

THE WEST LANCs LETTER



The Newsletter of the West Lancashire Light Railway



WELCOME to West Lancs Letter No.17!

Well, that was 2020, and definitely not a vintage year. Our activities, both on the tracks and in the workshops, were severely curtailed, and we missed seeing many of our visitors and volunteers enjoying themselves at the Railway.

However, we have been luckier than many heritage railways, and we are in fair shape for 2021. Progress has been made in a number of areas, including *Sybil's* restoration, *Montalban's* refurbishment, the new access coach, a new tea-room and operation of a restricted but very successful season of Santa Specials.

We are very grateful both to our dedicated team of volunteers, who have kept us going through some difficult times, and to our many visitors, old and new, who have come to ride our trains and give us words of encouragement. Here's to a better New Year!



Our Santa Specials are always a highlight of the year, and in 2020 even more so, with all other special events cancelled. After a lot of discussion, including a visit by the local council, we devised a plan which would enable us to run while keeping everyone Covid-safe. Regrettably this included fewer trains and less capacity on each, so we had to disappoint many would-be passengers.



Those who did come met not only Santa but also a magician, who kept one coach entertained whilst the other was visited by the Bearded One. And the feedback was brilliant - we had literally dozens of emails, texts and social media comments, not to mention what was said on the day, all saying how much they enjoyed the experience. It made all the effort worthwhile - it was particularly pleasing to see the many children having a great time.



Joffre awaiting the next turn with the Santa train, parked by driver Simon Moore with an eye for a dramatic photo-opportunity!



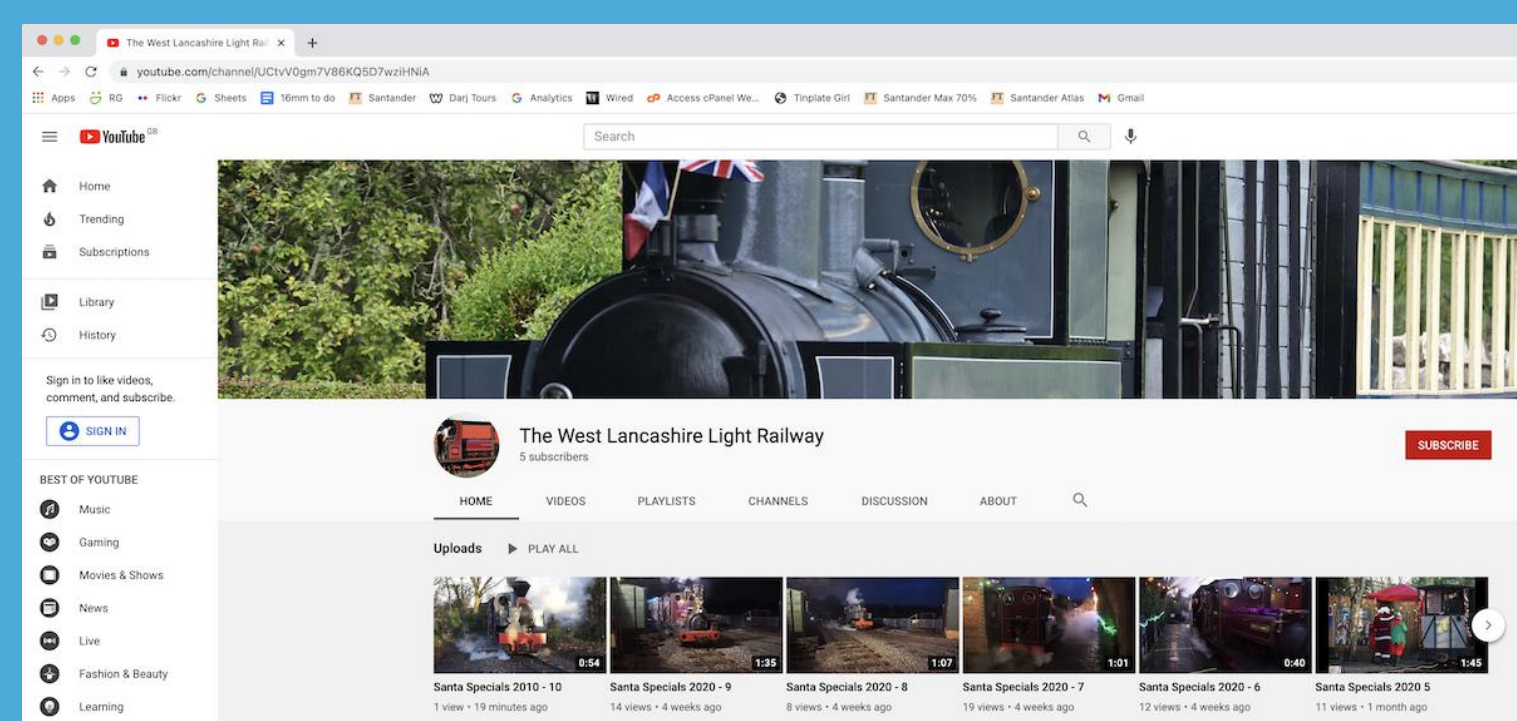
You just can't get the staff...



Joffre departs Toyland with some happy customers after a visit to Father Christmas. (video opens in a browser tab)



Those who were with us for our 50th year celebrations in 2017 may remember Mike Lynskey, who entertained us in unique style on the Saturday evening of our gala. Mike is a leading light at the Killmarsh workshops in Derbyshire, home base for the *Gowrie* locomotive new-build and several high-profile restoration projects. He writes a newsletter *The Killmarsh Weekly Eyestrain* describing activity at the site, which is well worth subscribing to, and not just for the name. Contact Mike at kilmarsh100@gmail.com.



We now have our own Youtube channel! The aim is to showcase the wide variety of events and activities at West Lancs, with an ever-growing number of videos showing what goes on at Hesketh Bank. Click [here](#) to watch the videos and subscribe to the channel!

West Lancs members can contribute their own videos - send an email to westlancs@lwrway@gmail.com for more info.



Something new on our website! Our very own unique enamel pin badges, plus a range of station-name fridge magnets and pens are now available to purchase from our [online store](#). Prices include UK postage.



And finally, a throwback ten years to December 2010, when we were blessed with real snow for our Santa Specials.

That's all for now - we are looking forward to a hopefully-full season of operations, due to start on SUNDAY MARCH 28TH. We are busy finalising plans for some new additions to our timetable, including a themed dressing-up event especially for children, and some mid-week running. And our magician will be back - watch this space!



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