

FRIENDS of the S&DR – 2025

‘HEAD of STEAM’ – One Act Play to be presented in 7/8 venues

Author: **BILL GIBSON**/Director: **LAURENCE SACH**/Cast: **CASTLE PLAYERS**

Thanks to John Raw for taking Laurence to 4 of the venues; Laurence knows the details of The Witham, and he will visit Darlington and Stockton venues imminently.

Thanks to Jonathan Ratcliffe for attending meetings & helping to produce a budget for the Workshops – now planned for May & end of summer – which has been submitted to Caitin Barratt. Laurence will draw up a budget for the tour. Laurence, Bill and I are working on improving the script. Bill’s research is accurate but we need to introduce more drama and this is proceeding well. We had a three hour meeting this week.

Ticket sales will be through Ticket Source; we will use all Festival & local publications. John Raw will enlist people in Shildon & venues to the west in manning the bar, door, etc. There will be 2 dates for presenting the play at the Shildon Railway Institute. The tour will commence in May 2025, ending on the weekends 19 and 26 September 2025.

BARNARD CASTLE: Cllr Chris Foote Wood (member of the Friends) is the lead council member for the 2025 celebrations. He has submitted a budget to Teesdale Action Partnership & we have had various meetings and its support seems to be forthcoming.; TAP might contribute to the funding of ‘Head of Steam’. Montalbo School has a railway layout in its garden; the children are involved & have been taught about the S&DR; the garden will be open to the public in 2025 summer holidays. There will be a two-week railway exhibition at The Witham leading up to the anniversary.

Chris and I have had a meeting with Glaxo; its 80th anniversary is next year; the site was opened in 1945 and was sited in Barney as it was away from any big cities and the war was still going on. The other reason it came to Barney was that there were 4 railway lines to carry its pharmaceuticals and Glaxo holds photographs.. We have spoken about the Crossing Keepers House which it owns and still bears the S&DR House Plaque, and the six railway seats. I have yet to finalise the circular walk.

OTHER: Tom Walker would like to give his talk ‘The Three Greeners of Etherley and a model steam engine’; Mike Norman would like to give his talk ‘It Wasn’t Rocket Science’.

We have 50 copies left of ‘Timothy Hackworth & the Locomotive’ by Robert Young.

I am continuing research on everything that might be useful for 2025 – something new every day!!

JANE HY.