

Don Spencer.

It has been announced that Don Spencer one of the original WSR staff had passed away at the age of 88 on the 1st of November.

Don was a GWR employee who worked on the Minehead Branch up to the 1960's, Don worked as Station Porter at Minehead, Dunster and Blue Anchor with I believe a bit of guarding and signalling.

Don had many tales of life on the branch, he remembered working with my mother at Minehead, he spent time after the Lynmouth flood arranging transport from North Devon back to Minehead for those caught up in that tragedy. He had tales of floods at Dunster when the duty signalman and he had to be rescued by boat in 1960. He would also talk of working through trains from Minehead to Yeovil, a font of interesting railway history.

After his time on the railway cut short by the rundown in the sixties Don worked at the Police station in Minehead, always interested in the railway I would often visit Don and family to talk railways.

On January 2nd 1976 when the WSR first got access Don and his son Mark were amongst those of us who ripped the boards off the doors and windows and gained access to the buildings at Minehead

He was then greatly involved in the frantic next few weeks getting ready for the reopening to Blue Anchor on March 28th where he operated the signal box on that historic day.

After reopening Don became an employee of the railway alternating guard and signalman duties, his knowledge and experience being invaluable to a number of us keen but inexperienced novices and it is fair to say we learned a lot from him.

Don left the railway in the early 80's although would still put in an appearance for a cup of tea and a chat, his last involvement was a Wednesday appearance assisting Phil Weaver.

After the death of his wife Lillian Don moved to Hampshire to be near Mark.

His funeral will be at Basingstoke Crematorium on the 16th November at 1230.

Steve Martin