

# BATH RAILWAY SOCIETY

President: Pete Waterman OBE DL

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## **OCTOBER NEWSLETTER 2019**

Dear Member,

We had an excellent start to our new season on Thursday September 5, when we welcomed our President - Pete Waterman OBE DL for his inaugural Presidential address to the Society. Pete certainly entertained us with his life involvement with railways and we thank him for taking the time in his very busy schedule to travel down to us from London. This meeting was held in the surroundings of The Museum of Bath at Work in Julian Rd and we thank them for their help and hospitality. We would especially like to thank Davina for everything she did in advance and on the night, with her helpers to organise the refreshments etc. The occasion was also used to present the S & DJR Shed Masters Chair, which the Society owns, to the Museum on long term loan and this was kindly presented by Pete Waterman to Stuart Burroughs the museum's curator. What do you think of the venue at the Museum? Do let us know your thoughts on this.

Please remember, membership renewal of £18 for the new season is now required. You can either send a cheque to our Treasurer Jon Hughes (payable to Bath Railway Society) at 65 Solsbury Way, Lansdown, Bath. BA1 6JA or pay him in person at our October meeting.

Our next meeting will be on Thursday October 3 back at our usual venue of St Mary's Church Hall, Bathwick when we welcome guest speaker Steve Beamon when he will be telling us all about 'Policing for Railways, Docks and Canals 1824 – 2019'. This will be quite a historical talk but will then bring us up to the present day policing methods. As usual, doors open at 7pm for a 7.30pm start.

We welcome new members Terry Ayliffe and Geoffrey Ayliffe-Fletcher who joined us in June, and Pete Adley and Richard Cowell who joined the Society at our September meeting.

Just to remind you all, your membership details are stored electronically and on paper, but these will not be passed to any third parties and will only be used solely for Bath Railway Society purposes. Should you not wish for your details to be stored please would you advise accordingly?

Mike Ware has decided to give up running the bookstore which has raised funds for the Society. We thank Mike for all his efforts and time doing it for several years. Does anyone fancy taking it over and carrying on with the bookstore? If so please let us know, we'd be pleased to hear from any volunteers.

Track renewals will affect train services between Bristol Temple Meads, Weston-Super-Mare and Taunton on Sundays 6 and 13 October while signal upgrades will affect services through Bristol Parkway on Saturday 26 and Sunday 27 October. Some trains will be diverted and buses will replace a number of services to/from Cardiff Central. For more information, please visit [GWR.com/Bristol](http://GWR.com/Bristol) Electrification work to Cardiff will affect train services on various weekends until Sunday 20 October. For more information on this go to [GWR.com/Electrification](http://GWR.com/Electrification)

The West Somerset Railway Autumn Gala from October 4 to 6 will take the theme of a Country Railway using home fleet locomotives plus visiting 7752 from the Birmingham Railway Museum

and 6412 from the South Devon railway. The last shuttle services operated by GWR between Taunton and Bishops Lydeard will be running on Saturday October 5. See WSR website for full details.

Another Autumn Steam Gala takes place on the Swanage Railway from October 11 to 13 with visiting locomotive BR Standard 5 – 73156 from the Great Central Railway plus home fleet locomotives 30120, 31806, 34053, 34072 & 80104 (all subject to availability). Again see the Railways website for details.

The Shirehampton Model Railway Club will be staging a show at the Public Hall, Station Road, Shirehampton, Bristol on October 6 with 6 + layouts on show plus one trade stand. On October 26 & 27 the Somerset Modellers Club are holding Rail Ex – Taunton with 30 layouts and 24 trade stands. This will take place at Taunton School, Staplegrove Road, Taunton.

Fifty years ago this month on October 3, The Longmoor Military Railway in Hampshire was closed with a full military ceremony. At its height the railway had 72 miles of running line and sidings and linked in with the BR Guildford to Portsmouth line at Liss. It also had a connection with the former Borden branch in the north. Although officially closed on 31st October, some locomotives and stock remained on site for another two years, and there were occasional movements. Three items of rolling stock (a van, a brake van, and a bogie flat) still remain on a continuing army site which is now part of a training village for urban warfare and a set of buffer stops are still at Liss by the site of the former 'army' platforms as a reminder of the railways once presence.

Two year earlier in October 1967, track lifting on the northern section of the former Somerset & Dorset line had reached a point half way between Shoscombe and Single Hill Halt and Wellow stations.

If you're not aware and if you are planning ahead for rail travel, on Sunday December 15, 2019, Great Western Railway will be introducing the biggest timetable change on their network since 1976, with faster, more frequent services, and with more seats across the region. Around three quarters of journey times will be changing as new services are added and changes made to old ones as part of the improvements. You can get more information and sign up for alerts at [GWR.com/Timetable2019](http://GWR.com/Timetable2019). Hopefully more updates in future Newsletters when known.

Following the refurbishment of St. Erth railway station in Cornwall, the Helston Heritage Railway have received a large donation of materials surplus to requirements which could be of use to them. These included sleepers, buffer stop and the original platform copers from St. Erth station. The items have now been transported to Prospidnick, the home of the Helston Railway.

It has been announce that a £26m package of improvements will take place on the Island Line (Isle of Wight) services between Ryde and Shanklin. The 1938-built former London Underground trains currently in use will be replaced by five x two car sets made up of former D78 stock originally used on LU's District Line, with testing due to start early next summer. The refurbished trains will be provided by Viva Rail and fitted for third rail operation and will be designated Class 484. Also as part of the improvements, a passing loop will eventually be provided at Brading to allow trains to run half-hourly to Ryde pier to connect with ferry services to Portsmouth. Other track improvement works will also be carried out. South Western Railway, which operates the Island franchise, is not planning to scrap the existing 1938 stock, but hopes to find good homes for it!

Regarding the above item, you may be interested in a book about the old tube trains on the Island? 'Ryde Rail A History of Tube Trains on the Isle of Wight' priced at £20 It tells the story of how and why ex London Transport Tube trains came to be used on the remains of the once

extensive Isle of Wight system after the withdrawal of steam in 1966, and it is available from the Titfield Thunderbolt Book Shop in Larkhall, Bath by online order (+ p&p) [www.titfield.co.uk/New-Books.htm](http://www.titfield.co.uk/New-Books.htm) or in person at the shop on Fridays only 10am to 5.30pm. There is an excellent selection of books on sale.

The Gloucester and Warwickshire Railway have an Autumn Diesel Weekend on October 12 & 13.

The Vale of Berkeley Railway have started work on restoring its BR Brake Van, No. B954990. This was built in the 1950's and used in the Eastern Region. Structurally the vehicle is in reasonable condition but it will need its springs and axles overhauled as well as a lot of the wood work being renewed. We will be having a talk on the Vale of Berkeley Railway by Alan Price on January 2, 2020.

In the National Rail Awards for 2019, Templecombe station was named the 'Station of the Year' in the small station category. The station is operated by South Western Railway and served by Class 159's.

Over £850,000 has so far been raised to replace the boilers of the Paddle Steamer Waverley and overall, £2 million is required to return this former LNER owned steamer to working order. She was built in 1946 and was the last paddle steamer to be introduced by the railway company before nationalisation. Donations are still urgently required and can be made via the P S Waverley website.

We look forward to seeing you at our next meeting on Thursday October 4 back at St Mary's Bathwick. Our November meeting will be taking us up to the Capital when Rupert Singleton will be talking about 'The Redevelopment of London Bridge Station' on Thursday November 7 @ 7.30pm.

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