

Railtalk Magazine

Issue 30
March 2009
ISSN 1756-5030



Weather warning - Tornado heading south



Hired DRS 66 413 passes Cosford, Shropshire on 24th January 2009 with Fastline's 4226 Ironbridge - Derby Chaddesden Sidings empty coal working. *Gary S. Smith*

Contents

- Pg 2 - Welcome
- Pg 3 - Charter Scene
- Pg 11 - Readers Articles
- Pg 18 - Pictures
- Pg 42 - The Nosh Report
- Pg 42 - View from the Outside
- Pg 43 - Rail Operator News
- Pg 50 - Different View
- Pg 54 - Preserved Railways
- Pg 63 - International
- Pg 66 - From the Archives

Front Cover

Thousands gathered lineside to see Tornado's first working to London. Pictured here approaching Hadley Wood. *Chris Morrison*

Submissions

If you have ever wanted to submit pictures to a magazine, here is your chance. Send us your news and pictures to email:

entries@railtalk.net

When do we publish ?

Railtalk Magazine is published on the last weekend of each month.

More information can be found by visiting Railtalk forums.
© Railtalk Magazine 2009

Contact Us

Editor: Andy Patten
editor@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

Co Editor: David
david@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

Charter Scene
charter.scene@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

Steve Roberts (The Nosh Report)
steve.roberts@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

Robert Keith
robert.keith@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

James Paice
james.paice@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

From The Editor

Welcome to issue 30 of Railtalk Magazine, to start with I would like to thank everyone that has contributed in any way to this issue, and thank them for there support.

This month has been an eventful one for me, but unfortunately for the UK rail network a bit of a letdown. Maybe it's just me being too picky, or that I have just seen how it should be done and preferred it, to our rail network, I hope not!

Half way through this month, I travelled across to Austria, and couldn't believe the difference, passenger comfort, politeness, cleanliness, and everything you would expect from a railway you find in Austria. Maybe you will find some of these in some places on the UK rail network, but I'm sure it's not as common as in Austria, and this covers all the staff, passengers and enthusiasts alike.

As soon as we got back to England, it was for all to see, and what made me want to give it all up, and go live in Austria. First of all, platforms, why can't signallers stick to the book platforms, instead of the 'This is a platform alteration'. The next problem is seat reservations, you can choose if you want a table or an airline seat, facing forwards or backwards, so when I booked to Edinburgh, with a "A" (Airline) I got to the seat and found I had a table and backwards facing, no more can be said. Next problem, I thought in this country it was always "The customer is always right" so when i bought an off-peak day return at the fast ticket machine and ended up being given a single, I got the reply it has to be my fault. This was up to the point when another guy came to the counter at the side of me and said exactly the same thing!

Now onto something that really does sadden me, rail enthusiasts that will do anything to get their picture of something, even by standing in the way of other people. Saturday 28th February was no exception, with Oliver Cromwell at Doncaster, the amount of arguments that broke out because someone stood in front of someone else. This happened to me, more than a couple of times, and unfortunately, unlike society says, it seems to be the older generation (the steam enthusiasts) that do it the most, not the younger generation. Oh well thats enough from me.

Once again, thank you to everyone that has contributed and read the magazine this month.

This issue wouldn't be possible without:

Richard Hargreaves, Ian Furness, Carl Grocott, David Dawson, Jonathan McGurk, Dave Harris, Mike Byrne, Derek Elston, Peter Cheshire, David Mead, Brian Battersby, Steve Madden, Andrew Flusk, Steve Andrews, Gary S. Smith, John Coleman, David Hollowood, Yorkie, Julian Churchill, Jonathan Gill, Julian G, Craig Stretten, James Stoker, Steve Thompson, Tomas Kubovec, Chris Morrison, Jan Kuzilek, Pavel Martoch, Scott Turner and a big thanks to the Rail UK team for assisting in proof reading.

Andy Patten

Charter Scene

charter.scene@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

This month's round up of the British charter scene

The aim of Charter Scene is to detail the monthly British charter scene, whether it be in the medium of pictures, reviews of railtours or of future notice of tours that are scheduled to take place. To contact us, please use the usual address to submit your railtour reviews, pictures and information of future tours. When submitting photos it would be appreciated if you could provide the location of the photos, the working and any relevant information regarding the charter in question.

charter.scene@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

February has been dominated by two charters, firstly the Spitfire run "Fellsman Chopper" which took a pair of Class 20's to Carlisle. Second major tour was the well publicised first run to London of new steam engine Tornado.

We hope that you will like our selection of shots this month.



First picture of quite a few for this tour sees Class 20 303 and 20 304 working the "Fellsman Chopper" railtour passed Helwith Bridge on the 7th February. Class 57 601 was on the rear providing much needed heat. [Steve Thompson](#)



Pictured from on the tour as it passes over Ribblehead Viaduct, the pair of Class 20's steadily take the train towards Carlisle. *Richard Hargreaves*



Top Left: At Carlisle the pair of Class 20's were exchanged for a Class 20/Class 37 combination, not to everyone's liking. Class 20 309 and Class 37 423 are seen waiting to depart with the return charter.

Bottom Left: The pair are pictured upon arrival at Stafford having made an excellent run back down the West Coast main line from Preston.

Above: Always ready to lend a hand on charters, if only to warm the seats is West Coast's Class 57 601.

All: Richard Hargreaves



A second charter along the Settle and Carlisle line on the 7th February was "The Cumbrian Fellsman" with LMS No.46115 "Scots Guardsman".
Seen here getting stuck into the climb out of Settle. [Steve Thompson](#)



Tornado certainly made an impact this month, here the A1 Pacific 60163 speeds through Tallington working it's first train to London 1229 "The Talisman", Darlington - London Kings Cross on 7th February. [Steve Madden](#)

Inset: Preceding the train was rescue loco Class 67 001, running light engine, just in case anything went wrong. [Derek Elston](#)



Left: Against a dull sky, 60163 "Tornado" steams through Wandsworth Town on 14th February with 'The Valentines Day Special'

Mike Parsons

Above: A1 60163 is seen leaving Salisbury heading for Romsey on 14th February working 1294 'The Valentines Day Special' Waterloo-Overton-Waterloo

Steve Andrews



charter.scene@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

RETRO RAILTOURS LTD

Retro Railtours specialises in providing exciting days out for enthusiasts and daytrippers. Our next trip will be:

'THE RETRO AVON GRID' - BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY MAY 4TH.

Requested traction: Double-headed Hanson Class 56s (main tour) & Virgin Class 57/3 (Bristol-Bath and return). Plus: Cargo-D Mk. 2/3 air-conditioned coaching stock
From Huddersfield to Bristol and Bath. Picking-up at Stalybridge, Stockport, Crewe and Shrewsbury.

WE ARE OFFERING A 'BOOKING IN ADVANCE DISCOUNT' FROM ALL STATIONS.

Huddersfield, Stalybridge, Stockport & Crewe to Bristol/Bath - Fares: £55 standard, £80 first. Shrewsbury to Bristol/Bath - Fares: £47 standard, £75 first
PREMIER DINING available at £135, including first class seat, breakfast, three-course evening meal and unlimited tea/coffee.

Approximately four hours free time in Bristol, and two and a half hours in Bath. You may leave the train at whichever destination you would like to visit.

A pair of Hanson Traction Class 56s and a Virgin Class 57/3 requested!



To book, telephone: 0161 330 9055
Address: 2 Brookfield Grove, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancs OL6 6TL
Or visit our website: www.retrorailtours.co.uk Email: info@retrorailtours.co.uk

Top Left:

In preparation for a forthcoming tour Class 47 832 takes the DRS Mk 3 charter stock out for a spin to check everything is ok. Seen passing through Crewe on the 19th February.

Brian Battersby

Top Right:

Here at Kensington Olympia on the 14th February we see DB Schenker (formerly English Welsh & Scottish Railway) Class 67025 with the Northern Belle Stock on 1286 09:53 London Victoria-Cardiff Central. This service was the "RBS Six Nations Special".

Julian G

Retro Rail ad designed by the Rail Express team.



Sheperds Bush on the 14th February saw the 1282 'VSOE Valentines Luncheon Special' Victoria-Guildford-Victoria, hauled by 35028 'Clan Line'

Mike Parsons



One that just missed the deadline for last month but it's such an excellent picture is that of Class 40 D335 as it rounds the curve at Bury Bolton street, working "The East Lancs Ambassador" on the 3rd January.

Mike Byrne

Off Peak fares in the South East - don't let them scam you!

It's worth bearing in mind that Off Peak tickets for journeys wholly in the South East area are generally restricted until after 0930 (with some exceptions), but journeys between stations inside the South East to/from stations outside the South East, via London, are completely unrestricted between the South East station and London!

But passengers have reported that some staff in the South East area are unaware of this and incorrectly attempt to issue excess fares.

For example, a ticket from Rugby or Peterborough to somewhere like Colchester, is unrestricted on London Liverpool Street to Colchester trains, whatever any announcements say. Guards on these trains regularly announce that Off Peak tickets are not valid, but such sweeping statements are not strictly true.

While National Express East Anglia (NXEA) has the right to state that all their Off peak tickets from London to Colchester are not valid at certain times, they have to abide by the restrictions on other tickets and cannot refuse to accept these tickets.

If you are asked to pay an excess in these circumstances, refuse.

Ask the staff member to check the restriction code. Even better, prepare yourself by asking for the restriction code when you buy the ticket and bring it along when you travel. Ask the person who is trying to excess you for their name, and then write to the TOC concerned suggesting that the person is given training in this area. It's not the staff on the ground's fault; it's the fault of managers who do not provide sufficient training for their staff.

Online booking changes

Both Southern and CrossCountry have introduced new ticketing sites. Southern have gone with ATOS Origin (who provide the site for NXEC) and CrossCountry are using an updated version of The Trainline.

It looks like we are seeing the end of The Trainline's dominance, which can only be a good thing. With two operators now using ATOS origin, and I'd expect more to follow. Different booking engines work in different ways and having a selection to choose from means that the chances of finding good deals are increased.

Utilising the "via" or "avoid" options can sometimes yield cheaper Advance fares - for example if the lowest priced quota for the fastest train has sold out. It's also worth pointing out that ATOS Origin and

The Trainline have their own, different interpretations of ATOC's Routeing Guide.

It is also advisable to avoid the main The Trainline site, as this charges a £1 booking fee (this increases by a further £2.50 if a credit card is used instead of a debit card), however until 9th of March you can actually get a better deal on The Trainline's site, as you can save £4 when spending over £20 by entering the promotion code 'TRAVSUP42'. The discount is applied just before payment, and is claimed to be a £5 discount, minus the £1 booking fee for using the main The Trainline site.

Virgin Trains off peak policy changes

You may recall my article in the November edition of Railtalk Magazine about a leaflet titled "Is your Off Peak ticket valid?", it proudly boasted that Virgin do not have any peak restrictions for journeys north of Milton Keynes, however Virgin quietly introduced draconian restrictions on Off Peak tickets in the January fares change, causing massive increases in fares at peak times.

For a journey such as Crewe to Preston, the first off peak service is the 10:09 arriving 10:51 and to travel earlier the fare increases from £21 to £35 - a massive increase by stealth. In this particular case, passengers can buy

Crewe to Wigan Anytime Day (£12.70) and Wigan to Preston Anytime Day (£6.20) making a total of £18.90.

Virgin are effectively trying to scam passengers into paying an extra £16.10 for this journey. My advice is not to let Virgin get away with this scam, do your research and split the tickets and pay a fair fare.

It is worth noting that Virgin still allow railcard holders to use any train on an Off Peak ticket (as mentioned in detail in the January article) so the increases only apply to non-railcard holders.

Ticket advice for all

Advice on rail ticketing is available on railforums.co.uk in the 'Fares, Tickets & Routeing' section. We believe this to be the best source of UK rail fares advice available anywhere, as we have a team of people who are familiar with the complex rail fares system who can help you.

Never pay over the odds again, and ask us if you need help! See you there.

If anyone would like to ask fares advice, Yorkie and the team can be found at:

www.railforums.co.uk

On Location



12 Hours at Doncaster.... 21st February

As well as being a busy National Express, Transpennine Express and Northern interchange, it is amazing what you can see in 12 hours at this station. Starting at the bottom left with 08.00 we see one of the many Freightliner coal trains passing through the station, as well as services from CrossCountry 09.00) and the occasional East Midlands Trains service (10.00). Fastline Freight also operate coal trains in the area (11.00). Midday saw the first of many loco convoy and light engine movements that happen on a weekend, getting locos ready for busy engineering work. 13.00's First GBRf light engine movement was followed by Network Rail's Class 31 105 working back to Derby.

The middle of the afternoon saw Thunderbird Class 67 027 rescue an ailing NEC set and take it to Bounds Green for attention. More Class 31 action later with Class 31 601 and 602 on the Structure Gauging train. First Hull Trains Have now started regular use of the Class 180's on their services, (17.00). Another light engine convoy as no less than 7 EWS/DBS Class 66's worked from Immingham to Doncaster for weekend Engineers trains, and the day finished off with Advenza/Cotswold Class 47 810 arriving on a Craigentenny - Doncaster Works, HST stock move (19.00). All in all a very busy day. [Class47](#)



The Fellsman Chopper Tour Review

Firstly let me apologise, to Andrew Flusk for hijacking his column and I hope that after this meager effort by myself, he will forgive me.

Hopefully Andrew will return next month.

Anyway on with the review.

So the day arrived the day of the 'The Fellsman Chopper', the Spitfire Railtour that we had been waiting for...

Well the people that were booked on their tour were waiting for it on the 7th February. Starting the day, well it was a bit late for us, normally we are used to the 4 or 5am starts, so a 7am start was, well, a lie-in. We set off just after the hour of seven on Saturday the 7th of February, just as the sun rises in the sky, we made our journey across the Pennines, to Crewe. With little traffic problem, and only a call from James Plamer, Mr Retro Railtours (maybe I shouldn't mention that in this article, but I'm sure that Spitfire won't mind) to disturb the rubber on tarmac/concrete sound.

When arriving at Crewe, we always make the decision, pop to Tesco or let the Gravy Train Catering boys and girls take care of the refreshments. Unfortunately a split decision meant that we decided to do both.

After about an hour on the station (we like to be early), the faint rumble of English Electric traction could be heard.

So after a few pictures, and a quick run we embarked onto the 'The Fellsman Chopper'. The train headed northwards to pick up at Warrington. After settling in, it was time to go say hello to Jo from Spitfire and visit the Buffet.

The haven, run by them nice people mentioned before 'The Gravy Train Catering Team' Where we picked up the only thing that can get you going in the morning, a bacon bap.

After talking to one of the team, we headed back to our seats, where we consumed our bacon baps and settled into the trip to Carlisle.

As soon as we hit the S&C, there was no time to settle in (no pun intended). The Scenery was something else, with the amount of snow that had covered most of the UK the week before and with most of that area unspoilt my man.

The snow made a great backdrop for pictures of the Class 20s powering away at the front. Especially with the viaducts that cover Ribbleshead and Garsdale. Arriving at Carlisle was a shock, the amount of people that had turned out to see the tour, was amazing, even though the station was shut apart from a couple of local services.

It was a big disappointment to find that the West Coast main line was shut for engineering work and there were very little services leaving the station. Most of the time spent at Carlisle was spent taking pictures of the loco change where the pair of Class 20s were removed and replaced by a Class 20 and a Class 37.

Upon departure time for the tour, most people had had enough of seeing nothing and were ready for the trip back down the S&C, across through Blackburn towards Warrington back down the WCML then onto Stafford and Birmingham.

Although from the viewing part, this part of the tour was not good, as the sun had set by what was missing with the lack of light, only meant one thing, the audio entertainment was something outstanding, with both the Class 20 and the Class 37 working like dream machines the sound only meant that the fun would carry on far into the night!

With the tour on the way back, we were well... speechless due to the superb sound that was powering out of the loco's. The tour all too soon arrived back in Crewe, the place where we started the day all them hours ago. So thank you, to everyone that made the day possible:

Jo, and her team at Spitfire
DRS
West Coast Railway Co
and not to forget the Excellent Gravy Train Catering company.

Now to the answer to the problem, we went home with nearly a full Tesco bag!



The Wessexman - Saturday 23rd May 2009
Crewe to Eastleigh, Bournemouth and Weymouth
With 2 x DRS class 37 locomotives
Also picking up at Stafford, Wolverhampton, Birmingham New Street, Leamington Spa and Banbury

Fares - Standard Class £55 (adult) £27.50 (child) 1st Class £75 (adult) £49 (child)
Fares booked a minimum of 4 weeks in advance - Standard Class £49 (adult) £25 (child) 1st Class £69.50 (adult) £45 (child)
Fares including Eastleigh 100 Works entry - Standard Class £55 (adult) £30 (child) 1st Class £75 (adult) £50 (child)
Regretably we cannot accept bookings to include the Eastleigh 100 works entry after 24th April 2009
All profits from this tour will be donated to the Eastleigh 100 works chosen charities

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE: WWW.SPITFIRERAILTOURS.CO.UK OR CALL 0870 879 3675
PLEASE MAKE CHEQUES PAYABLE TO: **SPITFIRE RAILTOURS LTD**
POST TO: **SPITFIRE RAILTOURS, PO BOX 824, TAUNTON, TA1 9ET**



Dear Editor

Most of my thoughts about railways today are based around my local station and mainline, the MML. My local station is Derby, which is going through a major renovation at the moment. For a city station, we only have a very small entrance, with basic facilities and a few retail outlets, including WH Smith & a café.

What many people believe is that Derby needs a new station entrance, with more facilities, and a place where people can meet. Derby City Scape have come to the aid of us with a revamped station, which, over their 15-20 year Masterplan for the City of Derby, will include more retail outlets, office space, and a multi-story car park where the old Royal Mail depot was. We will also see more Taxi Rank space, better Cycle storage, and a station that is worthy of it's Victorian predecessor.

On Thursday 15th Jan, there was a public consultation on the design of Derby station's frontage. There are a few outcomes, but the main two is that: 1. The designs are opposed by the public, meaning more money would be spent making another design, and more consultations on the design; 2. The designs are approved by the public, meaning that Derby will have a multi-purpose station which can be used by the local citizens and also, people travelling from all over the UK, and abroad.

My second point is about the removal of HSTs on off-peak journeys between London-Sheffield. I used the HSTs about once a month from DBY-SHF, and from experience, most HSTs weren't packed, and there was leg room and space to get up and get to

the bar. Now that Meridians run the route, a 5-car 222 is cramped, and very tiring having to stand for 40 minutes, also 7-Car versions are just as bad.

Now, having travelled on a HST for the first time in 2009 on the NOT-LEI route, they are quite spacious, with lots of spare seats on the train. So, instead of EMT worrying about a train being 5 minutes faster, make sure that the passengers get a seat?

One of my father's friends said that when he worked as a Steam Loco driver, LMS' & BR's promises were that:

- 1: The passenger gets a seat
- 2: The train gets to the required destination
- 3: The train is on time!! Why can't some TOCs follow suit?

Brandon Jon Morley

Have YOU got something to say or discuss?

If so email the editor or any of the contacts on page 2 of this magazine.

Alternatively post your comments on our forum

<http://www.railtalk.net/forums>

Motherwell



Class 318 254 is seen departing platform 4 at Motherwell station while working the 11.42 2S42 Milngavie - Lanark service. This unit has been back in service for over two months now having being out of service for over year when the train derailed in the tunnel at Anderston (one stop before Glasgow Central Low Level station) while working E.C.S. from Exhibition Centre Siding - Anderston during the morning rush hour on Monday 3rd September 2007 to start an eastbound service from Anderston station.

Hyndland



Class 318 252 is seen calling at platform 2 at Hyndland station while working the 11.19 2V53 Springburn - Dalmuir service. Class 320 309 is seen calling at platform 1 while working the 11.27 2M36 Milngavie - High Street service. Hyndland station is possibly getting a refurbishment similar to Partick station in the near future. The station is in desperate need for a fresher and more modern 21st century look. At the moment the staff toilets are being refurbished.

Ricky Davies

Sunday 15th February was Ricky's last day of driving trains, having being doing the job for 17 years. Ricky was a guard at Glasgow Central for 12 years in the 'good old days' of British Rail (B.R.). Ricky will be missed by many colleagues and his party at the end of the month should be a good turn out with the many that want to wish him a farewell and happy retirement from the railway environment.

I was on Ricky's last train working which was the 12.40 2F65 Motherwell - Balloch Sunday service with Class 334 039 being his last train to drive. Instead of taking the train straight down to Balloch he got relieved early by a driver that was spare (on stand by) at Yoker Depot. Myself along with many others wish Ricky all the best for the future and good luck with whatever plans he has for the rest of his working and retirement life.



A month of Network Rail wanderings



Class 31 285 (with DBSO 9701 at the rear) is seen approaching Rutherglen while working the 11.49 1Q21 Hyndland Loop - Motherwell Network Rail GSM - R Radio Test Train on 4th February.



DBSO 9701 (Class 31 285 at the rear) is seen leading approaching Drummelloch station while working the 10.04 1Q21 Hyndland Loop - Drummelloch - Helensburgh Central Network Rail GSM - R Radio Test Train on 10th February.



Class 31 105 (DBSO 9714 at the rear) is seen leading at Helensburgh Central station on 17th February, while waiting to work up to Drummelloch station working the late running 4Q08 Polmadie T.C.C. - Polmadie T.C.C. via Dumbarton Central, Helensburgh Central, Drummelloch and Dalmuir via Yoker Network Rail U.T.U. Test Train. The train was timed to come into Helensburgh Central at 21.09 to head back out at 21.18 to run upto Drummelloch. The train eventually arrived into the station at 21.57, over 40 minutes late. Class 31s have been an extremely rare occurrence at Helensburgh Central compared to other locomotives that have come into the station with a test train e.g. Class 37s.



On 10th February, Class 31 285 (DBSO 9701 at the rear) is seen approaching Partick heading towards Hyndland with Yorkhill Children's Hospital in the background while working the 13.00 1Q21 Helensburgh Central - Drummelloch - Hyndland Loop Network Rail G.S.M. - R. Radio Train.

Telford Railfreight Terminal

Tuesday 10th February

66 431 4Z76 Crewe-Donnington passes RFT Admaston



A selection of photos from the 4Z76 and 4Z77 return working from Crewe to the new Telford Railfreight Terminal at Donnington.



The loco used was Class 66 431 pulling two containers. It arrived at the terminal about 11:50, it covered every siding and loop before heading back to Crewe at 14:30. This is the first locomotive to traverse the full length of the branch for 18 years.



The terminal is due to open in Spring 09. Russell hauliers have the contract to move intermodal traffic, providing the traction will be DRS.

66 431 4Z77 Donnington - Crewe passes Haston



After completing gauging tests at the Telford International Railfreight Park, the loco returned to Crewe.

Photos: [Carl Grocott](#) and [Gary S. Smith](#)



This month's picture section is dominated by pictures in the snow. It seems several years since we have had snow like this and everybody obviously grabbed their cameras and went out in it. We start with Class 60 091 in a blizzard at York. [Andy](#)



Left: DVT 82215 stands at the rear of an National Express East Coast Edinburgh service during the height of the blizzard.

Andy

Right: Freightliner's Class 90 041 approaches Wilsons Crossing working 4M88 on 6th February.

Derek Elston



Right: Mid Winter snow decorates Midland Mainline HST No 43049 "Neville Hill TMD" as it waits in awful conditions at Sheffield with a service for London on 3rd February.

Dave Harris





Top Left: National Express East Coast HST 43208 brings up the rear of a north bound working at Tallington on 7th February.

Derek Elston



Top Right: In times like this we should spare a thought for the poor old signalman, isolated and alone in the box at Blea Moor.

Richard Hargreaves

Right: DRS Class 66 413 approaches Wilsons Crossing working 4M71 Tilbury - Daventry sugar train in the snow on 6th February.

Derek Elston





Above: With snow still on the ground, DBS/EWS Class 60 040 passes Haughton Farm, between Shifnal and Madeley Junction, with the 6G07 Liverpool Bulk terminal - Ironbridge on Saturday 7th February 2009. [Gary S. Smith](#)

Top Right: On 5th February Class 319 364 "Transforming Travel" waits to depart Bedford with 09.18 to Moorgate. [Steve Madden](#)

Bottom Right: Class 92 041 passes a snowy Northampton with a 4H17 Wembley - Trafford Park liner on 5th February. [Derek Elston](#)



Above: Class 156 499 is seen sitting in the snow in platform 3 at Motherwell station waiting to work the 18.37 2D75 Motherwell - Cumbernauld service on 2nd February.
Jonathan McGurk



Right: On Friday 6 February, 43186 catches the weak late afternoon sunlight as it heads west through a very snowy Norton Fitzwarren leading the 1406 Paddington - Penzance service.
Jonathan Gill



Left: February 9th saw the Arriva Trains Wales Holyhead to Cardiff express service begin a short period of trial operation using just one class 57/3. Designed to improve punctuality by eliminating the dead weight of the trailing loco, the move is somewhat risky. On day two of single loco working, the neutral blue-liveried machine rushes through Wistanstow, in Shropshire, with the 1V31 05.32 Holyhead-Cardiff Central. [Pete Cheshire](#)

Bottom Left: An unexpected visitor to Scunthorpe on 9th February. Advenza Class 57 006 worked as 0257 from Norwich to Immingham Railfreight Terminal, then proceeded to Gloucester with 3 scrap wagons and 3 tanks.

[Steve Thompson](#)

Below: After heavy morning snow at Bedford, Class 153 354 departs with the 13:55 service to Bletchley. [Steve Madden](#)





This shot was taken at Glendon East on 8th February. The former hybrid HST power car 43089, now re engineered and in EMT livery is seen working 1B56 13.31 Nottingham to St Pancras International diverted via Manton Junction. [Steve Madden](#)





Reflecting on the River Leven, Class 156 493 is seen leading a four car train which is seen crossing over Dalreoch Viaduct heading towards Helensburgh Upper on the 10th February. [Jonathan McGurk](#)



Left: The ex DRS 66/4s make a forlorn site at Midland Road, Leeds on 1st February. Class 66 402 is nearest to the camera.

David Hollowood

Bottom Left: With Class 37 605 at the rear, 37 259 crosses the A5 at Nobold with 1Z18 Machynlleth - Shrewsbury Track Recording Train on 6th January. *Dave Dawson*

Below: Class 66 155 passes over Albert Edward Bridge with a working from Ironbridge Power Station on 21st February. *Pete Cheshire*





Top Left: Bombs away, Class 20 314 departs Crewe on 19th February leaving a prominent exhaust trail.

Brian Battersby

Above: Stopping out all night recently, (shouldn't be allowed!) has been various members of the Network Rail Class 97's. This shot of Class 97 303 shows the loco parked round the back of Shrewsbury station, on the 18th February.

Richard Hargreaves

Left: On Saturday 21 February, due to engineering work at Bristol Parkway, Crosscountry services were diverted via Newport, one such service the 0600 Leeds to Plymouth formed of HST powercar nos 43303 & 43366 is seen passing Severn Tunnel Junction having reversed at Newport.

Jonathan Gill



Above: On 13th February, Class 86 610 is seen passing Coatbridge Central while working the 13.52 4M74 Coatbridge F.L.T. - Crewe Basford Hall Freightliner train. There are normally two of this class making this working. [Jonathan McGurk](#)

Top Right: On 28th February, new recruit to the Network Rail fleet, Class 31 465, passes through East Midlands Parkway with a diverted Derby working. [Richard Hargreaves](#)

Bottom Right: Class 156 494 is seen at Glasgow Central station with smoke fumes coming from the engine while waiting to work the 17.15 2Y62 Glasgow Central - Edinburgh Waverley service, 13th February. [Jonathan McGurk](#)



Above: Still surviving and probably the most photographed Class 60 in the UK this month is 60 040. Most of the month has been spent in the North West on Coal traffic, such as this working to Fiddlers Ferry via Warrington seen on 16th February. [Richard Hargreaves](#)

Top Right: Also on the "Coal Circuit" on 16th February was Class 60 087, again as the photo above seen working through Warrington. [Richard Hargreaves](#)

Right: Network Rail's Class 97 303 and 97 304 pass Cosford, Shropshire on 20th January on a 0Z97 driver training run from Shrewsbury to Barrow Hill which returned to Shrewsbury later.

[Gary S. Smith](#)



Above: Virgin Trains has started hiring a MK3 loco hauled set of coaches whilst the original set that they had has gone to Wabtec Doncaster for refurbishment. This is the sight of DVT 82101 arriving at Crewe from Preston on 19th February. *Brian Battersby*

Top Right: The original loco hauled set with DVT 82126 in view is pictured at Wabtec Doncaster on the 21st February. *Richard Hargreaves*

Right: Many DVTs are in use now by other operators. One such being WSMR and DVT 82304 stands at Marlyebone after arriving with a service from Wrexham on 14th February. *Mike Parsons*





Above: 3S95 Inverness - Inverness RHTT crossing the River Tay at Perth heading back towards Dundee with Class 66 421 leading and 66 424 on the rear. [Richard Jones](#)



Left: Class 56 101 has managed to move from Immingham at the second attempt, seen being hauled by 66 008 passed Scunthorpe. [Steve Thompson](#)



Right: Class 66 048 T'n'T 66 111 with a rake of LaFarge tanks passed the Olympic site, Stratford on 14th February. [Mike Parsons](#)



Old peds don't die - They get used by Network Rail

Above: Class 31 190 / D5613 is seen at York on 11th February working a Doncaster - Derby Test Train. [Andy](#)

Top Right: Wearing the more familiar Network Rail yellow colour, Class 31 285 is pictured at Crewe on 16th February. [Richard Hargreaves](#)

Bottom Right: Pink liveried Class 31 601 and 31 602 t'n't the structure gaugeing train through Doncaster on 21st February. [Richard Hargreaves](#)







Above: Class 66 158 and 66 116 work 6K05 Carlisle to Basford Hall, seen heading up the bank to Pleasington and towards Farrington Junction during the evening of February 4th

David Hollowod



Top Left: DRS Class 66 412 complete with WH Malcolm branding heads north through Golbourne Jct with the 4S44 Daventry - Coatbridge on 20th February. *Dave Harris*

Bottom Left: This shot was taken on 21st February at Irthlingborough Road, Wellingborough, and shows lass 66 037 working 6D32 Elstow to Mountsorrell empty stone train and Class 222 021 slowing down for Wellingborough Station whilst working 14:00 St Pancras International to Nottingham service.

Steve Madden



The recently opened Chase Heritage Trail in Staffordshire provides new photo opportunities on former railway land at Hednesford.

Two branches, the Cannock Chase Branch to Rawnsley and a short line to the nearby Pool Pits (later called the Valley colliery) left the Cannock to Rugeley railway at Pool Pits Junction.

The trail follows a short section of the Rawnsley branch and unfortunately uses high palisade fencing.

Top Left: Freightliner's Class 66 563 passes the site of the Pool Pits Junction at Hednesford, Staffordshire with the 6M55 Portbury - Rugeley on 27th January. The semaphore on the left shows that the 4G92 from Rugeley had only just left for Daw Mill colliery.



Bottom Left: Freightliner's Class 66 595 approaches the signal at the former Pool Pits Junction at Hednesford, Staffordshire with a 4G92 Rugeley - Daw Mill empty coal train on Tuesday 27th January 2009.

The Chasewater Railway started as the Railway Preservation Society - West Midlands District at a depot here in 1960.

Both Gary S. Smith



Above: Fastline's Class 66 302 and 66 303 compare notes at Chaddesdon on February 1st.

David Hollowood

Top Right: A Virgin West Coast Class 390 Pendolino is seen passing just south of Elvanfoot heading northbound in glorious weather conditions while working the 11.30 1S58 London Euston - Glasgow Central Virgin West Coast service.

Jonathan McGurk

Right: On 21st February Class 47 375 powers away from a signal check past Severn Tunnel Junction with the 5Z43 Taunton to Kilmarnock with buffet car 40809 marshalled between 2 barrier vehicles. 40809 was being conveyed to Brush at Kilmarnock for refurbishment. FGW's blue 57 602 was on the rear, having led the train prior to the reversal at Newport.

Jonathan Gill





Above: A look at a new Class 377/5 unit, stabled at Wimbledon on 14th February. In the near future Class 377/5s will be operating services for First Capital Connect .

Julian G

Top Right: Another shot of a Class 377/5, this time we see Class 377143 with 377138 and 377501 on 5221 London Victoria-London Victoria , a test run for the Class 377/5.

Julian G

Right: Freightliners Class 66 595 working 6L45 Earles - West Thurrock passes a sunny but cold Isham on 4th February.

Steve Madden





Above: On 21st February, 60085 'Mini - Pride of Oxford' powers past Severn Tunnel Junction with the 6B13 Robeston to Westerleigh loaded Murco tanks.

Jonathan Gill

Top Right: Taken at Streatham Hill on 20th February, Southern's Class 377160 is seen stabled in the cleaning shed.

Steve Madden

Right: Class 67 017 at Newport with the return working of First Great Westerns Cardiff to Taunton service. Class 67 016 was leading the train. There are 3 Class 67s allocated to this working.

John Coleman





Above: Class 60 018 passes through Kettering with 7B42 Toton to Forders trip on 27th February. It was running 123 minutes late at this point.

John Coleman

Top Right: Class 59 005 is pictured stabled at Acton Yard with Class 66 093 on 25th February.

John Coleman

Right: A shot of DB Schenker liveried Class 66 152 working 6E93 St Pancras to Peterborough Yard at Bromham on 27th February. *Steve Madden*



BARNES BRIDGE SET TO RECEIVE £3M FACELIFT

One of London's landmark bridges is to get a £3m makeover, courtesy of Network Rail. Barnes Bridge, in the London Borough of Richmond, will be refurbished starting next month (March).

The refurbishment will see 16,000 square metres of wrought iron trusses and arches on the grade II listed bridge being cleaned, stripped down to the bare metal and re-painted in two tones of grey. In addition, work will also be undertaken to remove algae and replace corroded metal and damaged brickwork. The work is expected to commence at the end of March 2009, and is expected to be completed early in 2010.

Richard O'Brien, Network Rail's Wessex route director, said: "Barnes Bridge is an important river crossing for one of our busiest commuter services, with a history going back to the 1840s. This bridge is a source of pride for Network Rail, so we have planned the work to reflect the bridge's importance to the community, both as a river crossing and a local landmark. We hope the long-term positives of this scheme will outweigh any short-term disruption while we undertake these vital improvement works."

Much of the work will be done during the day, but in order to keep rail services running, some trackside elements will need to be carried out at night. It will also be necessary to close the footpath across the bridge for up to six weeks at a time during different periods of the work. Network Rail has been working with Richmond Council's environmental health officer to help minimise disruption for residents and businesses during the works. Network Rail will provide advance notification about planned footpath closures and will be communicating directly with the community about the project. The refurbishment works have been staggered in order for the Thames to remain open to river traffic throughout.



RAIL LINE REOPENS FOLLOWING £1M MAKEOVER, WORK STARTS ON CAR PARK



The railway line between Southport and Wigan has reopened following a week-long closure for a £1m makeover between Gathurst and Appley Bridge. Now work starts on a new multi-storey car park at Wigan North Western station. This will mean the closure of the existing facility.

Gary Openshaw, Network Rail's area general manager, said: "Passengers will feel the benefit of the new track we have laid. The continuously welded rail we have used gives a smoother, quieter ride for passengers and reduces wear and tear on train wheels because there are no joints in the track.

"Timing was crucial for both projects. We closed the railway line over the half term holiday because with the schools shut there would be fewer passengers travelling.

"It was essential that the track work was finished on time because the car park at North Western is being closed (from 23 February) for the best part of a year while we build a multi-storey facility."

The new glass-clad 400 space car park at North Western station, incorporating futuristic wind turbines which have been likened to egg whisks, will take until the end of the year to complete. Alternative parking is being provided in Chapel Street.



FirstGroup's 'Incredible Journey' set to become a transport bestseller

A book about the history of Aberdeen based transport giant, FirstGroup, has been published in line with the company's 20 year celebrations.

"An Incredible Journey, the First Story" is written by Martin Helm, a former journalist and Transport Department Information Head who went on to advise FirstGroup.

Helm explores how First has grown so far and so fast and details some of the significant transport developments that have both stimulated the company's growth and impacted on its development. He profiles some of the key people in the Group, particularly Sir Moir Lockhead, who has led it from its birth into the powerhouse it is today.

Commenting Martin Helm said: "It was a fascinating story to write. Who would ever have thought that a small local authority owned bus company in North East Scotland would just 20 years later become one of the largest private sector bus and train operators the world has seen?"

"Twenty years ago Grampian Regional Transport boasted 225 buses and 600 staff, all concentrated in Aberdeen. That company, now FirstGroup, has grown to become the UK's largest rail operator, the UK's largest bus operator and the largest provider of yellow school buses in North America. It has 137,000 staff and 80,000 buses. I don't know of any other company, certainly in the transport industry, that has such a remarkable and successful story to tell."

Chief Executive of FirstGroup, Sir Moir Lockhead, said the book was 'immensely enjoyable'. "Although I can be accused of bias, I have to say that I found it a marvellous read. I don't expect it will knock John Grisham off the number one best-seller spot, but it is expertly written and a real must for anyone interested in transport." He added: "I don't often have time to reflect on just how astonishing our growth has been. I think above all reading the book has reminded me just how much our success is due to the quality of our staff. I have been incredibly fortunate to have had a fantastic team around me over the years."

Double celebration for West Allerton Station



West Allerton Station is celebrating something old and something new for the start of 2009.

A historic display commemorating the station's rich history now adorns the station to celebrate its 70th anniversary.

The display was unveiled just days after a new half hourly service was launched at the station, as well as an hourly service on Sundays.

Merseytravel has worked with passengers and staff to develop the display, which reveals the development of the station from humble beginnings on January 2nd 1939.

Councillor Mark Dowd, Chair of Merseytravel said: "We are really pleased that local people and users of the station have taken such an active part in celebrating both milestones with us. Like many other stations it is a focal point for this community."

Councillor Chris Blakeley, Chair of Merseytravel's Rail Services Committee added: "The display celebrates the rich history of the station and the contribution it has made to the area over the last 70 years."

Neil Scales, Chief Executive and Director General of Merseytravel, added: "We are continuing to work hard to ensure that we promote better connected, more frequent train services and this is one that we hope will benefit many people. We would like to see more people switching from their cars to a fast train direct to the region's city centres."

The station was opened by the LMS (London Midland Scottish Railway Company) to serve the new housing areas of Booker Avenue and Brodie Avenue.

Users of the station contributed their own images, showing the station's development from opening day, when clouds of war gathered over Europe, to the present day.

One of the contributors and a user of the station, John Armstrong, said;

"It is fantastic to be part of something that commemorates the anniversary of the station itself and celebrates something new, which is the improved half hourly train frequency to Liverpool Lime Street, Warrington and Manchester.

"The LMS was far sighted in building the station to serve new housing.

"Today we are pleased that Merseytravel and Northern Rail have had the vision to increase the frequency of the trains to half hourly and to improve connections at Liverpool South Parkway, as well as hourly service on Sundays."

Daytime train services have doubled in frequency to every half hour and the average journey time to Liverpool Lime Street is just 15 minutes.

Improved connections at Liverpool South Parkway now mean the journey time from West Allerton to Birmingham City Centre is just over an hour and a half, with trains every half hour Monday to Saturday.

Merseytravel have distributed free timetable leaflets to all households in the station catchment area to promote the improved service.

When the station opened in 1939 there were 27 trains a day. Today there are 62.

West Allerton became a Royal Station when, in July 1999, it was used as a departure station by the Queen and Prince Philip. They joined the Royal Train there at the end of an official visit to Liverpool.

Pictured: Cllr Dowd (left) and Cllr Blakeley with the display at West Allerton Station

Massive boost for business travellers as Eurostar restores full timetable through channel tunnel

- Travellers want their money to work harder for them during recession
- More trains and over a MILLION more extra seats to end of 2009
- Greater flexibility for business day trips

Eurostar, the high-speed passenger service that links the UK and mainland Europe, has reverted to a full timetable with more frequent services and faster non-stop journeys - ideal for business travellers.

With a return to Eurostar's fastest centre-to-centre journey times of just 1h 51 to Brussels and 2h 15 to Paris, and with first trains arriving before 09h00, business people can maximise productivity throughout the working day.

Unlike many other travel operators who are thinning out services or cutting routes, Eurostar is increasing services up to 2008 levels – before the Channel Tunnel fire (11/09/08). There will now be up to 19 trains per day from London to Paris and up to 10 per day to Brussels. Eurostar is adding up to a million extra seats from 23 February to the end of the year.

In addition, there are business-focused departures from Ebbsfleet International and Ashford International stations in Kent, and a new direct Ashford – Brussels service that is also timetabled for business travel.

Richard Brown, Chief Executive, Eurostar said, "In challenging economic times, business travellers want the best flexibility, best punctuality and the best environment to work en route. Time is money and for businesses seeking to maximise value, Eurostar's new timetable and faster journeys means a full day of productivity without the cost of overnight stays"

"Emerging booking trends indicate business day trips are again on the increase – they were up 30% in the first half of 2008 and although we do not anticipate immediate recovery to this level, it is encouraging to see positive movement in the right direction.

"Research is telling us that in tough times, customers want pricing transparency and value for money from travel operators. They don't want hidden extras or a reduction in service frequency. At Eurostar we are determined to rise to the challenge of the recession and are committed to delivering on further product enhancements during 2009 and giving the best possible value to our travellers."

Business Premier travellers enjoy a 10 minute check-in, comfortable business lounges and dedicated coaches with meals served at seat, including an Express Breakfast option.

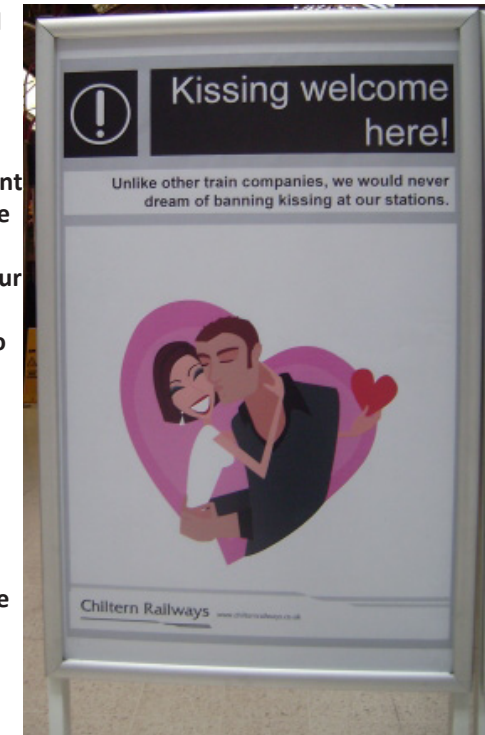
The restoration of full Channel Tunnel capacity further increases Eurostar's ability to deliver unrivalled punctuality; the first week after full capacity was restored on 10 February saw over 95.8% punctuality. Eurostar's punctuality for 2008 was 92.4%, against an average of 65.4% for the airlines operating on its routes, according to Civil Aviation Authority data.

Virgin's cancelled kissers welcome aboard Chiltern's love train

With the news that Virgin Trains have banned kissing in all but designated areas in their Warrington station, Chiltern Railways have responded with a bid to find their most romantic passengers.

Kirsteen Robertson from the Chiltern marketing department said: "Railway stations are romantic places; they are where fond farewells and emotional reunions take place, where relationships start with a glance and even, in the case of our Marylebone station last November, where one passenger will propose to another over the public address system! So our passengers are more than welcome to share a kiss in our stations."

Continuing she said: "To show that we are dedicated to spreading a little love around our stations, we are asking our passengers to send us a photograph of them kissing at one of our stations. From Birmingham Moor Street to London Marylebone, we've got lots and lots of picturesque stations, perfect for that romantic moment."



Virgin Trains nameplate auction raises over £100,000

Virgin Trains has raised over £106,000 for charities after auctioning over 100 train nameplates at London's Waterloo station on February 14th 2009.

The nameplates, which have been removed from trains over the last ten years were auctioned in the former Eurostar booking hall at Waterloo station.

The money raised will go to Virgin Group's charitable arm, Virgin Unite, and the Railway Benefit Fund. The Virgin Unite contribution will benefit the Virgin Trains chosen charity CLIC Sargent, which is the UK's leading Childrens Cancer Charity.

Over 107 nameplates and nose-end badges were snapped up by collectors with nothing from the auction catalogue going unsold.

Top earner was Charles Rennie Mackintosh, from a Class 86 electric locomotive fetching £4,700.

There was also a significant interest in Voyager and Super Voyager nameplates, with Devon Voyager fetching £2,600 and Doctor Who going under the auctioneer's hammer for £2,000.

Pride of Toton, from one of the former CrossCountry Class 47 diesel locomotives raised £3,600.

£26M WORK STARTS TO CREATE A BRIGHTER PADDINGTON STATION

Paddington station, already one of Network Rail's most loved, is being opened up to the light with the restoration of the roof over the fourth span of the station.

To create these better and brighter platforms 9 – 12, Network Rail has awarded a £26m contract to infrastructure services provider Morgan Est and sister construction company Morgan Ashurst who will:

- Repair and restore the steel structures in the roof
- Replace the glazing to allow natural light to come through
- Refurbish the platforms
- Remove the crash deck that currently hides the roof from passengers



Work began at the end of January and will be completed in 2010. The Edwardian structure will then be back on public view for the first time since the mid 1990s and passengers will be able to enjoy a similar airy feel to the rest of the award winning building, restored by Network Rail in 1993.

Paul Futter, Network Rail's Senior Project Manager, said: "Paddington station is one of Network Rail's most beautiful. Restoring the fourth span and opening it up to the light will make it even better for our passengers."

Paul Smith, Chief Executive of Morgan Ashurst and Morgan Est's parent company Morgan Sindall plc, said: "This project combines the Group's complementary engineering and construction expertise and demonstrates our ability to provide integrated construction services to our clients. We have a strong track record in the rail sector and this latest contract win builds on that success."

NORTHERN RAIL ANNOUNCES PROPOSALS FOR MORE TRAINS FOR WOLDS COAST

Northern Rail has announced it has submitted plans to run more services between Hull and Scarborough from December 2009.

The new timetable would mean an improved weekday timetable after 3pm and the extension of the current summer Sunday services to year round. This will more than double the number of Northern Rail services available for customers on Sundays, the biggest improvement for over 10 years.

Northern Rail has been working closely with Community Rail Humber and East Riding of Yorkshire and North Yorkshire County Councils to understand the transport needs of the region and develop a timetable that will help meet these requirements.

The extension of the summer Sunday timetable by six weeks last year was the first stage of this planning process and the partners are now looking to build on this success by maintaining the level of service year round.

Subject to approval, the new timetable will provide improved transport links for business and tourist traffic helping to boost the local economy.

Steve Butcher, Area Director, Northern Rail said: "We believe our proposed timetable will bring real benefits to passengers and the wider communities along the Wolds Coast line. I would like to thank Community Rail Humber and East Riding of Yorkshire and North Yorkshire County Councils for their hard work and support in getting these proposals to this stage."

The proposals have been submitted as part of the industry timetable planning process. Northern Rail expects to hear whether the proposals have been accepted in July.

Super Voyager fleet refreshed - early

The entire fleet of Super Voyager diesel trains operated by Virgin Trains have now been refreshed. The work, undertaken by Bombardier at its Litchurch Lane works in Derby has been completed two weeks early against the contract. The 18 five-coach and three four-coach trains have had the Shop vehicle moved to be next to the First Class accommodation, creating a 'hybrid' coach. The seats in this coach are now in bays of four, with new laptop-friendly tables and revised seat cushions and backrests. On busy peak time trains this coach can be used to provide additional First Class accommodation, with the normal onboard offer being provided. CCTV has been fitted throughout each train, including the vestibule areas. Forward facing cameras have also been fitted to the driving cabs, recording every journey the Super Voyager trains make.

Also upgraded is the galley area, with a double sink, water boiler, convection oven and improved lighting being fitted. There are ten more seats on each five-coach train and also more luggage space has been created. To commemorate the completion of the contract, Super Voyager train 221144 was named Bombardier Voyager prior to being handed over to Virgin Trains Chief Operating Officer Chris Gibb.

Chris Gibb said: "Bombardier has done a great job in refreshing our Super Voyager trains, and I congratulate them in completing the work a full two weeks early, earning them a delivery bonus."

Mark Williamson, President of Bombardier's Passengers Division in the UK, said: "This has been a great project and we are delighted that we have completed the project to our customer's satisfaction, bringing major improvements for Virgin's customers, working closely with our UK supply chain."

Both Tony Collins, Chief Executive of Virgin Rail, and Colin S Walton, Chairman of Bombardier Transportation UK commented that through the original new build and its on-going maintenance, the contract between Virgin and Bombardier has been a true partnership and praised both their teams for all their hard work and dedication.

NETWORK RAIL HONOURS DEDICATION OF SUSSEX RAILWAY EMPLOYEES

Network Rail has honoured two Sussex-based employees who between them have given almost 90 years of distinguished service to the railway industry by naming a locomotive after them. David Gay and Ron Westwood were invited to unveil the new name of a Network Rail Class 73 engine on platform 1 at Brighton station. Unbeknown to them, the locomotive, used in south east England for a range of rail improvement and maintenance works including clearing snow and transporting building materials, was fitted with a plate in David's name on one side and Ron's name on the other. The surprise ceremony was attended by the two men's families, friends and colleagues.

Fiona Taylor, Sussex route director, said: "It is the ultimate honour for a railway employee to have a train named after them. In most cases, including in David's and Ron's, it is an accolade extended to those who have shown exceptional dedication and made an outstanding contribution to the rail industry. We are delighted to recognise and celebrate almost a century of service to the industry and wish David and Ron all the best for their well-deserved retirement."

David Gay retired in December 2008 after 43 years' service. He worked as a local operations manager in Eastbourne, where he also lives. In this role, he was responsible for the safe operation and management of 35 signallers at seven signal boxes situated throughout East Sussex.

Ron Westwood, who lives in Lewes, retires from his role as Sussex route control manager in March 2009 following 45 years' service. Based at Network Rail's control centre in Croydon, Ron manages a team of 50 staff who are responsible for running trains on the route safely and to the timetable, as well as resolving unforeseen incidents.



ORR announces its decision on East Coast Main Line track access applications

The Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) has announced its decision on applications for track access rights for passenger services on the East Coast Main Line (ECML). Following its proposed decision on 29 January 2009 and subsequent consultation, ORR has now decided on the applications for track access rights on the ECML – either to extend the period for which existing rights are in place, or for rights to run additional services.

The regulator has approved the following:

- conversion of the twelve (six each way) National Express East Coast contingent rights between Leeds and London King's Cross to firm rights until December 2011;
- continuation of the current access rights, but all as firm rights, for seven weekday and five weekend Hull Trains services each way between Hull and London King's Cross until December 2016;
- firm rights for a fourth Grand Central service each way between Sunderland and London King's Cross until May 2012; and
- firm rights for three new daily Grand Northern services each way between Bradford Interchange and London King's Cross until December 2014.

Also, following our proposed decision, ORR is now in a position to approve:

- firm and contingent rights for a new National Express East Coast enhanced service from London to Lincoln and to Harrogate via Leeds until December 2015.

We have rejected applications received from Platinum Trains which requested rights to introduce a new service between Aberdeen and London King's Cross; and Hull Trains which wanted to introduce a new service between Harrogate and King's Cross.

Michael Lee, ORR's director of access, planning and performance, said: "Today's decision will lead to improved services at locations which are currently poorly served, and will result in more frequent services to others. The introduction of a new standard pattern timetable will have obvious benefits to both freight users and passengers. "Our decision is based on a long process of consideration, and unfortunately the applications we rejected did not demonstrate sufficient benefits to offset the impact on existing operators."

FORTH BRIDGE TO GO DARK FOR WWF'S EARTH HOUR

Scotland's Forth Bridge will join a list of iconic world landmarks by going dark at 8.30pm on Saturday 28 March for 60 minutes to mark WWF's Earth Hour, it was revealed today. The rail bridge will join some of the most recognised landmarks on the planet in switching off their lights for WWF's Earth Hour, including the Christ the Redeemer statue in Rio de Janeiro, Table Mountain in Cape Town, Sydney Opera House, the Eiffel Tower in Paris, CN Tower in Toronto and the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff.

RAILWAY VANDAL SCRUBS UP

A young vandal is scrubbing the slate clean by helping to clean up a railway bridge in Edinburgh after being caught red handed.

John, 16, spent a weekend (Jan 24/25) painting over the ugly graffiti in the Meadowbank area as part of an innovative restorative justice scheme pioneered by Network Rail.

John was charged by the police in late 2008, when he was caught throwing objects into a fire near the track in Rutherglen, Glasgow. Due to the nature of the offence, the procurator fiscal decided to offer him the opportunity of an alternative to prosecution by diverting the case to the restorative justice service run by South Lanarkshire Council. He acknowledged his disruptive behaviour and expressed regret before volunteering to get involved in a Network Rail led clear-up of mess left by other vandals.

Mark Henderson, community safety manager for Network Rail in Scotland, commented:

“The restorative justice programme aims to help young people understand the dangers of misusing the railway and the true cost of the damage they cause. In 2007, railway crime cost the railway industry an estimated £264m. This unnecessary cost is a massive drain on our society and is obviously preventable. In Scotland alone, the railway has to employ the equivalent of six full-time members of staff to continually clean graffiti from the railway.

“Every year, dozens of young people are killed or injured accessing the tracks to spray graffiti and damage property. In many cases, restorative justice is not an option, we will simply ask British Transport Police to prosecute offenders. Graffiti and vandalism on the railway is regarded as a serious crime by the courts and frequently results in prison sentences for offenders.

“John has clearly learned a valuable lesson from this incident and I was impressed by his positive attitude when we took him out and about. We even received a couple of ‘thank yous’ from local residents in the Meadowbank area and I think he really valued that.”

Network Rail has been involved with a number of similar schemes across the country. In November 2008, two teenagers caught painting graffiti in Inverkeithing were given a restorative justice task painting over graffiti in Glasgow’s west end.



PLASTIC FANTASTIC: RECYCLED SLEEPERS SET TO ROLL OUT ACROSS THE NETWORK

Everyday waste could form part of the railway of the future as Network Rail trials a new form of rail sleeper made from recycled plastic.

The trial will see around 20 tonnes of waste material recycled to form the new sleepers which will replace timber ones along some of the rural lines on the network. During the trial, Network Rail will test whether they can withstand the rigours of a running railway, and, once proven, will look to progressively roll them out across parts of the network.

Each year Network Rail replaces around 185,000 timber sleepers, which are a feature on some slower lines, as well as depots, sidings and points at junctions. Using recycled plastic to make sleepers has many advantages, not least reducing the amount of waste that goes to landfill.

Locally sourced, they can be made as long as needed, helping to reduce costs

when compared to hardwood beams which have to be imported from managed forests thousands of miles away.

Jerry England, director of engineering at Network Rail said: “This is an important scheme for Network Rail, helping recycling while putting waste to good use. Rail has the enviable position of being the most environmentally friendly and sustainable form of transport, and it is new thinking like this that will help us to improve our record further.”

The sleepers are being developed and supplied by i-plas, a plastic waste recycling company, based in Halifax.



NATIONAL EXPRESS SUBMITS BID FOR THE SOUTH CENTRAL RAIL FRANCHISE

National Express has submitted a bid for the new South Central franchise. The new South Central franchise operates a range of inner and outer suburban services to London Bridge and London Victoria together with services along the south coast - covering much of south London, Surrey, East and West Sussex, as well as serving parts of Hampshire, Kent and west London. The network includes the Gatwick Express (formerly operated by National Express), the non-stop service on the Brighton mainline running four times an hour between Gatwick Airport and London Victoria – with some peak hours services extended to Brighton. A direct service between East Croydon and Watford/Milton Keynes is also included in the franchise specification. The successful bidder is due to be announced in June, with the new franchise due to commence in September 2009. Commenting on the bid, National Express UK Trains Director, David Franks said: “We have submitted an excellent bid for the South Central franchise which has taken into account the views and aspirations of customers and stakeholders across the South Central network.”

TOUGH SENTENCES NEEDED AS LEVEL CROSSING LAW BREAKING REACHES FIVE YEAR HIGH

The number of people breaking the law at level crossings is at a five year high, Network Rail has revealed. Running risks at level crossings should come with tough consequences, and Network Rail is calling on judges and magistrates to stamp down hard on motorists jumping lights and dodging barriers, to act as a clear deterrent.

Last year, over 55 days of delays to trains and passengers were caused by level crossing misuse, costing Network Rail around £1.8million – money that can't be invested into the railway. The real cost to the industry far exceeds this, as it does not include actual damage to trains or tracks or staffing time and cost.

Network Rail chief executive Iain Coucher said: "The toughest consequence of breaking the law at a level crossing is to lose your life – thankfully that doesn't happen very often. But every week we see people who ignore warning signs and lights or drive round barriers at level crossings just to save a few minutes. This behaviour has the potential for massive damage, disruption and death. We think that the judiciary penalties received need to reflect the seriousness of these crimes, and are calling on the judiciary to consider all these factors when handing down sentences."

Network Rail welcomes the changes to the Coroners and Justice Bill, currently going through Parliament, in particular the proposal to establish a new Sentencing Council for England and Wales, with strengthened remit to promote consistency in sentencing practice. It also welcomes the amendment to the Road Traffic offenders Act (1988) to extend the length of the period of a driving disqualification where a custodial sentence is also imposed. Network Rail will be looking to work with Government, parliamentarians and interested parties to see how this important piece

of legislation can support tougher action on level crossing offences.

Last year, there were more than 3400 incidents of misuse at level crossings. On average, more than three motorists a week were involved in a near miss, where a train narrowly avoided missing them because they ignored warning signs and lights or weaved round barriers. There were 20 collisions between trains and motor vehicles for those that didn't beat the lights.

Pedestrians were also putting themselves at risk with more than five a week involved in near misses. If a train hits a person at high speed, there is almost always only one tragic outcome. Sadly, 15 people lost their lives at level crossings in 2008.

Network Rail's hard hitting tv and radio advertising campaign, which launched in November 2008, is again running across Britain this month. It illustrates in graphic detail the tragic consequences of misusing level crossings by both motorists and pedestrians.

Mr Coucher added: "We hope that increased awareness of the dangers of taking risks at level crossings, coupled with tough sentences for those caught breaking the law, will act as a deterrent and help bring down the number of offences and ultimately save lives."



First TransPennine Express celebrates five years of success

Train operating company First TransPennine Express (FTPE) is celebrating five years of success and investment in improvements for passengers. Since starting its eight year franchise on 1 February 2004, FTPE has introduced a fleet of new diesel trains, redeveloped its stations, expanded its network and increased passenger numbers by 67 per cent.

Passengers have benefited from the introduction of 51 modern diesel trains in a £250 million upgrade with more frequent services and extra seating.

Over £12 million has been spent on improving stations across the North and direct services between Manchester Airport and Scotland have been introduced.

Passenger numbers have grown from 13.5 million in 2004 to an anticipated 22 million this year as increasing numbers of people have sought alternatives to the congested trunk road network across the Pennines.

Freightliner Donates to 'Story Book'

Freightliner has continued its charitable giving scheme with a donation to the Royal Navy Air Station Yeovilton, Somerset. Ian Hewitson, a driver for Heavy Haul nominated the "Story Book" charity to receive a donation based on his links with the Royal Navy where he served for 22 years and where he continues to be a reservist. The donation of £1,000 will be used to purchase digital recording equipment so that when on long tours of duty overseas servicemen and women will have the opportunity to record bedtime stories for their children at home. At Yeovilton, volunteers edit the recordings, add sound effects and transfer them to a CD, which is then given to the



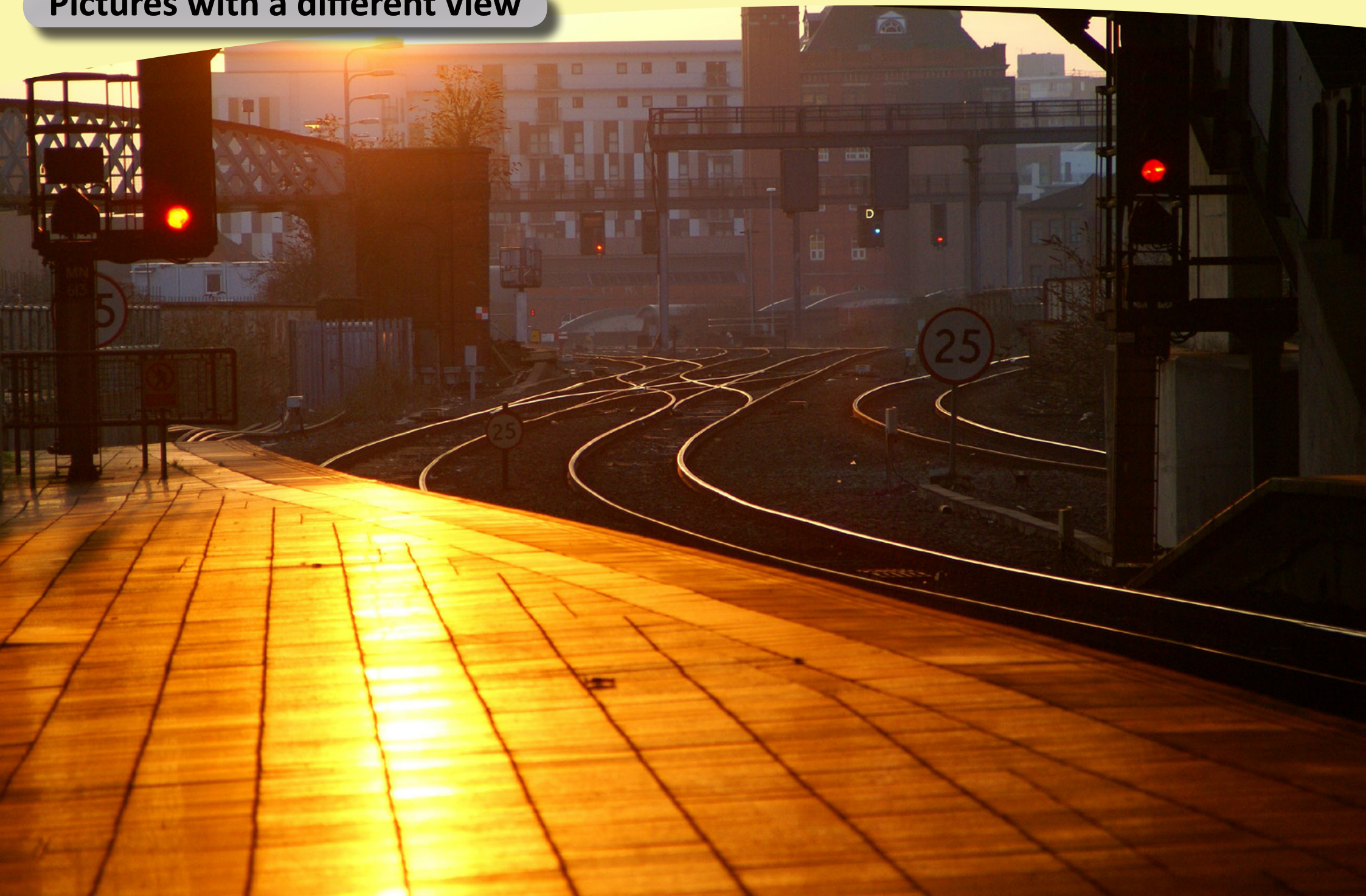
children to play at bedtime.

Although still in its infancy, demand for the scheme is immense and the Navy base are currently building their resources and equipment, whilst also appealing for more volunteers to come forward to help make the operation a success.

Freightliner, represented by Ian Hewitson and Heavy Haul Managing Director Paul Smart, presented the cheque to The Reverend Ron Martin, the Chaplaincy Team Leader for the Royal Navy Base.

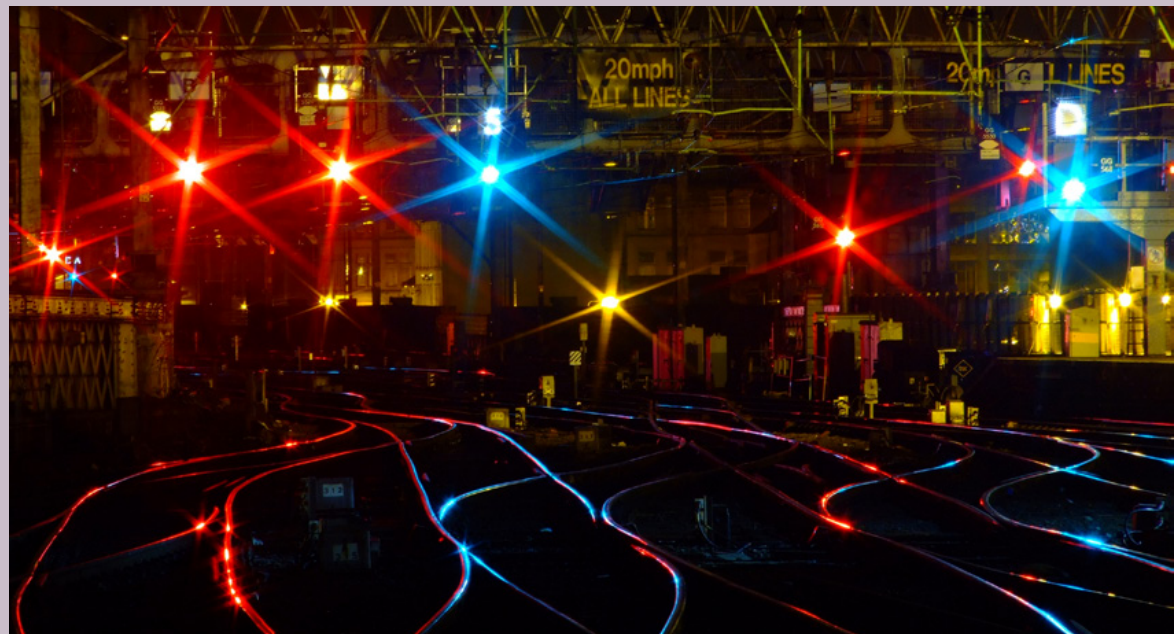
During the presentation Paul said, "This is a creative and original scheme to improve the lives of children separated from parents for months at a time. As a father of young children, I know how settling it is for my kids to have me read them a bedtime story a few times each week. The children of service personnel can miss out badly whilst parents are away on long tours of duty. I am proud that Freightliner is contributing to such an unusual and worthy cause" Lt Cdr Rob Stephens, Media Ops Officer with the Commando Helicopter Force (CHF) based at RNAS Yeovilton said, "The Story Book project has had an extremely positive effect on the children of CHF personnel that are deployed on Operations in Afghanistan."

Pictures with a different view





Left: Virgin Thunderbird Class 57 311 stands at Carlisle on 22nd January. [Ian Furness](#)
Above: A Robin is seen sitting on the return conductor cable in the snow above platform 1 at Yoker station on 9th February. [Jonathan McGurk](#)
Below: A view of the newly installed L.E.D. signals at Glasgow Central High Level station (as part of the Glasgow Airport Rail Link) lit up at night reflecting nicely on the tracks. . [Jonathan McGurk](#)





Semaphore signals are slowly disappearing from the rail network, however one location which still has plenty is Shrewsbury, several of which can be seen in this night time shot taken from the north end of the station. [Richard Hargreaves](#)



Taken on the evening of 2nd February is this view from Greenfaulds station looking towards Coatbridge in the heavy snow and under a very white and atmospheric winter sky. *Jonathan McGurk*

Preserved Railways



The Keighley and Worth Valley Steam Gala in February was the highlight of a quiet month in the preserved lines calendar.

Left: An atmospheric shot of engine and coach at Keighley on 14th February.

Above: With a few ladies admiring the loco, 80002 waits at Keighley.

Below: 90733 waits to depart Oxenhope on 14th February with a goods train.

All: Steve Thompson





Above: 85 leads 47279 as they blast towards Haworth on 15th February.

Ian Furness

Below: Visiting loco 70013 "Oliver Cromwell" pauses at Keighley on 14th February.

Steve Thompson



Above: 90733 makes a noisy departure from Haworth on 14th February.

Steve Thompson

Below: Taff Vale Railway No. 85 heads out of Keighley on 15th February.

Ian Furness







Some Welsh Steam action on this page
all from the 17th February.

Left: "MERDDIN EMRYS" is seen just after leaving
Minffordd.

Bottom Left: Welsh Highland Beyer-Garratt NG/G16
stands outside Porthmadog station, home of the
Ffestiniog railway.

Bottom Right: "Taliesin" waits to depart from
Porthmadog.

All: Pete Cheshire





GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY
LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

1960s Gala gets a March makeover

The GCR swings back to the 1960s on the 21st and 22nd of March 2009 with the popular mixed traction gala receiving a makeover. The new format will add extra motive power for a busy timetable.

Four steam engines are expected to participate. The line up is expected to include LNER Q6 no. 63395, LNER 04 no. 63601, BR 2MT 78019 and Fairburn Tank no. 42085. The roster is strictly 'one-off' as this is the final scheduled running days of the Q6 before it leaves the GCR after a three months stay, the 04 is entering the last six months of its boiler ticket and the Fairburn tank will only be at the GCR until June.

Matching the steam fleet, newly resident BRCW Type 2 no. D5401 will lead the diesel line up with Brush Type 2 D5830, Brush Type 4 D1705 (Saturday only) and Sulzer Type 4 D123 (Sunday Only) also expected to take part. The lines resident Met Camm DMU will also feature.

Event organiser Steven Chapple said "The year has been set as 1965. We're looking at the GCR through slightly rose tinted specs because of course by then, Quorn and Rothley has already closed. However, Loughborough Central will be stepping back to a mini maroon makeover for one weekend only. We're installing as many maroon signs as we can find and the end waiting room will become a demonstration parcels office."

Freight and parcels sets will compliment passenger trains with a very intensive timetable planned. As an added touch station porters will be loading and unloading the parcels stock during station stops. A gala programme will be available and its hoped to stage a line up of classic cars at Quorn.

cfps
class 40 preservation society

D335 to be a film star

D335 is to appear as the locomotive involved in the Great Train robbery in a programme in a documentary series entitled "Crimes that shook Great Britain". It will have its number temporarily changed to D326 to add to the authenticity.

Filming took place during February, between Bury and Heywood.

The programme itself will appear on a satellite channel at some point in the future and we will hopefully be able to advise of this when it is known.

C58LG

**CLASS 58
LOCOMOTIVE
GROUP**

The Class 58 Locomotive Group was formed in 2001 with the aim of one day preserving a Class 58 locomotive and we invite you to join us!

For more information on the C58LG, please see our website www.c58lg.co.uk, e-mail info@c58lg.co.uk or you can write via 'snail mail' to: C58LG, 107 Woolaston Avenue, Cardiff, CF23 6EW.



See our website for information on our new fund raising initiative: "£58 for a 58" – sponsor a part of a 58!



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY
LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

Great Central Prepares to buy LOUGHBOROUGH GOODS OFFICE Building as new HQ.

The Great Central Railway is set to purchase Loughborough Central station's former goods office building. The railway has launched an urgent fundraising campaign with a six figure target which needs to be met before the end of March. It follows two years of patient negotiations with the building's owner, a local housing developer.

A sale price was agreed in January and solicitors were instructed to begin purchase proceedings in early February.

The building currently stands isolated in the corner of the former goods yard, two minutes walk from the front door of Loughborough Central station. Only four dedicated goods offices were provided on the route. Nottingham is the only other survivor. A survey of the building has shown that many original features survive from its construction.

Bill Ford, president of the Great Central Railway told us, "This is a one off chance to get hold of this important bit of heritage. It's a very appropriate goal for 2009 – the year the GCR celebrates 40 years of preservation. We plan to use it as a new administrative HQ, which will release space at Loughborough Central for other improvements. It will also create a public meeting space. Imagine this - we could be running the Great Central – from an original pre-grouping GCR office building!"

The GCR has received some very good news from the East Midlands Development Agency who, via Leicestershire Economic Partnership and in conjunction with Charnwood Borough Council are offering a six figure grant aid package towards the purchase price.

However the railway still needs to find £100,000 not only to make up the total but also to provide urgent funds to begin its restoration. There is an urgent deadline to the appeal. The grant aid has to be taken up by the end of the financial year, March 31st – and it can't be carried forward. The GCR has to demonstrate it is "at an advanced state of negotiations" by then or it will lose the chance to buy the building. If the railway is unable to buy the building, it could become flats, or worse be demolished. An adjacent GCR stables building suffered that fate two years ago.

The appeal for £100,000 is being co-ordinated by the David Clarke Railway Trust, the GCR's official supporting charity. Malcolm Freckelton of the DCRT said, "This is a case of now or never. It's a difficult time to be asking for donations, but we believe there is something about getting hold of an original GCR building, which will speak to the 1899 DNA of our supporters.

We've put together some incentives for people who donate including building tours and the chance to be recorded on a role of honour. The money will be going into a 'ringfenced' fund purely for the goods office. Naturally, as it is coming by the DCRT, we can also claim gift aid from the government on anything given by a UK taxpayer."

Two thousand pounds has been pledged to the appeal already. It's been matched by a further two thousand from the DCRT itself, meaning four grand is in the pot before the starting gun has been fired. The DCRT contribution comes from the legacy of Richard Lovatt, the GCR's former company secretary who died in 2007. The building will be named in his honour to recognise the work he (and his father) gave to the preserved GCR.

Donation forms can be downloaded on line at www.gcrailway.co.uk and full details of the incentives on offer are listed there.





GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY
LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

SIX FIGURE GRANT ENABLES FEASIBILITY STUDY ON GREAT CENTRAL GAP PROJECT TO GET UNDERWAY

The Great Central Railway is pleased to announce that feasibility study work for the "Bridging the Gap" project will begin shortly, following a significant funding announcement from the East Midlands Development Agency.

The six figure grant will go towards paying for a consultant firm to study development prospects for the Great Central Railway corridor between Nottingham and Leicester. The "Gap" project is central to uniting the two halves of the GCR and unlocking the economic potential of a 17 mile railway route.

The southern section of the line would gain a main line connection, meaning it could expand the commercial services it already offers and the entire extended route could have potential uses far beyond tourist traffic.

It is expected the consultants will be asked to review other possibilities for development and expansion as part of their remit.

The East Midlands Development Agency said "Through Leicestershire Economic Partnership (LSEP), emda has approved funding towards a feasibility study to be completed by Charnwood Borough Council to assess the transport, tourism and economic potential of the Great Central Railway link. emda is pleased to support this prestigious and exciting project.

Railtalk
Magazine

The Great Central Railway is a valuable regional asset steeped in rail history, which is of significant importance to the economy of the East Midlands. Expanding the use of the line will have far-reaching benefits for both the railway and the region, through greater connectivity to improve the overall experience for tourists, the local community and visitors alike."

A spokesman for the Great Central Railway said, "We are delighted to have received a grant from the East Midlands Development Agency, through Charnwood Borough Council and Leicester Shire Economic Partnership. We should also thank Leicester Shire Promotions Ltd for their vital support. We have long believed the railway corridor through the East Midlands could be substantially developed, with potentially great reward for the local economy. The grant will be used towards these aims."

The GCR will itself need to raise a third of the funding to complete the feasibility study.

The process of appointing a firm of consultants to carry out the study will begin shortly, with the study itself, expected to be underway by March 31st 2009. The Great Central Railway will release more information about the breadth of the study and the timescales involved once work has begun.

Tony Sparks, a director of GCR and GC Link said "This is the culmination of much behind the scenes work by a lot of people from the railways both sides of the "gap". The steering group "Greater Great Central Railway" has immersed itself in plans and presentations to reach this point. The work won't stop here, as the consultants will need support during the feasibility study. Hopefully the feasibility study will prove our arguments about economic benefits to the region, but there will still be the massive task of convincing commercial partners to join us on this journey. During that time the work of ensuring both halves of the separate railways remain viable also continues. This is another step on the road to the reunited GCR. A feasibility study, which broadens into looking at economic potential, all helps towards building the business case for the project. We'll have more news once the study is underway"

Northern Charters

Present

THE AYR BRUSH. Sat 06 June 2009

Join us on board this very special train from Crewe via the W C M L to Glasgow Central and Ayr.

We will be departing Crewe at approx 07.30 calling at Warrington Bank Quay, Wigan North Western, Preston, and Carlisle. We have requested free time in Glasgow of approx 3 - 4 hours for those not wishing to travel on to Ayr.



Traction will be 2x AC Locomotives throughout, provided by the AC Locomotive Group. Utilising the Rail Blue Charters MK11 stock, to provide, a high standard of comfort, and that, authentic "Rail Blue Era" experience.

Fares for this special train are First Class £74.00 Adult, £69.00 Child. Private table for 2 in FC £15.00 per table (limited basis). Std Class £59.00 Adult, £49.00 Child. Special Standard Class only fare for passengers Joining at Carlisle £49.00. Also 5% Discount for all Rail Staff on production of Valid Railway Staff ID.

PART OF ALL PROCEEDS FROM THIS TRAIN WILL BE DONATED TO RAILWAY CHARITIES



Buffet Car and Draft Real Ale Bar available on Train

To Book Please Contact Northern Charters on 01925 813182 or send Chqs postal orders payable to Northern Charters to 56 Lincoln Close, Warrington, Cheshire WA1 4LU.

E Mail Enquiries to info@northerncharters.co.uk

Or web link www.northerncharters.co.uk



The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust New Steam for the Main Line

Tornado is to visit Scotland for the first time

Tornado arrived on Saturday 28th February with The Auld Reekie Express and departing on Saturday 7th March with The North Briton

Tornado, the first new main line steam locomotive to be built in Britain for almost 50 years, hauled her first train to Scotland on Saturday 28th February 2009, organised by railtour promoter Past-Time Rail. This train, The Auld Reekie Express, was hauled by Tornado from York to Edinburgh's Waverley station. This was the first time a once-familiar Peppercorn class A1 has been to Scotland for over 40 years. The return journey on Saturday 7th March with The North Briton will be Tornado's first historic departure from Scotland's capital.

New Peppercorn class A1 60163 Tornado was named at York station on Thursday 19th February 2009 by TRH The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall before hauling the Royal Train Leeds with the royal couple on-board. The Prince of Wales travelled on the footplate for part of the journey.

The Auld Reekie Express, on Saturday February 28th, conjuring up the colloquial name for Edinburgh in the days when every house had a coal fire ('Auld Reekie' means 'Old Smoky'), was hauled by Tornado between York and Edinburgh.

The North Briton, a week later on Saturday March 7th, will be hauled by Tornado in the reverse direction between Edinburgh and York.

The train starts from Leeds (diesel-hauled) at 07:30hrs, picking up further passengers at York (08:08hrs), Darlington (08:48hrs), and Newcastle (09:41hrs), arriving at Edinburgh Waverley station at 11:31hrs.

Tornado will make her first historic departure from Edinburgh's Waverley station with The North Briton at 14:19hrs, calling at Newcastle (18:08hrs), Darlington (19:42hrs) and York (20:32hrs) where Tornado will come off the train. The train will then go on to Leeds diesel-hauled, arriving at 21:27hrs.

Andy Staite, director, Past-Time Rail, commented:

"Edinburgh is a romantic destination at any time, but to think that we'll have the new Peppercorn class A1 Tornado at the sharp end, storming over its old 'racing ground' from York to Newcastle, gliding around the Northumberland coast, then drifting beneath Edinburgh Castle through Princes Street Gardens and into the old Waverley station is the stuff dreams are made of. It can only be topped by Tornado's historic first departure from Scotland's capital a week later!"

Speaking about Tornado's first trains to and from Edinburgh's Waverley station, Mark Allatt, chairman of The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust added:

"Tornado's first trains to and from Scotland are the opening of a new chapter in the story of a project that many said could never be completed. In 1990 a group was formed with a vision and the determination to make it succeed – to build and operate a Peppercorn class A1 Pacific steam locomotive for main line and preserved railway use. 19 years later, and thanks to that shared vision and determination, Tornado was named by TRH The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall at York station on 19th February 2009. It is thanks to our more than 2,000 regular monthly and other donors, our sponsors led by William Cook Cast Products Limited and the hard work of our volunteers and contractors that the project has achieved so much. The Trust is now looking to the great British public to help us keep Tornado on the main line by making a donation, sponsoring a component, taking part in our covenant scheme and/or our £500,000 bond issue to help repay the £832,000 borrowed to complete her construction."



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY
LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

PASSENGERS UP, SALES UP.

At the end of its 2008 financial year the Great Central Railway has disclosed extraordinary passenger growth despite the tough economic climate. The award winning Leicestershire line has also seen strong sales growth on a number of its products including Santa Specials and Drive A Locomotive Experience.

Visitor numbers were up 12% and the total booking office sales were up 11% on the 2007 financial year taking the lines turnover well over the million and a half pounds mark.

"These results are a tribute to the hard work of our staff and volunteers," said the GCR president Bill Ford. "They pulled out the stops in 2008 to deliver an ambitious programme of special events when we welcomed a number of large visiting locomotives. Our promotion 'The Year Of Express Engines' really worked as a way of bringing in visitors despite the economic background."

The strong growth is being attributed particularly to the visit of Tornado, Britain's brand new steam engine which came to Leicestershire line for running in trials in August 2008. Also, in May 2008 "Oliver Cromwell" an engine which is synonymous with the end of UK main line steam was re-commissioned after a lengthy overhaul. Other locomotives from the national collection including "City Of Truro" and "Lord Nelson" also visited.

However, income from Drive A Locomotive experience courses also rose by 4%, and Santa Specials by the same amount. Platform ticket sales were almost double the 2007 figure. The railway also developed new attractions like Ellis's Tea Room at Rothley and implemented new family friendly initiatives like the talking tour guide.

"Clearly there were a number of features in 2008 which are unlikely to be repeated," continued Bill, "so the strong growth is of course welcome but isn't guaranteed to continue. As a note of caution, our costs are always rising. The price of coal and utility bills are just two examples. Operating heritage infrastructure always means you have to run a little bit faster every year just to stand still as maintenance costs will always rise. Our outgoings in 2008 will have also increased over the previous year. However, I'm glad we're going into 2009 and the continuing economic uncertainty in this position than if all the excitements of 2008 hadn't happened."



Bombardier Awarded Contract for a Further 32 DMU Cars for V/Line Passenger in Australia

Bombardier Transportation has been awarded a contract in Australia by the Victorian Government, to build a further 32 VLocity DMU cars, to be supplied as a mix of two and three car units, valued at approximately 75 million euros (\$95 million US, \$148 million AU). The new vehicles will be operated as part of V/Line Passenger's regional rail fleet.

This brings the number of VLocity DMU cars operated by V/Line Passenger to 134. These trains, operated as two and three car sets, have proved very popular with both V/Line and the travelling public and provide rapid and comfortable links from Melbourne to Victoria's major regional centres. Since the introduction of the VLocity DMUs into service in 2005, V/Line has experienced excellent patronage growth.

"The Victorian Government has again expressed its confidence in the VLocity DMU and Bombardier with this purchase," said Dan Osborne, Managing Director of Bombardier Transportation Australia. "These units have delivered excellent performance and reliability since entering service, and have contributed significantly to the sustainable transportation provided by the Australian rail industry." The VLocity DMUs have been built at Bombardier's plant in Dandenong, Australia, with 70% local content.

Rob Barnett, CEO of V/Line Passenger, stated: "V/Line has enjoyed a massive increase in patronage over the last few years, and the Bombardier VLocity trains have been an integral part of that. I am pleased that we are expanding our fleet".

The VLocity DMU is made out of stainless steel, operates at 160 kph, and provides a comfortable passenger environment with large panoramic windows, air conditioned interiors and luggage space including bicycle and surfboard storage. A three car VLocity DMU provides 214 fixed seats, six wheelchair locations with eight folding seats and two onboard toilets.

This order will be delivered through 2010 and 2011 and will respond to V/Line's growing capacity requirements.



Photo: VLocity DMU cars as part of V/Line Passenger's regional rail fleet
© Bombardier.

Alstom delivers the first Metropolis for the Budapest Metro in Hungary

On 9 February, Alstom Transport delivered the first five Metropolis cars to the Budapest public transport operator BKV for the M2 line of the Budapest Metro in Hungary.

These metro trainsets were ordered from Alstom Transport and its partners in the "Budapest Metropolis Consortium" under a contract signed in May 2006. The order, which totals €247 million, relates to the supply of 170 Metropolis metro cars to replace the old M2 line fleet and also for the new M4 line, which is still under construction. Alstom will supply a total of 22 trainsets of five cars - ie 110 cars - for the M2 line and 22 trainsets of four cars- ie 60 cars - for M4 line. The cars will be manufactured in the Alstom's site of Katowice (Poland).



The 22 new Metropolis cars for M2 line have a 1023 passenger capacity and four doors per car to facilitate passenger flows during peak schedules. Wide intercarriage access also enhances movement within the trains. The cars have been designed to enable optimal quality of life on board and to provide maximum passenger comfort.

Everything has been done to make the journey more enjoyable and comfortable: ergonomic seats, warm materials, air conditioning, new colours and lighting etc. Passengers will also benefit from an information system that is at the leading edge of technology.

The main advantages of this Metropolis rolling stock come from its modular construction (2 to 9 car configuration), its ability to run in automatic mode, its reliability (more than 3000 Metropolis cars sold throughout the world) and its compatibility with Hungarian operating conditions. The design of the Budapest metros was chosen by Budapest city's inhabitants who voted to select which of the three front panels proposed by Alstom Transport.

The design of Budapest metros is inspired by the Millennium underground, the very first electric underground on the European continent inaugurated in 1896. It is characterized by a very graphic white and black livery as well as a pure front head.

Photo © Alstom.





850 LORD NELSON

The preserved SR Lord Nelson Class 4-6-0 No. 850 Lord Nelson arrived on The Mid-Hants Railway on 11th February 2009.

It is now to be home at Ropley for the foreseeable future and not only will operate between Alresford and Alton but also on the UK railway network on specials.

The locomotive was originally built at Eastleigh Locomotive Works in August 1926 at a cost of £9,510. It was withdrawn in 1962 and passed into the national collection of preserved locomotives, since then it has had a turbulent history.

Top Right: On 24 August 1985, it was at full power whilst working in strange territory with a northbound "Cumbrian Mountain Express" through Culgaith on the Settle to Carlisle line.

Bottom Right: A year earlier, 3rd March 1984, 850 Lord Nelson was employed on a southbound "Cumbrian Mountain Express" where I photographed it passing Lazonby.

David Mead





Left: During the 1980's, B.R. wanted to close the Leeds - Carlisle as a through route and deliberately reduced the passenger train service to two in each direction. (There was hardly any freight booked over the line at that period). However, the passenger trains remained locomotive hauled much to the delight of enthusiasts. On a snowy 27th December 1984, double-headed Class 31 425 and 31 453 arrive Appleby on the 07.38 Hull - Carlisle whilst 47 533 waits to depart on the southbound 10.40 Carlisle - Leeds.

David Mead

Below: A rare picture of Metro Vic D5705 almost hidden in this view at Swindon on the 16th Dec 1984.

Pete Cheshire



Left: On 4 August 1973, split headcode panel "Peak" D29 glides into Appleby on the 08.00 London St. Pancras - Glasgow Central - "The Thames-Clyde Express". Unfortunately soon after, BR decided to down-grade the former Midland route from London to Scotland and in 1976, the former named train ceased to run, it's title being stripped a year earlier. The "Peak" locos built in 1959 were the main stay of the route during the diesel era but did remain operating for a few years after on St. Pancras - Derby/Nottingham services.

David Mead





DB Schenker Class 66 115 in its original and old EWS livery is seen passing just south of Elvanfoot heading southbound while working a loaded coal train on 18th February. [Jonathan McGurk](#)