



THE WEST LANCS (NEWS) LETTER

Welcome to West Lancs Letter No.9!



The big news is that we have won the 'Small Groups' category at the annual Heritage Railway Association Awards Night! This was for our successful purchase of the land on which the Railway sits, including raising over £250,000 in barely three months. This has given a big lift to everyone involved with the Railway, with national recognition of all the work involved and the support received from members, friends and the local community.

Meanwhile, the land next to ours is seeing big changes, with house building well under way and a new access from the main road going in. A spur from this will lead to our new entrance at the rear of our site. In the meantime, a sharp S-bend, numerous puddles and the odd pothole are a bit of a challenge...

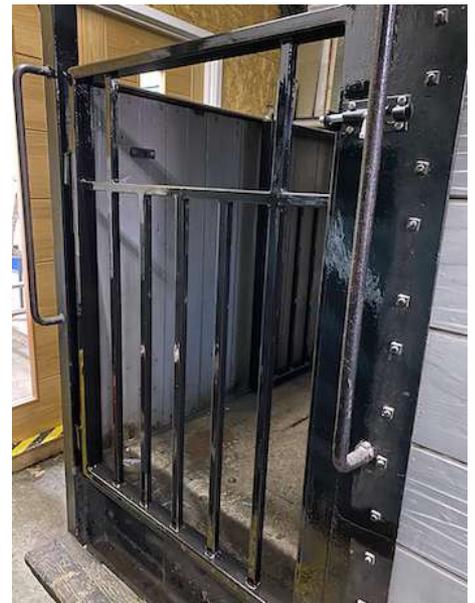




The closed season for traffic is very much open for maintenance and upgrade work. Here the sleepers and ballast are being renewed at Delph station.



A new fence is installed at Becconsall station, and the brake van gets smart new gates.



The boiler for our Quarry Bagnall *Sybil* is nearing completion, with the throatplate/ firebox assembly now riveted to the boiler shell. This work is being done down the road at Johnson's of Banks, who have the facilities we need.

The repairs to *Montalban's* boiler are going well, with new tubes fitted and the shell patch welded in. Once work on the frames is completed, the boiler will be re-installed.



You may recall the south end of the engine shed was occasionally given a sweep out and used as an event room. Well now it's permanent!

The space has been transformed into the Tudor Tea Rooms (for want of a more formal title) with new internal and external doors, heating, insulation and kitchen facilities. It will be used for parties, special events, a meeting room and as a visitor shelter and children's play area.



Officially it's the close season, but we had a steam-up recently in honour of a special visitor. Bob Taylor of Jones Bros, Preston built new boilers for both Utrillas and Montalban when they came to us after long careers in a Spanish coal mine. As you might imagine, he was very pleased to see them still in use, more than 30 years on!

More digging, this time by the entrance to Becconsall station. The old toilets in the background are to be replaced by a shiny new set, which will include facilities for the disabled.

The first stage is to remove the paving tiles and relocate the historic station lamp. As you can see, our elite band of manual excavators are well pleased with their progress.





In advance of the new running season, a programme of new and refresher training is underway for drivers, firemen and guards.

This follows approval by the Trustees of our new safety management and competence management systems.

It's not too late to sign up - contact Keith Nicholls for more information.



And finally, evidence that Andy Biggs is far more than just a mighty shoveller! Here he is at a recent show in Morecambe with his 7mm scale layout 'Bryncrug Sidings', inspired by childhood holidays on a farm next to the Tallylyn Railway.



That's all for this issue. Our new season is fast approaching - check out the timetable of events on our website: westlancsrailway.org. Come and ride our trains!