

14 May 2008

BACK TO THE FUTURE WITH NEW STATION NAMES ON LOOE VALLEY LINE ACTION DAY, SATURDAY 17 MAY

Saturday 17 May - Volunteering in Plymouth students gardening on Platform 3 at Liskeard station from 11 00. Renaming ceremonies – Coombe Junction Halt 13 50, St Keyne 14 00 (Photographers etc are very welcome to travel on 13 45 train from Liskeard. Will arrive back at Liskeard at 15 00)

Two of the stations on the scenic Looe Valley Line, the railway branch line which links Liskeard and Looe, will be going “back to the future” when they are renamed as part of an Action Day on the line this Saturday (17 May) to mark National Community Rail Weekend.

Both Coombe and St Keyne stations will be return to previous names last used nearly fifty years ago. New namesigns will be in the chocolate and cream colours and style used by British Railways Western Region in the 1950s and 1960s, part of a scheme that will see the whole line given this period feel.

On Saturday afternoon (17 May), there will be renaming ceremonies at both stations. Led by Julian Crow, General Manager, West of England for First Great Western, the party will leave Liskeard on the 13 45 train for Coombe. There, local ward Councillor Mike Critchley, Caradon District Council representative on the Devon & Cornwall Rail Partnership, will unveil the new sign to rename the station “Coombe Junction Halt.

The party will then take the same train to St Keyne where James Redfearn, Co-President of the ViP (Volunteering in Plymouth) Society at the University of Plymouth and fellow students who recently created a picnic area at the station will unveil the sign that renames the station “St Keyne Wishing Well Halt”.

As well as the renaming ceremonies, a team of students will be spending the day doing gardening work on Platform 3, the Looe Valley Line platform, at Liskeard. This is part of a project between the University’s ViP Society and the Devon & Cornwall Rail Partnership which has now seen work at Liskeard, Coombe, St Keyne, Causeland and Sandplace stations over a two year period.

This Action Day on the Looe Valley Line is part of local National Community Rail Weekend celebrations. Up and down the country, there will be activities on local and rural rail lines and stations celebrating their importance to the communities they serve.

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Julian Crow, General Manager, West of England for First Great Western said "This is a real community railway, one of Cornwall's thriving branch lines.

We're really grateful for all the hard work and support that the Rail Partnership, University of Plymouth Students and the local community have put in, and happy to revive the old names to add to the attractiveness of a journey on the line."

The Rail Partnership's Manager, Richard Burningham said "The students' hard work is making a real difference to the Looe Valley Line. Both this and the renaming project, with heritage style signs, help make the Looe Valley Line more attractive still and hopefully encourage more people to take the train."

James Redfearn, Co-President of the ViP Society at the University of Plymouth said " Through the volunteer activities we have completed along the Looe Valley Line, I have really enjoyed the opportunity to make this beautiful branch line more attractive for locals and tourists alike."

The Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership works to promote the scenic Looe Valley Line between Liskeard and Looe and the places it serves and to seek improvements to the line. It is a non-profit partnership between the County Councils, the City Council, local Parish Councils, the University and the rail industry.

ViP (Volunteering in Plymouth) is a student led society at the University with approximately 400 volunteers involved in community based projects ranging from beach cleans to conservation projects, serving meals and chatting at an older people's lunch club and working with children with disabilities.

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For further information, please contact Richard Burningham or Rebecca Catterall on 01752 233094.

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