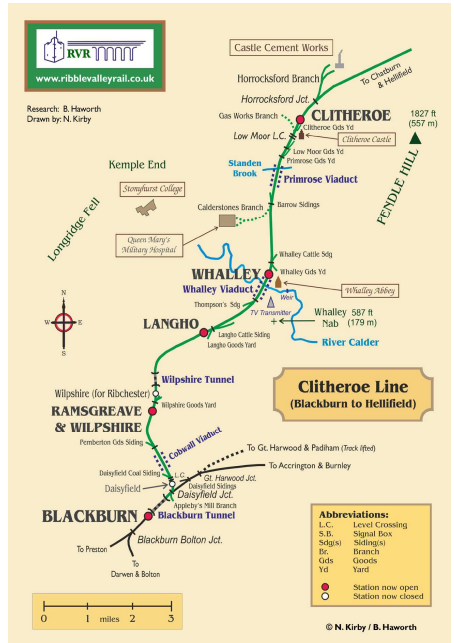


RIBBLE VALLEY RAILNews



Passengers waiting for the 17:23 train at Clitheroe on Saturday 12th October had a surprise when the late running 'Cumbrian Mountain Express' roared through the station. The signalman had given this priority on this occasion; normally it is held at Horrocksford making it later than ever having to follow the stopping service train. **Photo Graham Dudley**

IN MEMORIAM: NIGEL KIRBY (February 1937 - October 2019)



Nigel Kirby (RVR Member 427), for many years RVR's webmaster and RVRNews layout arranger, died in late October. Nigel was born in Scarborough in February 1937, his grandfather and father being in the boot/shoe trade. The family moved to Leicester around 1939, where their next-door-neighbour was a retired Station Master. Following his father's death, Nigel and his mother moved to Barrow-in-Furness where her family lived. He often recalled the station being destroyed by Luftwaffe bombs in May 1941. He attended Barrow-in-Furness Grammar School and, on leaving, joined the RAF and studied for his Mathematics degree whilst at Farnborough. He became a Flight Lieutenant and worked on the Harrier jump-jet programme.

He began his teaching career at Queen Mary's Grammar School, Walsall, in 1958, becoming a leading member of the school's Railway Society and building his own model railway. In 1964 he and his mother moved to his bungalow in Wilpshire when he took a post at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Blackburn. His final teaching post was Head of the Mathematics Department at Hulme Grammar School, Oldham, where he was renowned for his ownership of big cars. He became Membership Secretary and magazine editor for the Hulme Grammar School Old Boys' Association and was in contact with large numbers of his former pupils. At one of their annual dinners he met, and became firm friends with, Geoffrey Hilditch (author of *Steel Wheels and Rubber Tyres*, et al. RVR Member 520).

Nigel joined RVR shortly after the service to Manchester was restored in 1994 and travelled by train between Wilpshire and Oldham. It was on the train that both Brian Haworth and I both met him. His association with RVRNews production began with RVRN56 in 2001 when he reproduced coloured photographs on the front and back covers. After years of our photocopying and assembling the magazine at RVR meetings, Nigel took over the printing, after he and I spent many hours squashed in his computer room arranging each edition. A poor sleeper, he would get up in the middle of the night (when the electricity was cheaper!) to print, pausing the printer frequently to prevent the ink from boiling! He continued printing the magazine until Northern Rail had it printed for us. However, his assistance with arranging the text and photos continued right up to his final illness.

Nigel took over as webmaster when Colin Carr emigrated to Thailand and the RVR website was shortlisted for an ACoRP award in 2007. Latterly, the website became something of a behemoth as, although he could quickly insert the latest news, it became difficult to remove out-of-date material.

Nigel, who used the train for attending RVR meetings and shopping in Clitheroe, was always keen to promote local businesses, especially our Santa Special sponsors, Dawsons, Booths, and Byrnes. He was also keen to produce railway maps as railway routes were his passion rather than what ran on them. Photography, especially on and from trains, and the cinema were other hobbies and quite a number of us have had the pleasure of watching feature films in his front room "theatre" complete with wide-screen and drapes reminiscent of The Grand or The Palladium.

There are many tales we could tell involving Nigel, like the time he was so desperate that his last-but-one big car would cost him a fortune to get it through its MOT, someone suggested that to save the cost of having it towed away, he should leave it on a pub carpark with the keys in! Like the rail trip to Carlisle, featuring a bus tour of Barrow-in-Furness (where I discovered where Sloop St and Schooner St were [*but that's another story*]). returning from Skipton to Clitheroe by bus and the three of us taking Geoffrey Hilditch on Dalesrail and being treated to a slap-up meal at Foxfields. Despite this, Nigel was essentially a private person. I once asked him if he had ever thought of marrying. To which he replied; "Often, but I just never got round to it."

Nigel was a great asset to RVR. He is a great loss but his legacy will remain.

Bill Briggs

FROM THE CHAIR

Sincere apologies for the delay in publishing this edition of the magazine, but many thanks to Brian Haworth and Simon Clarke for ensuring that RVRNews126 was produced. Sadly our magazine compiler and Webmaster Nigel Kirby passed away, in hospital, following a short illness at the end of October and will be greatly missed by everyone at RVR. In the days when we ran the Santa Services Nigel was our loyal photographer who recorded these and other happy events.

As you will read further in the magazine the performance of services on the line has been poor with 127 full or part cancellations in the last three months, with 43 trains terminated at Blackburn. This issue of terminating at Blackburn, was raised at a Partnership meeting on 7th November when the Stakeholder Manager agreed to take this issue to Control in an effort to improve the situation.

As you are aware it was anticipated that Pacer units would be phased out by the end of 2019. Sadly this will not be achieved and a small number will still be operating in 2020 on our line.

Northern has issued a response following criticism over the retention of a small number of Pacers into early 2020. They said there had been significant delays to the delivery of its new CAF Class 195 diesel and Class 331 electric multiple-units. It expects to have more than 70% of the new units in service by the end of the year, but 11 Class 142 Pacers would have to remain in service 'for a few weeks' into 2020 to maintain capacity south of Manchester and between Blackburn and Rochdale. Nine Class 142s would be used each day, paired with units meeting PRM accessibility standards.



Pacers 142003 & 142029 stand at Blackburn. **Photo Brian Haworth**

FROM THE CHAIR

The DalesRail service ran every Sunday this season attracting over 2000 passengers, many of whom were involved in the walks programme (see article across the centre spread). Sadly the winter version, the Ribble Valley Rambler, has not been able to run its full service and this has been mainly due to the lack of available drivers.

To conclude with some good news, on Thursday I discussed, with our Stakeholder Manager, the possibility of applying for a Station Adoption Grant to be able to print posters of the line of route map from Blackburn to Clitheroe, produced by Nigel and Brian. These would go in the poster cases on the stations between Blackburn and Clitheroe a fitting tribute to Nigel. I applied on line Thursday evening and the grant was approved Friday afternoon, many thanks Becky.

On behalf of everyone on the committee of RVR I would like to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and Best wishes for 2020.

Marjorie Birch

RIBBLE VALLEY RAIL NEWS

Over the last three months discussions have been taking place at our Committee Meetings regarding the way forward for RVR News. Over the years we have been producing and delivering the magazine on a quarterly basis and for many years Northern printed the magazine free of charge.

RVR now has to stand the cost of printing and posting which amounts to £300 per edition £1,200 a year. Our predicated income over the next two years does not cover the cost of producing the magazine.

Initially we are going to reduce the publication to three times a year and keep the costs under review. In line with many other organisations we could reduce the costs if more people took the magazine on line.

If you are willing to do this please email Bill Briggs at bill.rvrnews@gmail.com

CLITHEROE LINE PERFORMANCE

Four week period from Monday 3rd June to Sunday 30th June.

A much better period – only seven cancellations, six of which were terminated and restarted at Blackburn.

Reasons for cancellations were: 3 due to a bridge strike, 2 due to late running (due to delays around Manchester Victoria), 1 issue with train crew, 1 due to unit safety system faults

Other items to report: - DalesRail 2019 commenced on Sunday 19th May and has so far operated on seven Sundays without problems.

Four week period from Monday 1st July to Sunday 4th August

33 cancellations in the period, including 20 cancelled and restarted at Blackburn, and a further 2 cancelled, restarted at Bolton.

Reasons for cancellations were: 7 due to train crew issues (mostly Sundays), 4 due to trespass in Blackburn tunnel, 6 due to delays in Manchester Victoria area, 1 due to flooding in Rochdale area, 10 due to traction problems, 1 due to unit door problems, 1 due to unit safety system problems. 2 due to track circuit failures, 1 due to signal failure.

Four week period Monday 5th August to Sunday 1st September

There were 41 full or part cancellations during the period, including 15 services terminated and restarted at Blackburn.

Reasons for cancellations were: 15 due to a 12 hour signal box closure (Saturday 17/08 from 0600 – 1800) 8 issues with train crew, 5 due to delays at Manchester Victoria, 4 unit traction problems, 4 due to a track circuit failure, 2 due to flooding, 1 due to a problem at Blackburn Depot, 1 due to passenger illness, 1 due to a mishap.

Four week period Monday 2nd September to Sunday 29th September

There were 30 full or part cancellations during the period, including 13 terminated and restarted at Blackburn.

Reasons for cancellations were: 6 planned cancellations by the Operator (3 Sundays of RV Rambler) 16 due to issues with train crew, 1 late start from Manchester Victoria. 3 due to a power failure, 1 points failure. 1 due to unit traction problems, 1 due to unit brake problems, 1 due to passenger illness. Still several Pacers on RV line services and hybrid 150 (no toilet) connected to 153/Pacer. Unit combinations mean no access for guard.

Five week period Monday 30th September to Sunday 3rd November

There were 56 full or part cancellations during this period including 15 terminated and restarted at Blackburn and 3 terminated and restarted at Bolton.

Reasons for cancellations were: 33 services were cancelled by the Operator, 8 due to issues with train crew, 3 due to unit traction problems, 1 due to unit door problems, 5 due to delayed departure from Man.Vic. 1 due to signal failure, 3 due to trespass, 1 due to flooding, 1 due to delay caused by the railhead treatment train.

Ian Tingle



Alighting from the DalesRail service at Kirkby Stephen, 09.0.06 **Photo Craig Ward**

RAILWAY NIGHTS AT RISHTON GOLF CLUB

THURSDAY 28TH NOVEMBER 2019

Tonight we see the welcome return of Gavin Morrison. In Gavin's own words, he is tired of looking at endless images of dirty class 5s and 8Fs, so tonight he is giving us a show with a difference which will consist of around 25 small presentations of say 15 slides. You the audience will choose a number between 1 & 25 without knowing the subject of that batch of images. It could be BR steam, narrow gauge, preserved, diesels or some of his favourite lines abroad. It should give us a varied and fun night because, as Gavin says if you pick a number that is diesels it's your own fault. But whatever you pick you can be sure it will be quality and be delivered in Gavin's own amusing style.

THURSDAY 12TH DECEMBER 2019

Once again PSOV will be making the journey up from the Midlands to show us the best of 2019 mainline steam action. Usual format with a matinee at 16:00 no supper included (£5) followed by at 20:00 an evening showing with supper (£7). Tickets will be on sale at the November meeting.

THURSDAY 30TH JANUARY 2020

Tonight we welcome back John Whiteley. After the end of BR steam, suffering withdrawal symptoms, John like many other railway photographers sought out other outlets for their craft. After 1968 real steam still existed in many countries around the world most of it running in superbly scenic locations and with a vast number of different classes many of which were British built. Tonight we will go with John on a mini world tour visiting West Germany, Czechoslovakia, Portugal, Turkey, South Africa, China and the USA. This is sure to be a night full of superb images in fantastic scenery delivered with many a tale of broken down vehicles and brushes with the law. A night not to be missed.

For more details and dates contact Tim Grimshaw on 01254 883614 or email tgrimshaw2@btinternet.com

NORTHERN APPRENTICE PROJECT

Arriva Rail North (Northern) apprentices worked with Brian Haworth from Community Rail Lancashire, local artist Alastair Nicholson and two Clitheroe schools, St Michael and St John's and Brookside to produce art work for display at Clitheroe station.

The aim of the project was to aesthetically improve the station by developing artwork on two themes; Transport in Clitheroe, Past, Present & Future (Brookside) and the History of Clitheroe (St. Michael & St. John's).

The artwork that the pupils produced was used to develop two colourful panels that are displayed on the platforms at Clitheroe station.



Other aspects of the larger project included improved signage including dementia friendly signs on the approaches to the station and on the station itself. Also part of the project was replacing the badly damaged welcome sign close to the exit from the arrival platform. This has been replaced with a branded quad royal poster case that is displaying a map of Clitheroe with illustrations of places of interest, with an aim of promoting tourism.



DalesRail 2019

After disrupted Dalesrail seasons in 2015, 2016 and 2018, Northern managers promised that the service would run every Sunday this year and, true to their word, it did. Naturally, because of previous unreliability, it took time for confidence in the service to increase but, gradually, many regulars returned and the numbers of day-trippers increased. Almost 2000 passengers used the DalesRail train this year.



Boarding the coach link to Wensleydale, 08.09.19 **Photo Craig Ward**

Better publicity, including a promotional video, helped to promote the service and, significantly, fares were held at 2017 levels. A refreshment trolley, provided between Settle and Appleby on the outward service, was much appreciated by passengers. Lancashire Rail Ramblers provided leaders for seventy-two guided walks and town tours and organised connecting buses to Swaledale(2), Teesdale, Wensleydale and Ullswater and these were fairly well supported.

Passenger numbers on DalesRail are usually affected by the weather forecast for the day or even in preceding days when potential passengers are planning their weekend activities. Most DalesRail Sundays this year were reasonable with one exception and on August 4th an early evening downpour in Upper Ribblesdale produced a lightning bolt which knocked out the signalling panel at Blea Moor Box just as the DalesRail train was about to enter Blea Moor Tunnel. As a result, the train was delayed for an hour before being allowed to proceed at caution. Otherwise most trains ran to time. The Class 158 units provided were well received by passengers.



Heading out of Hawes, 08.09.19 **Photo Craig Ward**

Planning for the 2020 season will be starting shortly. With this in mind, perhaps RVR members could give some thought as to how to encourage more people in the Clitheroe area to join the DalesRail service. Numbers joining the train there were disappointing in 2019. However, overall, the 2019 DalesRail season was a success and, hopefully, this can be built on in 2020.

Craig Ward

INFRASTRUCTURE

Platform lengthening on the Clitheroe Line – work was due to start on Sunday 6th October on Hall I' Th' Wood station and will continue through until January 2020.

The platforms at Entwistle, Darwen and Ramsgreave & Wilpshire are also due to be lengthened over the next few months and this will allow longer trains to call at these stations and means more seats available.

Network Rail have also recently been carrying out embankment stabilisation and drainage works in the Wilpshire area. A section of the embankment close to the station has been completed and a larger section in Brownhill cutting is shown pictured looking towards Wilpshire.



Evidence of the stabilisation work being carried out in Brownhill cutting in a view looking towards Wilpshire. **Photo Brian Haworth**

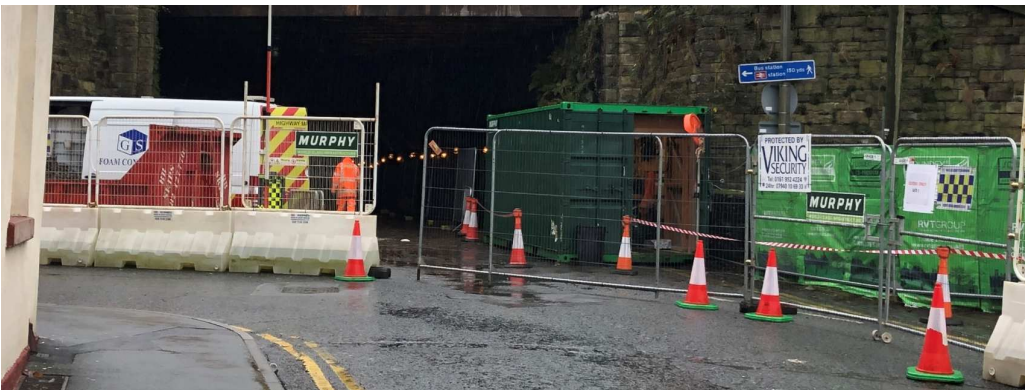


Whilst attending a meeting in Northers offices at Blackburn opposite the railway station I could not help but notice the way that Blackburn station frontage is showing obvious signs of deterioration caused in particular by water ingress.

The picture above shows the condition of the gutters above the station canopy and gives a clue as to one of the reasons for the water ingress. What a way to treat a listed building!

Below the old entrance to the East Lancs Goods Yard via an under bridge off Bridge Street, which has been gated off since the old yard was demolished is being filled in by contractors working for Network Rail

Brian Haworth



HOUSING DEVELOPMENT LANGHO

Ever since Langho station opened passengers have enjoyed magnificent views from the platforms in particular out towards Longridge Fell.

Unfortunately the decision to allow Pringle Homes to build around 40 homes on green fields behind the station will remove this view and open the gates for further development alongside the railway line. No doubt that as soon as people move in to the houses there will be complaints about noisy trains!!

Brian Haworth



Work starts on Northcote Park to the north of Langho station. **Photo Brian Haworth**

TRAIN SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS

Meetings are being held with Network Rail, Ribble Valley Borough Council, Northern & Transport for the North (TfN) to discuss possible developments to the Ribble Valley Service. The agenda will include the case for two trains an hour to Clitheroe.

RAMSGREAVE & WILPSHIRE

Partners Connecting East Lancashire (CEL) and Community Rail Lancashire (CRL) are working to develop a community based project at Ramsgreave & Wilpshire station.

CEL & CRL have commissioned Karen Allerton, a community and public artist from Heaton Moor, Greater Manchester, to help raise the awareness, access and engagement with the station.

The artist will work with students from Ribblesdale High School, Clitheroe and from Blackburn College in order to generate a number of temporary and permanent works for display on the platforms and car park at the station.

The overall aim of the project is to:

- Improve the visibility of the station;
- Improve signage around the station; and
- Improve the user experience of the station

In order to gain inspiration for their artwork a number of students from Ribblesdal High School travelled from Clitheroe to Manchester, accompanied by CRL's Katie Musgrove, to visit two art galleries.

Work is underway on the designs and the project will be finished by the end of March 2020.

Simon Clarke



Ramsgreave & Wilpshire station. Photo © [JThomas](#) (cc-by-sa/2.0)

ON THE LINE

Apologies for a rather shortened on the line due to circumstances beyond my control.

Freight traffic has remained buoyant during the period under review with cement, stone, wood, gypsum, china clay and infrastructure services all being noted on RVR metals. Steam and diesel excursions have also regularly used the Ribble Valley Line. The regular freight traffic normally covered with the ubiquitous class 66s has changed during the period under review and class 70s now hold sway on the log train and the Mountsorrel stone train.

The engineer's service continues to turn up interesting combinations of locomotives such as 66429/68002, 8th July, 68002/37716, 9th July, 68018/37716, 10th July, 68018/66516, 11th July, 66421/66423, 15th July, and 66421/37218, 18th September.



One of the more recent transfers to Northern a Class 150, 150107 has just come off Blackburn depot to form a service to Clitheroe with an unidentified Class 153 in October 2019.
Photo Brian Haworth

Steam workings have included 45690 Leander 13th July & 14th September, 46201 Princess Elizabeth 20th July, 4472 Flying Scotsman 20th July, 46115 Scots Guardsman 15th August and 70000 Britannia, 10th September,

Other working and occurrences of interest noted have been 56078/56087 on a cement working on 5th July, 47746/47854 heading 1Z80 a Carlisle to Euston excursion on 13th July, 37706/37669 1Z44 Chester to Carlisle 3rd August, Class 142004/142031 on 2J21 6th August, 37218/37259 heading a test train 16th August and Class 56096/56087 6C89 24th September.



The Statesman Pullman heading north through Clitheroe on Saturday 2nd November 2019. The two Class 47s were D1924 (Crewe Diesel Depot) and 47641. **Photo Jeff Dickinson**

Cancellations to the passenger servicers have continued on a regular basis with the usual reasons such as driver shortage and late running blamed.

A more unusual reason was given on 12th July when a road vehicle blocking the track between Blackburn and Clitheroe caused the cancellation of at least one service. On 17th August several early morning services were cancelled due to there being no signaller in Horrocksford signal Box!

Brian Haworth

FORTHCOMING EVENTS & DIARY DATES 2018

Tue 7 Jan	RVR Committee Meeting, New Inn, Clitheroe	14:30
Tue 4 Feb	RVR Committee Meeting, New Inn, Clitheroe	14:30
Tue 3 Mar	RVR Committee Meeting, New Inn, Clitheroe	14:30

**Non-committee members are welcome to attend
but will not be allowed to vote.**

RVR WHO'S WHO & OTHER USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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FoLS: Brian Haworth 01254 247844

FoWS: Alan Scholfield 01254 823140

FoCS: Gordon Wilson 01200 426214

FoDS: Graham Dudley 01200 429545

BT Police: Railwatch Freephone 0800 405040
Network Rail National Helpline 08457 114141
Clitheroe Integrated Transport Facility Control Room 01200 429832
Northern Rail Customer Helpline 0800 200 6060

RVR website: www.ribblevalleyrail.co.uk
Community Rail Partnership Website: www.communityraillancashire.co.uk



The steady introduction of brand new units by Northern will see a cascade of 150, 156 & 158 units across the region and the final removal of all Pacer (142) units from the company. Some pacers are to remain into the first few weeks of 2020 and may be seen on the Clitheroe Line, but they will soon be gone.

Above a 195 (195111) on a driver training diagram from Preston to Huddersfield on 26.07.19 passes a pacer (142078) at Accrington station and below a 331 unit is seen at Warrington Bank Quay on 14.02.19 on driver training. **Photos both Simon Clarke**





THEN - Staff seem to outnumber passengers and posters advertising all manner of things adorn every bit of wall. The fine Midland engine shed and impressive signal post can be seen in the background. **Photo Brian Haworth collection**



NOW - A track tamper stands at the platform and the cast iron platform canopies have stood the test of time. Hellifield now has no staff and the engine shed is long gone. **Photo Brian Haworth**