



“Much, Much More Than a Mere Transport Project!”

David Spaven: Levenmouth Rail Link to Transport Raw Materials and Spirits ...

Like a “Giant Stepping Stone” to The Future

“Largest Grain Distillery in Europe”

Story: **Allen Armstrong / LMRC**, in *East Fife Mail* ‘Community Pinboard’, Wed., 8th. April.:

“THE NEW LEVENMOUTH Line can be a “giant stepping stone to a sustainable future for transporting raw materials and the output of the spirits industry across Scotland” — that was how the respected rail-freight expert **David Spaven** outlined how a reinstated Levenmouth Rail Link would contribute towards a prosperous and, indeed, a healthier future.

“We must not waste this once-in-a-generation opportunity”, added Mr. Spaven, commenting on freight services; “The largest grain distillery in Europe, at Cameron Bridge, has its own rail sidings on the mothballed Levenmouth line – opening up prospects for movements of bulk spirit and wheat to be shifted from truck to train. It is [much less] than two miles by road from Cameron Bridge to the major bottling plant at Banbeath, Leven – creating the opportunity for up to two trainloads a day conveying finished product to Grangemouth, for onward rail and sea connections to domestic, deep sea and European markets.

“Accommodating freight in the Levenmouth area will *not* happen automatically, however”, he said; “because track works will be necessary to create a container railhead at Cameron Bridge”.

The LMRC’s monthly *e-Bulletin* - our

“The Older The Better?”

... at Leven’s Classic Vehicle Show in 2016 ...



Out - and Outlasted by Its “Elders”?! CLEAR Buckhaven’s 2003 Vauxhall Astra estate-car is now lodged in the ‘Great Car Park in the Sky’ - but Don’s ‘54 Austin Devon pick-up, 49 years its senior, just ‘trucks on’!! - *Leven Classic Vehicle Show*, 26th. June, 2016.

online newsletter - outlined the situation by reporting: “With the world turned upside-down, the Scottish Government has made it clear that ‘public transport is for essential use only, so that key workers, hospital staff, care-workers and all other essential staff, can practice social-distancing and be safe on their journeys. Those who are not one of these workers and whose journey is not essential are requested not to travel’.”

Searching for Station Sites

“We’ve heard, indirectly”, the *e-Bulletin* notes; “...that consultants *Atkin*, presently conducting the *GRIP-3* initial survey and ‘option selection’ work, have identified a range of options, including various sites for both Cameron Bridge and Leven Stations. Any planned consultation on these options has been ... / Page 2, Col. 1 -▶

NOT Axed for ‘Sixty-Three’?

“Here’s Trusting ... , now that we are up to *LMRC News 63*, any national debts brought on by ‘Covid-19’ will not be used as a reason to hold back or even stop any Railway Revival Plans ... !”

- *LMRC News’* editor **Alistair Aynsough**, thinking of any link with the *Beeching Axe* of 1963....
- That Report recommended the Levenmouth Rail Link **Stay Open**,

... although the *East Fife Line* Closed in ‘65.

Campaign Call ...

A Sentiment Shared

Story: **Allen Armstrong / LMRC**, in *East Fife Mail* ‘Community Pinboard’, Wed., 6th. May.:

THE LEVENMOUTH RAIL Campaign, of course, also hope the virus situation and lockdown “fall-out” - though still mindful if the great deal of hurt, sadness and disruption that is being caused - should not substantially derail the design and planning work needed to reinstate Levenmouth’s railway, along with significant associated development around paths, bus routes and investment in the associated *River Leven* and *Blueprint* programmes.

... / Page 4, Col. 2 -▶

LMRC JUNE MEETING CANCELLED

- Please See Back Page for Information and Campaign Contacts

"It's Over to You ...!"

Some More About Michael Drever

New *Levenmouth Reconnected Blueprint* Programme Manager

Story: *LMRC 'e-Bulletin'*, April 2020.:

FIFE COUNCIL have, as we reported last time, now appointed Michael Drever as Programme Manager for the *Levenmouth Reconnected Blueprint*, and he formally took up his new role on Monday, 6th. April. "Michael is a 'seconded' from *Fife Council (Economic Development)*", the *LMRC e-Bulletin web-news page* for last month stated; "...where he was Project Manager, *City Deal (Capital Projects)*."

A key part of Michael's role now will be to work with the Levenmouth communities and stakeholders. The 'Covid-19' crisis continues and obliges Michael, like so many others, to avoid direct contact, but "remote working may allow some progress on the Rail Link and *Active Travel* project with partners and stakeholders."

● **Network Rail** have (up to Friday, 29th. May, as far as *LMRC News* is aware) still to appoint a "Liaison or Communication Officer", or create the position itself, it seems. – This is also seen as important to reviving the Rail Link. *LMRC News* was tempted to recreate the advertisement for this job, as we did for Michael Drever's - but checks on the *Network Rail / Indeed Website* have, so far, proved fruitless.

Like "Giant Stepping Stone" to The Future

◀- Cont. from Front Page \ ... \ ... badly held up by 'Covid-19'. When the world emerges from this unprecedented upheaval, questions may arise regarding public spending and even investment programmes.

"As Levenmouth has been 'self-isolated' for the past fifty years, we hope that this project is not sidelined or long-delayed when things return to normal."

"Back-Tracking to The Future?!"

"A freight spur for *Diageo's* Banbeath bottling plant ... One burning issue to be addressed in the design of the line is provision for freight (unlike the *Borders Railway* for example). A *Multi-modal Freight* terminal was previously discussed for Cameron Bridge. As the major user would be



Friday, 17th. May, 2019 - the day of the *LMRC's* 2nd. 'Walk-The-Line' event. ...

Above: The first mile or so of the former *Lochty Line* has a new role suggested for it - just as it had in late-1996. The bridge here would have to be replaced, though.

Diageo, which currently generates a high volume of heavy-goods vehicle movements on inadequate local roads each day, we know there is real scope to shift much of this on to trains."

This is, in fact, a case of 'back-tracking to the future', for, on 13th. November, 1996, under the headline "*Consultants Back Rail Link Campaign*", the *East Fife Mail* reported: "The Kilmacolm-based consultants *Spaven McCrossan Partnership* have looked into the situation. ->

"They say the cost of rail reconstruction would almost certainly be eligible for funding from the *Scottish Office's* 'Freight Facilities Grant Scheme' payment of up to half of the cost of rail capital investment [in 1996], provided the grant tips the commercial balance from road to rail, and there are sufficient environmental benefits from removing heavy lorries from the roads. This grant is 'still available'.

"David Spaven [reckoned] that in 10 years [between 1996 and 2006?], a rail-based scheme could stack up between £2m, and £3m. of environmental benefits for grant purposes. Rail construction over some 5 miles (8 kilometres) of countryside could cost around £4m., [he estimated], allowing for a new bridge under the A.915. and level crossings over the A.916 and the unclassified Kennoway-Leven (Wester Durie) road [Railway-builders now prefer to avoid having level crossings]. Together with land purchase costs, that suggests a total figure of around £5m. [as of November 1996], Mr. Spaven [said] - 'enough to justify the 50 per-cent grant'."

All this was in consequence of highly-controversial plans to develop three large quarries in the Kilmux area, around Kennoway, which emerged in 1996. The prospect of having up to 200 heavy lorry-loads of dolerite - an igneous rock formed long ago as volcanic magma or lava flow - coming through Leven's streets on their way to Methil Docks filled locals with great fears - and peoples' anger was *potentially* in danger of becoming..., well..., "volcanic".

Dolerite is formed from lava-flows that have slowed to a stop and cooled-off on the Earth's surface, and is used today mainly as a high-quality road-stone - which would have come in very useful for Leven's beleaguered roads if all those truck trips had been needed. In the end - though that would not be 'til February 1998 - *Fife Council* refused permission for *Hewden Quarries'* plans for two large quarries at Kilmux Farm, near Kennoway, and also limited proposed operations to extend a third, at Cults, which was proposed by *Belliston Quarries*.

● A trial freight-train journey took place on the Rail Link in 2003, two years after Methil Power Station closed and regular freight services stopped. The *Logistics* division of the haulage contractor *Malcolm Group* already transport *Diageo* products [*LMRC News* doesn't know if the 2003 trial was theirs], and also run a sizeable, "Multi-modal" rail-freight division. Addressing the *LMRC's* May 2015 meeting, Andrew Malcolm, *CEO* of *Malcolm Group*, and Jim Clark, managing director of *Malcolm Logistics* at that time, stated that they were giving the Campaign "their backing", as they had done in previous efforts to get trains back to Levenmouth, and gave an informal and interesting talk on how the logistics and haulage group operate on the Rail Link, and also on the roads and railways in general. They have, and would be, focusing their efforts on the Cameronbridge distillery, within two miles (3kms.) of the Leven site, and which is also run by *Diageo*. At the meeting, *Malcolm Group* proposed warehousing and bonded warehouses, and rail transport and terminal operations to boost the efficient running of the new railway.

"The Re-opening of the Mothballed Leven-Thornton Route is a Top Priority for Transport Scotland".

– David Spaven, *Leading Transport Consultant*, talking to the *LevenMouth Rail Campaign*, November 2015.

The Diageo Rail Spur ... Spurred-On by Transport Scotland's Levenmouth Freight "Commitment"?!

Story: Aileen Robertson, *Fife Courier* (@Unaltered) D.C. Thompson Co. Ltd., Monday, 20th. April:

HOPES THAT A Railway Spur will be built to connect Diageo's largest bottling plant with the new Levenmouth Rail Link are heightened now, with *Transport Scotland* reaffirming their "commitment to establishing a freight link" to Levenmouth. The *Levenmouth Rail Campaign* have called for Diageo's major packaging operation, at Banbeath on the fringe of Leven, to be connected to the Rail Link when it is reopened. Campaign secretary Allen Armstrong said: "Diageo boast of their environmental credentials, but this has not extended beyond the factory gates to date."

"We Need to Know - Fairly Soon..."

"Now is an unrivalled opportunity to take full advantage of the current design process to develop these options - before plans are set in stone. With path networks and bus links now being planned as part of both the separate but related *Leven Connectivity Project* and the *Levenmouth Reconnected Blueprint*, we need to know **fairly soon** the specifications for the main branch line and any spurs so alternative paths [and services] can be planned."

"Maximising the Rail Link's potential to carry freight would reduce the need for heavy vehicles using the busy A.915 *Standing Stone Road*. Campaigners say a section of the disused *East Fife Central (Lochty) Railway*, could be re-opened to establish a link to the Banbeath plant.

"Diageo have previously welcomed investment in the Levenmouth Rail Link, and said they would 'explore further the potential opportunities this may give our operations in Fife'."

"A *Transport Scotland* spokesperson said: 'The use of the line, additionally, for rail-freight will feature in our development considerations. We will be in discussion with *Fife Council*, and others, to shape our plans to deliver this exciting project as we seek to maximise the economic and social benefits of the new railway to the local area'."

"*Fife Council* co-leader David Alexander [S.N.P.] welcomed *Transport Scotland's* commitment to exploring the Rail Link's potential to carry freight: 'This makes absolute sense - and has been talked about for years', he said; 'The fact that *Transport Scotland* are making positive noises adds credence to the potential. This would take huge numbers of vehicles off the roads, relieve the pressure on our Levenmouth road network, and help [reduce] our *carbon-footprint* enormously."

'There will have to be agreement between everyone involved, on many aspects - *not least* community consultation - on exactly where the link-up happens. However, this can add another positive aspect to the whole Rail Link project, and the fact that it is going to happen will concentrate minds in a way that wasn't possible before'."

LMRC's Zoom Call: Chairman's Invite

ON THE Invite of L.M.R.C. Chairman Eugene Clarke, members of the Campaign were able to "attend" a specially-arranged meeting with a difference on Tuesday evening, 12th. May, midway between the cancelled regular "action meetings" for April and May. The meet was held using the *Zoom* video-conferencing app., and, ahead of the *virtual* get-together - the only way to meet in these days of 'Covid-19', of course - was for people to be invited by Eugene to sign-up to the network. *LMRC News'* editor Alistair Aynscough was unable to join in as, that same Tuesday evening, he was meant to be using the same system to talk with fellow *Colinsburgh & Kilconquhar Community Councillors* ... but then, "with communications down", Alistair could not take part in either meeting anyway.

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Little or No Sport ... ?

Keep the Ball in Their Court !!!

CAMPAIGN CALL

LOBBY YOUR MSP ... Say LMRC,

Please Keep This 'Ball' Rolling ... !

OTHER LOCAL CAMPAIGNS

Our Second Update Column

Newburgh Railstation

"**IT'S TIME to Put Something Back into Newburgh**" is how the *Newburgh Train Station Campaign* presents their community campaign to re-open a station at Newburgh, Fife, which would re-connect it with the railway that runs on an elevated position, offering lovely views of and beyond the upper Tay estuary, and provide "vital access north, south, east and west".

"The case for a new station [to replace one that closed on 19th. September, 1955], both socially and economically, is stronger than ever as the railway running through Newburgh carries more and more trains as demand everywhere", the website, <https://newburghtrainstation.org.uk>, states; "Like many places, a lot has disappeared from Newburgh. Whole hill-sides for stone; a whole set of industries; the linoleum works, which closed in 1980, and associated trades and workshops; port facilities, fishing and packing. - Newburgh now does a lot for itself to keep itself going to adapt and survive. ... To join the town up with the network in Scotland [would allow it to] be a thriving place again." "The *Newburgh Train Station Campaign* has total community backing in Newburgh and its catchment area, including Abernethy. It has cross-party support in the Scottish Parliament and in the local authorities that serve Fife and Perth and Kinross", their website adds. Newburgh is famed for its ancient Abbey, and now its new Distillery - reviving an ancient brewing tradition.

Kinross & Loch Leven

ON OCCASION, there are calls for the reinstatement of one of the former railways that reached Kinross and Loch Leven; Its route is from Cowdenbeath to Perth, via the Glenfarg tunnels. It offers a "fast route from Edinburgh", but closed in 1970 to make way for the M.90 motorway; yet that did not reach Perth 'til Aug., '80!

Stay at Home ... Protect Our N.H.S. ... Save Lives!

PLEASE! — **ONLY** EVER VENTURE OUTDOORS FOR ...

- ★ **Exercise - Near Home;**
- ★ **Essential Shopping** and **Collection of Medicines;**
- ★ **Caring for Relatives;**
- ★ **Vital Work,** such as **N.H.S., Railway Staff.**

Stay SAFE ... and Stay SANE!

'REINSTATE THE LEVEN-**EDINBURGH** RAIL-LINK !'

LMRC **NOT** MEETING ...

**LevenMouth Rail Campaign
are Sorry to Announce
that, due to Coronavirus,
their Monthly "Action
Group" Meeting at the Fife
Renewables Innovation
Centre; 6.30 p.m. Tuesday,
30th. June, 2020, *is*
CANCELLED**

**All Dates Subject to Cancellation
or Alteration due to "Covid-19" ...**

There Will Be **NO** Meeting in July or
December anyway, due to Holidays

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

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

LMRC Action Group Meeting
— Tuesday, 27th. October, 6.30 p.m.;

LMRC Action Group Meeting
— Tuesday, 24th. November, 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 'Phone: 01592-713078

Facebook and Twitter - Enter via our
Website: www.levenmouth.co.uk

Campaign Call: A Sentiment Shared

◀- Cont. from Front Page \ ... "The public agencies involved claim there will be wide engagement, and the *River Leven Project* has been effective in reaching out, prior to the current disruption, but we would like to see greater outreach by all the key agencies driving this. In practice, despite being a key community representative, the *LMRC* often learns late - or *indirectly* - of steps taken. As we approach a critical phase in the campaign, when community engagement is vital, we look forward to much active, and *pro-active*, involvement."

Levenmouth and The Coronavirus Crisis

A **LIST** of contacts can now be found on the **LMRC Facebook Page** for anyone in need of information, help and / or advice from various groups which are listed there to provide you with useful information.

*"Please Check this List
... and **SHARE**
It !!"*

Coming Next Time in *LMRC News* ...

**£2bn Boost to Cycling and
Pedestrian Capacity in U.K.;**
**Deprivation Stories Told in
Letters to Local Newspaper**

CAMPAIGN CALL **"LOBBY YOUR MSP!" SAY LMRC**

ALTHOUGH, of Course, we now have the wonderful prospect of the Levenmouth Rail Link being reinstated, the *LMRC* will remain active and continue to keep watch on progress. **If you have concerns at any stage**, you should still write to their MSP, MP or Local Councillor.

LMRC News is Produced by **ALISTAIR AYNSCOUGH** at Colinsburgh, Fife. Transmitted by **Adobe PDF** and e-Mail to the *LevenMouth Rail Campaign*.



From the Creator of
**'Brougham
Hall News'**
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