

Virtual DalesRail – A Time for Celebration

Simon Clarke

DalesRail may not be operating in 2020 but that doesn't stop us sharing our many interesting experiences about our journeys. We hope you will share your interesting stories, favourite walk, fascinating anecdotes and pictures about DalesRail. Send them to Richard Watts at richard.watts.crl@gmail.com or simon.clarke.crl@gmail.com.

Over the years the summer Sunday DalesRail service has been used as a conduit for celebrating the anniversaries of some landmark events. There have been two events that I have been directly involved with, firstly as a Manager with First North Western and then as a secondee from Northern Rail to Lancashire County Council as a Community Rail Development Officer.

Sunday 23rd May 2004 – this event was to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the reopening of the line between Blackburn and Clitheroe on Monday 30th May 1994 and saw a host of specially invited guests including Managing Directors, Mayors, members of Ribble Valley Rail and Lancashire County Council joining the train and travelling up to Carlisle to meet with dignitaries from Carlisle City Council and to enjoy a lunch at what is now the Hallmark Hotel close to Carlisle Station.



The headboard for the special day



The assembled guests at Carlisle Station



Lunch in the Hallmark Hotel

The return journey saw a lay-over at Hellifield station giving guests time to stretch their legs and an opportunity for some photos and then finally back to Clitheroe where Town Crier Roland Hailwood welcomed the train into the station and then 'cried' the anniversary.



Train crew and guests at Hellifield



Ronald Hailwood cries the 10th
at Clitheroe



Ronald Hailwood & guests at Clitheroe

Sunday 9th September 2007 – was a 21st Anniversary celebration of the formation of the local rail user group Ribble Valley Rail. Ribble Valley Rail was officially formed at the inaugural meeting in the Swan & Royal Hotel in Clitheroe on Monday 1st December 1986. Richard Watt's as Acting Chairman welcomed the 20 people who were present and as the meeting progressed various officers were elected including Peter Moore as Chairman, a post he held until his death in 2012.

Once again a number of invited guests including Steve Butcher and Kathryn O'Brien from Northern Rail, Richard Watts from Lancashire County Council and RVR members joined the Officers of RVR for a journey through the Ribble Valley and then over the scenic Settle to Carlisle route. Lunch was taken in the Hallmark Hotel and then a free afternoon before the return journey.



Steve Butcher and Peter Moore at Carlisle



Left to right: Marjorie Birch, Richard Watts, Peter Moore and Steve Butcher