

## Editor's Report – July 2024

### *S&DR Podcasts*

The fifth S&DR podcast went live on the 28<sup>th</sup> June (thanks to Archie McKay for staying up very late to get this out). It is a detailed look at Locomotion No.1 and its first driver Jem Stephenson. The special guest was Dr Michael Bailey, who, with Peter Davidson, has conducted detailed research into the engine. There were some surprising reveals in this interview, not least that Locomotion No.1 may have been painted blue and yellow on the opening day. He also suggested that Locomotion No.1 did travel down the Darlington and Yarm branch lines. I am still uncertain about this, but it is clear that we never really have all the answers. It was also interesting to get a more detailed insight into Jem Stephenson (George's big brother) and the tragic early death of his wife Jane. You can access them all here: <https://talesfromtherails.podbean.com/>. Please forward this link to as many people as possible and spread the word. You can specifically access the Locomotion No.1 podcast here: <https://talesfromtherails.podbean.com/e/locomotion-no-1/>

The next podcast (July) will be about Hopetown and its historic buildings. This is to coincide with the opening of Hopetown. Let me know if you would like to participate. I'd love to interview some of the people involved.

Our podcasts have been downloaded 1114 times by the end of June and we have an international audience. Obviously most of our listeners are in the UK, but we also have:

Australia	16
USA	12
Belgium	5
Spain	3
Japan	2
Canada	1
Germany	1
Netherlands	1
New Zealand	1
Turkey	1

Small numbers admittedly, but if you know any railway enthusiasts abroad, do spread the word. And if you are one of the listeners listed above, why not get someone else to listen in?

As always, do let me know of any events coming up and we will include them in the podcast and on the Friends' web site.

### *The next walk booklet revision*

The walk booklet between Shildon and Heighington has been through one design stage and is being reviewed again before the draft goes out to consultation – it is looking great. This is generously being funded by Husqvarna who are located along the route on Preston Road on the Aycliffe Business Park. It would help hugely with our next update – the Darlington Circular – if there are any local businesses there interested in sponsoring this. In return you will get a page of publicity in the booklet and your logo on the back and a guided walk for any staff interested.

### *S&DR Music*

The music project is underway; I have been working with the arranger on sourcing the date and sounds of some of the tunes played on the opening day and have also asked for help from Beamish.

### *The Globe*

I am working on The Globe now. Thank you to everyone who submitted content. It will be out in July.

### *Webmaster's Report*

I have been adding new information to the web site. This is partly so that the self-guided walk booklet can have QR codes included which will take people to our web site for additional detailed information not printed in the booklet. So the information on Timothy Hackworth has been updated and new information included on the Clements family of Wood House Farm (just north of Heighington Station) and the Gaunless Bridge.

Sales have been healthy this month with 19 products sold amounting to £234.24. The main item sold was new membership.

### *Other things*

I have given a talk to Tudhoe Local History Society and received donations from them for the Friends (given to the Heighington Station campaign) and sold some S&DR publications.

I have had a number of enquiries from publishers, video companies, museums, members and Hornby about S&DR content, historical information or sourcing images. I try to respond to all enquiries but as we approach 2025, they are increasing in number and it is getting much harder to keep up. If you have been in touch and not had a reply, please just prompt me. I spent an afternoon with a journalist from Le Monde daily newspaper who hopes to write two features on the S&DR. I've been attempting to source more help with marketing and publicity but as yet, no firm help is forthcoming. We need this support for the launch of the subscription offer for our coffee table book, to help with the Save Heighington Station campaign and to help increase the audience for our podcast.

Caroline Hardie [caroline@aenvironment.co.uk](mailto:caroline@aenvironment.co.uk)