

## **Editor's Report**

### *S&DR Podcasts*

The third S&DR podcast went live on the 27<sup>th</sup> April (well I am writing this on the 26<sup>th</sup> late at night so fingers crossed). The main subject was Heighington Station and the Star of the S&DR section was John Falcus Carter who designed and oversaw the building of it between 1826-7. We were able to include more interviews his month and Niall co-presented along with me and Archie Mackay from SW Durham News. Obviously I have no figures for podcast 3, but the previous two podcasts have been downloaded 412 times. I am hopeful that we are reaching a new audience as well as existing followers of the S&DR.

If you haven't listened already or if you know someone who might enjoy listening, you can access them all here: <https://talesfromtherails.podbean.com/>. Please forward this link to as many people as possible and spread the word.

I am hugely grateful to Dave Reynolds (of the Stute in Shildon) for composing the theme music for the podcast, to Lee Morris, Darlington based actor from Tall Tales Mysteries for being the voice of Robert Metcalfe and to Archie Mackay of SW Durham News who manages the technology and edits despite working full time on various local newspapers.

If you'd like to be a guest on the podcast, please get in touch. You can join me in Shildon where we do the recording, we can chat on site or I can chat with you via phone, so you don't need to be local to take part. We can cover anything to do with the S&DR. Also, let me know of any events coming up and we will include them in the podcast and on our web site.

### *The next walk booklet revision*

Work is underway to update and redesign the walk booklet between Shildon and Heighington. This is generously being funded by Husqvarna who are located along the route on Preston Road on the Aycliffe Business Park. Indeed a number of us attended a visit to Husqvarna on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April where we received a cheque to pay for the new booklet. You should have received an invitation to attend the Walking the Line event on the 11<sup>th</sup> May where we will look at the old text and see what needs updating. It is surprising just how much does need updating. That is because so much research has been done since 2016 and there are new things to see such as the ironwork for the Gaunless Bridge and a New Hall at Locomotion. We've also got more research on the Goods Station, on the Locomotive Refuelling Drops and the bridges between Simpasture and Heighington Station. If you haven't received an invite and you are a member, or a member of staff at Husqvarna, do let me know.

### *S&DR Music*

The music project is underway, but there is not much to report. The recording studio has been booked, the musical arrangements, arranged and an audio visual person booked. If you've missed previous reports, this project is to produce authentically sounding music as played in 1825 on the Opening Day and which will be freely available to anyone who wishes to use it at their events. It will also create a series of videos on the music and the historic instruments targeting KS1-2 children – again they will be freely available for anyone but will be of most interest to primary schools. I have also had a meeting with Sam Slatcher of Citizen Songwriters about the possibility of a concert combining various musical approaches. The publicity surrounding the Save Heighington Station campaign brought more musicians out of the woodwork offering their services and songs and I have forwarded their contact details to Sam. Let's hope they come up with some fun events.

## *The Globe*

The next Globe is due out in July 2024, so I am looking for contributions by the end of June. You can send them in as soon as you like however. If you are thinking of submitting something, ask me for the Guidance Notes for Contributors. This will save a lot of time when it comes to preparing The Globe and means you are less likely to be asked to make changes. We can also publish research on our web site. This lends itself to raw material and sources such as transcriptions of historic documents – we want your research to be widely available and the web site is a great way to do that. So far we have two juicy offers of articles and editing has begun.

## *The Stockton & Darlington Railway Bicentenary History Essay Prize Competition (if you can think of a shorter name please do!)*



I've had discussions with John Little and Martin Peagam of the Cleveland & Teesside Local History Society about offering a joint competition to encourage writing of a factual nature about the history of the Stockton & Darlington Railway as part of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations.

We will invite original essays on any subject connected to the history of the Stockton & Darlington Railway. Subject to Trustee approval we will contribute £400 towards a prize and the C&TLHS will contribute £600, bringing the prize money to £1,000. This will be awarded to an essay which fulfills the criteria of the competition and which in the opinion of the judges merits the award.

The winning essay will be published by Cleveland & Teesside Local History Society and The Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway. Essays that do not win the prize but which are deemed to be of sufficient merit may also be published.

Full details will be distributed in September and the competition launched.

Other dates we discussed:

-  31 August 2025: Final Date for Submission of Essays
-  31 October 2025: Announcement of winner and subsequent publication

## *Webmaster's Report*

In the last month we have sold 32 products bringing in £547.48, the bulk of these have been memberships and our Locomotion limited edition pens.

The Locomotion pens are made by Andy Simmons, a descendant of John Falcus Carter of Heighington Station fame. These are sold in order to raise funds for our Save Heighington Station Campaign. I am pleased to say that the sale of these pens has raised about £400 so far (including sales elsewhere). More pens will have gone on for sale by the time of our meeting (indeed they may have sold out). A new range is called the Station Master's Pen and is made from historic timbers taken from the 1871 Station Master's House at St. Helen Auckland (thank you to George Alderslade). These beautiful pens have a really fine grain that you only find in slow grown historic timber. They are more expensive than the others, selling at £50, but worth every penny to hold such an exquisite piece of history in your hand.

Don't forget that we have a number of publications for sale in our [online shop](#) and the beautiful Hattersley maps of the S&DR and A3 sized prints of John Dobbin's Opening of the S&DR.

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