

BATH RAILWAY SOCIETY

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NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER 2018

Dear Member,

For our October meeting, Gordon Adams presented the 'History of the Railways of Southampton which also included the docks complexes. We thank Gordon for his in depth presentation for which he had obviously carried out considerable research for material. The railways of Southampton are still changing today and likely to do so in the future, so this is certainly an ongoing subject!

Our guest speaker for our next meeting on Thursday November 1 will be Chris Austins OBE MA FCILT. Chris's subject will be 'Disconnected: Broken Links in Britain's Rail Policy' a subject on which he is a co-author of a book. He is a retired railwayman having achieved 42 years' service to the industry and is now actively engaged as a volunteer with a number of railway groups as well as being secretary of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Heritage Railways. In addition to name just a few, he is chairman of the Avocet Line Community Rail Forum in Devon and also chairs the Infrastructure and Networks Group for Railfuture and serves as Secretary to the Heritage Railway Association's Legal & Parliamentary Affairs Committee. With his wealth of knowledge on our railways this should be a very interesting meeting and one not to miss. Doors open at 7pm for a prompt 7.30pm start.

Don't forget, if you have any unwanted railway books bring them along to our book stall, which has so far raised £63.20p. Please do put on a price you think they should sell for and if they don't sell, take them back home with you afterwards. All money raised will go to Society funds.

Well known railway photographer Malcolm Ranieri, who has been a past guest speaker at BRS showing his superb photographs, sadly passed away at home in early October.

With work continuing on four tracking and electrification, no trains are currently running between Bristol TM & Parkway (including Severn Beach Line) until Nov 19. Road replacement services are in operation while some rail services are being diverted. The line will again be closed between Bristol TM & Parkway (including Severn Beach Line) on November 24 & 25. Do check before you travel.

Whilst on the subject of engineering works, GWR has announced details of this year's Christmas works which will effect services at Southall, Westbury, Guildford, and Severn Tunnel Junction. GWR are recommending that customers make their Christmas getaway by Saturday 22nd as work will start from Sunday 23rd December and on many routes will continue through to the New Year. There will be no trains on Christmas Day or Boxing Day. Full details can be found at www.GWR.com/Christmas

£900,000 is to be spent improving the area in the front of Weymouth station which is served by both GWR and South Western Railway services. Plans to install a turntable at Weymouth for steam charters now seem to have been dropped.

Those of you who knew the late Jon Preston will know that he was a very keen photographer of both trains and buses going out day and night to photograph subjects. Now his brother Peter is trying to dispose of Jon's photographic equipment and find a good home for it. This consists

we think of cameras (PRACTIKA and PENTAX), tripods, projectors, projector screen etc. but no digital. If anyone is interested in any of this equipment, please see Mike Ware for further details.

If you're a fan of the film 'The Titfield Thunderbolt' then you may be interested in a new book now available 'On the Trail of The Titfield Thunderbolt' by Simon Castens. This is an updated edition of a book Simon first published back in 1999, a guide to the locations used in the making of The Titfield Thunderbolt. This new book gives detailed information on all of the locations used together with film facts and anecdotes, biographical details of key players and maps showing the locations. It's available from The Titfield Thunderbolt Bookshop, 3A Upper Lambridge Street, Larkhall, Bath, BA1 6RY Tel. 01225 462332 www.titfield.co.uk priced £8.95 (Open Wednesday to Saturday 10am to 5.30pm)

The South Devon Railway are staging a Diesel Gala from November 2 – 4 using their home fleet plus three visiting locos. West Somerset Railway Class 14 - D9526 together with an Class 08 from Laira depot + a third guest will join D7612, D6501, D3721 and W55000. There will be an intensive timetable in operation. See www.southdevonrailway.co.uk

Fifty years ago this month on Saturday November 16, 1968 the Bath Branch of the Locomotive Club of Great Britain ran the 'The Cheddar Valley Rail Tour' using a 3-car Swindon cross-country DMU set. The train started at Bristol Temple Meads then took the route:- - Fishponds - Mangotsfield - Bath Green Park (Midland Yard) – Mangotsfield - Yate - Hallen Marsh Jnc - Severn Beach - Clifton Down - Bristol T M avoiding line - Portishead - Bristol Temple Meads - Witham - Wells - Cheddar - Westbury - Bath Spa and Bristol Temple Meads. Also the Powerstock station building on the Maiden Newton to Bridport line was sold in November 1968, this being six years before the line closed! The building became a private residence and was modernised with a loft conversion which included windows facing onto the platform. It still remains today and the old track bed is grassed over.

On Saturday November 3, the West Wiltshire Gauge 0 Group are holding the Westbury Model Railway Show at The Paragon Hall, Haynes Road, Westbury. On Sunday 4 The Poole and District Model Railway Society hold their 2018 Exhibition at Poole Grammar School, Gravel Hill, Poole. On November 10 & 11, the Wincanton Model Railway Exhibition is at King Arhurs School, West Hill, Wincanton, with the Exeter Train & Toy Fair being held at The Matford Centre, Matford Park Road, Marsh Barton Industrial Estate on November 17.

The Avon Valley Railway are holding an End of Season Gala on November 10 & 11 with two visiting 'Southern' veterans - A1X Terrier 32678 & LSWR Beattie 30587 running alongside some of the Railway's home fleet. Full details at www.anonvalleyrailway.org or telephone 0117 932 5538. As in recent years, a charity Carol Train organised by the Bristol & South Gloucestershire Methodist churches in running on the railway on Saturday December 1. The Carol Train departs from Bitton station @ 7pm (boarding from 6.45) with the carol singing accompanied by the Bristol East & Kingswood Brass Band. Mince pies are available and you are advised to bring a torch or lantern and suitable clothing if wet. Tickets are Adult £7, Under 16 - £3.50, under 5's Free. They can be purchased from Clive & Joan Sutton on 0117 932 3978 with advance booking required. Profit from the evening will go to 'Railway Children' and 'Action for Children'. A good way to start Christmas, steam & carols!

The Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) has issued a report following the running away of two coaches at the Avon Valley Railway at low speed on July 25 this year. The incident occurred during shunting movements causing a collision with the level crossing gates of the cycleway. Details of the report can be viewed at <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk...Bitton.pdf>

The Severnside Community Rail Partnership beat off strong nationwide competition at the 2018, 14th National Community Rail Awards, held last month, scooping the top award for 'Outstanding Contribution to Community Rail' which was sponsored by the Department for Transport. This was for their programme of projects aiming to put the railways in the west of England back into the heart of the communities they serve. South Western Railway with the Swanage Railway gained a second place for the introduction of the SWR's Basingstoke to Corfe Castle service this year.

The Bath Christmas Market should bring two steam specials to the City this month. On November 24 the Railway Touring Company are operating a train which will see A4 60009 departing from London Paddington and running via Newbury and the Berks & Hants line. On November 28, The Cathedrals Express originates at London Victoria and motive power for this is still to be announced.

BRS member Mike Ware is compiling information, and photographs to complete his father's memoirs of Life on the Railways...If anyone has photographs, or information, of (especially) the SLS special on the 6th March 1966, and guard Bernard Ware, please let Mike know. You can see Mike at our meetings or email him on mikeware1952@yahoo.co.uk

Plans by Devon County Council to reinstate the old 'southern' line between Bere Alston and Tavistock have currently been put on hold due to the estimated cost of £60m.

We look forward to seeing you all on Thursday November 1 for the talk by Chris Austins.

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