

CAMPAIGNERS' CONFERENCE UPDATE – NEWSLETTER – JUNE 2006

PROFILES OF OUR CONFIRMED SPEAKERS



Ian Yeowart, Managing Director of Grand Central Railway.

Ian has been at the core of Grand Central since its inception. After a rail industry career spanning more than 25 years, Ian accepted the challenge of privatisation and led a number of franchise bids from within the industry before being asked to develop Grand Central's passenger services.

With experience in the fields of passenger and freight operating, culminating in roles that involved business safety and the management of stations and operating personnel. According to the Grand Central web-site, Ian has a reputation as a practical, hands-on achiever. Ian has responsibility for all aspects of safety, track access and rolling stock within the GC team.

As well as describing the services that Grand central will be providing, Ian intends to explain how difficult its been, where Grand Central started, the set backs, the reasoning behind their route choices, the development work undertaken, the difficulty of dealing with the SRA, the consistency of ORR and much more.

Grand Central (which is co-sponsor of the conference) will operate new, five-coach, Class 222 trains, capable of 125 mph operation. Key elements of its services will be an easy to understand fares structure, with 50% refunds to any passenger unable to find a seat, and buffet/restaurant car facilities on all trains. More than 5,000 people signed petitions in support of the services organised by the Halifax Courier and Sunderland Echo newspapers.



Andrew Roden – co-chairman of Save Our Sleeper

Attendees may remember Andrew's name from RAIL magazine. In January 2005 he was appointed to the new position of news editor with International Railway Journal (www.railjournal.com). He is also a contributor to IRJ's sister magazine, European Rail Outlook, which is published quarterly.

He has been invited to the conference through his campaigning to save the Night Riviera 'Sleeper' service in late 2005. He is a regular user of it, and recently posted to a rail newsgroup. "I had the pleasure of travelling on it three times in February for work, and each time, it was full, even going back from London on a Tuesday."

In November 2005, Save Our Sleeper launched a 'sleeper' user group 'SNUG' (Sleeper Nightriviera Users Group) Andrew says "It is really important that having won the Save Our Sleeper campaign, we keep up the pressure because I really don't want to have to run it again in five or 10 years' time!" Anyone interested in supporting the "Friends of the Sleeper Service" can find more on <http://www.saveoursleeper.com/SNUG/supportform.htm>.

Andrew will be speaking with former Railfuture Devon and Cornwall branch secretary Stuart Walker about the 'sleeper' in the afternoon. His more controversial presentation on "Campaigning to achieve – not for cloud cuckoo land projects" will be a part of the evening session.



Ruth Annison – Chairman Wensleydale Railway PLC

Ruth, pictured recently signing a contract with Hambleton District Council, has lived in Wensleydale since 1975. She was instrumental in the formation of the Wensleydale Railway Project in 1990, and has been marketing director since Wensleydale Railway plc was constituted in 2000. She was the founder, and chairman for 14 years, of the Settle-Carlisle Railway Business Liaison Group (SCRBLG).

Sine February 2005 Ruth has been chairman of the Wensleydale, which remains the only vertically-integrated part of the national rail network on the British mainland. It is the only company in Britain to have been granted all five possible rail licences from the ORR. Few people possess her level of determination to keep going or her ability to inspire rail activists everywhere. See www.wensleydalerrailway.com.

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Caspar Lucas – Technical Services Director JPM Parry & Assoc.

Caspar Lucas MEng CEng MIMechE graduated from the University of Sheffield with a masters degree in Mechanical Engineering in 1997. He joined Connex South Central. In 2000 he moved to ALSTOM, taking on engineering and project management roles and becoming a chartered mechanical engineer in 2002. Caspar joined JPM Parry & Associates Ltd in 2004, with much of his work directed towards project management of the Parry People Movers venture. He was appointed Technical Services Director in January 2006. (Photo: Caspar Lucas on 1st June 2006)

Since December 2005 a PPM50 has been providing a Sunday service on the Stourbridge Town line. Prior to that it operated a regular service along six miles of the Wensleydale Railway route normally only used by freight trains. As the final half-mile section of track which took passenger trains into the county town of Northallerton is long gone, an interchange point was constructed and a dedicated bus transported passengers to and from the town centre and the main line railway station. See: www.parryassociates.com/transport and www.parrypeplemovers.com.

PPM is ideal to start-up services to build a market and case for a regular conventional rail service. For example, on a heritage line to run a morning park and ride commuter service to an NR station without spare car park spaces.



Carl Henderson – MD, SilverTip Design – Inventor of BladeRunner

BladeRunner is the brainchild of North Yorkshire designer Carl Henderson BEng (Hons), MSc, MSOE, MIRTE, who runs engineering consultancy, Silvertip Design in Richmond. The concept, which has the support of the DTI, will enable both passenger and freight road-rail vehicles - optionally coupled together - to operate along railway lines, switching to and from road where necessary. It could revolutionise the potential for rail freight. See www.silvertipdesign.com.

Carl Henderson will be sharing a panel with Caspar Lucas to explain how disused railway lines can be brought back into service using vehicles that are far cheaper than conventional passenger trains (PPM) or more flexible, being able to leave the track (BladeRunner). The BladeRunner concept, with its innovative steering system, would allow lorries to safely travel along railway lines in convoy.



Stuart Walker – former Secretary of Railfuture Devon & Cornwall

Stuart Walker, who lives in St Ives, Cornwall, was the secretary of the Railfuture Devon and Cornwall branch for many years. He had originally intended to talk about the success of improved services on the Cornish branch lines. However, following the changes introduced with the new Greater Western franchise, he will no doubt express his concern about the cuts in frequency planned. On a more upbeat note, he can claim success along with Andrew Roden in saving the sleeper.



George Watson (Elan Public Transport Consultancy Ltd) MyTestTrack.com

George Watson is Vice-chairman of WyvernRail PLC which owns and operates sections of the Duffield – Wirkworth (and beyond) branch trading as the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway. MyTestTrack.com has served over 250 customers in the rail industry.

WyvernRail raised over £350,000 through a share offer which together with careful trading, soft loans and grants enabled two independent 1km-long sections of line to open for public use. Hopefully a further 3½ miles will reopen in the summer of 2007.

A biography of the Lord Mayor can be found at the Stoke-On-Trent City Council website: <http://www.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/council-and-democracy/lord-mayor>.

Additional Speakers Invited

Invitations have been sent out to a variety of speakers who have not yet confirmed.