



*Above - Killington Lane Bridge in 1948 - PI Clarke*

Killington Lane bridge as shown above may have gone (apart maybe for some remains in the filled in cutting) but it is still possible to re-create this scene with a new bridge and the added bonus of trackwork in the cutting!

It will take a lot of effort and money but we can't even start to consider the reconstruction of our favourite railway until we own the land.

If you can help by becoming a shareholder of Exmoor Associates please contact us via one of the methods listed below.

### **Exmoor Associates Contacts:**

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# Trackbed Trails

The newsletter for Exmoor Associates Ltd. Issue 5 Summer 2008



*Above - EA supporters enjoying a view of the former trackbed from across Wistlandpound Reservoir, May 2008*

Hello, and a special welcome to L&B members who have for the first time been sent a copy of our newsletter, helping keep everyone up to date on our activities! At our annual meeting at Hunters' Inn in May (more of which to follow) I suddenly found myself "volunteered" to help edit the Newsletter! Thanks to Nik for his past efforts. As for mine, well here goes...

*Martyn de Young*

### **Report of Exmoor Associates 2008 AGM**

This year's annual shareholder's meeting took place on the same weekend as the L&B AGMs, and was held at the Hunter's Inn. This report, for the benefit of members and supporters, is based on notes taken at the meeting, and covers Q&As and similar items of interest.

With more members present than has been the case in recent years, a slightly more formal approach was taken at this year's meeting.

Mike Buse reviewed progress over the past two years, and described some of the negotiations taking place with landowners – in particular, the Rawle family, and land owned by the late Gilbert Walters.

There was some discussion about the need for a bridge at Killington Lane, followed by funding possibilities, such as the Heritage Lottery Fund, and possible new organisational structures for EA. EA's role in relation to the other organisations involved in the L&B project was also discussed.

Members were keen to hear that several rumours related to various theories of hidden agendas and a 'secret society' were dispelled.

Some of the questions raised included: Would EA give its land to the L&B or sell? On selling to the L&B, do shareholders get money back or is it returned 'into the pot' Does it matter for funding and grants if EA owns the trackbed rather than the Trust? And the role of EA as a 'social enterprise', within 'the third sector'.

An informal vote was taken as to whether EA should wait for a year or so to see how well the L&BR CIC works before taking a similar conversion route: the majority favoured earlier action.

The railway's plans to reinstate the northern half of the line were discussed in some detail, in particular the section from Blackmoor to Wistlandpound, including the possibility and advisability of acquiring other properties along the route should they become available.

Approximately half the finance is now available for the Rawle land.

An informal vote was taken to reduce the minimum share issues – it was agreed to reduce the minimum to £100.

A member questioned how many EA shareholders there are? – a figure of 95 was given, including subscribers not yet possessing the minimum shareholding but this needs to be confirmed once the new minimum holding is taken into account.

Jenny Driver offered to assist the management team with EA activities and her offer is most gratefully received. Martyn de Young also agreed to help with the newsletter (here are the results!)

Keith Vingoe & Anthony Nicholson proposed that a broader range of directors may benefit EA. It was agreed that this will be considered as part of the CIC conversion process.

It was confirmed that all EA land is adequately insured.

What a time to appeal for money, you may say, with the credit crunch now biting hard. However, thanks to many of you we are already well on the way to purchasing this section. We have reduced the minimum share holding to £100, allowing many more members to share in this marvellous opportunity.

I have always been very fortunate when appealing for specific items for the railway - so please do not file this newsletter in the bin, but if you can afford to help please send a cheque to Exmoor Associates, and hopefully not before too long we can once again travel on the former track bed under a new bridge with new vistas opening up before our very eyes.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions at all, and hopefully we will soon be the new owners of this next section of trackbed.

Finally the Directors of Exmoor Associates would like to thank the Trust for allowing us to distribute this newsletter with the Trust Magazine. We may be a separate company but we have one common aim: to restore the finest Narrow Gauge Railway in the World.

(Mike Buse)



*Above - The Discover Wistlandpound Visitor Centre  
- the start point of the trackbed walk, May 2008*

construct a new (and very expensive) bridge at Killington Lane. Major earthworks are required, though the Rawle family are prepared to help with this, and it may be possible to spread a large quantity of soil across the adjacent field.

Both bridge parapets at Parracombe Lane Head need to be rebuilt, although the bridge itself (number 63) seems in remarkable condition. The small cattle creep (bridge number 64) is not required by the Rawle family and so a decision will need to be made about its future. The railway will pay for all of this as well as the fencing and a new farm crossing over the railway.



*Above* - Bridge 64

Exmoor Associates has at long last been able to put together a deal to purchase the former track bed from the Rawle family, something we have all been working on for many years, which has involved our purchasing land from the Church. We have decided to send this newsletter to all members of the Railway and not just to Exmoor Associates shareholders, many of whom have already received a call from me offering the chance to purchase more shares, just when you thought you were all safe.

Moorlands – it was reported that this property is now no longer on the market.

Keith Vingoe outlined some possibilities on how technology could be used in the future, both for internal trustee business and for communications with members – e.g. Email Newsletter distribution - the directors confirmed they will give consideration to these options.

A question was asked of the mood of trackbed owners along the route? – the majority certainly aren't opposed to the scheme.

The proposed route into Lynton was also questioned: the new line would deviate at Bridge 80, following a higher path towards Park Farm/Lydiat Lane. These proposals are still in discussion with Exmoor National Park and are subject to public consultation.

The meeting ended after a splendid buffet lunch and was followed by a pleasant walk from the new Discover Wistlandpound Visitor Centre to Hunnacott, accompanied by Wistlandpound Site Manager, Tom Haynes.

We would like to express our thanks to all who attended, also to Tom and Discover Wistlandpound, and to the owners of the Hunter's Inn.

(Nik Barrie, Martyn de Young)



*Above* - EA supporters enjoying the trackbed near Hunnacott, May 2008

## **Exmoor Associates becoming a Community Interest Company**

Since the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Company is now a Community Interest Company (CIC) operating as a subsidiary to the Trust – and because CICs are designed for social enterprises that want to use their profits and assets for the public benefit – it is a good time to look towards EA becoming a CIC.

While there is no doubt that charitable status is the right choice for the L&B Trust, EA was founded by members of the Trust acting as entrepreneurs to safeguard the trackbed of the L&B. As EA is clearly working for community benefit on a not-for-profit basis having the relative freedom of non-charitable status to identify and adapt to circumstances, a CIC is the perfect vehicle. Also, because CICs are specifically identified with social enterprise it is a more suitable company model than EA's present one.

A CIC has to have an asset-lock and this has to be a charity. In becoming a CIC it would make sense for EA to name the L&B Trust as its asset lock. This in turn would secure its assets for the future as should EA ever be wound up, those assets would automatically pass to the Trust, thereby securing the L&B trackbed currently owned by EA. At present there is no guarantee that any trackbed currently owned by EA is secure against loss.

At the last meeting of EA shareholders it was agreed to convert EA into a CIC and a set of M&As has been prepared. The conversion of EA into a CIC is a much simpler task than the conversion of the Estates Company into the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway CIC - so once the Directors of EA set the ball rolling, the conversion could be completed within a very short time.

With its conversion to a CIC being another step in the harmonisation of the L&B structure, members of the L&B Trust will surely welcome this move, as do the Directors and shareholders of EA.

(Keith Vingoe)

(And a brief word of thanks to Keith for the work he has done so far in preparing a new Memorandum and set of Articles of Association for the proposed conversion to Exmoor Associates CIC. But he did have a lot of practice with the L&B Railway/Estates Company!)

Tony Brown

## **Extension to the Lynton and Barnstaple Railway Killington Lane to Parracombe Lane Head**

During the time that we have owned and operated trains from Woody Bay station, I have been discussing with the Rawle family extending the Railway through the farm they own. This will involve cutting the farm in half, with one crossing place for farm machinery - not an ideal option for them as they have been able to cross at many places since the railway closed.



*Above - The "Rawle" Land*

This new acquisition will connect the Killington Lane section from Woody Bay with the section we have owned for many years, Parracombe Lane Head to Cricket Field Lane.

Since we have been operating trains from Woody Bay one of the most frequently asked questions has been: When will we be extending the railway beyond its present terminus at Killington Lane?

Please understand that as well as purchasing the land we will need to