



FRIENDS OF THE ROBERT STEPHENSON TRUST

Friends of the Trust are reminded that the 2008 subscription of £15 is due on 1st Jan 2008. Payment should be sent to :- The Treasurer, 31 The Green, Hurworth, Darlington, Co. Durham, DL2 2AA, United Kingdom

Those Friends who are taxpayers and have not yet signed a Gift Aid Declaration, are asked to consider doing so, to enable the Trust to reclaim tax.

A form is reproduced below or can be printed by visiting :

<http://www.robertstephenstrust.com/giftaid.htm>

GIFT AID DECLARATION

Charity name:- **The Robert Stephenson Trust Ltd.**,
Charity Number 700647

Details of Donor:-

Title: Forenames:

Surname:

Address:-

Postcode:

I want the charity to treat all subscriptions and donations made by me to the Robert Stephenson Trust Ltd after 6th April 2002 and until further notice as Gift Aid. I have read the notes below and agree to notify you of any material change in my circumstances.

Signed:

Date:

Notes: *You can cancel this declaration at any time by notifying the charity.*

You must pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax equal to the tax that the charity reclaims on your donation/subscription in the tax year

If in the future your circumstances change and you no longer pay tax on your income or capital equal to the tax the charity reclaims, you should cancel your declaration.

If you pay tax at the higher rate you can claim further tax relief on your Self Assessment tax return.

News in Brief

Jeremy Lewis, Chairman of North East Regional Committee of I. Mech.E. in November unveiled a heritage plaque awarded to Stephenson's Works by the Institution. Jeremy was accompanied by Jack Hale, Chairman of the Tyne & Wear Area Committee and other committee members. After thanking the Institution, Chairman, Bob Longridge accompanied by Curator, Alan Clothier showed the visitors around the works to which all expressed a keen interest and appreciation of all that the RST have achieved on the site. Jeremy Lewis also presented to the Trust a very welcome addition to our library collection - *Progress Through Mechanical Engineering - The first 150 Years of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers.*

The Newcomen Society and ICE Northumbria Branch held a joint meeting at Discovery Museum in November when Tim Abbott of Mott MacDonald and Leslie Ayling of English Heritage presented a paper entitled: *Heritage Engineering - High Level Bridge*. The subject proved extremely popular with 90 people attending the meeting. On the day following the presentation of the paper the Institution announced the Historic Bridges and Infrastructure Awards and tat work on assessment of capability of the High Level Bridge at Newcastle received one of the top Awards.

Institution of Civil Engineers Brian Blakeley worked on the Benguela Railway, Angola in 1956 has presented the Trust with *Some African Milestones* by H.F. Varian. The book is in the great tradition of pioneering and adventure by a man who spent half-a-century opening up new territories in Africa.

Earlier this year the Permanent Way Society held their AGM in Newcastle and were addressed by John Addyman on the subject of *The Stephensons*



THE ROCKET

The Newsletter of the Robert Stephenson Trust - December 2007

Message from the Trust Chairman

For many of you this is a time for Christmas preparations and all that that entails; but for myself and the other Trustees it is tempered by the realisation that by 24th March next year we must agree a new rent level for continued use of 20 South Street with our landlord Silverlink Holdings Ltd. This is reviewed every 10 years and was set at £5400 in 1998. Much has changed in the intervening period. The Stephenson Quarter has been designated as a development area by the City Council; and St. Mary the Virgin Charitable Trust sold its freehold land - which included 20 South Street - to Silverlink in 1994. As I write, a detailed Planning application has been lodged with the Council by Silverlink for all its holdings in the Quarter. This will be available for public scrutiny and if approved will lead to substantial changes and improvements to the land surrounding Stephenson's Works. Because 'our' building is protected by its heritage listing there is no reason for alarm about its future. But the question of its use is far less clear.

The Trust would like to continue to develop its collection and maintain a centre for study and the promotion of Robert Stephenson's legacy; but we have to face financial realities. The considerable rise in land values on which our rent is calculated has resulted in a formal notification from our landlord of a new rent from next March of £140,000 (no, there is no mistake - I have not added a nought). Naturally we have sought professional advice from our solicitor Andrew Jones and land agent Peter Smith (of GVA Lamb & Edge); but

without a new basis for a tenancy our continued presence at 20 South Street is unsustainable.

So, realising that to 'stay as we are' is not an option, the Trust, together with Silverlink, has commissioned Tyne & Wear Museums to explore such avenues as they see fit to find a viable solution for the Trust and Stephenson's Works. The investigative work is being conducted by John Clayson, the Keeper of Science & Industry, assisted by David Parry, an independent consultant. The Museum's Report will be produced by the end of 2007 and we can only hope they come up with something which satisfies both the Trust and Silverlink. We have received assurances from David Clouston, the managing director of Silverlink, that he would like the Trust to continue to have a presence in the Stephenson Quarter - but where and on what terms is not clear.

We are in close contact with Newcastle City Council and are delighted that the current Lord Mayor, Councillor Peter Arnold, is the member who has been chosen to attend our Board meetings. He has already been a valuable source of good sense and wise counsel, and we look forward to his continuing support.

This is not the time for pessimism but I make no pretence at our concern for the future. I will write again in January or February when there will be more to relate.

On behalf of my fellow Trustees, I wish you a peaceful and happy Christmas.

Bob Longridge, Chairman



THE ROCKET

Support for the Trust

Stuart Porthouse, as President of the Mining Institute, approached the Literary & Philosophical Society President and others under the Joint Development Committee (JDC), to accept the Robert Stephenson Trust to be named under this umbrella.

Lit & Phil



To belong to the JDC will give the RST much needed support from like-minded institutions, all three occupy Grade 2* buildings within close proximity and can now be jointly promoted on tourist brochures, for instance. The Lit & Phil lecture programme 2007-8 can be found at

http://www.litandphil.org.uk/html_pages/LP_news.html

E: library@litandphil.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 232 0192



The North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers programme can be found at

<http://www.mininginstitute.org.uk/events/index.html>

Telephone/Fax: (0191) 232 2201

Email: office@mininginstitute.org.uk

Letter to Robert

Dear Robert,

I wonder if you can confirm the existence of the following locomotives: *My Lord* (Associated with the Killingworth wagonway); *Elizabeth*, *Lady Mary* and *Jane* (Associated with the Wylam wagonway)?

yours

Vicky

Dear Vicky,

I'm afraid my records on this subject are very scant- perhaps our *Friends* could let us know if they have any information.

yours

Robert



Boilershop Gossip

The last newsletter gave details of the current tenants of the boiler shop.

Several projects were delivered in partnership with Culture10 as part of the NewcastleGateshead Initiative. Dott 07 projects aim to improve five aspects of daily life: movement, health, food, school and energy.

The focus of the initiative was on grass-roots community projects; but there were also projects involving more than 70 schools, plus exhibitions and events in museums, galleries and rural sites. All events explore how design can improve our lives in meaningful ways.

The year culminated in a free 12-day Dott 07 Festival in Baltic Square on the banks of the River Tyne. It brought together the results of the projects and enabled all those involved to share experiences and plan what to do next. Outstanding achievements were celebrated in the Creative Community Awards.

The festival was an opportunity for many more people to find out how to participate in similar projects - and thereby accelerate the region's transition to sustainability.





December 2007



STEPHENSON'S WORKS

The Trust 'Out and about'



STEPHENSON'S WORKS



John Addyman gave a talk about Robert Stephenson to 'The University of the Third Age' at Trinity Methodist Hall, Hexham on 4 December.

On Monday 15 January 2008 at 10.30a.m. Vicky Haworth is giving a talk to a Local History Group based at Whitley Bay. The subject is Robert Stephenson with special reference to local associated events and on Monday 21 January 2008, Vicky is also giving a talk to the National Trust on the same subject.

Trust Curator, Alan Clothier will be giving a talk to Gateshead History Society about Stephenson's Works in February.



Ken John, Chairman of Wylam Scouts contacted Vicky Haworth to ask if the RST would have an Information & Sales stand at the Scoutrail fund raising day on Saturday 28 October 2007. The event was extremely successful and one model railway group expressed an interest in using Stephenson's Works as a base. Model Railway groups are now aware of the fascinating connection between the Scout movement founder, Lord Baden-Powell and Robert Stephenson.

The Hexham Courant reported:

WHAT a triumph! The Scouts' railway exhibition last Saturday was a charming and unusual occasion. Railway enthusiasts from Skipton, Blyth and Carlisle descended on the institute with their wonderful layouts.

.... there were play layouts for the children, together with the virtual opportunity to drive a railway engine. There was a beautiful display about Robert Stephenson and his connection with Baden Powell, which neatly linked railways with Scouting.

There was an auction which raised £750, including a set of limited edition prints of Wylam station which were snapped up for a vast sum. Refreshments were on hand throughout, and the exhibitors were so impressed with the hospitality shown that they waived expenses.



The Trust also attended the Scouting Fair held in mid November at Discovery Museum. The fair

was part of the Northumberland Scouts centenary celebrations and their Exhibition "Scouts were.... Scouts are....." will run until 6th January 2008 when it transfers to Bailiffgate museum, Alnwick before moving to Woodhorn Museum in March

