed for trundling around Meldon sidings - useful at weekends when the 08 is on passenger services. Thumper engine repairs are progressing and we are now awaiting the procurement of spare parts.

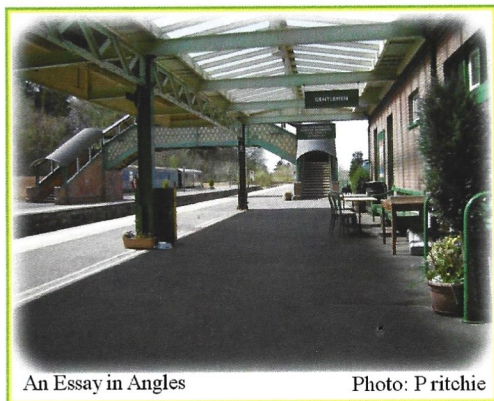
Volunteer Report 3: Stations Maintenance Team

By Tom Baxter

The main job recently has been the repaint of the GUV (General Utility Van) in Platform 1 at Okehampton. Why, some may ask, are the Stations Team doing what is essentially a C&W task? As some will know, Platform 1 has no pointwork connecting it to the railway so vehicles stored on it are "fixed" and the opinion is they form part of the station fabric. The GUV was painted in Rail Blue on the platform side and still retained its last and well faded Inter City Livery on the car park side. This vehicle, in particular, was giving a very poor impression of the railway from that side of the station. Rust holes that had appeared in the doors and sides also compounded its tired and unloved appearance.



Painting outdoors in the fickle Okehampton climate is challenging but so far we have managed to undercoat the sides in a rather fetching agricultural red oxide undercoat. Repairs have also been made to the holes including one that housed a blue tits' nest for the second year running. We did, of course, wait for the young to fledge and vacate the nest before filling the hole! Having taken their nest site we'll probably have to provide a nest box for next year?



An Essay in Angles

Photo: P Ritchie

The next job is to topcoat the GUV in BR Coach Maroon which the vehicle carried originally when built in 1959. Ends will be in black. This livery will compliment the 50s/early 60s era of the station.

Other painting work undertaken has been to one of the seats on platform 2. Interestingly, when rubbed down, it revealed that at one time it had been painted

brown with the name OKEHAMPTON painted in white on the top rail. As

the seat has never been painted that colour in the Dartmoor Railway era it rather suggests it is an original Okehampton seat from BR or SR times.

Other less exciting tasks have been drain clearance, vegetation cutting back and plumbing repairs. The lesson with the latter has been to always ensure you have the likely parts needed before you start! But, fortunately, the late Mike Wroe's donated selection of tap washers and other plumbing spares came to our rescue on that occasion.

The team continues to expand. Jon Kelsey and Paul Martin are keen painters and hole repairers. John Coxon brings along his C & W and rural skills. Geoff Brooks has recently joined us and is adept a rubbing down and drain clearing. But we always look forward to welcoming new faces. So if anyone else fancies joining the team you would be most welcome.

We also shouldn't forget the other stations which, of course, don't require as much attention but need a watchful eye for issues as and when they occur. Geoff Horner looks after Sampford Courtenay and Geoff and John Coxon also keep their eyes on Meldon station. They also maintain the Toilets at Meldon, a not entirely pleasant task at times.

Finally, a request. This time for tools and rags. Anyone disposing of any hand tools – hammers, screwdrivers, spanners, garden tools etc. are very welcome to direct them our way. We particularly need heavy "railway" duty size tools. Also any old clothing for rags. But these need to be of cotton or a similar absorbent material. If you have anything suitable you wish to donate please drop in at Okehampton station or get in touch.

Volunteer report 4: Catering at Meldon

By Sue Baxter

Do you remember the glorious sun in April? Everyone came looking for ice creams and cool drinks, so we hit the ground running this year when we opened on April 9th.

However the fact that we were able to open at all was down to John Coxon. Despite draining down the water in November, the severe freeze had resulted in 8 leaks where tiny pockets of moisture remained in the pipes which are all exposed underneath the carriage. After the initial dismay, John set to and soon fixed it, recycling short lengths of pipe as he went along.

We intend to keep the buffet open every weekend and Bank Holidays until the end of October, 11am to 4pm. If we are busy on Sundays when the First

Great Western trains run, then we will stay open until 4.45 and ourselves catch the later 17.35 train back to Okehampton. We have a rugged flat bed trolley donated by Andy Rudd which can be easily manoeuvred up and down ramps. It enables Mary's scones and cakes to be transported safely on the train. Customers say our scones and tea taste better than at Okehampton!!.....??

Andrew Reid and Rosemary Agar are most likely to have been your excellent hosts so far this season. The buffet is also ably supported by Geoff, Pam, Simon, Margaret, Mick, Chris and Dave. We are always grateful for extra hands, even briefly, for opening up and closing down. On busy days we need three to give a good service. So please volunteer if you fancy working in the only alpine chalet in the South West!



A cheerful Sue in the buffet coach at Meldon

If you haven't visited us yet, you are missing out! We have the best views on the railway. If you fancy having a cycle, then why not put your bikes (or wheelchair) on the train to Meldon, and then have an easy cycle to Lydford and back. Otherwise bring your Sunday newspaper to read, or buy

one of our beautiful Railway painting cards and write to a friend. Then browse the railway books before treating yourself to a bargain.

One of our important roles is helping keep the nation's children fit! Parents are frequently heard to say "Thank heavens you're open. I kept them going on the promise of a lolly/pasty/drink." Whatever your reasons for visiting, we just hope you do. Our terrace can be bracing, but you don't need a ticket to sit in our carriage!

Do you feel like doing something worthwhile? Do you feel like meeting people?

Come and join us on the Dartmoor Railway.

Volunteer Report 5: The Flower Fairies

By Wendy Ware

The Flower Fairies came out of winter hibernation some time ago to make preparations for the tubs and hanging baskets. Bow Nurseries have once again been very generous with their donations of lots of various plants.

Wendy and Sue have been busy little bees making the station platforms come to life and by the time you receive this issue the flowers will be in full bloom with lots of lovely



Photo: G Ware



A Flower Fairy!

Photo: G Ware

colour. We still need to keep an eye on the deadheading and watering, especially the ones on platform 2, although the hanging baskets and oak barrels are on the watering system. Let's hope this water timer will last longer this time. If any of you kind people out there see any tubs that look dry or wilting, we would be grateful if you will give them a drink, as the Flower Fairies

are not able to be there every day.

Dartmoor Railway/DRSA

Telephone Numbers/Websites

Dartmoor Railway Information and Timetables	01837-55164
DRSA Membership Matters	01837-840670
Westcountry Models	01837-55330
Buffet at Okehampton Station	01837-55667

Dartmoor Railway Website www.dartmoor-railway.co.uk

DRSA Website www.dartmoor-railway-sa.org

Publicity Report June 2011

By Peter Chapman, DRSA Publicity Officer
chappie333@blueyonder.co.uk
01626 211170 and 07758 895999

The publicity stand had it's first outing at the Exeter Model Railway Society show at Matford on the 4/5 June. This was a great success. The stand attracted a lot of interest and many leaflets and timetables were handed out. Book and video sales went very well



with over £200 raised.

Everyone who manned the stand had a great time and we had sufficient people to be able to enjoy the rest of the show as well. My thanks to those who assisted. The stand also appeared at the Dowland Country Fair and Dog Show on 19 June. Another successful outing with over £36 raised.



The next appearances for the stand at present are as follows:

10 July: Heart of Devon Show, Bow.

13/14 August Plymouth Model Railway Exhibition, Guildhall, Plymouth.

Any help members can give is very welcome. Please get in touch if you can assist.

The DRSA website has been well received, and is nearly complete. I would like to be able to update the site frequently, but so far contributions have been a bit slow. Any reports and pictures of activities will be gratefully received.

Finally as many of you have noticed, we now have a leaflet for the railway and one for the DRSA. If you know of anywhere that would be fertile ground for these, please collect some from Okehampton Station.



QUESTION : What Do the following successful standard gauge Heritage Railways have in common?

East Kent Railway
Lavender Line
Cholsey & Wallingford Railway
East Somerset Railway
Swindon & Cricklade Railway
Gwili Railway
Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway
Mangapps Farm Railway
Mid Suffolk Light Railway
Whitwell & Reepham Railway
Colne Valley Railway
Chasewater Railway
Northampton & Lamport
Telford Steam Railway
Cambrian Heritage Railways
Eden Valley Railway
Ribble Steam Railway
Appleby-Frodingham Railway Pres. Society
Bowes Railway
Derwent Valley Railway
Elsecar Railway
Lincolnshire Wolds Railway
Middleton Railway
Royal Deeside Railway

They are all of similar length or less than Okehampton to Meldon!

Source: Heritage Railway magazine

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.

Membership

from Peter Flick, Membership Secretary.

I am happy to report that our Association's membership has now reached 354.

This suggests that the figure of 400 hovers within reach. If numbers could achieve such a target before the end of this year, then it would be a cause for celebration. To help enrolment on its way there, a copy of our new Membership and Volunteering Information leaflet is enclosed with this issue, for passing on to potential new members. If you need more leaflets do please give me a ring. And of course we should be delighted to welcome new volunteers to help with the maintenance and running of the railway. For the recently introduced Junior Membership subscription - please ask for a separate form - for 14 and 15 year-olds



Rosie's Diary

By Rosie

So, here you see me on a summer duty at Meldon Buffet. I used to be frightened of this tiny house, but I am now brave enough (and sensible enough) to go in if it is raining.



At Okehampton Buffet, new driver Steve and new buffet assistant Maryann are a great addition to the two leg team because they have placed a box of dog biscuits outside the kitchen. Unfortunately other dogs try to be as appealing as me and get the biscuits too. Cassie is one of those, a spaniel who looks after Chris, also a new buffet assistant, and Nigel who is a trainee guard.(I jump sometimes when he slams the doors shut!) Cassie prefers her own company so I have learnt to sniff elsewhere.

Now, do you know that I have been on another railway for a whole day and it turned me black? (well very grubby anyway) just from lying on their floor? Licking my coat clean took hours! I watched in amazement at a place called

Minehead, on the West Somerset, while a big green engine called Sir Lamiel just got the tail of his tender on a turntable before being pushed round by two 2 legs. They did a strange slow walk until Sir Lamiel was back in exactly the same place again. Why did he move? 2 legs all watched in reverential silence. Was there a tear in the eye of a grey head, or was it just grit from the engine?

One day, on a long walk across Exmoor, my Special Friends (Tom and Sue) must have been very tired because we took a ride in a brand new little carriage, smelling of shiny stuff. It was a bit jolty, due to the mine couplings apparently. However the very young guard and everyone else at the Woody Bay Station on the Lynton and Barnstaple were courteous and offered me refreshment. They even have an open fire, which would be very nice at Okehampton too on wet and cold days,(in the museum?)

For the Official Opening of the Welsh Highland Railway in April I had to be on my very best behaviour, the only four legs aboard. At Pont Croesor station everyone walked all over the tracks trying to get in a photo with Pete Waterman or John Prideaux or Speaker Dafydd Ellis, while I tried to get my nose on their dark suits. I also kept an eye open for the ospreys nesting nearby in case they dropped a fish within my reach. Next day we went on the WHR to Nantmor to start a long walk over Cnicht, the Welsh Matterhorn. I could have done it in a 10th of the time 2 legs took! I lapped up water in the Rhosydd quarries before we padded aboard the Ffestiniog at Tanygrisiau. Their vintage carriages are a bit of a squeeze and I had to have my tail tucked out of the gangway, while Tom drank a Purple Moose.

So what was the strangest engine I travelled behind? It was called a Garratt on the WHR. A very big, bendy engine on a narrow gauge track. But I stood my ground when it hissed at me!

Volunteers Still Wanted

There is still room for new volunteers to assist **Mike Ellis** in the refurbishment and extension of the 'OO' layout at Meldon.

If you'd like to help please contact

Mike on 07930-443771

Mike can also be found up at Okehampton station on most Saturdays and Sundays

50 008 Thunderer

By the Editor



Thunderer entering Exeter St David's from the West

before RNEC (some records indicate eight). So 50008 has a proud tradition

to follow. The front cover is a (fairly poor) photo of the original nameplate and ship's badge or crest which is circular. In 1983 Laira was presented with the current badges which are in a diamond shaped frame. This was following a change of rules within the RN with respect to the shape of

ships badges. A photo of her appears on the right in 1989 with the diamond shaped badge clearly visible. Now that she is preserved she will remain the last site to carry the official *Thunderer* badges, unless a new ship is given the name. The figure of the god Jove forms the centrepiece of both badges but in the latest version he is reversed from his predecessor. Let's hope *Thunderer* settles down here and finds a good 'home'.



Please excuse me indulging myself like this but I spent 4 years at HMS *Thunderer* during the mid 1960s. Yes, it was the name of the Royal Naval Engineering College at Manadon (RNEC) in Plymouth and was the last named ship or establishment to carry the name *Thunderer*. There were five ships so named



BREAKFAST AT BUDE

Monday 20th August 1962

Peter Barnfield

At 3.38 in the morning the dimly lit platform at Exeter St Davids was chill and uninviting after the close stuffiness of the compartment I'd just left. A mere handful of us alighted and as I walked out past the sleepy-eyed ticket collector the train, my old friend the 1.55am from Bristol, rumbled off into the night on its almost endless amble to Penzance.

Walking through the deserted city streets I saw the odd stray cat, a policeman who regarded me with some suspicion, and not much else. I soon located Queen Street and marched up to Central Station to find much to my disgust that the Southern actually closed down at night. My train was due at 5.10 and at 4.45 the station was still firmly barred and bolted. One or two other hopeful travellers arrived to hang around and eventually we were admitted to pass through the harsh glare of the white tiled booking office and down the concrete steps to the shadowy platforms.

As 5.10 came and went the hopefuls, huddling in pools of ghostly yellow light, began growing restless. There was much pacing, tapping of feet and consultation of timepieces. One couldn't expect a public address system to start blaring out at this hour so a porter, cigarette end firmly stuck to lower lip, shuffled around the platform cheering us all with mutterings about the habitual late running of this particular train.

From the up direction we heard the clank of coupling rods and the characteristically hollow beat of a Bulleid pacific announced the arrival of the 1am from Waterloo. This proved to be just the sort of thing one would expect to be trundling around in the small hours. Behind the engine were two centre corridors for Ilfracombe, a few vans, three coaches for Plymouth, more vans, one coach labelled 'Padstow' followed by yet more vans. The 1am from Waterloo was the newspaper train.

Getting on board proved no easy matter for having selected the single Padstow coach as my rightful portion I found the corridor piled with kit bags and each compartment filled with somnolent sailors who did not wish to be disturbed thank you, or words to that effect. Since most of the light bulbs had been removed I stumbled around in the near dark, trugged along the rest of the train and came to the conclusion that a sizeable portion of the British Navy was travelling to Devonport that night. It was not until a nice helpful

guard went through the Padstow coach and with great courage ordered all the occupants and their kit bags into the Plymouth portion that I then enjoyed the luxury of reclining at ease in a completely empty coach while the Navy were no doubt sitting grumpily in the corridors not far away...

While chaos reigned at the rear of the train the leading portion made good its escape for North Devon and we too were soon slipping down the incline to St Davids. At Cowley Bridge we swung away from the domain of diesel hydraulics and then like all wise travellers on this part of the Southern at this time in the morning, I slept.

It was raining at Okehampton, a fine drizzling rain that drifted down from the barren slopes of Dartmoor to blanket the little grey station in thick mist. The crowded Plymouth portion slipped off with hardly a whisper leaving the Padstow coach standing at the dripping platform. For over half an hour, there it remained until a grimy mogul stirred from the tiny, ashen engine shed and decided that it was now time for the newspapers to continue their interminable amble in the general direction of Padstow.

So we went down past Meldon and swung away from the Plymouth line on the great single track curve across Maddaford Moor. There were no passengers waiting at the rainswept halt so we set off again at a very sedate pace, 31823, one coach, one van and an old goods truck. By the time we reached Halwill Junction it was almost 7am, the rain was lashing the exposed platforms with vigour and I was amazed to note that we were actually running to time. (2 hours from Exeter)

82025 and two rather down-at-heel coaches in the bay did little to brighten the spirits of one who had been travelling all night but they were labelled 'Bude' and a swift dash through the torrents soon had me aboard. There was a fifteen minute wait while a bit of unenthusiastic parcel unloading took place and the Halwill papers were unceremoniously dumped on the platform. One couldn't help noticing that they seemed to be sitting in the wettest part and a large puddle gradually disappeared as the bundle soaked it up. The Padstow papers remained in the van and would of course remain dry for many hours yet.

The few unfortunates in the Padstow train were no doubt dismayed to see their engine uncouple in order to clank off to the yard. It being Halwill Junction, shunting was obligatory and as we pulled out the mogul had located some disreputable looking coaches to add to its train. I assumed that

these *were* empty stock but I suppose there was always the chance that they were the Padstow portion of some train from the previous day, abandoned and forgotten for the night, spotted by chance by some eagle-eyed driver. I often wonder what happened to those Halwill newspapers.

We continued along what had once been the sort of 'main line' from Okehampton, the North Cornwall line being something of an afterthought and as with North Devon arriving far too late to aid the area's development. I was reminded of one of Thomas Hardy's characters in his novel *A Pair of Blue Eyes* who in the 1880s preferred to travel from Bristol to Boscastle by steamer rather than trust himself to the tender mercies of the railway, ".....*the time saved by speed on the railway being wasted at junctions, and in following a devious course.*" Nothing had changed very much by 1962!

Bude, 7.49am, just in time for breakfast in the station refreshment room which sold groceries, beer, ice cream and cups of tea with biscuits plus any amount of other things across a marble-topped counter. I was joined by the local postman, a bus crew, the stationmaster and some porters, who all came in for what was obviously their regular breakfast. Alas I was the only actual passenger.

The rain stopped, the sun shone beautifully and I strode along the old canal towpath to stand and survey the Atlantic rollers pounding into the bay. I had the whole place to myself and at this moment felt that it really had been worth getting up at 1am in order to breathe some truly fresh air.

82025 took me back to Halwill at 9.30 where two typical North Cornwall trains, mostly vans with the odd coach here and there, crossed with one another. The Bude train was, with all due ceremony, coupled to the rear of the up working which no doubt would be coupled to something else before it reached Exeter, let alone Waterloo.

With the departure of both trains the platforms returned to their customary emptiness, apart from the Torrington bay where a rather tired looking Ivatt 2-6-2 tank with a tall chimney and a single corridor coach had slipped quietly in from North Devon.

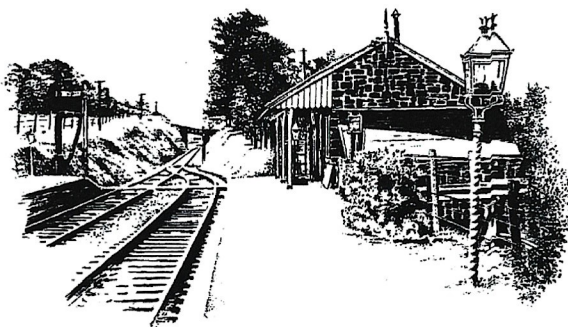
The North Devon & Cornwall Light Railway, opened in 1925, was the last standard guage line to be built in the West and one really wonders why they bothered. Apart from some lovely scenery there is little else in this sparsely populated area apart from the clay traffic from Meeth, though by the 20s it

must have been quite obvious that this kind of rural railway could hardly earn its keep, let alone make a profit.

There were two passenger trains and a goods each day and the journey time for the 20 miles was about one and a half hours, not the way to travel unless you had plenty of time to spare or simply no other means of getting about. In fact of all the branch lines I have travelled on I don't think any has evoked such a feeling of timelessness as this one. For the train crew and staff at stations the clock certainly appeared not to exist although the schedules were so slow that one would probably have needed to go backwards to lose time.

There seemed time in plenty anyway for long pauses at all the stopping places, which were mostly where the line crossed a road or lane going in the general direction of the place the station purported to serve. Hole, Hatherleigh and Petrockstow were all passing stations with two platforms, groundframes and small stone buildings. Other stops were more basic.

At Hatherleigh the station attendant came out to meet the train wearing waders, he'd evidently been fishing. He found someone aboard the train



Hatherleigh 20th August 1962

whom he knew and there followed a long conversation while the engine took water, but then it was discovered that he'd forgotten to put the kettle on and the poor guard was pacing the platform waiting for what was obviously his daily cuppa. The pair retired to the dim interior of the station building and the handful of passengers could only sit and wait until the kettle boiled, the teapot was warmed and the water thrown out onto the track. Then could be heard through the open carriage windows the chink of china and the stirring of spoons and if the porter had come out offering tea at ten shillings a cup he would probably have had five takers. As it was we just had a thirsty wait in the sunshine and the engine crew reclined on the platform beside the rose bushes. At length the guard appeared with a satisfied smile on his face to swish the dregs from his cup on to the track, "Okay Jarge," to the driver and we were on our way again.

There were lots of ungated crossings, in fact none of them *did* have gates, and this gave our driver an excellent opportunity to prove to his passengers that some LMS engines have a whistle which can make a sound other than that of a wet splutter. After the first few crossings I saw that things followed a definite pattern. We would be bowling along at about 15 mph when on would come the brakes and speed would be reduced to a very slow walk. At about 50 yards from the crossing someone would presumably hang the coal shovel on the whistle chain and leave it there until the tail lamp was way past the road or lane. The whistle made some quite interesting noises, none of which were exactly what one would expect from a steam locomotive but they did seem to have the desired effect of ensuring that we didn't meet any road vehicles. The one car that we did see on the entire journey had stopped some way from the railway and the occupants had got out to admire the view but the driver made absolutely sure by giving them 3 ten-second blasts on the hooter.

Petrockstow seemed to be in the charge of a large black cat which basked sleepily in the sun between the waiting room wall and the porter's bicycle. It surveyed our arrival with disdain before returning to disturbed slumber. I do not recollect ever seeing the porter.

At about midday we threaded through a deep wooded valley, ran over a viaduct, then under the hill from Torrington and came to rest at the station with 10 minutes to spare before my connection took me off in the direction of Exeter again to complete an unforgettable circular tour.

Monday 20th August 1962

dep.	Bristol T.M.	1.55am
arr.	Exeter St. Davids	3.38
dep.	Exeter Central	5.10
arr.	Okehampton	5.57
dep.	Okehampton	6.30
arr.	Halwill Junction	6.58
dep.	Halwill Junction	7.15
arr.	Bude	7.49
dep.	Bude	9.30
arr.	Halwill Junction	10.10
dep.	Halwill Junction	10.38
arr.	Torrington	12.02
dep.	Torrington	12.13
<i>To Exeter St. Davids</i>		
dep.	Exeter St. Davids	6.01
<i>Change at Taunton</i>		
dep.	Taunton	6.50
arr.	Bristol T.M.	8.34

Help to keep the last of "The Withered Arm" alive – tell everybody that the Dartmoor Railway lives. Volunteers are required.

**** If you feel that the "FOX AND HOUNDS is too difficult to get to, then let a Committee Member know and suggest an alternative which can cater for our numbers, and is also not remote for others. At the moment, the Fox and Hounds suits the purpose ****



D4167, Bluebell Mel, on the 1605 Oke - Meldon
19 June 2011

A selection of
photographs with
D4167/08
937/Bluebell Mel in
evidence



1400 Oke - Exe (142 030) and 08 937 with
1405 Oke - Meldon 19 June 2011



08 937 and 1300 Meldon - Oke
2nd May 2011

Bluebell Mel currently
carries both pre and post
TOPS running numbers!

Captions Please!

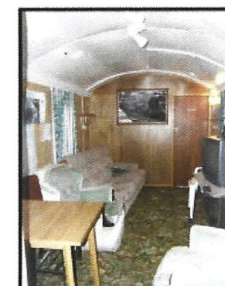
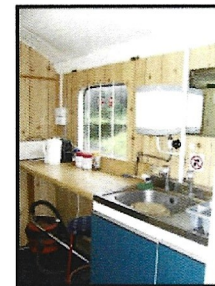
The last competition elicited no responses to the picture of Julian dressed to kill. The photograph for this edition is a well known face in, perhaps, a well known situation:



“I find a subtle approach always works” might be a good one?

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



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DARTMOOR RAILWAY

Okehampton Station, Okehampton, Devon EX20 1EJ

www.dartmoor-railway.co.uk

Tel 01837 55164

Train Times

Days of operation

June 2011				July 2011				August 2011				September 2011				October 2011				November 2011																
Mon	-	6	13	20	27	Mon	-	4	11	18	25	Mon	29	1	8	15	24	Mon	-	5	12	19	26	Mon	31	3	10	17	24	Mon	-	7	14	21	28	
Tue	-	7	14	21	28	Tue	-	5	12	19	26	Tue	30	2	9	16	23	Tue	-	6	13	20	27	Tue	-	4	11	18	25	Tue	-	1	8	15	22	29
Wed	1	8	15	22	29	Wed	-	6	13	20	27	Wed	31	3	10	17	24	Wed	-	7	14	21	28	Wed	-	5	12	19	26	Wed	-	2	9	16	23	30
Thu	2	9	16	23	30	Thu	-	7	14	21	28	Thu	-	4	11	18	25	Thu	1	8	15	22	29	Thu	-	6	13	20	27	Thu	-	3	10	17	24	
Fri	3	10	17	24	Fri	1	8	15	22	29	Fri	-	5	12	19	26	Fri	2	9	16	23	30	Fri	-	7	14	21	28	Fri	4	11	18	25			
Sat	4	11	18	25	Sat	2	9	16	23	30	Sat	-	6	13	20	27	Sat	3	10	17	24	Sat	-	8	15	22	29	Sat	5	12	19	26				
Sun	5	12	19	26	Sun	3	10	17	24	31	Sun	1	7	14	21	28	Sun	4	11	18	25	Sun	-	2	9	16	23	30	Sun	6	13	20	27			

Yellow Timetable

(west bound)

	FGW	DR	Bus 187	DR	FGW	DR	Bus 187	DR	FGW	DR	Bus 187	DR	FGW	DR	Bus 187	DR	FGW	DR	Bus 187	
Exeter Central	d	09:06			11:03				13:06				15:06				17:05			
Exeter St. Davids	d	09:14			11:07				13:10				15:09				17:08			
Crediton	d	09:24			11:17				13:21				15:20				17:19			
Sampford Courtney	d	09:44			11:37				13:41				15:40				17:39			
Okehampton	a	09:52			11:45				13:48				15:48				17:47			
Okehampton	d		10:05	10:45	11:05		11:55	12:30	13:15		14:05	14:30	15:05		16:05	16:30	17:05		18:05	
West St - Bus stop A	a			10:50				12:35				14:35				16:35			18:10	
Meldon Quarry	a		10:20		11:20		12:10		13:30		14:20		15:20		16:20		17:20			

Yellow Timetable

(east bound)

	Bus 187	FGW	DR	DR	Bus 187	FGW	DR	DR	Bus 187	FGW	DR	DR	Bus 187	FGW	DR	DR	Bus 187	DR	FGW	
Meldon Quarry	d		10:35	11:35		12:15	13:35		14:35	15:35			16:35		17:35					
West St - Bus stop B	d	09:48			11:38				13:38				15:38		17:28					
Okehampton	a	09:55	10:50	11:50	11:45	12:30	13:50	13:45	14:50	15:50	15:45	16:50	17:35	17:50						
Okehampton	d		10:00			12:00			14:00				16:00		18:00					
Sampford Courtney	d		10:08			12:08			14:08				16:08		18:08					
Crediton	d		10:28			12:28			14:28				16:28		18:28					
Exeter St. Davids	a		10:40			12:38			14:38				16:38		18:41					
Exeter Central	a		10:44			12:41			14:41				16:41		18:44					

Green Timetable

(west bound)

	DR	Bus 318	DR	Bus 318	DR	DR	Bus 318	DR	DR	Bus 318
Okehampton	d	10:30	10:35	11:30	11:55	12:30	14:00	14:40	15:00	16:35
Fore St - Bus stop D	a		10:43				14:45			16:40
Fore St - Bus stop C	a			12:00						
Meldon Quarry	a	10:45		11:45		12:45	14:15		15:15	16:15

Green Timetable

(east bound)

	Bus 318	DR	Bus 318	DR	Bus 318	DR	DR	Bus 318	DR		
Meldon Quarry	d	11:00		12:00	13:00		14:30	15:30	16:30		
Fore St - Bus stop D	d	10:10		11:38			14:15		16:15		
Okehampton	a	10:25	11:15	11:53	12:15	13:15	14:35	14:45	15:45	16:30	16:45

Notes

- DR Dartmoor Railway train service.
- FGW First Great Western Dartmoor Sunday Rover train service.
- Bus 187 First Devon and Cornwall Dartmoor Sunday Rover bus service via Tavistock to / from Gunnislake Railway Station for connection with Tamar Valley Line train services to Plymouth.
Note - the 18:05 187 departure from Okehampton runs direct to Plymouth via Tavistock and does not serve Gunnislake Railway Station.
- Bus 318 Carmel Coaches Okehampton Town bus service. Note 318 bus service runs monday to saturday only. There won't be any bus services between Okehampton Town and Okehampton railway station on sundays from 25th September 2011.

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