

# Lynton & Barnstaple Railway



## Past, Present & Future

### **The Engines**

Trains on the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway were hauled by three steam engines called Yeo, Exe and Taw which were built by Manning, Wardle & Co of Leeds. A fourth loco named Lyn was obtained from the Baldwin Locomotive Works in the USA.

Sixteen carriages were built for the railway by the Bristol Wagon & Carriage Co in 1897 and Coach 17 built in Barnstaple by Shapland & Petter in 1911. Another Manning Wardle engine called Lew was ordered in 1925 by the Southern Railway following their takeover of the line.

### **Hard times, Line Closure & Dismantling**

After World War One the railway came under increasing pressure as a result of growing competition from motor transport. Consequently the L&B was purchased in 1923 by the Southern Railway Co who began a major investment programme to revitalise the economic viability of the line. This included relaying track, re-fencing the line and obtaining an additional locomotive, cranes and goods vehicles.

Unfortunately the continued improvement in road transport meant that the line went on losing money and in 1935 the Southern closed it down. Annual passenger numbers just before closure were 32,000, down from a peak of around 100,000 on the eve of the First World War.

The rolling stock and track were put up for auction with the locomotives being sold for scrap and the coaches cut into sections and sold as garden sheds. Finally the track was lifted in 1936 and the rail corridor returned to farm and moorland.



At milepost 15<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> 8<sup>th</sup> November 1935

FE Box