

New style at Skipton

The new waiting room at Skipton on platforms 3 and 4 is now complete and in use. It is light and airy and has room for more passengers than the old wooden building.



WjS



Left Co-Chairman, Hugh Turner and Secretary, Gerald Townson with the LASRUG stand at the Swapmeet at Carnforth on 18th September 2011

Please send items for the Newsletter to - Publications Co-ordinator
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Newsletter - December 2011



The 10.19 ex Leeds "The Boat Train" in Bentham Station on 5th January 2010.

Best wishes for
Christmas and the New Year
from
the LASRUG Committee

Ten reasons to love the Pacer! See page 3

LASRUG AGM

This year's AGM, held on September 16th in Bentham Town Hall was attended by 40 people, a higher number than last year, perhaps prompted by our guest speaker, Michael Williams.

Not surprisingly Mr Williams, an experienced Fleet Street journalist and lecturer on transport matters, spoke about the railway subjects that he had aired in his books, most prominently the delights of slow travel and the discoveries to which it can lead. He clearly had a soft spot for our line and fond memories of meeting our president and treasurer when he came researching his second book.

He recalled other occasions during his over 30,000 miles of travel on Britain's railways whilst preparing to write and reactions since. He was delighted to be feted by the directors of the Docklands Light Railway after his chapter 'The 09.45 Back to the Future'. Nobody had had such nice things to say about their system, they said.

And, indeed, Mr Williams has the gift of being able to find the interesting, charming and beautiful that others miss. He would claim, no doubt, that this is because they don't travel in a slow and leisurely enough manner to take things in properly. However, it could also be because he is a man of generous spirit and positive attitude who likes to see the best in things and people. He even likes Pacers, he confessed! (That admission prompted us to ask him to explain his apparent heresy in greater detail, which he does opposite.) And when he listed his railway pet hates they were only the minor irritants that vex us all, such as byzantine ticket systems, incomprehensible station announcers, inadequate information, poor or non-existent food on trains and being called a customer rather than a passenger.

Mr Williams was thanked by our co-chairman Richard Rollins for what had been a most enjoyable journey on the current railway system's highways and (mostly) byways seen through the eyes of an exceptionally well travelled railrider and railway lover that reflected so much of what we all experience and feel.

The meeting was pleased to receive the annual reports of our chairmen and treasurer, copies of which are enclosed. The existing members of the committee were re-elected apart from Wendy Smith, who stepped down as Secretary but, happily, continues as Publications Co-ordinator. Gerald Townson was elected as Secretary.

Cllr Gareth Adams and Cllr David Whitaker are the new representatives of Bentham Town Council and Lancaster City Council respectively.



The Giggleswick Shelter saga continues - - - Michael Fanning of Transolutions and LASRUG Co-Chairman, Richard Rollins at the site of the proposed shelter at Giggleswick on 16th September 2011 take matters a step further.

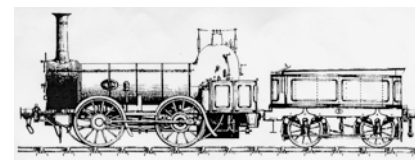


Clapham Station July 1966 What changes have occurred over the last 45 years?

LASRUG Coffee Mornings in 2012 will be held in High Bentham Town Hall on the **25th February** and **18th August**, between 10.00 and 11.30.
Do please try to support your local Rail User Group.

Screenshow

Our new secretary, Gerald Townson, organised a Screenshow of the line past and present during the coffee break at the AGM and would like to develop the idea as a regular feature when we present ourselves on public occasions. He needs more material to draw on to make these presentations varied and interesting, and so, if anyone has any photographs taken on the line - when and where do not matter much - he would be glad to have the use of them. He will scan them and return them to you. His postal and email address and telephone number are on page 8



Christmas Photo Quiz Answer from page 5 - The photograph was taken at Wenington Station and to the left the Carnforth and Morecambe portions of a Leeds train are combining in the bay platform.

Community Rail Conference in Cardiff November 2011

The aim of this ACORP conference was to look at how community rail may change in the future.

The Industry Plan for England and Wales shows that 570 to 640 new rail vehicles are needed by 2019. The emphasis will be on electric units but this will allow more diesel units to be allocated to rural lines. Some of the existing fleet will be refurbished and made more accessible while some of the older units will be scrapped.

For most people the vehicle of choice is still the car but that is becoming more expensive. Many people still have a 19th century perception of railways. The traditional heavy rail is too costly to build and maintain especially in rural areas and lighter vehicles may be an answer. They have less impact on the track and are less expensive to maintain and run. Buses should be able to bring people to stations and not run in competition to the trains.

Anna Walker from the Office of Rail Regulation agreed that there is too much focus on urban areas but indicated that there may be more local management of individual routes. This idea of “daughter companies” or local management within future larger franchises was mentioned by a number of speakers.

As a result of the McNulty Report, the government wants to make savings of £1 billion from the railways by 2019. A number of consultation papers are being produced during the next 3 months and user groups, CRPs and local authorities will need to respond, saying what rail services are needed for lines in our areas. Future investment in the railways may depend on these savings being made.

Speakers also confirmed that main line speeds and standards are not needed for all lines and that less costly standards should apply to rural lines. There still have to be overall safety and design standards but operationally separate standards could be applied to rural/ community lines.

In conclusion, speakers stressed that on community lines, old and expensive infrastructure and trains must give way to simpler and less costly solutions like new signalling, lighter trains, less regulation, local maintenance, basic fencing and more local management.

Jim Trotman, CRP officer, Furness and Lakes Lines and LASRUG committee member

The Winter Sunday Services

The new four train service has now been operating successfully since mid-September, and is well used by walkers, students and day-trippers, despite a surprising lack of promotion on the part of Northern Rail. John Bearpark, our President and Press Officer, has worked hard to draw attention to the additional services in the local press and in railway publications. We have the service, now we must work to keep it!

National Rail enquiries - fares and timetable information

Tel - 08457 48 49 50
Textphone - 0845 60 50 600
Website - www.nationalrail.co.uk

Train Running - the latest information on train running is available by phoning ‘Train Tracker’ from National Rail Enquiries on 0871 200 49 15 or by texting Train Tracker’, text to 84950

Northern Rail

Customer Helpline - Tel. 0845 00 00 125 - 0800 to 2000 Monday -Saturday
0900 to 1700 Sunday
email customer.relations@northernrail.org
for comments, enquiries and complaints

Correspondence

Customer Relations Department

Northern Rail
Freepost (RLSL - ABEC - BGUU)
Leeds
LS1 4DY

Access, disabled information or cycle assistance

Freephone 08081 56 16 06
Textphone 08456 045 608
email assistance@northernrail.org

Lost property -

Tel - 0845 00 00 125
email lost.property@northernrail.org

Group Travel - Group Travel, 0845 1243345 open 09.00 to 17.00 Mon - Fri. (Northern may give discounts for groups of 10 or more.)

Passenger Focus

Telephone 0300 123 2350
Address Passenger Focus
Freepost
(RRRE-ETTC-LEET)
PO Box 4257
Manchester M60 3AR
Web site www.passengerfocus.org.uk

British Transport Police - Tel - 0800 40 50 40

Crime Stoppers - Tel - 0800 555 111

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www.leedslancastermorecambecr.co.uk - access to the website is also still perfectly possible through the original web site address. (www.lmr.co.uk)

Dales Railcard

The cost of the Dales Railcard remains at £10.00 per person for residents of the areas with post codes :-

LA 2 / 5 / 6 / 10

BD 23 / 24

You can obtain, or renew, a railcard at Carnforth, Skipton and Settle stations or by post.

Complete an application form (available from the above stations) with proof of your address and identity (eg driving licence, utilities bill) - send a photocopy with postal applications and post to -

Dales Railcard

FREEPOST CE747

Appleby in Westmorland

CA16 6ZZ

Rail Future Conference, Manchester, November 2011

The conference was attended by representatives of rail user groups from across England, Scotland and Wales, who were keen to hear about the future for RUGs in light of the numerous changes in franchises and possible new franchisees over the next few years, as well as recent developments on various routes.

RUG presentations were given by members of the East Suffolk Travellers' Association, the North Cheshire Rail Users Group and the Friends of the West Highland Lines and focused on establishing hourly timetables, line re-doubling, flora and fauna projects and the re-creation of views from the train.

Richard Watts, a co-founder of LASRUG who now works for Lancashire County Council, highlighted his work with Community Rail Partnerships across the County, including our line partnership.

Barry Graham, Northern Rail's Business Development Director, felt CRPs, RUGs and Friends Groups were vital to his company, providing 'grass roots' information and advice about travelling with Northern Rail.

Lilian Greenwood, MP, Shadow Transport Minister, spoke about the devolving of franchise awarding to more localised groups and the need for commitment to the whole High Speed 2 line to Glasgow from the outset, not just the first section to Birmingham.

Christmas Photo Quiz Question



At which station was Midland 0-6-0 44479 photographed on a mineral train in July 1955 and what is going on to the left? (Answer on page 11)

EVENTS AROUND THE DISTRICT 2012

Hellifield Tearoom Presentations 2012. All events start at 7.30

6th January - Digital image presentation of the photographs of Vic Drake and Howard Malham. BR in the 1960s

3rd February - Barry Atkinson presents a show of slides by Tim Parker moving from Skipton to N.E. Lancashire and back and Alan Hayes photographs of the Blackburn - Preston line

16th March - Out and About on BR in the early 1960s - Robin Lush

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Stephenson Locomotive Society meetings

Meetings are held on Thursday evenings (unless otherwise shown) at 7.15 for 7.30 pm at the St. John's Ambulance Centre (just off Sandes Avenue, Kendal). Further details from the Centre Secretary, Eric Bartlett, 4 Empson Road, Kendal LA9 5PS

01539 720706. e-mail: ericbartlett@btinternet.com Visitors are welcome at all meetings.

Visit the SLS website: www.stephensonloco.org.uk

5th January - Alan Hart - Local steam at its peak.

2nd February - Members' Evening

1st March - Tom Heavyside - On narrow gauge tracks.

12th April - Gordon Biddle - Sir William Tite and the Lancaster & Carlisle Railway.

12th May - Walk and outside visit.

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These meetings take place at the County Hotel, Carnforth at 7.30pm on the dates below. For more information contact Alan Sattenstall 01524 34840

alan.sattenstall@tiscali.co.uk

6th January - History of the Lancaster & Carlisle Railway - Peter Robinson

3rd February - Developing rail services in the North West - David Langton (train planner for the FirstTransPennine Express)

3rd March - A Photographic Tour of the Stainmore Railway - David Tyreman

13th April - The work of the British Transport Police - Sgt David Grant

4th May - The East Lancashire Railway - David Wright

The Lesser-Spotted 158

Whilst the majority of the services along our route are operated by the 'nodding donkeys' Class 142 and Class 144 'pacer' units and a daily Class 150, there have been several occasions in recent months when an air-conditioned relatively luxurious Class 158 has been seen along our line. People have watched in amazement and excitement from platforms as a 158 has approached, and conductors have been inundated with questions such as, "Are you sure this is the right train?" or "What have we done to deserve a train as good as this?" Best of all they have enable more comfortable and happier journeys for the local passengers. Let us hope that Class 158 units keep popping up or better still become regular visitors to our shores.



British Transport Police

Recent priorities for the Lancaster area BTP have been:

1. anti-social behaviour, notably on the Lancaster to Barrow and Millom line;
2. trespass, an offence which increases particularly in the school holidays;
3. assaults on staff and passengers and even taxi drivers attending to rail passengers;
4. theft.

A bicycle thief at Oxenholme and Kendal was caught, made to make restitution to the owners and to do 200 hours unpaid work in the community. A number of cases of theft of bags on trains between Oxenhome and Lancaster were solved when a well-dressed young woman was seen in the act on CCTV and apprehended on leaving the train at Lancaster.

The BTP has been joined by two specially trained special constables, who are giving much needed support to the force.

Access for All : Giggleswick

Three persons with learning difficulties and a member of staff from the North Yorkshire County Council Resource Centre in Settle recently met with John Bearpark at Giggleswick station. They were preparing an article for their newsletter The Gazette Their special interest was in accessibility, and from this point of view Giggleswick scored highly.

They observe that the station is quite isolated, "on its own, in the middle of nowhere." The large car park catches their eye (this was of course built when BR was planning to close the Settle-Carlisle line). There is praise for the smooth-surfaced entrance ramp, but a doubt whether the platform shelter has room for a wheelchair to turn round. They mention LASRUG's hopes for a shelter on the opposite platform. The wide platforms win approval. They note that, in the absence of a footbridge, everyone, whether disabled or not, has to cross the tracks to reach the opposite platform for trains to Morecambe. There is a gentle slope to the board crossing with a non-slip surface. They welcome the good visibility in both directions for people needing to cross the line; as well as being useful for information about delays, the platform phone enables those wanting to cross whose sight is not good to check if a train is coming. They also praise the new foot-crossing on the A65, with its island refuge, and the gentle ramps down to it from the station.

In conclusion: "Giggleswick station is a good station. They have used what space they have really well. It has been well thought out and they have taken lots of time and trouble to make it safe and more accessible for all."

Blasted Bentham

After a long wait, the footbridge at Bentham Station has been well and truly sand-blasted back to the metal, primed and is currently being repainted in Northern Rail colours. Work will need to be carried out on the supporting columns.

Those two very busy little chaps Elf and Safety must have visited Wennington Station recently, as safety meshes have been added to the sides of the footbridge.