

ISLE OF WIGHT STEAM RAILWAY

An unforgettable adventure
through time

VOLUNTEER & STAFF NEWSLETTER

A round up of news for the Isle of Wight Steam Railway team - Edition 40, FEBRUARY 2025



4133 takes a trip to the mainland



Freshwater refurbishment continues apace



Lighter evenings are coming...

A Message from the CEO

Marc Morgan-Huws

I'm sure some of you, like me, get asked by people what we do when the trains aren't running!

This month we seem to be doing more than ever as the Winter Gala and the season approaches.

Having seen the success of the Barn Café in 2024, Nick Boycott has overseen a very quick change to the original food counter that predated the café creation. Pop in and have a look if you can – it's a great improvement for the flow, the ability to display our wares, and the general appearance.

The Estates team continues to amaze me with the amount of work they achieve, this week having started to clear the Haven Falconry site ready for the new playground and delivering a series of other improvements around the station site.

But I know that these are just a few of the activities going on and that there is much work going on in all departments - and that ahead of the new February Gala W8 Freshwater is a hive of activity in the loco workshop. Thank you to everyone all across the railway for all your hard work and commitment.

This is likely to be the last volunteer newsletter – with plans afoot for a new Newsletter that will be available to volunteers, staff and the membership from March, providing more updates on what is happening all across the Railway.



NEW FOR 2025!

WINTER GALA

DARK ALES FESTIVAL

20TH-23RD FEBRUARY

ISLE OF WIGHT STEAM RAILWAY

Celebrate With Us!

A new four-day festival marking Railway 200, 150th anniversary of the Ryde and Newport Railway and the 100th year on the Island for our iconic flagship loco 'Calbourne'.

-  Flagship '02' class W24 'Calbourne' will haul passenger trains throughout the event.
-  The first Winter Dark Ales Festival offers a selection of dark ales.
-  Class 05 Diesel D2554 'Nuclear Fred' will be making a rare appearance.
-  The 1877 Island Ternier W8 Freshwater planned return to steam since 2019.

Visit iwsteamrailway.co.uk/events for more information

/TeamAdmin Page Reminder

Please remember we've set up iwsteamrailway.co.uk/teamadmin to be a resource for all the day-to-day information you might need. It's a 'one stop shop' for useful information. You can access the latest Newsletters, enter prize draws or apply for opportunities, renew expired or lost Staff Cards, find the current Hovertravel discount code, access our Wightlink discount, and much more throughout the year on this regularly updated page.

Volunteering News

The latest from Volunteer Development Manager Doug Alldred

Prize Draws return for 2025!

Some of you will have already seen some prize draws through the /TeamAdmin page this year, and indeed we've already sent 5 lucky volunteers to shows at Shanklin Theatre, with many more opportunities to come through the year.

Win Tickets to The Zoots' 60s Show

Live now on the /TeamAdmin page is the opportunity to win a pair of tickets to Jack Up the 60's with The Zoots, sure to be a fabulous night of great 60s music from The Beatles, The Stones, The Kinks, and many more. The show takes place at Shanklin Theatre on Saturday 29th March, and tickets are usually £25 each! Get over to the /TeamAdmin page now to be in with a chance of winning!

Volunteer Roles Available!

We're currently looking for volunteers to fill several specific roles around the railway, so if you think one of these might suit you, then drop us a line!

Phone Cover/Office Assistants - This is a role for anyone with good customer service skills and a friendly and outgoing demeanour. We need some help in the office dealing with enquiries from the public both face-to-face and over the phone. If you're interested in helping out, drop an email to lizk@iwsteamrailway.co.uk



Ladder and First Aid Kit Tester - We're looking for someone to take on this important record-keeping role. Full training will be given in ladder safety inspections to ensure you have the necessary knowledge. Anyone interested should email tim.spencer-peat@iwsteamrailway.co.uk

Winter Gala & Dark Ales Festival

February 20th-23rd

Steam returns early this year with our Winter Gala & Dark Ales Festival running for four days from Thursday 20th February. This new four day gala marks the launch of Railway 200, the 150th anniversary of our line (Ryde and Newport Railway) and the 100th year on the Island for our iconic flagship loco 'Calbourne'.

This is sure to be a fabulous event chock full of opportunities to ride on some lesser-seen vehicles from our collection, and sample some warming winter ales if they take your fancy.

W8 Freshwater is planned to return to steam for the first time since 2019 following a full overhaul, as well as appearances from W24 Calbourne, and a rare outing for Class 05 Diesel D2554 'Nuclear Fred' pulling Brake Van Specials.

As a special thank you to our team, all volunteers are invited to attend this event with their partner and any school-age children from their household free of charge for unlimited travel on a day of their choice during the event.



Book Sale

Fancy a read?

The railway's second hand bookshop will be holding a flash sale of books throughout the Winter Gala with almost all titles at just 50 pence each or three for a pound.

That's got to be worth a rummage! Happy hunting!



HRA Privilege Card 2025 Now Available

Liz King shares all the info

The HRA Privilege Card is for the exclusive use of working volunteers who currently work on UK heritage railways. It is valid for twelve months (March-February), and allows the pass holder, plus one accompanying person to travel on most heritage railways in the UK at either a reduced fare or, in most cases, free of charge. The accompanying person does not need to be a railway volunteer.

I am pleased to confirm that the cost of the pass for 2025/26 will be £42, so it only takes two or three visits to cover the cost!

You are now able purchase your card online, and you can do this via the /TeamAdmin page. If you are unable to purchase your card online then you can still pay for you HRA Privilege Card by cash, credit card, or cheque (made payable to the ISLE OF WIGHT RAILWAY CO. LTD) and sent to Liz King Sales & Marketing Assistant.

Please note that HRA Privilege Cards may not be purchased by or for family members or other persons who are not working volunteers.

A list of the participating railways (with their conditions if any), will be sent to you with your pass and is also available on the HRA website. Please bear in mind that some heritage railways may not give free travel during their special events, so it is a good idea to check with your chosen railway before visiting! It is hoped that when visiting other railways you will support them by spending in their cafeteria and/or shop!

The Heritage Railway Association (HRA) is our “umbrella” or “trade” organisation, which supports and advises member railways. The £42 charge for the Privilege Card goes towards the costs of running the organisation, and helps keep our annual subscription to the HRA as low as possible.

Board Meeting Minutes

The minutes of Board Meeting 462 (January 2025) are now available to view on HOPS via Community>General Documents>Board Meeting Minutes

Locomotive Engineering Update

This in from Andrew Summers, Rolling Stock Manager

Ivatt 41313 Visits the mainland

Cleaners Needed! Ivatt 41313 will be representing our railway when she leaves Havenstreetr at the start of March. She will be visiting the BlueBell and Swanage railways. We therefore need to give the loco a deep clean before she leaves. If you are a member of the footplate team or loco department and can spare some time, please drop me a message or just drop in.

More generally looking ahead to the running season, if any volunteer would like to put their name forward to assist with the presentation (cleaning) of our locomotives on a regular basis please drop me an email to loco@iwsteamrailway.co.uk .



Volunteer Vacancy

We can only keep our railway operating thanks to our amazing volunteers, and we would love you to come and join the Rolling Stock department! We are seeking a volunteer to be part of a team working on the department’s Health & Safety documents. This vital role will initially involve producing and updating Risk Assessments for activities undertaken whilst maintaining our locomotives, carriages, and wagons. If you have experience in this are and can commit to regular (flexible) volunteering, you can play a crucial role in the safe running of our railway. If you are interested, please drop me an email to

loco@iwsteamrailway.co.uk .

Rail Infrastructure Update

The latest from the Rail Infrastructure Team

With the operating season scheduled to begin in February this year, this month provided the last monthly working weekend free of train operations. Therefore, the opportunity arose to carry out the annual session of Fishplate Maintenance. After the successful use of the battery powered wrenches last year, a third one has been procured to act as backup. A petrol powered machine will also be in attendance as a further reserve.

Wootton station was the location for January's slightly delayed Working Weekend, a couple of tasks on the platform road were the target for the gang over the two days. There was a slight delay in arriving at Wootton when the pre-loaded rail trolley had to be decanted into the Company van for the trip to Wootton. Frozen points at Havenstreet being the cause.

The track in the loco release road had been recovered earlier in the week, so the excavator was able to start removing the dirty, chocked ballast first thing. Given the restricted area, the Road Railer with a bucket attachment was used to move the spoil to a place further down the run round loop. While the digging was going on, the recovered sleepers had their chairs removed which were then fitted to one side of the replacement sleepers. When all the ballast had been removed the new sleepers could spaced out along the length of the loco release.

In the afternoon the two panels of track at the ramp end of the platform road were removed, allowing a start to be made removing the top stone to expose the formation. The platform side rail in the loco release was also refitted, plated and keyed up by the end of the day.

Sunday saw a slightly smaller gang in attendance, which soon split into two. One group repaired to the hole at the ramp end of the platform to continue the excavation to investigate the cause of a persistent weak spot. The remainder fitted the second chair to the sleepers in the loco release siding, which involved drilling and screwing each one down to the correct gauge. The rail could be fitted after dinner, and once keyed up, four bags of fresh, clean stone were run in before being spread about by shovel. The excavating by the ramp was proceeding well, and the expected clay came into view in the early afternoon.

Many thanks to everyone who helped out over the weekend.

Since the last Working Weekend the main task has been to complete the formation work at the Havenstreet end of Wootton station platform. The clean ballast being removed to reveal the condition of the formation below. As expected this proved to include a quantity of clay, which is very common at Wootton. This was removed to the embankment side by excavator and crushed concrete was used to refill the opening created to a level to allow for a depth of ballast below the sleeper bottoms.

With the ballast reinstated the two panels of track were relaid before being given a final lift to the correct level relative to the platform.

While the excavating was going on, some lifting and packing was carried out on the relaid loco release and selected parts of the run around loop.

The Friday Gang continue their sterling efforts on the lineside. At present they are working in Briddlesford Woods, towards Wootton from the remains of Bridge Twelve.



“...IMPOSSIBLE NOT TO LIKE...
A VERY IMPRESSIVE BAND” THE STAGE



WITH THE **ZOOTS**



THE BEATLES, THE STONES, THE KINKS & MORE

Sat 29th March 2025 | 7:30pm

Tickets £25

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