

# Trackbed Trails

The newsletter for Exmoor Associates Ltd

Issue 13, Winter 2012

## 10th Birthday Event

Welcome to our Christmas / New Year edition of Trackbed Trails. Firstly a big thank you to the Stirland family at Exmoor Steam for hosting our 10th Birthday party on 27th October, a bright but sunny day in a part of the world not noted for clement weather.

About 30 of our members managed to attend for what was a pleasant social event at the extensive workshops and grounds of Exmoor Steam Railway which is no longer open to the general public. For those who had never been to Exmoor Steam it was a real eye-opener, a few



## Maintenance of Trackbed at Snapper and Raleigh Weir

This past year has demonstrated to us that a more hands-on approach is needed to keep our sections of trackbed maintained. Although the trackbed at Snapper was cleared by machine in the Spring of 2011 by this Autumn it was becoming impassable again.

We need someone in the North Devon Area who would be prepared to keep an eye on these sites, organise working parties and act as a local contact. We are leasing the fields at Snapper but the trackbed and station area will need regular attention to keep the prolific Devon weeds and brambles at bay. If you think you may be in a position to help please get in touch using the contact details at the end of this edition of Trackbed Trails.

people may have a model Garret locomotives in their homes, very few will have a real one indoors! Jackie and Tony Williams once again arranged the catering and Tony Stirland was kept busy on the footplate of "Black Beauty" taking guests around the extensive circuit.



▲ The tunnel at speed, it feels faster underground! One of several afternoon steam excursions in the gardens at Exmoor Steam.

◀ Awaiting the next train departure, headed by the magnificent "Black Beauty".

## EA Land and the Expansion of the L&B from Woody Bay

During the past year, EA's directors have met with The L&B chairman Peter Miles and other L&B Trustees or Directors to discuss the railway's expansion towards (and hopefully one day, over) land currently owned by Exmoor Associates.

The main principle is that EA will not obstruct, hinder or prevent expansion of the railway, indeed the *raison d'être* of EA is to assist its expansion. The first section that would be required is the Killington Lane to Parracombe Lane section once funding for the new Killington Lane Bridge can be raised.

At this stage we would like to canvas informal opinions from our shareholders on how to proceed when the L&B has the TWA order and funds to extend. *(continued...)*

# News Bites

## Wills & Things

Please remember that your shares in EA are an asset for inheritance tax purposes even though in real terms they may not have a significant value. Please mention in your will (and everyone ought to have a valid will however young or old you may be!) what you wish to happen to your shares. We currently have 2,500 shares in limbo awaiting instructions. If you have a relative interested in the L&B and EA then that would be an obvious choice otherwise donating them to a charity exempts them from Inheritance Tax complications and we can probably all think of a railway charity that would appreciate them!

## Future Progress

As ever, Mike Buse keeps in touch with many of the trackbed owners along the L&B's route - generally if trackbed becomes available we are given an opportunity to purchase. We have found over the last ten years that this can be a very random process. Like the proverbial buses nothing for ages then two are likely to come along at once!

There are a number of options for us in two scenarios depending on the L&B's financial position at the time – here are some.

### If the L&B had funds available:

1. Purchase at cost
2. Purchase at cost plus inflation
3. Purchase at an agreed independent valuation
4. Purchase with a lease purchase arrangement

### If the L&B had minimum funds available:

5. Rental on a permanent 'peppercorn' basis
6. Rental on a 'peppercorn' basis until such time as revenue is generated when a lease based on purchase values could commence.
7. Donation of the land to the L&BR Trust.

When the L&B Trust is in a position to make an official request to EA for the use of any of our trackbed a formal vote will be taken as defined by our constitution on the basis of one vote per share held. (The L&B Trust owns about 13% of our shares – the trustees would decide on their voting position).

At the moment we are not instigating a formal vote but would be interested in hearing from shareholders on their views of the above or indeed any other possible options. There are probably more cost effective solutions (buy back of Trust shares for land?) and remember that should the L&B be fortunate enough to get grant funding for trackbed purchase it cannot be retrospective – the trackbed cannot already be owned. Let us know your views on this, we will publish some of the responses in the next edition.



▲ The tenth birthday party comes to a close, with an impressive backdrop.

## River Yeo News

You may recall from Trackbed Trails 7 (Spring 2009) that we cooperated with the Environment Agency in the building of a weir, gauging station and fish resting pool at Collard Bridge, access to the weir being over our land. We have now been contacted again regarding possible further works, this time at Raleigh Weir. We quote extracts from this correspondence.

"I would just like to confirm that in principal you have no objections to a fish pass so long as it does not conflict with Exmoor Associates interests. These being that any fish pass proposal does not encroach on the foot print of the track bed of the Lynton to Barnstaple railway or limit in anyway the reinstatement of the railway.

I also understand that due to the bridge downstream of the weir no longer existing some

consideration will have to be made with regards to this area of land possibly being used as the terminus of the railway upon completion.

I will add this information to the feasibility study we are conducting on behalf of the Environment Agency. At this stage this is just an options appraisal exercise however if things do progress towards detailed design we shall be in contact to discuss the design with you so that it does not

conflict with the interest of Exmoor Associates as stated above.

On a personal level may I just say that I highly commend the work of preservation organisations such as that of the Lynton to Barnstaple Railway. I remember seeing documentary filmed in the late 80's on the railway and was quite interested when I found out that it is being preserved and that there is even a section open!"

## Talk with us...

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