

www.friendsofsbrs.org.uk

WEBSITE LAUNCHED



The Group are delighted to announce the launch of their website which went live on 12th November 2013, coinciding with the Group's third Annual General Meeting.

After the generous donation of time and expertise by local IT manager, Martin Watson, the Group's website is now live.

Whilst there's still work to do, it's a great start to getting the Group online and reaching out to the wider community. Our community partner ACoRP also supported us with tweeting our address via their social media and we're hoping visitors will find the site both useful and interesting.

There's information about the Group and its members; current news and updates on our initiatives; membership details and also a sponsors page which promotes local businesses who have supported us since we started in November 2010.

We hope you'll take the time to visit the site and we'd welcome any constructive feedback via the contact form on the site.

Visit us at www.friendsofsbrs.org.uk

Annual General Meeting...

The Group's third AGM was held on Tuesday 12 November 2013 at the Jubilee Refreshment Rooms. For more info, please visit our website at www.friendsofsbrs.org.uk

Branwell Bronte plaque and garden

One of the Group's main projects during 2013 has been to promote the local connection with Branwell Bronte – brother of the three famous Bronte sisters. Branwell was employed as Assistant Clerk-in-Charge at Sowerby Bridge's first railway station from its opening in October 1840 until March 1841.

An English Heritage style blue plaque has been fixed to the outside wall of the Jubilee Refreshment Rooms to commemorate this connection (see picture opposite).

The newly created 'Bronte Garden' is also part of this initiative, the intention being that it contains plants and flowers mentioned in the various Bronte novels, poems, paintings and drawings.

Recent planting in the Bronte Garden has included roses; heathers; crocus; strawberries; hawthorn; box and bay tree – all of which feature in the Bronte works.



Winter changeover of plants

Saturday, 16 November, saw the winter changeover of plants/flowers in the locally sponsored station planters and tubs. This involved the removal of summer varieties and replacement pack bedding (primula, pansy, viola, bellis, wallflower); winter heathers; ivy; hawthorn and skimmia.

Security mirrors

In mid-November, the long awaited replacement security mirrors were installed in the station's underpass. These have been positioned at the bottom of the slopes from the platforms to give added vision and security for station users. The Group thanks Northern Rail for providing and fixing these.



FOR SALE.... an ideal Christmas present?

Complete set of second-hand Tom Sharpe paperback books. 16 titles including Blott on the landscape, Wilt etc. Offers over £20 to jim.milner@tiscali.co.uk (or in writing – please hand in to the Jubilee Refreshment Rooms at the station by 20th December).

Thanks to Mick Jowett for donating the books.

Contact us: Tel: 07850 822590 or email: fofsbrs@gmail.com

Looking forward to 2014

The Group hopes to build on its achievements in 2013 with a number of initiatives and ideas in 2014, including the continuing development of the Bronte Garden and maintaining our success in the 2014 Yorkshire in Bloom competition. .



Former Sowerby Bridge Railway Station Workers

Derek Ashton (1957-1960)

Derek worked as a Booking Office Clerk at Sowerby Bridge Railway Station from 1957 to 1960 and was a Relief Clerk at other local stations covering holidays, staff absences and busy parcel periods. His job involved selling tickets, dealing with parcels, answering the telephone, answering Morse Code messages and paying the workers' wages.

He was commended by British Railways' Leeds Area Manager during the severe winter weather of 1959 when, together with the Station Foreman Stanley Millward, he cleared the points at Milner Royd Junction – Derek recollects using a flame thrower to free the frozen points. As a reward for this work he received a one day holiday and a free travel pass to any British Railways' station (He travelled to Elgin in Scotland). Derek also recollects assisting with the delivery of trunks from Sowerby Bridge Station to Rishworth School, at the beginning of the school year, with the parcel van driver Jack.

At Derek's time at the station Leonard Hopkinson was the Chief Clerk and Tom E Smith was the Stationmaster. There were 40-50 people employed at Sowerby Bridge Station and Engine Shed at that time.

After leaving British Railways in 1960, Derek worked at the District Bank in Hebden Bridge and became the Bank Manager of Nat West in Heckmondwike in 1980. He retired in 2004 and currently lives in Brighouse with his wife Pamela and his classic cars.



Derek pictured on his scooter which he used to travel to work and back

If you'd like to know more about the Group or would like to get involved in any of our initiatives please let us know. You can visit us at www.friendsofsbrs.org.uk or contact Chris Wright on 07850 822590.

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Calendar of Upcoming Events

Date	Event
Tues 10 Dec	Open 'Committee' Meeting. 7.30-8.30pm. Meet at JRR*
Sat 14 Dec	Work Together session. 9.00am-12 noon. Meet at JRR*
Tues 14 Jan	Open 'Committee' Meeting. 7.30-8.30pm. Meet at JRR*
Sat 18 Jan	Work Together session. 9.00am-12 noon. Meet at JRR*
Tues 11 Feb	Open 'Committee ' Meeting. 7.30-8.30pm at JRR*
Sat 15 Feb	Work Together session. 9.00am-12 noon. Meet at JRR*
Tues 11 Mar	Open 'Committee ' Meeting. 7.30-8.30pm at JRR*

*Venue: JRR = Jubilee Refreshment Rooms at Sowerby Bridge Railway Station

Work Together Days vary and may involve weeding, tidying up the station, planting or watering the flower boxes etc. If you enjoy a bit of cultivating and have a few hours to spare, please join us. Just ask for Chris at the Jubilee Rooms on the station.

Open 'Committee' Meetings are held once per month and the agenda includes general updates on the Group's activities and progress. Why not come and see what we're all about. You'll receive a warm welcome. Just ask for Chris.

Acknowledgements...

Thanks to **Martin Watson**, local IT manager, for his time and expertise in building the group's website; **Simprint** for the discounted print of this newsletter; the anonymous couple who gave a generous cash donation to the Group's funds; **Jim Robinson**, for fixing the Branwell Bronte blue plaque and to the very many people who have donated items to the Group over the summer and autumn:- **Auralee** and **Tony Evans** (gardening tools), **Thunderfix** (watering cans), **John King** (sack cart), **Diane Pearson** (horse manure), **Mick Jowett**, **Bob Whiteley**, **John Holt**, **Rob Wilson** and **Barkisland Old People's Welfare Committee** (books and DVDS), **David Harriott**, **Geoff Hallos** (photographs). Thanks also (with apologies) to those whose names we've failed to record, and everyone who has given plants and seeds for the planters/gardens.



**Finally – Merry Christmas from all at Friends of
Sowerby Bridge Railway Station**



Contact us: Tel: 07850 822590 or email: fofsbrs@gmail.com