

BATH RAILWAY SOCIETY

President: Pete Waterman OBE DL

Chairman:-John Froud, 155 Bath Rd, Bradford on Avon, BA15 1SS Tel: (01225) 869112
www.bathrailwaysociety.co.uk bathrailwaysociety@gmail.com

JUNE NEWSLETTER 2019

Dear Member,

On Thursday May 9 we welcomed Michael Bunn as our guest speaker and he took us across the English Channel presenting the 'Railway History of Paris' and I hope you enjoyed the journey around the French capital? We thank Michael for his interesting presentation.

As previously notified, our AGM will take place on Thursday June 6, at 7.30pm at St Marys Church Hall and we welcome any nomination for positions on the committee. Also if there are any matters you wish discussed please also advise us in advance. Please use the above addresses, either email or letter. We will try to keep the AGM as brief as possible and then take a tea/coffee break.

Following the break our guest speaker for the last meeting of the season will be Mark Smith who will give us a talk on 'The Heritage Railway Association'. Mark is the Vice Chairman of the HRA which is a voluntary run trade association representing Heritage & Tourist railways, related Museums, Tramways, Cliff Lifts, Railway Preservation Groups and has over 300 corporate members. This will be an interesting subject so please do come along and give a good BRS welcome to Mark.

Please note, there will not be a book stall at this meeting, but I'm very pleased to advise you that it has made a grand total of £122.80p this season thanks to Mike Ware's efforts. Thank you also to everyone who has supported the book stall either by buying or bringing in books for sale. It will re-open again at our October meeting.

On Saturdays June 1, 22 and 29 Network Rail will be undertaking track renewal work near Trowbridge station, where they will be removing the existing rails and replacing them with new. Check your journey if you intend travelling through Trowbridge on these dates.

On the weekend of June 8th and 9th, the Dartmoor Railway will be running an English Electric Weekend, using the entire DR traction fleet, all of which are EE powered. A two train service will operate throughout the weekend, including a full run of the line on Saturday night Tickets will be available online at the discount prices of at £15 for adults, £12 for seniors or £8 for children Traction Class 205 Thumper 1132 (600hp English Electric 4SRKT engine) Class 08 08937/D4167 (350hp English Electric 6KT engine Class 31s 31452/D5809 and 31285/D5817 (1470hp English Electric 12SVT engine)

From Friday June 7 - Sunday 9 the Didcot Railway Centre will be running both the Saint Class No. 2999 Lady of Legend and visiting Hall Class No. 7903 Foremarke Hall together in steam. Lady of Legend will be in fully lined Edwardian livery and, as the Saint Class was superseded by the Hall Class. Both engines will be in steam over the weekend including running as a double-header on the main line and with GWR 1450 and Autotrailer No 190 running on the branch line. Also Modified Halls 5900 Hinderton Hall and 6998 Burton Agnes Hall will be on static display for photographs.

The Didcot to Oxford branch line of the Great Western Railway is Celebrating its 175th Anniversary on June 15 with events at five stations along the line - Didcot, Appleford, Culham,

Radley and Oxford. A combined ticket will be available to visit one, a couple, or even all five venues and the Thames Travel special 175 bus service, will run a circular route hourly from Didcot. At the Didcot Railway Centre, a special Victorian display will be held in the Transfer Shed, while 7029 Clun Castle will be running into Oxford. See the Anniversary 175 website for details. <http://didcotoxfordgwr175.org/>

There will be a Midsummer Wine Festival at the Avon Valley Railway on Friday 21 June with around fifteen local English wine producers present together with Bath Soft Cheese for this special evening event. You can enjoy sampling from the different vineyards and talk direct to the producers themselves. The event runs from 18.30 and lasts a couple of hours with tickets costing £15, and these are available to purchase now. See the Railway's website for full details.

Twenty years ago this month on June 12, Hertfordshire Rail Tours ran a special train from Plymouth to the Central Wales line. It ran via Bristol, Severn Tunnel Junction, Maindee North Junction. Hereford and Craven Arms where it reversed to run over the scenic line through Llandrindod Wells and down to Llanelli. It then returned via the Swansea avoiding line, Cardiff and Newport to Plymouth. The train was formed of an HST using power cars 43010 and 43012.

It was 57 years ago this month when the last passenger trains ran on the Fairford branch from Yarnton (Whitney Junction) in Oxfordshire on June 12 1962. The branch was 22 miles long and although Fairford was the terminus it was originally intended to be a through station as the line was planned to run to Cirencester, but this was shelved. Track did however run a further 500 yards past the station where there was a run round loop and it also had a turntable. Although the line to Fairford was completely closed, freight traffic continued to run up from Yarnton to Whitney, but this finally ceased and the remaining line closed from November 2, 1970. Several rail tours did run up to Whitney prior to this closure. Pressure has been growing to re-open the line to Whitney for passenger traffic to ease congestion going into Oxford. The latest report/study submitted to the Council in January this year strongly recommends looking into re-opening the line with a service to/from Oxford and Whitney.

There are numerous steam specials advertised to run out of Bristol during the next three months, too many to list here. These include trips to Kingswear, Par and Weymouth. A number of the trains to Kingswear are routed via Bath and Westbury as of course are those to Weymouth. One train running into Bath & Bristol is a Steam Dreams excursion on Thursday June 20 from London Paddington. It is likely that some of these advertised trains may well be cancelled, but you can check on what is running on the Steam Tours website at www.uksteam.info/tours/

Several model railway exhibitions are taking place which you might like to visit this month. On June 8, The Mendip Model Railway Group have a display at the Warminster Civic Centre, Sambourne Road with 9 display layouts and eleven trade stands in attendance. Also on June 8 + 9, the Shepton & District Model Railway Society will have 9 layouts on display at the Village Hall, Chelynch Park, Doultong. Back over in Wiltshire on June 15 & 16 the Mere & District Railway Modellers will have 10 layouts plus 3 trade stands in attendance at the Mere Lecture Hall in Salisbury Street.

Every Sunday until 8 September, a bus service will run between Okehampton station and Lydford, Lydford Gorge, Brentor, Tavistock and Gunnislake station. The bus will link in with some Exeter–Okehampton and Gunnislake–Plymouth trains and pass the main entrance to Lydford Gorge. You can buy a Devon Day Ranger rail ticket and a £3 bus ticket to do a round trip between Exeter and Plymouth. One way out via Dartmoor and the new bus, the other via the south Devon main line and along the sea at Dawlish. The Devon Day Ranger costs £13.00 Adult (£8.60 Railcard). For full details visit the Devon & Cornwall Rail Partnership website at

<https://www.dcrp.org.uk> where details of all branch lines in Devon & Cornwall can be found with ideas for days out.

The London Transport Museum will be celebrating 150 years of the District Line this month. To mark the occasion steam hauled trains will run into central London hauled by Metropolitan No 1 and tailed by electric locomotive Sarah Siddons. Trains will run on June 22 & 23 and it is likely to be the last time that events like this will take place on lines in the centre of the capital due to new signalling upgrades.

Great Western Railway is due to start running a shuttle service to the West Somerset Railway at Bishops Lydeard from Taunton this month, but the start date has still to be announced. The service will run for 50 days. Check websites for updates. Meanwhile South Western Railway are again running their 'Saturdays Only' services to Corfe Castle (Swanage Railway) from Wareham. The train originates at London Waterloo (0635) and runs via Salisbury, Yeovil Junction and Pen Mill (0950) and Weymouth to Wareham, then forms several shuttle workings to/from Corfe Castle. See SWR or Swanage Railway websites for details. Fares: - £12 day return from Yeovil and £14 day return from Salisbury, Tisbury, Gillingham, Templecombe and Sherborne. Railcard discounts apply to all Corfe Castle fares

We hope to see you on Thursday June 6 for our Annual General Meeting followed by a talk by Mark Smith from the HRA. We then take a break until September when our first meeting will be on Thursday 5, when we welcome our President Pete Waterman. This meeting will take place at Bath's 'Museum of Work' in Julian Rd, Bath BA1 2RH starting at 7.30pm. Further details to be announced.

Please note:- All events and special trains etc are mentioned in good faith and hopefully details are correct at the time of publication of the Newsletter. Please however, do check before travelling or attending events as things can change