

# BATH RAILWAY SOCIETY

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## SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

Dear Member,

We hope you've had a good summer break and we welcome you to our 2018/19 season.

The last meeting in June was our Annual General Meeting followed by a talk on The Ffestiniog Railway by Mark Temple from the Railway's Bristol Group. Mark gave us a most interesting talk on the history of the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway and brought us up to date with the latest happenings. For those of you not at the AGM, the committee were re-elected on block, and membership fees remain the same for the new season. I hope those of you who went on the visit to Midsomer Norton station enjoyed the evening, and we thank Paul Udey for organising it.

Unfortunately, membership fees are now due and if you wish to pay in advance of the September meeting to avoid the rush at the door, you can send a cheque for £18 to the Hon Treasurer, Jon Hughes (made payable to Bath Railway Society) at 65 Solsbury Way, Lansdown, Bath BA1 6JA

Our first meeting of the new season will be on Thursday September 6, when Stephen Bigley presents 'Railways at Night' This is an unusual presentation showing railways at night, covering trains, stations and other structures, from Penzance to Oban, taken between dusk and dawn. As usual doors open at St Mary's Church Hall, Bathwick at 7pm for a 7.30pm start.

For the small number of you who have the Newsletter by mail, there is now no need to provide stamped addressed envelopes. The Newsletter will be mailed to you free of charge.

Please note, there will not be a bookstall at our September meeting, this will resume in October.

From September 15 to October 7, electrification works will be taking place on the line between Winterbourne viaduct to Stoke Gifford and no trains will call at, or run through, Bristol Parkway station during this period. Some trains will be diverted and other trains will be replaced by buses. Check with GWR, CrossCountry or National Rail Enquiries before travelling.

The West Somerset Railway will be holding a 'Late Summer Weekend Gala' on September 1 & 2 with trains departing hourly from both ends of the line. Locomotives scheduled to be in use are: - 6960 Raveningham Hall, 7F - 53808, D6575, D1661 'North Star' and D1010 'Western Campaigner'. On September 9, the Gloucester & Warwickshire Railway are holding a 'Classic Vehicle Day' at Toddington with vehicles being displayed in a field on the east side of the station. Admission is free if you have a valid railway ticket. See the Railway's websites for full details of both events.

Several steam specials are due to operate in the Bath/Bristol area during September with the first being on Sunday September 2, with 'The Royal Duchy' (Bristol - Par) due to run. 'The Royal Duchy' is again scheduled to operate on September 16. On Wednesday September 5, 35028 'Clan Line' is due to work from London Victoria to Bath & Bristol with the Belmond Pullman. On September 9 there should be a 'Torbay Express' from Bristol to Kingswear. Full details can be found at [www.uksteam.info/tours](http://www.uksteam.info/tours)

Work is progressing on the new Worcester Parkway station which is being constructed at Norton. Phase 1 is due to open during 2019 with a platform serving the Cotswold Line followed at a later date by Phase 2 which will have platforms on the Birmingham - Bristol line.

The annual Model Railway Exhibition will be taking place at the 'Steam' museum at Swindon on September 8 & 9 with 27 layout displayed throughout the museum, and over 30 trade stands in

attendance. On September 9, the Weston Hospiccare exhibition will take place at The Campus, Highlands Lane. Locking Castle, Weston-Super-Mare with 28 Layouts and 11 Traders in attendance.

The last Sunday summer only services from Exeter to Okehampton will operate on September 8. No date has been given yet for the start of regular daily services on the line but when it does, Crediton signal box is likely go from two to three shift manning thus being open for the full 24hrs per day to allow earlier and later trains to operate, especially on the Barnstaple line. A disused platform at Yeoford might also be reinstated for Okehampton services.

Looking back fifty years ago this month, the Great Western Society had an operating day on the Wallingford branch from Cholsey & Moulsoford station in September 21, 1968. For their series of shuttle trains they used 0 - 4 - 2T 1466 and Auto Trailer 231 from their Didcot depot. The following week on September 28, the now defunct Longmoor Military Railway held an Open Day with WD's 600 'Gordon' and 196 'Errol Longsdale' operating the train services around the extensive system. In London on September 1, the Undergrounds Victoria line opened between Walthamstow Central and Highbury and Islington.

This month there will be engineering works in the Southampton area effecting train services through Southampton Central most weekends. The work will see track improvements into Southampton Docks taking place, but Central station will remain open for only very limited services whilst others will be diverted or cancelled. Do check train services if you are travelling in the area.

The Isle of Wight Railway will be holding a Diesel Gala on September 28 to 30 using diesel shunters. In addition to their own Class 03 - D2059 and Class 05 - D2554, Class 03's 03 197 & 03 399 will be joining them from the mainland. See the Railway's website for full details.

The Swanage Railway will be operating a 40 minute frequency timetable in each direction for the Bournemouth & Poole Preservation Club's annual 'Vintage Vehicle Rally' which is held in a field adjacent to Harmans Cross station from September 7 to 9, with a large number of vehicles and stationary engines etc. on display. Swanage Railway's Class 33, D6515 (33012) rescued the Dorset Coast Express on Thursday August 23, when its class 47 failed at Weymouth. The 33 was summonsed to haul the train, some 3 hrs late, from Weymouth to Clapham Junction. A4 60009 was on the rear and provided assistance on Bincombe and Parkstone banks before coming off the train at Southampton.

The Vale of Berkley Railway in Gloucestershire have acquired a track machine from the Dean Forest Railway which is in need of restoration. It arrived last month and once restored to working order it will be used to Jack & Pack and Slew track on the line

A Volunteers Weekend is to be held at Midsomer Norton station during the period Saturday 8 to Monday 10. It is hoped to attract new volunteers to assist on the expanding railway. It is intended to hold two introductory sessions on both the Saturday and Sunday with a fifth session on the Monday, with each of the sessions lasting approx. 2.5 hours. Full details can be found at [www.sdjr.co.uk](http://www.sdjr.co.uk)

The Avon Valley Railway are holding a 1940's Weekend on September 22 & 23 with various attractions at Bitton station and train services in operation.

The Lynton & Barnstaple Railway are staging a gala at Woody Bay station on September 29 & 30 giving the chance to see two replica L&B engines (LYD and LYN) on their home line hauling appropriate L&B carriages side by side for the first time in 93 years plus ISAAC and AXE also in steam. The miniature railway is also due to be in operation plus other attractions. See L & B website for full details.

The Tarka Valley Railway based at Torrington station has been given planning permission to extend a quarter of a mile beyond the station platform, the current limit of their track, to the first overbridge towards Bideford. Members have already started clearance work of the old trackbed

beside the Tarka Trail cycleway in preparation of track laying which will include the provision of a minor crossing.

Traders and businesses in Dawlish are concerned about Network Rail's plans to move the railway seawards. They are worried that it would involve the loss of two beaches which would affect trade in the town.

We look forward to seeing you all back on Thursday September 6 when Brian Ringer presents 'Railways at Night', and please don't forget to either post or bring your membership fees with you! Our October meeting will be on Thursday 4 when we welcome Gordon Adams who will be giving us a talk on the 'History of the Railways of Southampton'.

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