



*Southern on the Western
'Tangmere' at Dawlish*

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THE DARTMOOR PONY

The Magazine of the Dartmoor Railway
Supporters' Association

No.19

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North Tawton Footbridge
&
Okehampton Buffet Counter

The DARTMOOR PONY

Issue No. 19

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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

FRONT COVER: Shades of John Cleese and the Two Ronnies!
Andrew Turner, Graham Kelly and Alan Cocker on the footbridge at Ropley on the Mid Hants Railway – see article on page 17

Photo: P Ritchie

BACK COVER:

Tangmere on the sea wall near Dawlish

Photo: S Sellick

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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:-

Jon Kelsey – 01363 774188
Geoff Horner :- 01363 82383

Editorial:

By Peter Ruchte



The Polar Express (PE) programme for 2013 is now over. The groundwork in preparation for this programme has been quite diverse and has involved removal and secure stowage of DRSA artefacts, move of sleeping cars from Meldon to Platform 1, import of all the PE victuals and bits and pieces for use on the trains etc., etc. Virtually every room and space on Platform 2 was occupied and Station Maintenance tools and equipment moved away to provide space for PE. Professional decorators were hired in to decorate the station in festive trimmings and the station did look particularly good especially after dark.

The First Great Western Sunday service wound up with the last of this year's trains running on 15th September – more about that in the General Railway section. It would appear that there will be a similar service again in 2014 but that, of course, will require ratification by all players nearer the time

In the meantime the volunteer sections have been stoically carrying on with their work, from the C&W group on Lab 11; the Stations Maintenance Team with their constant battle to keep the stations and their surroundings up to scratch; the Lineside Team who, mostly unsung, head out weekly to assist Andy and Alan in maintaining the track and surrounds in good order; the Buffet Team who have to interface with the Great British Public in all its moods and provide sustenance to all and sundry when required. All this activity is occurring during this continuing period of uncertainty when the railway hasn't got a permanent General Manager.

We met the challenge of the year's break in 2008 between ECT and BARS and I'm sure we can weather this one out. Certainly, your committee and Granite Line Ltd are involved in meaningful (I hate that word) discussions with BARS over a working agreement for next year and beyond.

I've mentioned the PE already but I would just like to add a further comment or two. Some 18,000 bookings were taken – that's well up on last year. Your editor attended Departures and Arrivals whenever he could and sounded out the GBP to find out where they came from and how much they had enjoyed the experience. The most commonly used adjective I heard was "Magical" and it showed in the faces of young and old alike. A list of places that they came from is impressive – Doncaster, Blackburn, Dartford and Sidcup in Kent, Birmingham, Petersfield and Southampton (Hampshire) Northampton and Kettering (Northants), High Wickham, Brackley, Pontypool, Cardiff, Cirencester, Stow-on-the-Wold, Cwmbran, Bristol, Portishead, Weymouth, Salisbury, Dorchester, Weston-Super-Mare, Burnham-on-Sea, Taunton and these are only the places I can remember! Virtually every part of Devon and Cornwall was represented. There were quite a number of families who were there for the second time having tried it out last year! The important factor here is that, to these visitors, they can see only the Dartmoor Railway – they don't see it as BARS or the DRSA The amount of goodwill it is creating for the railway is enormous. Last years PE created a similar effect but this was squandered by not allowing trains to run during the summer. To take advantage of this goodwill we *must* reach an agreement between the interested parties – and we hope a breakthrough can be made and heritage trains will be running again in 2014. The Association website will keep us all up to date as information comes in

Enough of my rantings, you'll be bored by now. I have to offer abject apologies for this late offering – it's very difficult to produce something worthwhile when the activity has been minimal. In the meantime, I hope you all had a very Happy Christmas and that the year of 2014 is peaceful and productive for everyone, with the railway prospering as it deserves.

THE RAILWAY

General:

September 22nd saw the last of the Sunday trains to Exeter, ending the regular service for the year. Sue Baxter has been active with her camera this year and she got a shot of the last train – and it is the very last train. The destination blind bears Exeter St David's as the destination



The last Exeter service of the season Photo: S Baxter



A Kiwi goes home Photo: S Baxter

which is correct for the last train of the day

only! She also took a photo of one of the passengers and his companions. He is actually a New Zealander starting off on his journey home via the Dartmoor Railway. Would that the service could be

here full time so that this scene could be repeated again and again. Another photo that Sue has provided is one of the Station Maintenance Team using the Sunday service to commute!



The Sunday commute Photo: S Baxter



FGW drivers at their lunch break in the buffet Photo: P Ritchie

First Great Western (FGW) held what has come to be an annual week of 'skid pan' training based on Okehampton station from 25th September to 3rd October. Whilst the operational aspects of this week are largely self-contained by FGW, a buffet lunch – or should I

say spread – is provided for them by Mary, Kay and the buffet team. I have included a photo of this spread to give some idea of the magnitude of this feast. Tables 5 and 6 are filled with food but note the empty plates/bowls! Certainly, the train crews appreciate both the quality and quantity of food provided.

Of interest, Channel 5 TV had been broadcasting a series of programmes which described the workings of First Great Western. The TV team turned up on one day of the skid pan training. The programme



The remains of a feast! Photo: P Ritchie

concerned was duly aired and Okehampton Station appeared on TV



The Sleepers in Platform 2 Photo: J Kelsey

screens across the nation. If you were quick enough, Messrs Clegg, Horner and Ritchie can be seen trying to do some tarding up of the sleeping cars that had come down from Meldon for Polar Express accommodation purposes!!!

12th

October saw two trains operating under charter down to Coleford Junction. The first was for



Departure time? Photo: D Clegg

the general public and the second a private hire with invited guests. The loading on both trains



Charter at Bow Photo: J Kelsey

was excellent and our Chairman, Dick Henrywood, organised a reception at Bow Station where drinks and small eats were provided

on board the train. A barbecue was held at Okehampton station on completion of the second trip.

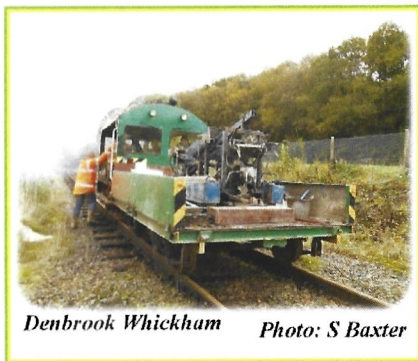


Moving on then into November and the 2nd saw Graham Kelly's efforts come to fruition when 18 DRSA members attended a Basic Railway Safety Awareness Course at



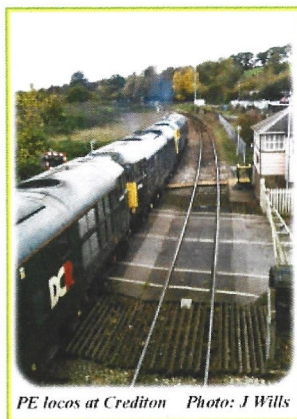
Okehampton. Held in one of the Polar Express coaches it was adapted from the Network Rail Guide to Personal Track Safety, and delivered by Ian Potter. *"Ian's light touch presenting heavyweight material was much appreciated, and maintained everyone's interest throughout."*

On November 5th, borehole equipment and team took a trip down the line to the Denbrook Valley Wind Farm site with Alan Cocker in the Wickham Trolley. Apparently their boreholes show the site is underlain by Crackington Formation (Carboniferous shales and sandstones) rock at only about one and a



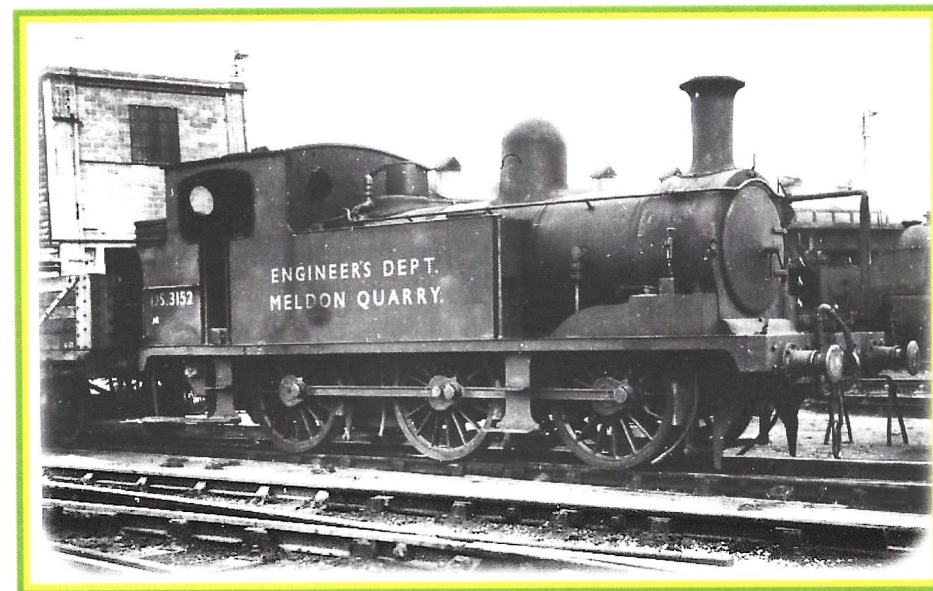
quarter metres depth, so the geoscientist was happy, not least of course with his method of travel to the site.

Then it was time for the Polar Express motive power to reach us. Once more it was only just 'in time' and there was little time to check everything out before the start of the actual trains' start date. They were hauled down to



Exeter by a D&CR class 31 from where the class 47 hauled the convoy up to Okehampton. John Wills was on hand at Crediton to photograph them passing the signalbox there. Another class 47 was brought down at a later date as a safeguard against failure of one or other loco. This second loco was not in the best of condition.

Then we were in to the Polar Express operating period which features in another article. Post Polar Express efforts are being made to open up 'windows' through the line-side vegetation to allow diners to have more interesting views of the surrounding countryside than is currently possible. It looks as if the Dartmoor Railway are going to go ahead with dining trains as per their website www.dartmoorrailway.com Granite Line is in negotiation with DR with a view to running heritage trains to fit in with the dining train proposals.



Meldon Quarry shunter Class D6 0-6-0T numbered DS3152, shown at Exmouth Junction shed on 16 August 1953. The loco was previously LSWR number 72. It was based at Meldon from 1949 to 1960. (Ross Henrywood collection)

Carriage & Wagon Group News – Lab11 update

Geoff Horner, Joint Volunteer Co-ordinator



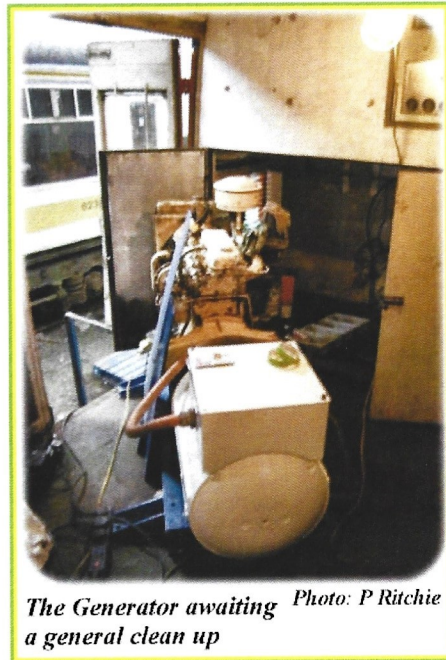
Lab 11 in its BR guise

Since our last report very good progress has been made and some important milestones reached and passed.

David Trant has completed the overhaul and rebuild of the diesel engine

to power the generator and has given the engine a satisfactory test run.

Under David's direction and with the help of some unorthodox arrangements of beams, hoists and pulleys (no pictures, health & safety required a discreet veil drawn over those proceedings) the engine was manoeuvred back inside Lab 11. We are indebted to David for all his work on the engine and getting it back in the carriage and mounted on its base frame. Without him this would have been a task well beyond the abilities of the majority of the C & W regulars.



The Generator awaiting a general clean up Photo: P Ritchie

We are also indebted to two more of our C & W team. Martyn Skinner and Tris Logan have laboured for several months getting the generator compartment cleaned out, painted in fire retardant paint and generally ready for use again. They have also replaced damaged parts on the generator and have now coupled generator and engine back together again as one

unit. Once some final adjustments are completed the next challenge will be moving the combined unit back inside the generator



The 'Passenger' space Photo: P Ritchie

compartment, (no doubt utilising some more innovative hoist and pulley systems), refitting the exhaust pipe and silencer and connecting it all up to the distribution panel again. With a 'fair wind behind us' we may well have a working generator back on line by the year's end.

The external repaint is also progressing very well. Both sides have had two coats of 'Rail Red/Orange' applied and the final areas of second coats of 'Rail Blue' will hopefully be completed shortly. The white lining above and below the windows is about 40% complete and decorations are well under way on the West end with the East end to follow.

Our thoughts are now turning more and more to the interior refurbishment with the complete rewiring the first major task to be dealt with. Hopefully the next issue of the 'Dartmoor Pony' will bring news of further advances towards the completion of what will be a most useful



Paintwork 1

Photo: P Ritchie

addition to the DRSA rolling stock stable.

Ed: It has been a long time since I last visited C&W at Meldon but my recent visit reminded me of what a skilled group we have up there. The



Paintwork 2

Photo: P Ritchie

outside finish has to be seen to be believed. Some would suggest that they are too perfectionist in their approach but the finish on this coach will be far more likely to last for a good time more than a more relaxed approach. There is one worrying aspect about the C&W group, there is no sign of younger volunteers coming up to join them. I

don't think they would mind my saying that, to a man, they are no spring chickens. Regrettably, a couple of the group have been unavailable of late and this exacerbates the situation. They need more volunteers urgently.



Laboratory 11 on arrival:1

Ed: I thought it worthwhile giving these two photos an airing – they show the arrival of Lab 11 at Meldon.

It is plain to see that C&W have done a great deal of work on this carriage.

My apologies to the photographer but I have lost all reference to him/her but thank you, whoever you are



Laboratory 11 on arrival:2



**MID-HANTS
NEWS**
No 41 WINTER 1983 40p

Photo: Olive Pyle

The Moving of North Tawton Footbridge

By Mark Walden

There has been a long standing requirement on the Railway to provide footbridges at both Ropley and Alresford to avoid the problem of passengers using the foot crossings which are often blocked by standing trains, and the need for the Traffic Department to man them.

So when Chris Hunt and I were on one of our railway relic hunting trips in Devon, we came across the very handsome LSWR footbridge at North Tawton which had strangely survived the demolition that had occurred on the Exeter to Plymouth line when it became a mineral line to Meldon Quarry.

Enquiries to the bridge office at Exeter quickly resulted in a site meeting with Chris Arscott, the area bridge engineer, and a representative of South Western Cranes, the result of which was that it was a straightforward job that should present no problems but that several line possessions would be necessary and that these would have to be at the weekend.

At first we thought it would be possible to take the main girder out in one piece, but our subsequent calculations revealed that the possible weight of about 13 tons would be rather marginal for the crane available considering the distance it would have to reach. It was therefore decided to split the bridge into its two component girders and lift one at a time.

However, it was still necessary to buy the bridge from BR and we knew from past experience that this would be a long business so we made an offer that ground its way through the BR purchasing machinery and resulted in our offer being accepted. I should point out that we also looked at a similar bridge at Okehampton, but for various reasons we considered the North Tawton bridge was the one we would practice on first.

We planned on three weekend possessions totalling six days, but we managed to complete the job in three days of possessions.

It was our intention to lay the girders flat on the transport for movement to Ropley, but this resulted in a load that was 10ft wide and this required notification to all the police authorities through whose areas it would pass; five in all. We also discovered that Devon police have an embargo on wide load movements in their area on Saturdays and Sundays in July and August so that this meant that we would have to load on to Ron Blackman's transport on Sunday and it would leave at first light on Monday.

The first weekend saw about twelve members of the Building Group and John Graham at North Tawton when we burnt out all the rivets from one girder that joined it to the other girder and replaced them with bolts. The wooden decking and stairs, by now very rotten, were removed and burnt. The staircase walls were demolished level with the bottom of the girders and all the stair tread bricks recovered and cleaned. It was, of course, important that we leave the bridge in safe condition that would allow traffic to run under it and this all had to be to the satisfaction of the BR bridge engineer.

The Big Lift

The day of the 'big lift', Sunday August 1st, was another of those blistering hot days and it again saw at least a dozen of the Building Group on site at 0830 when the possession started and the crane arrived. In order to lift out one girder at a time it was necessary to attach steel rope stays to the other girder and attach them via Tirfor winches to the track on each side. At the same time the crane was used to steady the other girder while all the previously inserted bolts were removed. This all being safely done, the crane lifted out the first girder complete with bedstones, although the holding down bolts had been removed, and laid it carefully in the station yard. The second girder came away in the same manner after releasing the Tirfor winches and this was also laid in the station yard.

As it was now lunchtime we all adjourned to the Station Hotel alongside to await the arrival of Ron Blackman's transport. Loading the transport took time because the girders were laid on top of each other and had to be not more than 10ft total width when loaded.

While we were working on the bridge, Jack and Olive Pyle were dismantling the counter and fittings from Okehampton Station buffet which we had also purchased. Jack, who comes from Okehampton, and whose father worked on the railway there can remember using the buffet as a bay when it was first opened in the mid 1930s. We hired a local sheep transporter and moved these items from Okehampton up to North Tawton for onward transport to Ropley with the bridge together with a large quantity of bricks. That lorry was well loaded!!

Burnt Out Clutch

We all departed, leaving the lorry to leave at first light on Monday morning and the whole day for the journey to Ropley. The journey up was rather eventful because the lorry burnt its clutch out soon after leaving North Tawton. However, the driver was able to reach Ropley by midday without a clutch!

Unloading took place on the Tuesday when the bridge was re-constructed upside down in its present position in the station yard. Doing it this way allows us to sand blast and paint all surfaces except the top plate while it is on the ground.

The whole operation, dare I say it, went exactly as planned and without mishap or accident except for that burned out clutch. It would not have been possible without excellent co-operation of BR, particularly the Exeter bridge office.

The siting of the bridge at Ropley has yet to be determined as the Railway Inspectorate will require it to be in a position that does not obscure signals and this will be decided once the running season is over.

The next phase will be putting it all up again and that could be the hard bit.

This article is reproduced with the kind permission of John Elliott, Editor of the current Mid Hants News. This inspired four of us, Alan Cocker, Andrew Turner, Graham Kelly and your Editor, to visit the Mid Hants during their Autumn Steam Gala and check out the bridge and buffet counter. The following article describes what we found.

A Steam Gala:

By P Ritchie

Early morning on 26th October saw four of us, two DR Staff and two Volunteers, set off from Devon to the wilds of Mid-Hampshire. It was Andrew who was the driving force that took us to the Autumn Steam Gala on the Mid Hants Railway. There were two objectives of the visit. Firstly to see and enjoy the sound, smell



Steam giants

Photo: A Turner



Shady characters

Photo: A Turner

and sight of 'big' steam, and mainly Southern steam at that. The secondary objective was to see and record the old North Tawton footbridge and the

Okehampton buffet counter.

Travelling over the Mid Hants is known as 'going over the Alps' because of its fairly steep gradients, hence large steam engines have always been an advantage here. 4-6-0s and pacifics are perfectly at home. The steam gala fed us sights of 'Super Power' with double-headed trains using two pacifics amongst others. This was, perhaps, overkill on just five coaches but, nonetheless, impressive.



The 'Westcountry Buffet' at Alresford

Photo: P Ritchie

The 'Westcountry Buffet' at Alresford station revealed the old Okehampton buffet counter with a brass plaque recording its history - 'This Buffet Counter was originally at Okehampton station in Devon'. It was too difficult to photograph the plaque under the ambient lighting conditions.

Next came the old North Tawton footbridge at Ropley. When Andrew, Graham and Alan lined up on the bridge it immediately conjured up memories of the sketch with John Clees and the Two Ronnies on 'Not the Nine O'clock News'. The result of this is the photograph (left) and the enlargement of a section of that photo used on the front



North Tawton bridge at Ropley (see front cover for close-up). Photo: P Ritchie

Graham and Alan lined up on the bridge it immediately conjured up memories of the sketch with John Clees and the Two Ronnies on 'Not the Nine O'clock News'. The result of this is the photograph (left) and the enlargement of a section of that photo used on the front

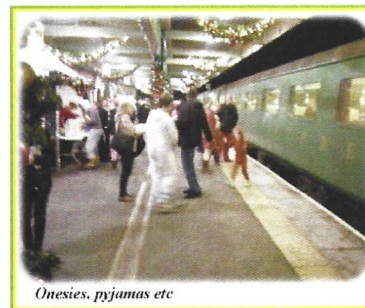


North Tawton bridge plaque at Ropley. Photo: P Ritchie

cover. There is a brass plaque recording the origins of the bridge situated under the left hand staircase when viewed from the main station buildings. The plaque reads 'This footbridge, No 591, was formerly at North Tawton station Devon. It was dismantled during August 1983 and rebuilt here by volunteers of the Mid Hants Railway Preservation Society. October 1986'. The rest of the day was spent exploring the railway. It was interesting to find out how the King's Cross footbridge had been utilised and its position is in a most advantageous situation giving excellent views of the shed yard and workshops. Overall, then, we had a very enjoyable and informative day and would recommend a visit to the Mid Hants as a matter of priority.

Polar Express 2013:

The Polar Express run on the Dartmoor Railway this season appeared to be a great success. 18,000 people



Onesies, pyjamas etc

booked onto the trains as stated in the Editorial and they came from near and far. Hopefully, they have gone away with a good impression of the railway and its people. It was good to

see a crowded platform with an excited hum about it despite the weather - and sometimes the weather was really bad, but still they came. Preparation for the PE was helped by



In the cab of a Class 45 Photo: A Gregory



PE Locos at Okehampton Photo: P Wagstaff

the fact that the rolling stock had been cleaned up and fitted out last year but there was still a lot of work to do after the coaches had been open to the elements for 12 months. A vast amount of work was required to get the sleeper coaches up to even a basic standard for the cast of actors' accommodation. The original

locomotives expected for PE duties included a Class 45 for which our drivers, Nigel and Keith, needed training. They duly underwent training on the Weardale Railway only to find the Class 45 was not going to be used at Okehampton. The locos that arrived first were a Class 31 (31459) and a Class 47 (47375) hauled in by a Class 31. Joining them at a later date was Class 47 47769 which



47769 at Meldon Photo: P Wagstaff

proved most useful later when 31459 failed with a turbo-blower problem.

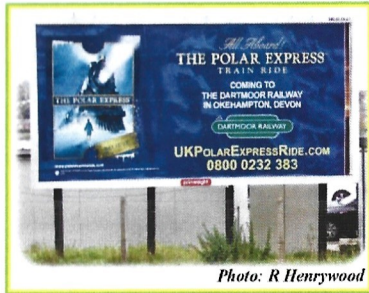
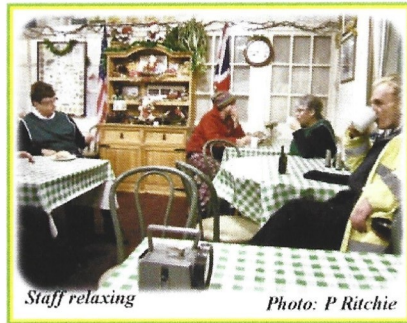


Photo: R Henrywood

This year, advertising seemed far more prominent and our Chairman spotted a large hoarding in Exeter which is pictured on the left

When dealing with two full trains per night, the staff, from car park attendants to Buffet staff were really worked hard and it was good to get a bit of relaxation

in between trains. Even then that was interrupted by the requirement to switch off lights etc when the train passed through the station. Mary must have produced a ton of chips or more over the running period and Andy and Emma did their bit by cooking the beef burgers to go with the chips.



Staff relaxing

Photo: P Ritchie

On top of the catering needed in the evening, the cast had to be fed and a (largely) young cast would roll in to the buffet expecting breakfast at any time in the morning. Mary should be given a medal for her work!

DRSA Social Gatherings

Where Members and Staff can get together socially

Eastern Area: First Wednesday of the month
'King's Arms', Tedburn St. Mary
From 1830 onwards

Western Area: Third Thursday of the month
'Fox and Hounds', Bridestowe
From 1830 onwards

The Motor-rail Train 1962

(Courtesy John Wills)

BOOKING ARRANGEMENTS

As accommodation is limited—advanced booking is essential. Application should be made on the form provided. No remittance should be sent until notification of acceptance of the booking has been received. If payment is not then made by the 28th day prior to the forward journey, the accommodation will be released to other applicants. A refund of fares cannot be entertained unless notification of intention to cancel a booking is received not later than 14 days before the actual departure date. Book through your Travel Agent or send the enclosed application form, completed and signed on BOTH sides to:

Line Traffic Manager,
(South Western Division),
Southern Region, British Railways,
Waterloo Station, London, S.E.1.

Tickets and other details will be sent to the address shown on the application, about 14 days before the travel date. The tickets can only be used on the outward and return dates shown on them.

LOADING THE CAR

On Fridays and Saturdays cars will be loaded in the station yard at Surbiton and/or Okehampton, and on Sundays at the platform dock at Waterloo and/or Exeter Central at pre-arranged times. Details will be given of the time at which the car is to be presented for loading (approximately an hour before departure) and labels for each journey will be supplied to attach to your car keys. To avoid congestion at the loading dock punctuality is obviously necessary. The car keys, with the label attached, should be handed to the British Railways uniformed driver at the loading dock, they will be returned when delivery of the car is taken at the destination station.

Petrol may be left in the petrol tank but separate fuel containers will not be permitted. Trailers and caravans cannot be carried.

LUGGAGE

Luggage not needed on the journey may be left in the car, but care should be taken not to add to the height and length by piling luggage on the roof rack, or in the boot. The height of the car, including luggage, must not exceed 6 ft. 4 in. Bicycles and perambulators must not be strapped to the car but these may be conveyed in the guard's van at an additional charge. Luggage weighing up to 100 lb. per passenger will be conveyed free of charge. (Children 50 lb.)

Dogs may be taken upon payment of an additional charge, but they will not be allowed to remain in the cars.

Return journey £1. 7. 0. each
Single journey £1. 0. 3. each

SECURITY OF CARS AGAINST THEFT

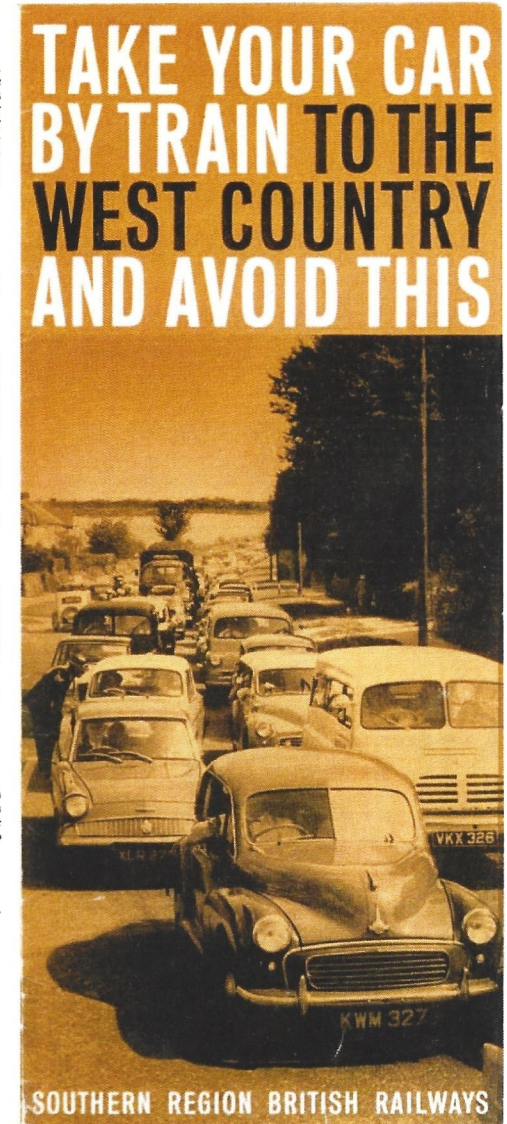
If the car is left at the loading dock before the arrival of the British Railways representative, no responsibility is accepted by the British Transport Commission. Cars must not be driven away from the destination until released by the British Railways representative to whom the travel ticket must be surrendered.

INSURANCE

Insurance can be effected at moderate charges to cover passengers, cars and luggage.



Photograph on the front cover by courtesy of the "Western Morning News"
Proprietor: The Southern Region of British Railways, 1962-1963. All rights reserved.
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With this leaflet, John reminds us of the pre-motorway, pre-dual-carriageway A30 and A38 summer days when the traffic jams on the

**TAKE YOUR CAR BY TRAIN
BETWEEN SURBITON SURREY
AND OKEHAMPTON DEVON
FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS
WATERLOO LONDON AND
EXETER CENTRAL SUNDAYS
JUNE 16 TO SEPT 16 1962**

Much more traffic than is safe is using the main road from London between Honiton and the Exeter by-pass. Since 1954 traffic on this road has increased by 48 per cent. The West Country is a wonderful holiday playground but the snag is getting there. It's a long drive at the best of times but in the summer when the roads are crowded, traffic jams can make it a nightmare journey. This Car Carrier service is designed to relieve you of all your driving worries by taking your car in a covered van attached to the train in which you and your passengers travel. Let someone else do the driving this year—there and back—you'll enjoy your holiday all the more.



SERVICE OPERATES AS FOLLOWS

		Fridays 27th July until 31st August incl.	Saturdays 16th June until 15th September incl.
SURBITON	depart	7.51 a.m.	8. 3 a.m.
OKEHAMPTON	arrive	12. 5 p.m.	12.26 p.m.

		Fridays 27th July to 31st August incl. and Saturdays 16th June and 15th September only	Saturdays 23rd June until 8th September incl.
OKEHAMPTON	depart	3. 8 p.m.	3.55 p.m.
SURBITON	arrive	7.15 p.m.	8.11 p.m.

		*Sundays 17th June until 9th Sept. incl.	
WATERLOO	depart	9. 0 a.m.	
EXETER CTL.	arrive	12.50 p.m.	

		*Sundays 17th June until 16th Sept. incl.	
EXETER CTL.	depart	4.12 p.m.	
WATERLOO	arrive	7.50 p.m.	

CHARGES (ONE CLASS ONLY)

	SINGLE	RETURN
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
DRIVER AND CAR	9 5 0*	15 0 0*
EACH PASSENGER	1 10 0	3 0 0
CHILDREN (3 and under 14 years of age)	15 0	1 10 0

*The charges for driver and car are subject to a reduction of £1 each way for travel on Sundays.

REFRESHMENTS

A restaurant car will be included on the train for the provision of the following meals on Fridays and Saturdays:

	ADULT	CHILD
	s. d.	s. d.
†BREAKFAST	8 6	5 6
LIGHT LUNCH	8 0	5 0
AFTERNOON TEA	3 6	3 6
SUPPER	8 6	5 6

†Tickets for breakfast may be obtained by prior advice being given on the enclosed application form.

On Sundays, the Restaurant Car will offer an *a la carte* service of meals, light refreshments will also be available at current prices.

A30 would stretch from the Exeter By-pass to Cheriton Bishop in one

direction and from Okehampton to Whiddon Down in the other. It was especially bad on Bank Holidays. Mind you, these were also the days when you could still get to Ilfracombe, Bude, Padstow and Plymouth by the Southern route.


Meldon Quarry was still very much a busy and going concern to which the advertisement in the local press bears testament

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OKEHAMPTON

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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.

The Dartmoor Rambler

by Dick Henrywood

Illustrated here is the front cover of a double-sided 3-fold leaflet advertising "The Dartmoor Rambler" which ran on four summer Saturdays in July and August 1986. Clearly it must have been a precursor for the current "Sunday Rover" trains, although it was organised by the West Devon Borough Council dealing with British Rail rather than Devon County Council and First Great Western. There were just two return trips each day, departing Exeter Central at 09:23 and 16:15 and returning at 11:22 and 18:20, leaving just 20 or 25 minutes in Okehampton. The return fare was £2.50. BARS may like to learn that the leaflet stated quite categorically that "The Dartmoor Rambler is NOT a steam train". It stopped at Crediton but not at Sampford Courtenay.

Another part of the leaflet, also shown here, provides a useful description of the "Okehampton Line" and a short history. I like the fact that the line "clings tenaciously to the edge of Dartmoor"!

(leaflet images courtesy Ross Henrywood collection)

THE OKEHAMPTON LINE

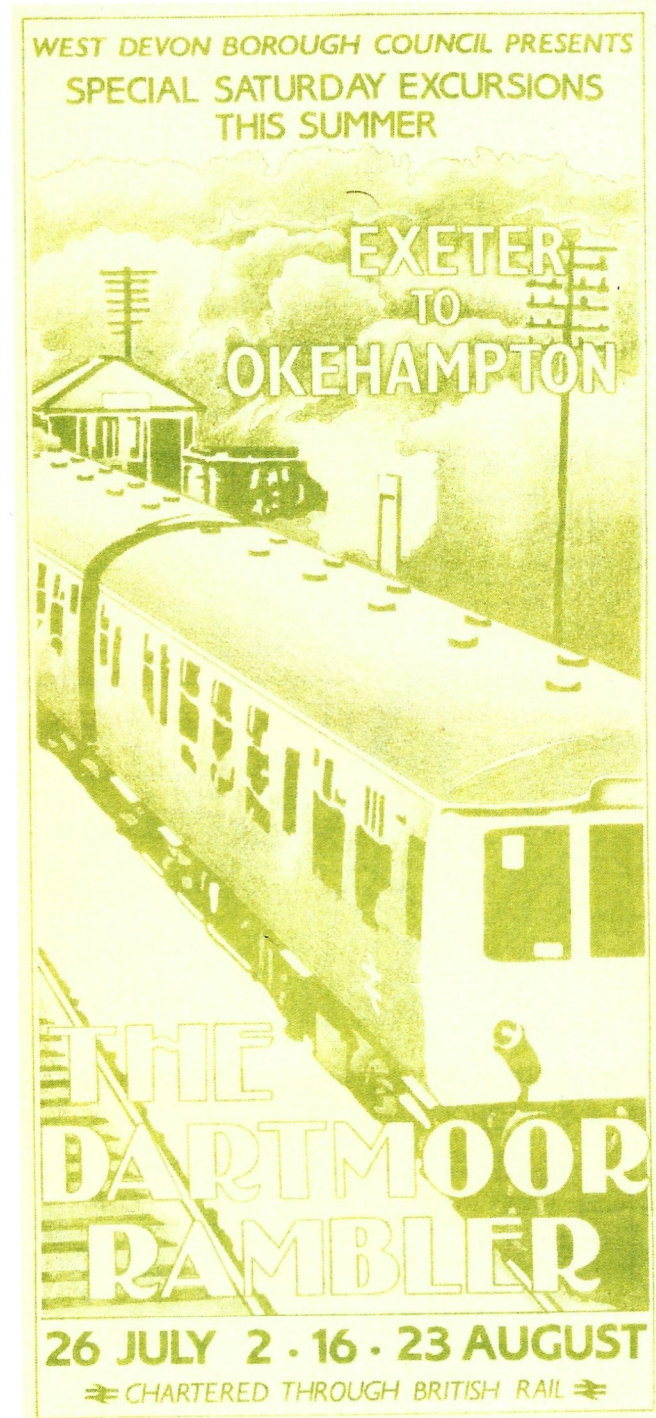
The first plans to build a rail connection to Okehampton in 1862. Through a couple of subsidiary companies the London and South Western Railway Company eventually commenced the rather erratic construction of the line. From Coleford to North Tawton was reached in 1865 but the final three miles to Okehampton were not opened until 1871 with an extension to Lydford following in 1874.

The first few miles from Coleford are fairly easy but then the line curves and climbs steadily until it clings tenaciously to the edge of Dartmoor. The station at Okehampton looks down on the town with the line continuing on past Meldon to its highest point of 950 feet before descending in a series of graceful curves across open moor to Lydford. The line to Lydford travelled over a large viaduct, having six girder spans on metal lattice piers, all other viaducts on the line were of local stone.

The expense of maintaining the Meldon Viaduct was one of the reasons for closing the Okehampton to Plymouth Line. There is still track on the viaduct and over 300,000 tonnes of ballast stone is removed from British Rail's quarry there.

British Rail closed the Okehampton to Bere Alston section of the line in 1968. A passenger shuttle service to Exeter operated for a further four years until it too was withdrawn on 5th June 1972.

In the heyday of steam, Okehampton was a busy station for connections and for dividing large trains, such as the Atlantic Coast Express, according to intended final destinations in the West Country.



Rosie's Diary: "A Rare Breed"

by Rosie

Well, it was a shame you missed an excellent Steam Away Day, but it wasn't your fault. Our Dartmoor Pony just didn't make it to your door in time. Either he wasn't fed, or the grazing along the roadside was just too good to pass by. However you can now read an exclusive and be prepared in advance for a similar outing in the new season, probably end of March. I refer of course to paddling in a Castle.

Everything went smoothly from Coplestone and I was thirsty by the time we arrived at Paignton. We happened on a most civilised outdoor cafe by the harbour there, where seats were polished dry for my two legs while I gratefully partook of the clear aqua brought to my very nose even before the coffee was served.



Goodrington Sands

Photo: S Baxter



The new station building was splendid with a big log burner ready to go in the entrance hall when the weather cools down. As you can see I had a choice of window seats as we travelled behind Goliath, so I was tantalised by the expanse of mechanically cleaned and smoothed beach at Goodrington Sands, just waiting to be dug up. However we sped on and you



Kingswear signal box

Photo: S Baxter

can tell they are most thoughtful on the P and D because they provide silvered ledges at just the right height for almost any canine to take in the view.

Two legs Tom was much more interested than I in the "New Signal Box". He was just dreaming about how he would feel if his office had been built like that, but it lacks any levers.



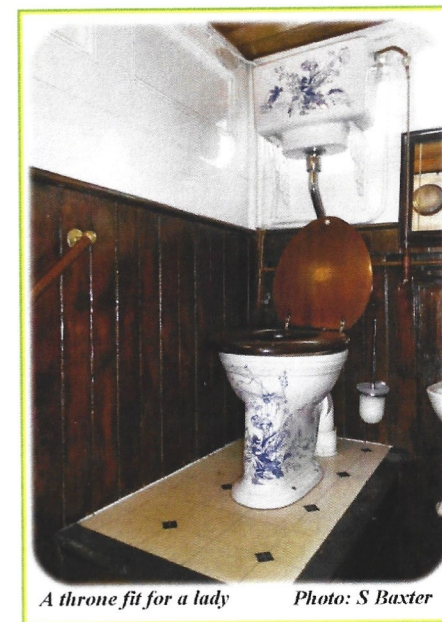
PS Kingswear Castle

Photo: S Baxter

often forgot, going up and down the stairways, that my two legs were still attached by their lead. The hatch to the hot engine room was open, but I couldn't see down into it. Unlike the Ladies Toilet which both the gents and I were summoned to look at. To me it looked most uncomfortable, up in the air, a throne apparently.

Out on the Dart the River Steamer and the Steam Train had a hooting competition which Goliath won. However when we go next year listen carefully because, not to be outdone, Kingswear Castle has a new two tone hooter on order too! Despite being big and bubbling did you know that steaming monster

Finally onto the Castle. Now I have to admit that it did tremble quite a bit which was not what I was expecting, but there again it had lost its stone walls. Once under way there was this gentle bubbling up of the water thrust by the paddles, very positive and calming. I explored everywhere but



A throne fit for a lady

Photo: S Baxter

can hardly turn round? Her paddles are not independent and only go at one speed. So next time we need to go to Totnes to see how her captain turns her round in the narrows, with a little assistance from ropes I believe.

For the time being I have collected another trophy, as the only DRSA canine to have trodden the boards of a floating river monster which consumes half a ton of coal a day. A rare breed indeed.

A Cautionary Tale!

The whole 'Clan' project was outlined in the last issue of the Friends of the Dartmoor Railway Newsletter (Winter 2008) and the first edition of The Dartmoor Pony (Spring 2009). Bob Ife outlines the history of events since new management had to take over to rescue the project. Needless to say, the project is moving ahead with new vigour. I have attached the latest updates at the end of the first part. Ed

The 'Clan' Project – Part 1

By Bob Ife



As I am not sure what readers know about the 'Clan' Project, I will give a brief history from where the current team took over the management of the build of 'HENGIST,' to the present time.

The current team were initially appointed at an Extraordinary General Meeting, held at Barrow Hill, in May, 2011. The appointments were confirmed, at the Annual General Meeting held in Loughborough, later that year. The management team, known as the Council of Management, run the project via regular meetings at a central point and, in between times, by a combination of emails and telephone calls as thought appropriate. There are currently seven members on the Council of Management.

When we first took over the project, the initial thoughts were to consolidate what we had. Many parts of the locomotive had been manufactured, but were scattered around the country, at various locations, from Lancashire to Dorset. Several working parties have been convened and most of the parts have been moved to our secure midlands storage area. Work on cataloguing them will commence in September, with a further working party being assembled for the task. Alongside this, to enable us to know what we are actually looking at and cataloguing, the drawings for the locomotive, which were received in unordered bundles, have also had to be sorted in to numerical sequence and placed into document cases, ready for use and reference. This process took many evenings of work at the home of our Chief Engineer, Geoff Turner, assisted by Chris Jones, Dave Etheridge, (all three of whom are members of the Council of Management), and other members of the Engineering Committee, as and when they could spare the time. This process also enabled a check to be made to see if any drawings were missing and, if so, what the numbers of the required drawings were and to set in train the process of acquiring them.

The major frame components, that had already been manufactured, were located at the premises of Ian Riley and Co, Bury. Also, there were the smokebox, smokebox door and ring. Council of Management member, Bob Ife, made an initial visit to Riley's to see what was actually there, recording the parts on site by taking photographs for reference, and discovering what drawings of the locomotive were in Riley's possession: also if they were the only copies held, or duplicates of ones in the main catalogue.

Even on this initial visit, Colin Green, a senior member of staff at Riley's, pointed out what he thought was going to be a difficulty with the horn guides of the mainframe plates, in that they were, apparently, incorrectly machined.

Parts at Riley's were found to be the main frame plates, the frame extension plates, and a cast stretcher along with the smokebox parts already referred to above. All the frame parts were on a Weltrol wagon, sheeted over with tarpaulins, while the smoke box parts were exposed to the elements. Colin Green was of the opinion that the parts

were in good condition, needing only light sand blasting to make them fit to be assembled.

Bob reported back on his findings and a further visit was arranged, for a more detailed examination, some weeks later. Colin, again, was our guide and explained things in detail to Geoff Turner who led this visit. Colin explained his concerns about the frame plates and the horn guides in detail to Geoff – indeed the horn guide problem, with regard to the machining of them, was obvious to the naked eye. Colin expressed concern that there was no known paper trail for the manufacture of the frames and the welding work. He would be unwilling to assemble the frames without the relevant paperwork in place, as there was a strong possibility that our Vehicle Certification Body would not pass them as fit, without the correct paperwork.

After the locomotive frame drawings were located and, as the correct paperwork had still not been located, it was thought, on advice from our Certification Body, Wayne Jones and Partners, that the best way to achieve conformity was to have the frame plates and welding work independently surveyed. Frazer Nash assisted us in carrying out non-destructive testing of the welding between the horn guides and the frame plates and testing the grade of the material from which the plates and horn guides were made.

Graham Ashton, a member of the engineering team, arranged through his employers, TATA Steel, the loan of a Faro arm measuring device to completely check the dimensions of the frame plates, to ensure that all was well. The Faro arm makes a three dimensional drawing of the item being measured and compares it to a master drawing to see that it conforms. It was to be many months before the full results of these tests would become available.



© Ken Horan / Standard Steam Locomotive Company

Progress!! The State of Play 8th December 2013

The Dartmoor Pony Winter 2013/14

The second combined frame stretcher / spring hanger and the rear frame stretcher / brake cylinder support have now been delivered. The photo above shows the impressive line up of stretchers, front buffer beam and front buffers.

Progress on other components :

Frames	Profiled at Stephenson Engineering and awaiting the welding in of the horn guides
Horn Guides	Awaiting welding preparation
3rd combined stretcher	To be cast in January
Existing fabricated stretchers	At Ian Rileys awaiting NDT
Front firebox support & truck pivot	Obtaining quotes
Vertical frame stretcher SL/DE/19832	Obtaining quotes
Smokebox saddle	Obtaining quotes
Slide bar brackets	Obtaining quotes
Motion brackets	Obtaining quotes
Exhaust steam spider	Quotes obtained, order to be placed shortly
Frame / horn guide keeps	Quotes obtained



12th December
One frame complete, the other being machined

The story will continue with Part 2 in the next edition of the Pony.

The Dartmoor Pony Winter 2013/14