

# BATH RAILWAY SOCIETY

President: Pete Waterman OBE DL

---

Chairman:-John Froud, 155 Bath Rd, Bradford on Avon, BA15 1SS Tel: (01225)  
869112

[bathrailwaysociety@gmail.com](mailto:bathrailwaysociety@gmail.com)

---

## NEWSLETTER

Dear Member,

It was very unfortunate that we had to cancel last month's meeting due to the severe weather conditions that prevailed on Thursday March 1. We have re-arranged for the guest speaker for that meeting, Stephen Bigley, to give his presentation on 'Railways at Night' at the start of next season.

The subject of our next meeting on April 5 will be 'The new build 'P2 Project' presented by Huw Parker. The P2 Project is an ambitious new-build project, aiming to recreate one of Gresley's 2-8-2 Mikado Passenger locomotives. It is being funded by donations and commercial sponsorship and built at Darlington Works by the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust, builders of 60163 "Tornado." Huw will give us the latest news on the project and we look forward to seeing you all at St Mary's church hall, Bathwick. As usual, the doors will open at 7pm for 7.30pm start.

Following the passing of our former President, David Shepherd CBE FRSA FGRA, we are pleased to announce that Pete Waterman OBE DL has accepted our invitation to now become the Society's President. As you will be aware, Pete Waterman was our Vice – President and we hope to be able to arrange for him to come to speak to us in 2019, if a suitable date can be arranged.

You may be aware that new data protection laws (General Data Protection Regulations - GDPR) are coming in force next month regarding the storage of personal information. The Society has to comply with these new regulations and we ask you to read carefully and complete the other attached document with this Newsletter. Please return completed forms by email, post or hand in at our next two meetings. As stated, anyone not returning the form by May 25 will have to be removed from our data bases. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us at the addresses given above.

As briefly mentioned in the March Newsletter, we have been invited to join the RCTS Bristol Group on a private evening visit to the Somerset & Dorset Railway Heritage Trust at Midsomer Norton station on Friday June 15, starting at 1830hrs. It is hoped that Sentinel

'Joyce' will be in steam and providing rides (subject to availability). Conducted tours will also be taking place. Tickets are £5 and must be purchased in advance from Paul Udey, who will have them available at our next two meetings. The stations' buffet car and shop will be open and parking will be available at Norton Hill School.

Eurostar are to commence running daily scheduled public services to Amsterdam from April 4 from London's St Pancras Station direct to the Dutch city. Two train per day will operate with a journey time to Amsterdam of 3hr 41mins. However, in the reverse direction passengers will have to change at Brussels due to customs formalities, but this change should be eliminated in 2019.

A special excursion train is to run on April 21 from Okehampton to Oxford & Stratford on Avon. This will be formed of a GWR HST with Pullman style dining available. It also calls at Crediton & Exeter. The train is being run for the local community of the area who will benefit from the reopening of the line. Departure from Okehampton is at 0700 with a return time of about 2100. A previous special ground to a halt with serious wheel flats on a power car and the train had to be replaced at Exeter.

Hitachi are to trial another 'bi-mode' version of their five car Class 800 IEP's for GWR due to the delays in the electrification programme. The existing diesel engine will be replaced on unit 800 104 with a hydrogen powered - modern day steam turbine which experts predict will provide the same power, if not higher, as the diesel variant. The only noticeable visual difference between this unit and the diesel version will be a brass safety valve in the roof panels of the driving cars in the old G. W. traditional style. Traces of steam will therefore be visible when the unit is under power! A non - stop test run between North Pole and Hitachi's Stoke Gifford depots is to take place on Sunday April 1, but timings for this are not being released, however, it should arrive at Stoke Gifford by 12 noon.

On April 7, the West Wiltshire Model Railway Circle is holding a 'Spring Model Railway Exhibition' at

Holt Village Hall, The Street, Holt, Nr Trowbridge, Wiltshire. There will be 10+ layouts and 2+ trade stalls. Layouts in N, 00, EM, OO9, and O. Free parking and refreshments available.

Gloucester station is set to get a £3million pound makeover. The money will be spent improving the front of station area including the car park and a subway.

The Avon Valley Railway will be staging a Diesel Gala on Saturday and Sunday, April 14 & 15 with passenger and freight trains in operation. See their website for full details nearer the date. On April 28 & 29 the Railway is presenting 'Boys & Their Toys' with a weekend of model railways from the members of the AVR. Various layouts in N, OO and Continental gauges. Steam-hauled train services and brake van rides will also be in operation. Normal fares apply for train rides with admission to the model railway displays included in the price.

The London Transport Museum is holding an Open Weekend at its Acton Depot on April 21 & 22 from 10am to 5pm. Admission is £12 (Concessions £10). Exhibits from trains to posters etc., plenty to see. The museum is holding three open weekends this year, the next is in July.

On April 24, the Great Britain X1 rail tour will be passing through Bath Spa on route from Cardiff to Weymouth. This is due to be hauled by either WC Class 34046 or A4 Class 60009 to Yeovil Pen Mill where 'U' Class 31806 will be added to the formation to assist haulage from Weymouth to Swanage.

Two years ago on April 3, 2016, forty eight people were injured when a Great Western Railway Class 150/2 forming the 1339 service from Penzance to Exeter service, collided with an HST 125, forming a London service, at 15mph in Plymouth railway station. Permissive signalling arrangements were in place that day to permit two trains to share the same platform, due to the station lifts being un-available. A report into the accident concluded that the signaller misjudged the amount of space available behind the HST and wrongly believed there was room for the Penzance train, and the driver of the 150/2, also did not realise that he was entering a platform with a train already standing in it.

50 years ago on April 6 1968, the RCTS ran the 'Thames & Avon Rail Tour'. This started at Paddington and visited Swindon works on route to Chippenham and Bradford Junction where it traversed the North to West part of the then triangle continuing to Limpley Stoke where it reversed. It then ran to Westbury – Frome – Radstock and onto the S & D to Writhlington Colliery. Reversing it then travelled to Bristol Marsh Junction/North Somerset Junction and to Parson Street for a journey down to Portishead. The four car DMU returned to London from Portishead via the Bristol Marsh Junction avoiding line, North Somerset Junction, Dr Day's Junction and the Badminton route to Wotton Bassett.

Totnes station in Devon is to get a new station footbridge incorporating passenger lifts.

The Gwili Railway is celebrating its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary over the Easter period. Trains will also be operating during the Easter school holidays. See their website for details. <https://gwili-railway.co.uk/>

Pathfinder Tours will be marking the end of BR Steam in August 1968 with a special train over the Settle & Carlisle line and Shap on Saturday August 1, 2018. The tour starts from Bristol T M at 5.30am with pick-ups at Bristol Parkway, Cam & Dursley and Cheltenham Spa. The train will be hauled from Preston and back to Crewe by 60163 'Tornado'. Bookings are open for this tour, see the Pathfinder website for full details and to book this tour. [www.pathfindertours.co.uk](http://www.pathfindertours.co.uk)

Did you know that the former 'Bullseye' presenter - Jim Bowen, who died on March 14, previously owned Arkholme for Kirkby Lonsdale railway station, on the Leeds to Morecambe

Line between Wennington and Carnforth stations? He had the main station building converted into a private house.

Membership of the Berkley Vale Railway based at Sharpness has now topped 400 and they are poised to start clearance work on Oldminster Sidings, once the final arrangements with Network Rail are in place and environmental aspects are considered. They hope to start running trains by 2020.

Our next meeting will be on May 10, and please note this is the second Thursday of the month for this meeting, when Brian Ringer will present 'Strictly Freight – Part 2.' In the meantime we look forward to seeing you on April 5 for the talk on the new build 'P2 Project' presented by Huw Parker.

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