



# The Levenmouth Rail Campaign Newsletter

**"Much More Than a Transport Project!"**

**Campaign  
Update 57**  
**September 2019**  
**(5th. Series)**

## **East Fife's New Season:**

### **Football Fans Prefer to "Let the Train Take the Strain"**

Story: *Courier & Advertiser* (Fife)  
Website, Tuesday, 30th. July.:

A SURVEY of Football Followers Coming to Levenmouth on the final weekend of July strengthened the case for the reinstatement of a rail link to the area ... and the referee's whistle will always be ready to sound at any hint of *fouls* or back-tracking on the promise - made just days later - to re-open the area's vital link to the rail network.

"Let the Train Take the Strain!", many of them cried.

More than two-thirds of the supporters of *Hearts of Midlothian* who made their way from Edinburgh to the *Bettfred Cup* match against *East Fife* on Saturday, 27th. July, stated they would prefer to travel by train - if given the choice. As the game progressed, ending in *League One* side *East Fife's* respectable 1-1 draw against *Scottish Premiership* rivals, members of *Levenmouth Rail Campaign* conducted a survey amongst the many hundreds of spectators - which showed that less than one-in-five of the away support had come by public transport, even though the match was being played a little over thirty miles, or 48 kilometres, from the Capital.

"These figures are both reassuring and worrying", said a Campaign representative after the final whistle; "They are reassuring because they show just how willing people are to travel by train,

## **Levenmouth's First 'Food Festival' Well-Attended**

Suggestions for Activities and Festivals Show Levenmouth's  
**New-Found Sense of Optimism**  
after 'Rail Link to Outside World' Gets Go-Ahead

Story: *Claire Warrender, Courier & Advertiser* [Fife] Website, Tuesday, 9th. July;  
and *Jamie Callaghan, East Fife Mail Website*, Monday, 26th. August.:

**THE FIRST Leven Food and Drink Festival has been upheld as "a great success" after hundreds of people headed to Shorehead to drink, eat and enjoy themselves.**

This Festival's wonderful reception, together with plans for a regular 10-kilometre (6¼-mile) run, proposals for an outdoor film festival, regeneration along the course of the River Leven, the much-talked-about and anticipated *Active Travel* cycle network and, of course, the *Levenmouth Whales* proposals - clearly all suggest that the whole area has suddenly got a new-found sense of optimism about it.

With our much-wanted *Rail Link to The Outside World* given its surprise, official 'go-ahead' by Scottish Transport Minister Michael Matheson at the *Fife Renewables Innovation Centre*, at the Methil Docks, near Leven, on Thursday, 8th. August, local newspapers have appeared more-optimistic about the area's future. Now that the Rail Link will be revived, much more can now be achieved. ... [Page 2 ►]

and how popular an option that would be.

"They're worrying because they highlight the complete inadequacy of public transport availability, particularly rail, in this part of Scotland."

We, at the LMRC, now wait for this, and other wrongs, to be put right...

**Right - Very Busy:** The combined LMRC and CLEAR Buckhaven stall at the Leven Food and Drink Festival on Saturday, 24th. August.



## **50th. Anniversary of Passenger Trains' Withdrawal Next Month**

**LMRC Ready to  
Commemorate  
... but Not to  
Commiserate!**

**FRIDAY, 4th. OCTOBER,**  
Marks the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Last Scheduled Passenger Trains to Leven and Cameron Bridge.

Not so long ago, we commented on the unwanted anniversary of that closure. Now we can happily commemorate - **but NOT have to commiserate over it!** The official closure of these services came on Monday, 6th. October, 1969, but with no Sunday services on this route anyway towards the end, around 100 passengers took the last chance they had of a rail journey from Leven, bound for Edinburgh, at about 8.30pm on Saturday evening, the 4th..

Some were happy to go no further than Cameron Bridge or Kirkcaldy, while others chose the 'doomed' stations at Dysart and Sinclairtown (near Kirkcaldy) or, of course, Thornton Junction, at the west end of the Levenmouth line. Some ventured all the way to Edinburgh Waverley. Many would be obliged to return by bus - this, their "future".

Apart from reporters, the final passengers included three "veteran", local rail employees with careers going back 35 years or so, right the way back to the mid-1930's., one of whom later spoke of his reminiscences - and also of watching the lights of Leven Station disappear into the darkness as that final train set off into the night.

**L.M.R.C. News**

**The CREDIBLE Journey: On to Destination**



## Levenmouth's First 'Food Festival' Well-Attended

[◀ Cont. From Front Page] ... The *Leven Food and Drink Festival*, the first of the kind to be held in this seaside town, was also the first event to be organised by the group *Levenmouth Together* - a taskforce which has just been established to come up with ideas to support the High Street, and more.

Dozens of stalls - and their many eager customers - packed the Shorehead car-park, to the rear of Leven Bus Station, and were selling a range of very welcome treats, and also providing information about local groups such as the *LevenMouth Rail Campaign*, *CLEAR Buckhaven*, and *Levenmouth Rotary Club* (part of a world-wide social-charity organisation, and one also with the local community at its heart), or hosting cookery demonstrations.

*Fife Councillor* Ken Caldwell was on-hand to "do the honours"; he later described Leven's inaugural *Food and Drink Festival* as a "fantastic day" - and congratulated *Levenmouth Together* on their successful, debut event.

As had been hoped - and intended - *Festival-goers* also ventured up the neighbouring High Street, and the shops there reported a welcome and healthy boost in trade.

Cllr. Caldwell said: "The feedback that I got from the stall-holders was that it was a great success. It has had a very positive knock-on effect on the High Street as well, with many shops reporting a big increase in sales."

Cllr. David Alexander praised the Council officers, and his fellow local Councillors, for the recent transformation of the Shorehead area, which included changes to the car-park there to allow it to host events such as this. With this new event hoped by many to become an annual attraction, it looks as though it was £1,000,000 well-spent!



**Both Below:** The sheer amount of people at the *CLEAR Buckhaven* and *LMRC* stall gives a clue how busy and successful the *Food & Drink Fest.* was.



## Celebrations Round-Up:

**Levenmouth Academy ("Community Use School")** – Tuesday, 27th. August, 2019. - 19 Days after *Go-Ahead*.

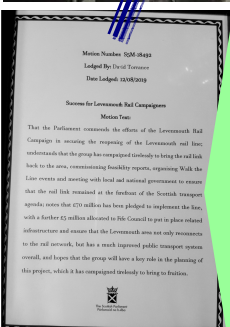
**THE LEVENMOUTH Rail Campaign's** first gathering at their new meeting-place - the 'Community-Use School' at the *Levenmouth Academy* on Tuesday, 27th. August - was certainly a memorable one - for everyone who can remember it. ... That would be everyone, then. ...

'Unfortunately' for some, it *may be alleged*, they could obviously not have so much to drink as to be obliged to travel by bus, rather than car, in the absence of a railway connection. ... "Oh!, the 'Indignity' of that!"

**Below:** *LMRC* Chairman Eugene Clarke, 2nd. in row, reads a *Scottish Parliament* certificate, awarded in the name of MSP David Torrance (4th.), to mark the Campaigners' breakthrough.



**Above and Below:** Toasts are given and a choice of savoury biscuits (and the celebratory cake, centre-stage), are ready for *LMRC* folks and supporters to enjoy at their first gathering in their new meeting place at the *Community Use School*, Levenmouth Academy.



**"Motion: S5M-18492, Lodged by: David Torrance [on] 12/08/2019: Success for Levenmouth Rail Campaigners."** - That the Parliament commends the efforts of the *LevenMouth Rail Campaign* in securing the reopening of the Levenmouth rail line; understands that the group has campaigned tirelessly to bring the rail link back to the area, commissioning feasibility reports, organising Walk The Line events and meeting with local and national government to ensure that the rail link remained at the forefront of the Scottish transport agenda; notes that £70-million has been pledged to implement the line, with a further £5-million allocated to *Fife Council* to put in place related infrastructure and ensure that the Levenmouth area not only reconnects to the rail network, but has a much-improved public transport system overall, and hopes that the group will have a key role to play in the planning of this project, which [they have] campaigned tirelessly to bring to fruition."



# Celebrations Round-Up:

**Carberry House, Leven** - Wednesday, 4th. September, 2019. – 27 Days after Rail Link *Go-Ahead* Announced.

**SOME THINGS Have Changed in the time the current LevenMouth Rail Campaign** - not least at **Carberry House in Leven**, where Campaigners have had meetings with *Peter Brett Associates*, one of the organisations who have so kindly been backing the group. For one, they have had stalls at three of the ever-popular *Leven Rose-Queen* ceremonies and Galas in their vital quest for at least 10,000 signatures for their campaign petition (which ultimately reached a total of 12,506); for another, these *Rose-Queen* Galas have moved to a new venue in town.

On Wednesday, 4th. September, *Fife Councillors* kindly invited *L.M.R.C.* members to a celebration at their offices (they were gifted *Carberry House* by an eminent, local businessman in 1929) and Cllr. David Ross - a co-Leader of the *Council*, and a keen backer of the Rail Link, set things rolling with his introductory speech, before Provost Ken Caldwell formally congratulated the group. Before everyone tucked into the fine buffet tea and refreshments laid on for them that night, *L.M.R.C.* Secretary Dr. Allen Armstrong recalled the many struggles that *Campaign* stall-holders faced in defying wind and rain at many local fairs and galas - even before considering their efforts in trying to convince the *powers-that-be* that this really was a “no-brainer” as far as railway re-openings were concerned. Allen talked of “low-hanging fruit”, and this being the “easiest project” to campaign on.

Finally he paid tribute to the many rail experts or professionals who were involved, as well as Councillors, Members of the Scottish and Westminster Parliaments, and all of the supporters in and out of the Campaign group, too.

**Right:** Allen Armstrong, who instigated the current *LevenMouth Rail Campaign* and also acted as its Secretary, reflects - clearly very excitedly! - on its successful outcome. He also mentioned many important things that the *L.M.R.C.* still needs to work, and continue to campaign, for in the months and years ahead ... .., such as the environmental parts of the Rail Link's rejuvenation, including all assistance with the integrated “Active Travel” cycle-network. He also paid tribute to his fellow Campaigners.



**Above:** Enjoying their Buffet tea at *Carberry House*. **Left:** Provost Ken Caldwell - Convenor of the Levenmouth Area and Central Planning Committees of *Fife Council*, and representative of the Buckhaven, Methil and Wemyss villages - gave his *Congratulations* to the *LevenMouth Rail Campaign* for their recent, great success. **Below:** Cllr. David Ross, a Co-Leader of *Fife Council*, and *Kirkcaldy North Ward* representative, formally opened the celebrations.



## Backing for BiFab ... .. Kirkcaldy Demonstration Attracts Jeremy Corbyn

**ONE OF The Main Concerns** these days, in these parts, is the crisis affecting *Burntisland Fabrications*, or *BiFab*, who could well benefit from the revival of the Levenmouth Rail Link. This month, Jeremy Corbyn, the main *Opposition* leader at *Westminster*, joined a demonstration at Kirkcaldy over fears they may lose out on a valuable contract for wind-turbine parts to a company in the Far-East. The wind-farm is planned just 10 miles (16 kms.) out to sea from their factory and yard at Methil.



## CAMPAIGN CALL ..... “LOBBY YOUR MSP!” SAY LMRC

**ALTHOUGH**, of Course, we have the wonderful news that the *Levenmouth Rail Link* is to be reinstated, the **LMRC** will still be active, and will continue to keep watch on progress. If anyone has concerns at some stage, they should still write to their MSP, MP or Local Councillor. ...



**Allen Armstrong** is seen at the *LevenMouth Rail Campaign* stall at 2017's *Leven Rose-Queen Fête* - with *Carberry House* behind.



# 'REINSTATE THE LEVEN-EDINBURGH RAIL-LINK NOW!'

## LMRC Meetings

Our MAIN PUBLIC ["Action Group"] MEETINGS are Held Monthly - Except in Summer and December - at the ...

### Levenmouth Academy Community Use School

Methilhaven Road, Buckhaven, Leven, KY8 1EA.

6.30 p.m., **TUESDAY, 24th.**

Enter the Academy grounds by the Main Gate; go straight on for about 200 metres, or 220 yards; the Community Use School entrance is on the Left. ...

Sept'r..



"Say You'll Be There!" \*



... to the 'Community Use' School!

\* 'Song-Title Arrows' ... Spice Girls [1996].

## Later LMRC Meetings ...

LMRC Action Group Meeting —  
Tuesday, 29th. October, 6.30 p.m.;

LMRC Action Group Meeting —  
Tuesday, 26th. November, 6.30 p.m.;

There are **NO** Meetings in December  
(or July) due to Holidays.

LMRC Action Group Meeting —  
Tuesday, 28th. January, **2020**, 6.30 p.m.;

LMRC Action Group Meeting —  
Tuesday, 25th. February, 6.30 p.m.;

For Other Dates, Events  
and Details ... ..

## LMRC Contacts ... ..

**CLEAR** Buckhaven, 36 College St., Buckhaven,  
KY8 1JY. - [Opposite Library and Council Offices]  
E-Mail: [LMRC@mail.com](mailto:LMRC@mail.com) 'Phone: 01592-713078  
Main Website: [www.lmrc-action.org.uk](http://www.lmrc-action.org.uk)  
Facebook - [www.facebook.com/levenmouth.railcampaign](http://www.facebook.com/levenmouth.railcampaign)

Produced by ALISTAIR AYNSCOUGH, Colinsburgh,  
Fife, for the *LevenMouth Rail Campaign*.

## Levenmouth's "Left-Behind" Students

### 'Practical Climate Action' Protests

Story: **LMRC Press-Release [Largely Unaltered]**, Friday, 17th. May.:  
— 83 Days BEFORE Rail-Link Given Go-Ahead.

**PROTESTS BY Young People** over the 'Climate Emergency' are not confined to the cities. For the second year running, over 200 school and college students from across the Levenmouth area took part in a *Walk the Line* event along the mothballed Leven railway line.

Children aged from 11 to 16 years, and from seven different Schools and Colleges, took time off on Friday to join the global youth movement demanding 'practical action' from decision-makers in response to the Climate Emergency. They were joined by MSPs, Councillors and other local community representatives. Many of the participating children have never been on a train, yet reopening the mothballed railway line between Leven and Thornton Junction, along which they walked, could make an immediate impact in reducing carbon emissions. *LevenMouth Rail Campaign* Secretary Dr. Allen Armstrong explained: "The recent declaration of a Climate Emergency by the Scottish Government is a positive gesture, but it needs to be followed-up with practical action.

Capitalising on existing, unused green assets, such as the Leven line, offers a simple - and immediate - solution towards "reducing Scotland's carbon footprint". As the largest urban area in Scotland not served by rail, reinstating Leven-Edinburgh rail services would not only encourage car-users to switch to much more climate-friendly rail transport, but also play a key role in regenerating an ex-mining area which has struggled for decades.

**Background Facts - 1.** The Thornton-Leven rail line is approximately 5½ miles (8¾ kilometres) long, and with track-bed fully in place. It is owned by *Network Rail*, and is subject to technical monitoring, with freight services reinstated for the first mile between 2012 and 2015. No Act of Parliament is needed, as was required for the Borders Railway to Galashiels and Tweedbank, nor even any *Transport and Works Order*. Land is earmarked and available for stations

**2.** Passenger services to Leven ended in October 1969 - despite the infamous Beeching Report's recommendation that they continue. Freight services ended in 2001. At present, *Fife Circle* services between Edinburgh and Fife stop at Thornton Junction (near Glenrothes) and then return. An extension of existing services is entirely feasible.

**3.** The population of the Levenmouth conurbation (the contiguous settlements of Leven, Methil, Buckhaven, Methilhill, Windygates, Kennoway, East Wemyss), is around 37,500 plus additional planned housing (for 5,000 people) and a further 9,500 in the southern East Neuk (Elie, Pittenweem, Colinsburgh, Kilconquhar, Anstruther, etc.), for which Leven would serve as a *rail-head*.

**4.** Reinstatement of rail services to Leven is *Fife Council's* stated 'Number One' transport priority. The *Council* have funded three major transport studies over the past eight years. The latest *STAG (Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance)* Report shows a positive case (and stated potential of raising £1.31, for the local economy, for every £1 spent towards reopening it). Levenmouth now has the highest level of deprivation in Fife, despite significant private investment in the area by *Diageo*, and public investment in the *Fife Energy Park*, the new *Levenmouth Academy and Campus*, and other improvements.

◀ For More Details, Contact: **Allen Armstrong, Secretary, Levenmouth Rail Campaign**, using one of the **Contacts** listed on the **Left** of this Text.

From The Creator of '**Brougham Hall News**'.

LMRC News - Sept'r 2019 - [www.levenmouth.co.uk](http://www.levenmouth.co.uk) - 4