The Railway Herald

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Front Cover

S&DJR 2-8-0 7F No. 53809 is currently on loan to the Bluebell Railway. The locomotive is pictured near Freshfield Summit on 18th October. **David Gibson**

Rear Cover

As the light starts to fail, LMS 'Black 5' No. 45407 is pictured in silhouette as it crosses Entwhistle Viaduct on 22nd November with Past Time Rail's 'Cotton Mill Express' charter.
John Whitehouse

Publication

The Railway Herald is published every Monday and is available on e-mail subscription or from our website at www.railwayherald.co.uk

Submissions

We welcome submissions from all readers, especially digital photographs. Pictures should be sent to the editor at editor@railwayherald.co.uk

Good quality scans of colour slides and prints are also acceptable. Currently there is no financial payment made for photographs published in *Railway Herald*. Where possible we always try to use news photographs taken within the production week of the publication date.

Website

Our website contains all the back issues of the magazine.
www.railwayherald.co.uk

National Rail Timetable

The entire UK National Rail Timetable is now available as a PDF download from the Network Rail website.

Produced in the same fashion as the printed version and ordered by table number, the current timetable is available by clicking here.

The railway by-laws and information for enthusiasts are also available online from the Network Rail website, by clicking here.

Editorial

Rarely do I, as Editor, find the need to pick up my creative pen and write an editorial. As a magazine, it is not something that we, as a team, specialise in - we much prefer you, the reader to reach your own conclusion from the news and information contained within each issue.

However, it was while collating and designing pages for this issue that I felt the urge to 'pen' this editorial. Over recent years, worldwide new technologies, business operations, organisations and day-to-day functions have developed. Various names and acronyms have hence become part of the modern day vocabulary and through this development society has created another 'new' aspect of modern day life and one that can work for or against a journalist.

To which aspect am I specifically referring? The sometimes crazy world of Health and Safety? No. The strange concepts that 'appear', to outsiders at least, to take place when redrawing the railway franchise map? No, I am referring to, what is becoming, one of the most common aspects of news (especially business and technology news) ... the three letter abbreviation.

In a world that has created functions and organisations out of mere functions and organisations, it was deemed that we needed an easier way of describing or discussing them and the three letter abbreviation was born! Abbreviations for business terms, software, organisations and a whole host of other areas are of course nothing new. Indeed the railway industry itself was using them back in the 1970s, when a new computer system was planned. Using technology like it never before in the UK brought the advent of the Total Operations Processing System, known to one and all as TOPS.

Although it is true that today's railway industry has abbreviations for abbreviations at times, of varying lengths, the three letter abbreviations, or TLA (did I really just type that?) is perhaps the most common.

We have train operating companies (TOCs), freight operating companies (FOCs), in addition we have Transport for London (TfL) and there are signals passed at danger (SPADs).

But it was while editing a news story for this issue that I concluded we had really hit the bottom with the development of a new national network smartcard that followed ITSO standards. Now, don't get me wrong, I'm sure that, in the big world of ensuring that systems talk correctly to each other, ITSO standards are a wonderful thing. After all, we need systems that communicate correctly so that a commuter travelling from Portsmouth to Clapham Junction doesn't end up with an Andover to Exeter ticket. But it was one of those occasions when, as editor, I have to try and ensure (to the best of my ability) that readers can understand what we are talking about, that I actually found myself reaching for that non-existant reference encyclopedia called 'Abbreviations codes and their meanings.'

So what does ITSO stand for? Amazingly few of the recent press releases or information actually tell the media. Now, maybe I have been missing something in recent months and I'm sure if I have that some of our 32,000 plus weekly readers will email and update me, but when a press officer from within the railway industry, whose organisation is involved in ITSO standard smartcard operations (should that become ISSOs?) was asked what it stood for, an answer of "I'll have to find out and come back you" made me realise that it isn't just me - we really are now coming up with abbreviations that nobody can understand because they don't know them! Welcome to the world of the English language in the 21st century!

Oh, by the way, just in case you were wondering, ITSO, I later discovered after performing a search on a well known internet search engine, stands for the Integrated Transport Smartcard Organisation, which itself was formed to build and maintain a specification for secure 'end to end' inter-operable ticketing transactions, utilising relevant ISO and emerging CEN standards. Now aren't you glad you asked?

Class 40 confirmed for Lincoln Christmas charter

Rail-Blue Charters have confirmed that it will definitely employ the Class Forty Preservation Society's Class 40 No. 40145 on 6th December on a charter to the Lincoln Christmas Market, using the blue and grey liveried Mk2 and Mk3 stock.

The train, which will start from Shrewsbury and pick-up at Crewe, Wilmslow, Stockport and Sheffield, will head north towards Doncaster, taking in the freight lines from Hexthorpe Junction (which rarely see passenger services) to Doncaster Decoy Yard, before turning east, bound for Gainsborough, Saxilby and finally Lincoln.

Timings for the journey are very reasonable, with a departure from Shrewsbury at 07.00 and Sheffield at 10.05, giving over four hours to explore and enjoy the Christmas Market in Lincoln, before a departure at 16.15. The latter time, being earlier than the organisers would have wished but is due to the large number of additional services and charter trains requiring to leave between 16.00 and 18.00 that day.

Rail-Blue Charters and *Railway Herald* are offering readers a **special selection of tickets**, aimed at providing a reasonably priced day out in what are financially difficult times. As a result, readers can join the train in Standard Class at Sheffield for the return trip via the Doncaster freight lines to Lincoln for just £20 adults, £15 senior citizens and children, and for those with families the company is offering readers a special family fare of £45, which will cover two adults and up to two children. Alternatively for a group of up to four adults wanting to travel in the comfort of First Class, a special group fare from Sheffield to Lincoln and return is available at £100.

All of the special reader offer fares must be booked through Rail-Blue Charters booking line on 0161 850 0559 and readers must quote 'Railway Herald'. The special fares are not available in conjunction with any other offer, and the position of seating within the train is purely dependent on availability. Internet booking is not available for the special reader offer fares. The tele-sales line can accept most major credit and debit cards and for those readers wishing to pay by cheque or postal order can reserve seats for seven days.

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Rail fares to rise again in January by around 6%

The Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) has announced that many rail fares will change from 2nd January next year.

Regulated fares, which are capped by the Government (based on the July 2008 Retail Price Index of 5%, plus 1%), e.g. Season Tickets and longer distance Off-Peak fares, will rise by 6% and unregulated fares, e.g. most leisure and Advance fares, will rise by varying amounts, according to the train operator, with the average over the network of 7%. ATOC says that the increased revenue will help pay for major investment to improve the railways and deliver better value for taxpayers in line with Government policy to reduce subsidy to the railway by 40% between 2006/07 and 2013/14. Currently work worth over £800 million is being carried out to introduce new trains, refurbish existing fleets and improve stations.

A breath of fresh air among the variety of rail fares being increased in January is a statement from open access operator, Grand Central, which has announced that it will not be increasing fares next year. Managing Director, Tom Clift, said "In the current economic climate our loyal customers would not thank us for increasing fares. So fares on Grand Central are being frozen at their current level until May 2009 at the earliest."

It is also worth noting that travel on Grand Central services can be bought either before travel or on board the train - and for the same price!

£3.3 million investment in information systems

Passengers at stations across Yorkshire are to benefit from a £3.3 million investment in new information systems. Northern Rail, Metro, Network Rail and the Department for Transport are funding better public address (PA) systems at 51 stations and new information screens at 22 stations.

The new integrated systems will give up-to-the-minute train running information and make sure that audible and visual information is linked and delivered at the same time.

The investment includes replacing existing analogue lines with digital links, and installing new amplifiers to improve the quality of audible information. Older information screens at stations will be replaced with new hi-tech screens to provide much more reliable and visible train information. The project will also fund additional screens at several locations including Bradford Interchange, Bradford Forster Square, Skipton and Ilkley. The screens are due to be completed by March 2009 and the PA by the following June.

Is it the end of leaves on the line?

The well used phase of delayed by 'leaves on the line', so extensively promoted by some members of the national media, could become a phrase of the past.

A massive tree-risk assessment of every track-side tree in Great Britain that is deemed to be a hazard is to be undertaken by Network Rail.

The network will use a risk-assessment system (THRETS, the Tree Hazard: Risk Evaluation and Treatment System) pioneered in the late 1990s by arborist Julian Forbes-Laird, who is advising on its effective use.

"It's a rolling programme and will include many, many trees," said the director of Bedford-based Forbes-Laird Arboricultural Consultancy.

New look for the Welsh Thunderbird locomotive

▼ ***As part of the proposed new north to south Welsh loco-hauled service, which is expected to commence from the December timetable change, Class 57/3 No. 57315 is presently residing in the Pullman Rail workshop at Cardiff Canton, having been rubbed down and de-named, ready for (what is understood to be) a repaint into Arriva Trains livery.* Railway Herald *believes that a contract with Virgin Trains for the service has still to be signed, although driver training on the North Wales coast route has been on-going for several weeks. No. 57315 is pictured at Cardiff on 18th November.*** Paul Bigland

New station for East Anglia Main Line

A new station is to be built on the East Anglia Main Line between Ipswich and Needham Market following Government approval of the Snoasis winter sports complex.

The £350 million development, described as the world's first indoor winter sports resort, has been designed to provide a centre of excellence for winter sports athletes. Fourteen different sports will be brought together and provided with world-class training facilities. The development will have an indoor ski slope and offer a range of sports, leisure and entertainment activities to the 650,000 visitors a year who are expected to visit.

The developers have committed to spending £29 million on local improvements, including upgrading the intersection of the A12 and A14 roads and building the new station. However, critics of the scheme claim only 8% of Snoasis visitors will arrive by train, yet the station could require the Great Blakenham level crossing to be closed for an extra 15 minutes every hour, increasing congestion on local roads. They also say that the A12 and A14 will not be able to cope with the additional traffic generated by the centre.

Parking provision will include 2,000 spaces for day visitors and 1,500 for holiday accommodation. Snoasis is expected to take at least three years to build, with a provisional opening date of 2012.

£1 billion investment to increase capacity

A £1 billion programme to increase rail capacity between Glasgow and Edinburgh and reduce journey times is ahead of schedule, and key design contracts are due to be signed in December.

The investment aims to improve train journeys for more than 15 million passengers, while also reducing emissions and operating costs, and improving economic growth. The design contracts are specified and funded by Transport Scotland as part of the Scottish Government working in partnership with Network Rail, which will procure and manage the design contracts, which cover electrification of the line via Airdrie and Bathgate, designed to provide four extra trains per hour between the cities from December 2010.

Further problems for Kyle of Lochalsh line

A section of the line between Inverness and Kyle of Lochalsh will be closed at least until 24th November, after it was struck by a landslide on 18th November, which later caused a passenger train to derail.

Network Rail immediately commenced an investigation into the cause of the landslip on a low-speed part of the track near Stromeferry, and very close to an area where work to prevent rockfalls was carried out in September, contractors carrying out rock-cutting and stabilisation to help prevent landslides.

Engineers were soon at the scene where the train had struck 200 tonnes of mud and rubble, and specialist abseilers made a detailed assessment of the embankment beside the track in case there was more unstable rock and earth. During the work, services between Inverness and Kyle terminated at Strathcarron, and a replacement bus service was put in operation.

No one was injured in the incident, which involved the 15.23 First ScotRail service from Aberdeen to Kyle, via Inverness, which had nine passengers and two railway employees on board. The front coach of the two-car unit was derailed, but remained upright. Luckless passengers and staff were escorted on foot back through the darkness to Stromeferry station, a mile away.

Arriva acquire LNWR Crewe in deal worth over £2 million

Arriva has acquired the train maintenance company LNWR for £2.4 million.

The business, which operates a modern train maintenance depot in Crewe, was founded in 1996 by Pete Waterman. It has grown from a former Victorian carriage shed and has had £3 million of investment over the past 12 months, turning it into a leading servicing facility for motive power.

It now services one of the most diverse fleets of trains in the UK and is one of the largest train depots and stabling facilities on the WCML. LNWR's Managing Director Mark Knowles will continue to lead the team of over 100 employees and the business will continue to trade as LNWR.

Bob Holland, Managing Director of the Arriva UK Trains division, said: "LNWR has grown into a specialist facility capable of competing with some of the largest international groups. It has an impressive workforce and facility, which provides high quality maintenance services every day to the UK rail industry. Going forward, we plan to build on LNWR's work for Bombardier, Siemens, Freightliner and Arriva Trains Wales. The assurance that being part of the Arriva group brings will help attract work from the rolling stock leasing companies and other large customers."

Mr Holland continued "We look forward to welcoming the LNWR team into the Arriva group and working with them to continue to deliver excellent train maintenance services."

Fastline freight has recently started a new service from Liverpool Bulk Terminal to Ratcliffe Power Station using its Class 66/3 locomotives. On 19th November No. 66304 is seen propelling high capacity bogie hopper wagons under the loading dock at the bulk terminal. **Fred Kerr**

▲ *What is believed to be the first-ever First GBRf Class 66 to traverse the East Lancashire Line from Blackburn to Hellifield via Clitheroe, Class 66/7 No. 66725* **Sunderland** *passes through Blackburn on 18th November. The locomotive was employed on route-learning duties in preparation for the commencement of the forthcoming Gypsum traffic due to commence in January between Fiddlers Ferry and Kirkby Thore.* **Mark Ainsworth**

NXEC undertakes MTU engine change in-house

The pioneer National Express East Coast HST Power Car No. 43300 *Craigentinny* has undergone the removal of its MTU power unit under a scheduled 'QL3 top engine overhaul' power unit change exchange.

It is the first of the NXEC MTU-fitted powercars to have its engine removed for overhaul since installation under GNER. The procedure was also the first MTU power unit removal carried out at Craigentinny Depot, near Edinburgh, by an in-house National Express team. The pre-work necessary to support the project is described by NXEC as "significant", with support being provided to the depot from a wide variety of individuals and departments, including its in-house fleet management team, MTU as engine manufacturers, Brush and Unipart.

The work was carried out under the supervision of local project manager, Peter Smyk.

▼ *Class 43 No. 43300* **Craigentinny** *is pictured at its namesake depot in early November, as the MTU power unit is craned out of the bodyshell.* **National Express East Coast**

❖ National Express East Anglia is to close its Norwich Call Centre, which is likely to lead to a loss of 73 jobs. The company is also planning to make changes to the way it provides food and drink on board the trains between Norwich and London, abandoning the restaurant car meals and providing additional trolley services.

❖ The £9 million earmarked for Network Rail by the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) to make improvements to Gatwick Airport station before the 2012 Olympic Games has now been increased to £19 million, but West Sussex County Council says it is still not enough to transform 'a major gateway into Britain for visitors to London 2012' and maintain that a figure of £30 million was needed to pay for track and signalling improvements as well as a new passenger concourse.

❖ Preliminary work has started on a £1.5 million revamp of a Grade 2 listed Ormskirk station. The modernisation will include enhanced CCTV coverage, improved cycle storage and refurbishment of the platform canopy. A temporary ticket office is to be set up when the main construction work starts in January. The project is part of the Government's National Stations Improvement Programme scheme and will receive £635,000 of Department for Transport funding towards the work. The project combines sympathetic restoration of the external features of the building with a modern, clean interior.

❖ To date, only £8 million has been secured out of the £15 million stated to be needed to build a new station in Bromsgrove on land close to the current station. Advantage West Midlands (AWM), a regeneration body for the West Midlands said more work to assess the scheme must be done before it would give any funding. If the proposals do go ahead, they would provide two additional platforms, giving the station four in total, and the number of car parking spaces would increase from 70 to 350.

❖ Leyland station is set to undergo upgrading, with new customer information screens, a public announcement system and replacement platform shelters. A spokesman for Northern Rail has confirmed that the improvements, which will also include a new coat of paint, should be finished by the end of 2009. Campaigners, however, say that the plans do not go far enough and that disabled passengers and mum's with prams have to travel 10 miles to Preston in order to use the disabled access before returning to Platforms 2 or 3, because of the lack of a ramp.

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▲ *The Grade 2 listed arch roof over the eight platforms of the Eastern section of London Victoria station is being completely refurbished by Network Rail at a cost of £24 million. In addition to re-glazing, the roof trusses are being grit-blasted and then painted, and steelwork repairs will be undertaken as necessary. The work is due for completion in mid-2010. Standing beneath the London Victoria arched roof are Class 465/2 and 465/9 Networkers Nos. 465238 and 465918, the former about to depart for Orpington and the latter awaiting departure for Faversham. To the left, Class 375/6 Electrostar No 375827 has arrived on the rear of a service from Bognor Regis and '375/9' No 375909 leaves heading a Brighton train.* **Brian Morrison**

Greenfield problems

The £300,000 refurbishment of Greenfield station, which was scheduled for completion this month, has stopped as the contractors, Yorkshire-based Lotus Construction has gone into administration.

The development, which is being led by the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive (GMPTE), is to provide a new ticket office and waiting areas on the Manchester bound platform of the station as well as safety and security features.

Paul Griffiths, GMPTE's interim projects director, said: "Unfortunately we had no prior notice that the contractor was being taken into administration. That means that there will be a short pause while we make the appropriate arrangements to complete the outstanding work, which amounts to testing the systems in the new ticket office and some external work including installing handrails. We are disappointed that this project has been affected by circumstances beyond our control, but I would like to reassure passengers that we are doing all we can to get the new and improved Greenfield station open as soon as possible."

First four Class 395 Hitachi 'Javelin' EMUs achieve over 31,000 miles of testing

The new 140mph Class 395 'Javelin' EMUs have now completed more than 31,000 miles of testing on the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (HS1) and on domestic lines in Kent.

The Hitachi-built trains are due to come into service in December 2009, running on Southeastern's Kent domestic routes and the high-speed line into St Pancras International station, cutting current journey times by as much as one hour. They will also run services during the London Olympics in 2012.

News that the four trains so far delivered from Japan have notched up the big mileage figure came as Hitachi Rail Group celebrated the first anniversary of the opening of the new Ashford Train Maintenance Centre, where the fleet will be maintained and serviced. During this year, the maintenance centre has attracted over 3,500 visitors from the UK, Europe and Japan's rail industry, and has so far created 47 jobs for local employees.

In addition to the 'Javelins', Hitachi also won the traction replacement for Southeastern's Class 465 'Networkers'. This project is going ahead as planned, with the prototype unit currently undergoing testing, full production being scheduled to start early in the New Year. Ashford was awarded ISO 9001 quality accreditation in May this year and has an exemplary safety track record, with 41,500 work hours completed without any lost time or accidents to staff.

Alistair Dormer, General Manager at Hitachi Rail Group, London, said: "In addition to looking after the Class 395s, for the past 12 months Ashford has also been servicing up to 5,000 Class 375 and 465 vehicles per month for Southeastern. Our maintenance operation at Ashford combines best practice from both the UK and Japan, and investment into our workforce is a key issue. Our team leaders have all spent time in our factory and gained first-hand knowledge of the Class 395 trains by working on the production line."

Clapham Junction developers hit the buffers

As previously reported, developers Metro Shopping Fund, want to erect two 42-story towers with more than 550 flats next to Clapham Junction and create new shops and a cinema, and as part of the proposal, much-needed modernisation would be carried out to the station, including two new entrances.

However, Battersea MP Martin Linton has come out against the plan on the grounds that the towers are too tall. He said: "There's no reason we should have to pay a price for this of having two 42-story tower blocks, which would be completely out of proportion to the surrounding buildings. People feel they are being bounced into accepting something they don't like, to get something they need." The developers say they could not afford to reduce the project because of the cost of the station improvements, which include two new escalator entrances.

A Wandsworth council spokesman said people's views would be accepted until the application went to committee next spring and that the decision would be made solely on planning guidelines.

Hykeham Upgrade deal

Following comments from a passenger survey, Hykeham station is to get a three-bay shelter on the Lincoln-bound platform in place of the existing brick structure, a CCTV system and a new set of cycle lockers.

Lincolnshire County Council and several partners including East Midlands Trains and the town council will fund the £60,000 improvements. The work will be undertaken in two phases and is due to start before the end of the year. Phase two will provide a second shelter and a new car park and there will also be a revised bus service to and from the station.

SNCF sabotage delays Eurostar services

Eurostar passengers travelling to London were severely delayed on 8th November after the high-speed line between Paris and Lille was sabotaged.

SNCF investigated and discovered that metal bars had been hooked on to several overhead electric cables. French anti-terrorist police have since arrested eight people linked to far-left political groups who had been under surveillance for some months. The sabotage could only have been undertaken by someone familiar with working on high-tension power cables.

CrossRail assists RSPB

Earth taken from beneath London for the construction of Crossrail is to be used to create a huge nature reserve on Wallasea Island, eight miles from Southend, the RSPB has announced.

Construction material excavated as part of the new line across the capital will be used by the conservation charity to turn 2.5 square miles of farmland into a tidal wildlife habitat in Essex. Clay, chalk, sand and gravel from the Crossrail scheme will be used to redesign the landscape on the island to provide saltmarsh, mudflats and other coastal habitats.

The RSPB hopes the scheme, which aims to replace habitats that are being lost as a result of rising sea levels and development, will attract rare or vanished species to this country such as spoonbills and Kentish plovers.

NXEC looks at competing bids for ECML paths

Three train operating companies are currently bidding to run new trains out of London King's Cross to new destinations at Bradford, Harrogate, Lincoln and Grimsby.

National Express East Coast, which runs the majority of services between Yorkshire and London and pays the Government £2 billion as franchise operator, commissioned a report from a consulting company comparing its application with those of rivals, Grand Central and Hull Trains.

Both Grand Central and Hull Trains are 'open access' operators, being allowed to run trains on the East Coast Main Line when there is space available and all three companies are bidding for the few additional slots available that Network Rail has identified.

The consultancy document says that the National Express plans deliver more than six times the annual revenue than Grand Central's proposals and 23 times more than those put forward by Hull Trains. The Office of Rail Regulation decides between the competing bids in January.

Ian Yeowart, Managing Director of Grand Union, said: "We are not trying to prevent National Express running its services – we don't think it's an 'us and them', we think there's room for both. While their trains would come into Bradford Forster Square ours would come into Bradford Interchange and also serve Halifax, Brighouse and the Five Towns and we've been getting lots of support locally."

SWT begins first smartcard scheme pilot tests

South West Trains (SWT) has introduced a pilot scheme of the UK's first national rail Smartcard.

A number of season ticket holders are taking part in the scheme between Staines and Windsor to help test and perfect the ITSO smartcard technology before it is introduced across the network. Equipment is being installed at stations across SWT Network to allow smartcards to be introduced gradually on a route-by-route basis.

The Department for Transport (DfT) is working with Transport for London (TfL) on making TfL's smartcard system compatible with the national ITSO system, to allow London to be included.

Developing the first ever National Rail smartcard has taken two years of work after it was specified as part of the new South Western franchise.

Further ITSO smartcard schemes have been specified for other rail franchises, including as already reported, East Midlands Trains. The DfT and TfL are currently completed work on integrating the ITSO and Oystercard systems, the latter of which is not actually compatible with the ITSO standard.

Not helping the EWS carbon footprint!

▼ ***This was the scene that confronted our photographer on 18th November when Class 60 No. 60020 was obviously not in the best of health while working a Lindsey Oil Refinary to Kingsbury loaded petroleum service. The situation deteriorated when the locomotive was declared a total failure soon after this image was taken and came to a stand around Trent Junction. Class 66 No. 66081 was dispatched 'light engine' from Toton to rescue the train and take it through to its destination, the Class 60 being deposited at Burton Yard, awaiting transfer back to Toton, which happened the following day.*** **Dave Mulligan**

Agreement reached over funding for Buckshaw

Plans for a new railway station in Buckshaw Village appear to be back on track after the project was aborted due to a £3 million shortfall in funding as Network Rail has now agreed it will consider providing the shortfall in the short-term.

The news means that residents in Buckshaw could be using the service between Manchester and Preston after all. Chorley Council is working closely with Network Rail and Chorley's MP Lindsay Hoyle to ensure a railway station at Buckshaw Village is up and running as soon as possible. Buckshaw, which has developed on a former Royal Ordnance site, will eventually provide homes for 8,000 people and jobs for 8,500 within the neighbouring Strategic Regional Site, making it one of the borough's largest communities.

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Work commences on redevelopment of Blackfriars

Work has begun on the £300 million redevelopment of London Blackfriars station.

The four-year project, which is one component of the £3.55 billion Thameslink programme, will lengthen the existing platforms to span the full width of the River Thames, allowing 12-car trains to call at the station and allow construction of a station entrance on the south side of the Thames, close to the Tate Modern.

To allow the longer platforms to be built and additional track to be laid, the bridge that supports the railway will be widened to rest on the first of the redundant pillars (pictured) that used to support the old railway bridge between the current rail structure and Blackfriars (road) Bridge.

The Port of London Authority says that during the work scaffolding will be erected on different parts of the bridge and construction and jack-up barges will be moored in various bridge arches. Tugs and work boats will be operating in the vicinity of the bridge.

Throughout the work, two of the three central arches will normally be open to riverboats although short-term closures may be required. Over last weekend, contractors erected scaffolding outside the front of the station ahead of work to refurbish the existing building. Although the Thameslink route station, served by Southeastern and First Capital Connect, will remain open and operational throughout the reconstruction the Underground station below will shut in March 2009 until completion of the project.

▼ *A Class 319/3 unit crosses Blackfriars Bridge, forming the 15.44 First Capital Connect service from Luton to Sutton. When the platform lengthening is completed, views such as this of trains crossing the River Thames will be obliterated.* **Brian Morrison**

Survey work commences on Fareham and Gosport bus route

Work has started on clearing up the old railway lines between Fareham and Gosport as part of plans for a proposed high-speed bus route.

Overgrown plants and vegetation will be cut back on the disused tracks to allow surveys of the site to go ahead. The work is being carried out from Redlands Lane, Fareham, to Holbrook in Gosport, and Hampshire County Council says it is clearing the area so it can establish land boundaries along the route. It will also enable wildlife surveys to take place to see if the bus scheme would have an adverse impact on the area.

Work on the tracks will carry on until January 2009, when a consultation with residents will take place. A business case will then be submitted to the Government, and the scheme could get £20 million to fund the first phase, which would see buses running down the old railway route between Fareham and Gosport. Why not reopen the railway?

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The route is depicted as it was in the late 1950s, a few years before closure, when the line was an important freight and local passenger route. At that time, steam was the main motive power, although diesels were just entering service, particularly the new Diesel Multiple Units.

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Courtesy of the CFPS – Photo Ray Briscall.

Rail-Blue Charters

SPECIAL OFFER FOR READERS
A special ticket offer from Sheffield is available - see Page 2

Lincoln Christmas Market

from Shrewsbury, Crewe, Wilmslow, Stockport and Sheffield on Saturday, December 6th

This train is confirmed as being hauled by the CFPS Class 40 No. 40145 East Lancashire Railway.

The charter arm of Cargo-D, Rail-Blue Charters is running a Christmas charter trip to the very famous Lincoln Christmas Market. Join us aboard our period British Rail Blue and Grey liveried air-conditioned MkII and MkIII carriages.

Lincoln Christmas Market is an event not to be missed. More a Christmas experience than anything else, a trip to Lincoln is guaranteed to attract the attention of even those who hate shopping! Brightly coloured stalls decorated with lights, selling every conceivable Christmas gift and the traders in Victoria costume. The smell of chestnuts roasting, mince pies and hot mulled wine. This is Christmas.

Join us as our special train starts its journey at Shrewsbury and heads via Crewe, Wilmslow and Stockport to Sheffield via the beautiful Hope Valley route. We continue via Conisborough and freight lines around Doncaster, before taking the Gainsborough route to reach the City of Lincoln.

You might want to celebrate the coming festive season with our premier dining option. Enjoy a leisurely full English breakfast as we went our way to Lincoln. After you have soaked up the atmosphere of the Market, return to the train and enjoy a three-course dinner with a Christmas theme.

There will be a buffet serving hot and cold snacks and drinks for first and standard class passengers.

We pick up at Shrewsbury dep 07.00 (back 20.30), Crewe dep 07.53 (back 19.41), Wilmslow dep 08.12 (back 19.20), Stockport dep 08.22 (back 19.11) and Sheffield dep 10.05 (back 17.43). We arrive Lincoln at 11.35 and depart at 16.15.

Fares from £54 per person
Standard, First and Premier Dining options available.

Beat the rush and **CLICK HERE** *to book your seats online now!*

To book your seats call 0161 850 0559 now

Rail-Blue Charters

For details or to book online, please visit our website or contact our telesales team

All timings are provisional and will be confirmed 10 days prior to travel

www.rail-bluecharters.co.uk/tour_list

UK Steam & Modern Traction Railtour Listings

The following table details the latest information available on steam, diesel and electric railtours for the forthcoming weeks from the date of publication. Information is understood to be correct at the time of going to press.

27th November		
Railway Touring Company	60019	Haywards Heath-Bath (break/rev) & return **Postponed**
Steam Dreams	Class 50	(London KX-Potters Bar-Stevenage-Peterborough-York-Scarborough)
	60007	Scarborough-York-London KX
UK Railtours	2xEWS 67	Worcester Christmas FayreLondon KX-Potters Bar-Stevenage-Leicester-Nuneaton-Worcester Shrub Hill (break/rev) & return
29th November		
Compass Tours	2xRiveria 47	Liverpool South Pky-Liverpool Lime Street -Rainhill-St. Helens Jct-Newton le Willows-Manchester Victoria-Stockport-Stratford upon Avon (break/rev) & return
NENTA Traintours	2xWCRC Cl47	North Walsham-Wroxham & Hoveton-Norwich-Wymondham-Attleborough-Ely-March-Peterborough- Keighley-Skipton & return
Past Time Rail	5029	(London Paddington-Slough-Reading-Didcot Parkway-Bristol TM)-Bristol TM-Hereford-Ludlow-Shrewsbury (break/rev) & return
Pathfinder Tours	EWS Class 67	Weston-super-Mare-Yatton-Bristol TM-Bristol Parkway-Cheltenham Spa-Worcester Shrub Hill-Kidderminster-Birmingham New St- York-Durham (break/rev) & return
Railway Touring Company	60009	London KX-Stevenage-Peterborough-Doncaster-(Doncaster-York (break/rev)-Doncaster)-Doncaster-London KX
Spitfire Railtours	2xWCRC 37	Poole-Bournemouth-Brockenhurst-Southampton Central-Southampton Airport Pky-Winchester-Basingstoke-Didcot Parkway-Banbury- Leamington Spa-Coventry-Birmingham International-Bescot-Crewe-Stockport-Manchester Victoria-Bolton-Chorley-Preston-Blackpool North (break/rev) & return
Steam Dreams	34067	(London Paddington-Beaconsfield-Banbury-Chester)-Chester-Banbury London Paddington & return
UK Railtours	2xEWS 67	London KX-Potters Bar-Stevenage-Peterborough- Skipton & return
WCRC	850	Carnforth- Wennington-Hellifield-York-Scarborough & return
30th November		
Past Time Rail	tbc	Manchester Victoria-Carnforth-Manchester **Cancelled**
Past Time Rail	45407	Manchester- Stockport-Chapel en le Frith-Buxton-Peak Forest-Chinley-New Mills-Guide Bridge-Manchester Victoria
3rd December		
Steam Dreams	60007	London Victoria-Ascot-Reading-Bath-Bristol TM & return
UK Railtours	2xEWS 67	Huntingdon-Stevenage-Potters Bar-London Finsbury Park-Bath Spa-Bristol Temple Meads (break/rev) & return
5th December		
SRPS	tbc	Linlithgow-Edinburgh Waverley-Drem-Berwick upon Tweed-Alnmouth-Morpeth-Cramlington-Newcastle Upon Tyne-Durham-York-Doncaster-Gainsborough-Lincoln (break/rev) and return
Steam Dreams	34067	London KX-Potters Bar-Stevenage-Lincoln (break/rev) & return
UK Railtours	2xEWS 67	London Euston-Bletchley-Corby-Melton Mowbray-Lincoln & return

Not all pick up/set down points are shown. Check with the operator before travelling any distance.

BLACK Charters expected to operate as booked. **RED** Tours cancelled by the operator
GREEN Tours postponed to a future date by the operator **BLUE** Provisional excursion
WCRC West Coast Railway Company
(Locations) in brackets on a steam tour listing indicates a diesel or electric-hauled section.

▼ ***SR Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35028* Clan Line *approaches Sole Street, through the multitude of lineside colours, on 15th November with the 11.55 Victoria to Whitstable VSOE Pullman luncheon special, with Class 67 No. 67025 on the rear.* Jonathan Makepeace**

The Week Ahead

After a subdued period of activity, the 'Christmas Rush' gets underway this week with a veritable glut of trains.

Steam Dreams lead the way with its'Cathedrals Express' from London King's Cross to York on 27th November being extended for operational reasons to Scarborough. The outward leg will be diesel hauled, with No. 'A4' Pacific No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* working the train throughout on the return. This is followed on 29th November with a positioning train for Battle of Britain class Pacific No. 34067 *Tangmere* from Chester to Paddington ahead of the locomotive working a season of trains for Steam Dreams prior to Christmas.

The Railway Touring Company meanwhile feature 'A4' No. 60019 *Bittern* from King's Cross to Doncaster on its 'Christmas White Rose' on 29th November. The train continues to York diesel hauled, as will be the return to Doncaster where the 'A4' will again take over for the return south.

Also on 29th November, 'Castle' 4-6-0 No. 5029 *Nunney Castle* makes a welcome mainline appearance on Past Time Rail's 'Ludlow Christmas Medieval Fayre' from Paddington, with steam haulage both ways between Bristol Temple Meads, via the Welsh Marches, Ludlow and Shrewsbury. West Coast sponsors a train in its own right on the same day, which is essentially a mainline test for 'LN' class 4-6-0 No. 850 *Lord Nelson* from Carnforth, via Wennington, Hellifield, Skipton, Leeds and York to Scarborough and back. This should provide a good test for No. 850, as it is rumoured to be the traction on a much more arduous job later in December from York to Edinburgh for the Railway Touring Company, as deputy for the unavailable 'A4' No. 60009 *Union of South Africa*.

Past Time feature again on 30th November, when the company operate from Manchester Victoria to Buxton with 'Black 5' 4-6-0 No. 45407. The outward run will be via Stockport and Chapel-en-le-Frith, while the return will take the freight-only line through Peak Forest.

Coincidentally, there are also six modern traction tours in operation, with UK Railtours leading the charge with EWS Class 67-hauled charters on 27th November from King's Cross to Worcester, which runs via Peterborough, Melton Mowbray and the West Midlands, and on 29th November, again from King's Cross to Skipton for the Grassington Dickensian Festival. Also heading for Skipton is Nenta Traintours with its final outing of 2008 from North Walsham and Norwich with West Coast Class 47s featuring.

Spitfire will be hoping for a trouble free (see separate story) day with the 'Christmas Cracker' from Poole to Blackpool North with a pair of West Coast Class 37s, which also offers a Manchester set-down. Pathfinder head for York, Darlington and Durham with a pair of EWS Class 67s from Weston-super-Mare and stations to Birmingham New Street, while Compass head in the reverse direction with the 'Festive Shakespearian' from Liverpool South Parkway to Stratford-upon-Avon with Riveira Class 47s at the helm.

Class 508 farewell railtour cancelled

A plan to celebrate the end of Class 508 operations for Southeastern in Kent on 13th December has been cancelled.

The proposed tour presented a number of operational problems that were eventually overcome, but in the end the price rendered the tour unviable.

▲ *LMS 'Black 5' 4-6-0 No. 45407 climbs to Copy Pit summit with the 'Cotton Mill Express' on 22nd November.* **Mick Langton**

Hastings DEMU visit to Folkestone Harbour

Hastings Diesels Limited in conjunction with the Remembrance Line Association will be running a railtour to Folkestone Harbour on 21st December.

The train will originate from Hastings (08.26), and will be routed via Tonbridge to London Victoria (10.47-11.00) where it will reverse and then travel via Maidstone East. The scheduled arrival time is 13.00, and will give passengers a little over two hours at the south coast resort. Standard fare options include £50 for the full return journey from Hastings, with options to join at London Victoria for £45 or a return trip to Victoria can be booked for £25. The Remembrance Line Association Ltd is dedicated to fight the planned closure of the steeply graded line and viaducts leading to the Harbour station as part of an extensive redevelopment plan which will see the harbour area converted into a marina. For more information and booking details go to www.hastingsdiesels.co.uk or www.theremembranceline.org.uk

Tornado completes final testing stage with 75mph ECML run

The next step for the new 'A1' Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado*, following it's highly successful loaded test run on 18th November from York to Newcastle-upon-Tyne and back, is to retire to the paint shop at the National Railway Museum (NRM) in York for painting into the early British Railways' version of the classic LNER apple green livery. The locomotive is due to be unveiled to covenanters on 13th December in a ceremony at the NRM.

The night of 18th November does require further comment, as the run was originally due to turn round at Tyne Yard, with the locomotive venturing no further than King Edward Bridge Junction to turn, but on the night the train was extended to Newcastle Central with the sponsorship of National Express, whose logo temporarily replaced the 'www.a1steam.com' website address on *Tornado's* tender, where it was greeted by a reported 2,000 spectators. It is good to see that the locomotive continues to attract enormous interest, both with the general public as well as the enthusiast community.

Looking into the future, 31st January and 1st February are important dates, as it is on these days that many of the covenanters will be able to sample what it is like to ride behind a Class A1 for the first time when No. 60163 operates between York and Newcastle on both days. It is understood that although these trains are earmarked for the use of covenanters, any spare seating may be made available to the public nearer the time.

A week later on 7th February, Tornado is due into King's Cross for the first time on a positioning move from York, in order to be in place to operate separate luncheon and dining trains for Steam Dreams on Valentines Day.

Later, the locomotive has two booked workings for Pathfinder, which include covering the York – Newcastle-upon-Tyne leg of a tour which originates at Cardiff on 12th March 2009, and on 10th October 2009, working the Settle & Carlisle portion of a trip from Worcester.

Incidentally, it can be confirmed that this will not be the loco's debut on the S&C, as this will happen earlier on a presently unspecified date for the A1 Steam Trust.

▲ *The end of the locomotive's testing run - Britain's newest steam locomotive 'A1' Pacific No. 60163 is pictured shortly after arrival at York in the early hours of 19th November.* **Steve Philpott**

by John Whitehouse

Zero tolerance to charter train anti-social behaviour after a heritage locomotive is almost banned from a charter service

There is concern within the charter movement of the possible future of heritage traction tours following incidents of bad behaviour on the Spitfire Railtour's 'Capital Whistler' on 15th November.

Reports indicate that the train was stopped at Leeds on the return journey as a result of two passengers being involved in a fight, which resulted in at least one person being removed from the train. As always, the conduct of a few seems to have blighted the reputation of many, as it seems most of the bad behaviour occurred in one coach, and Spitfire is currently conducting an investigation in an attempt to establish what happened and who were the culprits.

As with most such instances, excess alcohol consumption throughout the day appears to be a significant factor. Damage to the coaching stock was mainly as a result of spillage of food and drink, thus requiring additional expense to clean up the mess. However, damage to a window and door, initially thought to be a result of vandalism is now accepted to have been incurred by air pressure as a consequence of passing a National Express Class 91-hauled service in a tunnel.

Earlier, another passenger had been removed from the train upon arrival at King's Cross as a result of ignoring warnings not to engage in the act of excessively hanging out of door droplights and 'bellowing', as such acts are now treated with zero tolerance by Spitfire following problems on earlier tours.

All this is bad news at a time when economic conditions are likely to have an adverse effect on the charter market, as it must be remembered that such tours operate at the very marginal end of the business, with operators such as West Coast and EWS, who will both no doubt keep requests to run heritage diesel charters under review in the light of instances of bad behaviour, and which may well influence their willingness to operate such workings in the future.

▲ *Spitfire Railtour's 'The Capital Whistler' powers through Alexandra Palace on 15th November, bound for London King's Cross. Unfortunately, the behaviour of some passengers, not necessarily enthusiasts, has called into question the issue of passenger handling and behaviour.* **Chris Wilson**

Indeed, there were fears this week that the recent events could have already seen one casualty in the form of the CFPS Class 40 No. 40145, which was scheduled to be used on Rail Blue Charters' Lincoln working on 6th December.

Mark Honey of Rail-Blue Charters commented: "Due to a number of incidents that took place on the Spitfire Railtours Class 40-hauled charter on the 15th November, we were advised by WCRC that 40145 was no longer going to be allowed to operate on our charter from Shrewsbury to Lincoln on 6th December. However, I am pleased to advise that discussions between CFPS, WCRC and RBC has culminated in permission from WCRC to use 40145 for the charter on 6th December." It is understood that West Coast is believed to be keeping future use of the locomotive on its trains under review.

Indeed, Rail Blue Charters is also believed to be reviewing its policy of using heritage traction following incidents, again mainly alcohol related, on its Manchester to Minehead charter last month featuring Class 50s Nos. D444 *Exeter* and 50049 *Defiance*, which resulted in passengers enjoyment of the trip being spoilt by loutish behaviour and afterwards one coach being subject to a 'deep clean'. Mr Honey continued to say that: "It is alleged that some of the issues regarding the 15th November charter could have been related to the consumption of excessive alcohol. RBC wish to state that any misbehaviour on board any of its charters, alcohol related or not, will not be tolerated and dealt with in the strictest manner." This is a message that is being echoed across all aspects of the charter train industry and after the last week, the old adage of 'abuse it and lose it' does have more weight behind it than has previously been seen.

Meanwhile, Spitfire will be reviewing its procedures to ensure that the company's next charter involving a pair of West Coast Class 37s from Poole to Blackpool North on 29th November operates without incident, as further problems could well impact adversely upon them.

Other operators we have spoken to, who in the past have also suffered at the hands of so-called enthusiasts, say they have introduced procedures to deal with such behaviour, which include maintaining close contact with the locomotive owning societies to encourage them to 'self-police' trains that use their locomotive together, with a zero tolerance approach to trouble makers and individuals who ignore instructions concerning such matters as window hanging and smoking.

▲ *A 'Hoover' on Bethnal Green bank. Run in connection with the Bank Holiday Gala Day on 26th August 1991, the 10.00 Liverpool Street-Parkeston Quay-Clacton-Liverpool Street charter is powered by No. 50017 Royal Oak. A situation like this with people 'window hanging' is likely to cause problems today.* **Brian Morrison**

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▲ *On 21st December, the two mainline registered electric locomotives operated by the AC Locomotive Group, Class 86/1 No. 86101* Sir William A Stanier *and Class 87 No. 87002* Royal Sovereign *haul a Carnforth to Doncaster RMT empty stock working through Stafford, formed of the WCRC-owned Mk2 Manchester Pullman set. The train ran in preparation for the First GBRf staff train the following day from Doncaster to Edinburgh.*

▼ *Class 90 No. 90018 waits to proceed at Stafford station shortly after 06.00 on 19th November, while working the 01.17 Edinburgh Waverley to Euston First ScotRail sleeper service. Luckily for the photographer, overrunning engineering works on the Trent Valley enabled this photo to be taken.* **Both: Brad Joyce**

▲ *Class 57/3 No. 57303* **Alan Tracy** *departs from Holyhead with a return Arriva Trains Wales crew training run to Crewe on 20th November.* **Steve Morris**

▼ *Wrexham & Shropshire-liveried Class 67 No. 67013 crosses Chirk Viaduct with the 12.55 Wrexham - London Marylebone service on 22nd November.* **Nigel Capelle**

▼ *Class 92 No. 92016* **Brahms** *heads the 07.30 Doncaster Belmont-Dollands Moor loaded steel flats at Frinkley Lane crossing, Marston, on the East Coast Main Line on 11th November.* **Steve Philpott**

Moorgate : A six-line underground London interchange

The large rambling underground complex of Moorgate has three sub-surface London Underground lines and one Tube line, in addition to the termini platforms for First Capital Connect (FCC) trains to Welwyn Garden City, Letchworth Garden City and Stevenage and Thameslink services to Bedford.

London Underground four-car A60/A62 Stock operates the Metropolitan Lines between Aldgate and Watford, Uxbridge, Chesham and Amersham in eight-car formations, and two-car C69/C77 Stock is used in six-car formation for both the Circle Line trains and for those of the Hammersmith & City route between Hammersmith and Barking. The Northern Line has 1995 Stock and the deep platforms cater for trains between Morden and Edgware/High Barnet.

The local FCC services from Moorgate to the Hertfordshire termini operate on weekdays only, served by Class 313/0 EMUs, with the weekend trains running into King's Cross.

Thameslink trains are formed of either Class 319s or 317s and operate out of Moorgate only at peak times on weekdays, but are due to finish altogether in March next year due to construction requirements of the enhancement to the core Thameslink route. All the accompanying illustrations were taken on 7th November.

▲ *Both Circle and Hammersmith & City trains use the same C Stock from the same platforms. Here, a Circle Line inner service departs from Moorgate, with Driving Motor No 5719 on the rear.*

◀ *A Northern Line train from Morden to Edgware arrives at Moorgate, formed of 1995 Stock with Driving Motor No. 51611 leading.* **All: Brian Morrison**

▲ *First Capital Connect Class 313/0 No. 313044 departs from Moorgate, forming the 12.42 service to Welwyn Garden City..*

◀ *A Metropolitan Line service from Aldgate to Uxbridge departs from Moorgate, formed of A Stock with Driving Motor No. 5132 on the rear.*

◀ *Class 319/4 No 319455 and Class 317/1 No 317339 at Moorgate, the latter awaiting departure as the 15.35 First Capital Connect service to Bedford and the latter stabled awaiting the evening peak.*

The Blue & Grey Years

We continue our occasional photographic feature looking at the Blue & Grey years as Dave Simmonds looks at the Worcester area.

Reader's colour contributions for this section, either as scanned digital images, prints or colour slides are welcomed, via the editorial address.

▲ *Class 40 No. 40126 powers the lunchtime Bescot to Severn Tunnel Junction working through Worcester Shrub Hill on 29th July 1983. Of note, within the consist, is Class 08 No. 08444 which will be detached at Gloucester Yard for 'tripping' to Swindon Works.*

▼ *Class 20s Nos. 20188 and 20178 depart Worcester Shrub Hill on 27th October 1982 with an afternoon Bescot to Gloucester freight.*

The Blue & Grey Years

▲ *On 26th October 1982, Class 40 No. 40141 is stabled in the parcels bay at Worcester Shrub Hill, having arrived with an early morning Hereford - Paddington train following the failure of the booked loco. It had just been replaced by Class 50 No. 50027 for the onward journey to Paddington.*

▼ *The day before and Class 31/1 No. 31167 and Class 50 No. 50031 await departure from Worcester Shrub Hill.*
All: Dave Simmonds

Lakeside & Haverthwaite Diesel Weekend

▲ *The Autumn Diesel Gala on the Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway was graced with superb autumnal sunshine on 16th November. Here, resident Class 20 No. 20214 and Class 27 No. 27024 curve through Backbarrow with a Lakeside to Haverthwaite service.*

▼ *Later the same day and Class 27 No. 27024 approaches Newby Bridge station with a Haverthwaite to Lakeside service.* **Both: Fred Kerr**

Pontypool & Blaenavon announce 2009 events line-up

Running dates and events for the Pontypool and Blaenavon Railway in 2009 have been published.

Steam traction will be provided primarily by Devonport Dockyard No. 19, courtesy of the Bodmin and Wenford Railway and it is hoped to get a guest steam engine in for the 140th Anniversary Gala to celebrate the 140 years since the opening of the Brynmawr - Blaenavon section of line back in 1869 on 12th/13th September - and of course the popular 'Ivor the Engine' weekend will bring another steam engine to the railway.

Diesel traction will initially alternate between Class 73/1 No. 73128 and Class 31 No. D5627 (31203) until such time as Class 37 No. 37023 and Class 40 No. 216 are ready. The '37' is undergoing restoration off site and No. 37216 is on site having attention to the bodywork.

The April opening weekend is planned to feature No. 73128 with 4CEP EMU No. 1198 on Friday 10th April with No. D5627 likely to make its preservation debut on the following day. With at least three mainline diesels available for the July diesel gala a new Little Engines Weekend has been added on 6th/7th June "celebrating the unsung heroes of the railways".

This is to allow the industrial locomotives their moment in the sun and will feature all available diesel shunters and Number 19 working passenger services and possibly a freight or two. In addition to the motive power position, it s anticipated that the extension to Blaenavon High Level will be ready for opening at Easter 2010.

Excellent progress has been made and in the last three weekends a total of 215 wooden sleepers have been replaced with concrete ones from the Severn Valley Railway.

Lord Nelson - the future

It is understood that the National Railway Museum and Eastleigh Railway Preservation Society are negotiating with the Mid-Hants Railway to form an operating partnership for No. 850 *Lord Nelson*.

If successful, the loco will be based on the Mid Hants Railway and operated jointly by the partners, enabling mainline operation.

Improvements to GCR's Leicester North station

As part of a programme of works at Leicester North station, which has had new fencing put up and other security improvements, the Great Central Railway (GCR) is having contractors provide a new canopy over the platform to keep passengers dry.

The work is being split into two phases. Phase one, which started on 17th November is costing nearly £35,000 and covers the erection of heritage style steel work and roof supports in front of the station building. This has been funded through a recent section 1.06 planning grant to the GCR following building work on a new housing estate close to the station.

Phase two will cost an additional £30,000 to complete the roof and provide a glass roof and a traditional GCR wooden valance around the canopy edge. The railway is actively seeking grant funding for the second phase, which will go ahead as soon as possible.

The station was opened in 1991 as part of a southern extension for the railway. The station building was added in 2000. It is built just to the south of the original 1899 GCR station at Belgrave and Birstall.

▼ *The reflection of No. 10 G H Wood is caught in a large puddle as it nears Castletown on the Isle of Man with the 10:20 Douglas to Port Erin service on 30th October.* **Stuart Chapman**

Severn Valley awarded gold

Plans to blow up two landmark silos at the former British Sugar site in Kidderminster have been scrapped because of concerns over safety and loss of income for the Severn Valley Railway.

The silos will now be knocked down in stages using a giant 'nibbling' machine. Demolition is part of plans to develop the former site off Stourport Road, but under the original plan it would have been necessary to close the Severn Valley Railway for at least a complete weekend at a time when the railway is just getting over closures because of the flood damage caused last year.

Meanwhile, the Severn Valley is celebrating after gaining a clutch of tourism awards.

Just 16 months after the line between Kidderminster and Bridgnorth was devastated by flood damage, the railway has been voted top for its entertainment value, all-round excellence and remarkable reconstruction campaign. The railway beat all-comers to gain the gold medal for the Best Tourism Experience in the Heart of England Excellence in Tourism awards and is now set to go forward to compete against other regional winners in next year's national finals.

The railway was also chosen as having made the most outstanding contribution to tourism in the West Midlands.

SOUTH CHINA STEAM PHOTO TOUR

19 MARCH - 10 APRIL 2009

ANOTHER INTERESTING STEAM PHOTO TOUR TO INDUSTRIAL AND EXOTIC LOCATIONS!

After a very successful tour of North China, we are this time heading to the interesting South, which, whilst not having the huge mines of the North, offers some lovely scenic lines, as well as the more usual industrial locations.

Some of the lines are home to the now rare QJ type locos, which we should see still at work. Some time will also be spent enjoying the spectacular NG Shibanxi Railway, with coal, mixed freight and passenger services into the remote villages in the hills.

Please contact Jim Colley for full itinerary and prices for this fascinating tour.

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Diary

The editor welcomes details of forthcoming events, talks, slide shows, conferences, model railway exhibitions and club meetings for inclusion within this section.

Details should be sent via email to ***editor@railwayherald.co.uk*** and should include a brief outline of the event, including the speakers name if appropriate, date, time and location, together with contact details (either telephone, web or email). *Railway Herald* cannot accept any responsibility for any inaccuracies or events which are amended, cancelled or postponed. Information, such as advance programmes and club meeting line-ups can also be sent through the post to the editorial address.

24th November 2008

Permanent Way Institution (Ashford)
The Elwick Club, Church Road, Ashford (10 mins from Ashford Station).
'New Methods of Work with Geismar New Products' by Alan Leyland, Geismar UK, Northampton. Meeting commences at 18.30. Contact Ted Hamer on 01227 711897 or e-mail Teditorial@AOL.com for further details.

26th November 2008

Basingstoke & District Railway Society
Wote St. Club, New Road, Basingstoke.
'Trips around the world' by Ian Francis. Meeting commences at 20.00 Contact the society secretary on 01256 326096 for further details. Visitors welcome.

27th November 2008

Mid-Hants Railway Preservation Society (Thames Valley Group)
Church House, Church Street, Caversham, Reading.
'West Somerset Railway' presented by Keith Smith. Meeting commences at 19.30 for 19.45. A donation is requested

Locomotive Society of Great Britain (Croydon Branch)
United Reform Church Hall, Addiscombe Grove, East Croydon.
'Southern Africa in 1977' by Brian Manktelow. Meeting commences at 19.15.

RCTS (Brighton)
Brighthelm Church and Community Centre, North Road.
'Tales of an International Railway Journalist' by Chris Jackson. Meeting commences at 19.30.

RCTS (Preston)
Claremont Hotel, Blackpool Road. Branch AGM followed by 'A 40 Year Love of Trains' by Steward Leyland. Meeting starts at 19.30.

28th November 2008

Great Western Society (North West Group)
St Hilda's Clubroom, Slater Street, Latchford, Warrington.
Joint Meeting with '8E' Society. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Great Western Society (Oxford Group)
Pauling Human Sciences Centre, 58 Banbury Road, Oxford.
'Working with 6024' by Dave Fuszard. Meeting starts at 19.30.

Shropshire Railway Society
The Gateway, Chester Road, Shrewsbury.
'Slide show' by Steve Price. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact Colin Hatch 01691 650985 for details.

Stephenson Locomotive Society
The Mining Institute Lecture Theatre, Neville Hall, Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne.
'Coal - Murmansk to Merry-Go-Round' by David Stewart-David. Meeting commences at 19.00. Contact local secretary on 01434 688946 for further details.

29th-30th November 2008

N Gauge Society (Yorkshire Group)
Heworth Community Centre, Stray Road, York. Open Weekend. Saturday pm only, Sunday all day.

Railway Enthusiasts Club
The Garrison Sports Centre, Rawlinson Road, Northcamp, Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 2LQ Model Railway Exhibition. Saturday 10.30-17.30. Sunday 10.00-17.00. Adults £5.50, Children over 5 £2.00, under 5's free.

Swanage Railway
1960s Weekend: A mix of steam and diesel trains will operate on the Saturday with a wholly diesel operated service on the Sunday marking the change-over years between steam and diesel/electric on the Southern Region of BR.

1st December 2008

RCTS (Port Sunlight)
The Lever Club, Greendale Road, Port Sunlight. Members' Slides 30 per member on first generation Diesel & Electric Multiple Units. Meeting commences at 19.45.

2nd December 2008

Gravesend Railway Enthusiasts Society
Emmanuel Baptist Church, Windmill Street, Gravesend DA12 1BB. Christmas Social Evening with Refreshments. Meeting commences at 19.45. Contact Roger Hart on 01474 8333320 for further details

Locomotive & Carriage Institution
London Underground Limited HQ, St. James Park Station, London.
'Barrow Hill Roundhouse' by Mervin Allcock, Project Manager. Meeting starts18.00 Contact Stuart Smith, by Secretary email smithstuart@btinternet.com for further details.

Locomotive Club of Great Britain (Bedford Branch)
St John's Church Hall, St John's Street, Bedford. 'Scotland Part 3' by Chris Banks. Meeting starts 19.30.

Locomotive Club of Great Britain (North London Branch)
Wood Green Labour Club, 3 Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, London N22 5NJ. Annual Branch Quiz. Meeting starts 19.30.

Permanent Way Institution (Darlington & North East)
Railway Athletic Club, Brinkburn Road, Darlington.
'Settle and Carlisle Railway' by Robert Welsh, Network Rail. Meeting commences at 19.00 Contact Dave Lugsden on, mobile 07825 766328 or e-mail David. Lugsden@Networkrail.co.uk for further details.

Permanent Way Institution (Wessex Section)
The Freemantle Club, Waterloo Road, Southampton.
'The Bluebell Railway Northern Extension' by Chris White, Bluebell Railway Infrastructure Director. Meeting commences at 18.00. Contact Eddie Gosling on 01252 614558 or e-mail e.gosling@ntlworld.com for further details.

Permanent Way Institution (West Yorkshire)
The Pullman Room, The Golden Lion Hotel, 2 Lower Briggate, Leeds LS1 4AE.
'Confessions of a Railway Rambler' by Jane Ellis. Meeting commences at 18.30. Contact Martin Woofe on mobile 07747 160949 or e-mail abcts@daelnet.co.uk for further details.

RCTS (Watford)
St Thomas's United Reformed Church, Langley Road, Watford. Members Slides, Sausage Rolls & Mince Pies. Meeting starts 19.30.

Southern Electric Group (South Hampshire Branch)
Eastleigh Railway Institute in Romsey Road, Eastleigh. 'The Southern Electric 1909-1969' by Ted Goodman. Meeting starts at 19.30. Entrance fee £2

Yeovil & District Railway Society
Yeovil Sports & Social Club, Johnson Park, Yeovil.
'Annual Quiz & Buffet'. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact Roger Marsh on 01935 814367 or www.ydrs.org.uk for details.

3rd December 2008

Basingstoke & District Railway Society
Wote St. Club, New Road, Basingstoke. 'The 1952 Harrow & Wealdstone accident' by Peter Tatlow. Meeting commences at 20.00 Contact 01256 326096 for further details. Visitors welcome.

Burton Railway Society
Marston's Social Club, Shobnall Road, Burton-upon-Trent.
'Steam on Cine in the 1950s and 1960s' by Mike Clemens. Contact Mark Ratcliffe on 01283 221537 for further details for further details. Meeting starts at 19.30

Permanent Way Institution (Thames Valley)
Sussex House, Reading.
'Old Commercial Cine Films of Railway Civil Engineering Works' by Frank Banfield. Meeting starts at 17.45. Contact Peter Simmons, e-mail peter181102@yahoo.co.uk for further details.

RCTS (Ipswich)
St Thomas Church, Back Room, Bramford Lane, Ipswich.
;Branch Annual General Meeting followed by Members Slides & Seasonal Refreshments. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Stephenson Locomotive Society
Hayes Village Hall, Hayes Street, Hayes, Bromley. 'The Modern Railway - Out and About in the United Kingdom' by Bernie Holland. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact the Secretary on 0208 289 9935 for further details.

4th December 2008

Great Central Railway Society (Rotherham)
The Three Horseshoes, Bawtry Road, Wickersley.
'Members Evening – slides or digital' with buffet. Meeting starts at 19.00. Contact the secretary on 0114 254 0275 for details.

Irish Railway Record Society
The Exmouth Arms, 1 Starcross Street, London NW1 2HR
'Locos of the Great Southern Railway' by Michael McMahon. Meeting commences at 19.00.

Permanent Way Institution (Bristol & West of England)
Arup Auditorium, 63 St Thomas Street, Bristol.
Annual Inter Section Quiz. Meeting starts 18.00. Contact Phil Harrison on 0117 9765432 or e-mail philip.harrison@arup.com for details.

▲*Still carrying the livery and details of a previous owner, Class 47/0 No. 47145* **Myrddin Emrys** *(now denamed and owned by DRS) has been moved from Carlisle Kingmoor to Gloucester for assessment. The likelyhood being that a positive outcome could see the Advenza fleet gain an additional '47'.* **Lorraine Hopkins**

Permanent Way Institution (South & West Wales)
Kings Hotel, High Street, Newport. Annual Inter Section Quiz Meeting commences at 18.00. Contact Andy Franklin on 0207 557 8664. mobile 07824 410782 or e-mail Andy.Franklin@networkrail.co.uk.

Permanent Way Institution (Thames Valley)
Kings Hotel, High Street, Newport. Annual Inter Section Quiz. Meeting commences at 18.00. Contact Peter Simmons, e-mail peter181102@yahoo.co.uk for further details.

RCTS (Milton Keynes)
CIU Workingmens Club, London Road, Stony Stratford 'Christmas Evening with Members' Presentation' Meeting starts19.30.

Scottish Railway Preservation Society (Edinburgh Group)
Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh. Members' Slide Evening followed by Seasonal Refreshments. Meeting starts 19.30. Contact Dr Peter Howell on 0131 334 5232 for details.

Stephenson Locomotive Society
St John Ambulance Centre, Sandes Avenue, Kendal 'Preservation Aims and Progress at Kirkby Stephen East' by Stainmore Railway Company Ltd. Meeting commences at 19.15.Contact the Secretary on 01539 720706 for further details.

5th December 2008

Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway (Birmingham Area)
Northfield Library, Church Road, Northfield, Birmingham. 'Twenty years of mainline steam' by Malcolm Ranieri. Doors open 19.00 for 19.30 start.

Permanent Way Institution (Edinburgh)
The Scots Guards Club, 2 Clifton Terrace, Opposite Haymarket Station, Edinburgh. Technical Visit. Meeting starts 18.00. Contact Nicola Topping on 0141 555 4290, mobile 07919 127995 or e-mail nicola.topping@networkrail.co.uk. for further details.

Permanent Way Institution (Irish Section)
Royal Hotel, O'Connell Street, Dublin. Winter General Meeging. Meeting starts 14.00. Contact Tara O'Rourke on 00353 87 2943562 or e-mail tara.orouke@irishrail.ie for further details.

RCTS (Bristol)
St Peters Church Hall, Church Road, Filton. 'Images of European Steam - Vintage & Sound Cine Film' by Terry Nicholls. Starts 19.30

Stephenson Loco Society
Settlement Centre, Union Street, Middlesbrough. 'Doncaster Locomotive Works 1949-1955' by Bill Glasspoole. Meeting commences at 19.00. Contact 01642 321205 for further details.

6th December 2008

Locomotive Club of Great Britain (Main Club)
Victory Services Club, near Marble Arch. Christmas Reunion. Main Speaker Mark Allatt on 'A1 60163 Tornado'.

RCTS (West Riding Branch)
Visit to Crewe Basford Hall commencing at 11.00 plus Christmas Driinks. Contact Malcolm Riley on 01274 589488 or mobile 0788 7908501 for further details.

Stephenson Locomotive Society
The Friends Meeting House, Mount Street, Manchester. 'The Class 185 Introduction Project' by Paul Staples. Meeting commences at 14.00. Contact the Secretary on 0161 928 2461 for further details.

8th December 2008

Lincoln Railway Society
St Hugh's Church Hall, North Hykeham, Lincoln. 'A preservation miracle in medium format' by Simon Hopkins. Starts 20.00. Contact 01522 705365 for details.

Permanent Way Institution (London)
10th Floor Restaurant, 55 Broadway (LUL HQ), London. Christmas Quiz by Peter Lugg. Doors open 17.30 for 18.00. Contact Paul Gammage, e-mail pjgammage@aol.com for further details.

Internet Links
Further contact details for the clubs and societies listed can be obtained from our website by clicking here.

Should your club or society event be listed here? If so then please e-mail the Editor with the appropriate details, which should include the name of the society or group, postal address of the location that the event is being held, starting or opening times, speaker and talk title or attractions and publishable contact details.

RCTS (Northampton)
St Crispin Social Club, Berrywood Road, Duston. Branch Annual General Meeting followed by Christmas Entertainment. Starts 19.30.

RCTS (Sheffield)
St Mathews Church Rooms, Carver Street, Sheffield. 'The South Yorkshire Joint Railway' by Bob Gellatly. Meeting commences at 19.30.

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