The Railway Herald

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Front Cover

The first daylight appearance of a Hitachi Class 395 EMU into London St. Pancras International on 12th December found Class 395 No. 395002 performing the honours. The unit is pictured after arrival. **Brian Morrison**

Rear Cover

Refurbished Class 159/1 No. 159103 departs from Templecombe with the 12.25 South West Trains Paignton - London Waterloo service on 8th December. SWT Services west of Exeter will cease from December next year. **Hayden James**

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.

Newsdesk

Stone regains its passenger service after five years

▲ ***Stone in Staffordshire regained its rail service on 14th December after a period of five years. With local residents and enthusiasts out in force to witness the event and with a brass band playing Christmas carols, London Midland Class 350/1 No. 350123 arrives at Stone forming the 11.38 Crewe - London Euston, the first of the new service. The Mayor of Stone Town Council travelled on this train to take a gift to his counterpart at Atherstone, which had also been without its train service during the rebuilding of the West Coast Main Line.*** **Gary. S. Smith**

'That's Yer Lot!' from North Norfolk as biggest gala event in the line's 35 year history is confirmed

The North Norfolk Railway's M&GN 50th anniversary of closure steam gala, amusingly entitled the 'That's Yer Lot' gala, will be the biggest event ever held on the East Anglian line in its 35 year history.

The former Midland & Great Northern Joint Railway was closed on 28th February 1958, and between 27th February and 1st March and 7th/8th March, eight steam locomotives will be going 'home' to mark the event. Five guest locomotives will be taking centre-stage, representing types that worked the line in its heyday: B1 class 4-6-0 No. 1306 *Mayflower*, BR Standard '4MT' Mogul No. 76079, '4F' 0-6-0 No. 44422, ex-L&Y Class 27 0-6-0 No. 1300 and BR Standard '2MT' Mogul No. 78019. They will be joined by the North Norfolk's home fleet of 'WD' 2-10-0 No. 90775, 'J15' 0-6-0 No. 65462 and 'N7' 0-6-2T No. 69621.

General Manager Geoff Gowing said: "This is the biggest event we have ever hosted and we couldn't let the 50th anniversary pass without celebrating this event as it's part of the forming of the NNR. We are extremely lucky to be able to have these five unique visiting locomotives and on the 27th February, we will be devoting the operation to the visiting engines". Holt signal box is due to be reopened after re-commissioning a few weeks before the gala and will greatly enhance the operational flexibility of the intensive timetable that will be in use over the two weekends, which will feature a demolition train and the newly restored, award-winning Gresley 'Quad-Arts'.

In total, four passenger trains will be in use. The NNR's newly launched 'North Norfolkman' dining train will also be in use on the evening of 28th February, hauled by visiting 'B1' *Mayflower*. Advanced booking for this is highly recommended.

In keeping with the closure theme, there will be a free rail replacement bus service provided by former Eastern Counties buses of the period. These will operate between the three NNR stations of Sheringham, Weybourne and Holt on all five days of the Gala. Additionally, there will be special vintage bus tours of sections of the closed M&GN in Norfolk with renowned railway author Adrian Vaughan as guide. These tours will operate on Sundays only, with the morning tour covering the line towards Norwich and the afternoon over the route towards King's Lynn, heading as far as Massingham.

Away from the NNR and 'rising from the ashes' on 28th February, the M&GN station at Whitwell & Reepham will be opening its doors to the public for the first time in 50 years. The station will play host to visiting Peckett No. 2000, returning to its East Anglian roots, having formally worked at the British Sugar Corporation in Ipswich.

For further details visit www.nnrailway.co.uk or phone 01263 820800.

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▲ *The end of an era. History was made on 13th December when London Midland ran the last 'heavy rail' trains on the short but steeply graded, branch from Stourbridge Junction to Stourbridge Town. A local initiative ensured that the day did not go un-noticed, with the DMU for the day, London Midland-liveried Class 153 No. 153334 carrying a headboard at each end proclaiming '1879 Stourbridge Junction Stourbridge Town 2008'. A Parry People Mover (PPM) is due to take over the service, but as testing has yet to be completed the diagram will be covered by a bus until the full PPM testing is achieved. A local driver, whose favourite turn was covering the 'branch' diagram has calculated that in his career he has traversed the line around 34,000 times! On 13th December, the '153' eases out of Stourbridge Town for the climb back to 'The Junction'.* **John Whitehouse**

Cliff Railway to community group?

Torbay councillors are being recommended to rubber stamp the progress on applying to the Secretary of State for a new order to allow management of the Babbacombe Cliff Railway to be transferred to a community group.

The council has already been told the process could cost a minimum of £41,000 and take six months to finalise, but if there are lots of objections leading to a public inquiry, it could take up to 14 months and legal fees would be greatly in excess of this sum. The council has set aside £35,000 from the cliff railway budget to pay for the new order, and will fund the remaining £6,000 from its repair and maintenance budget. Public consultation has started with advertisements in the London Gazette. Objections had to be lodged with the Secretary of State for Transport by 11th December, and the council wants to grant the Friends of Babbacombe Cliff Railway a 40-year lease.

The approval, which is expected to be granted next year, would allow the volunteers to run the railway on a not-for-profit basis and plough all the income into improvements.

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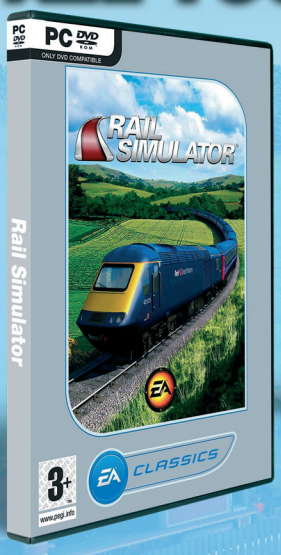

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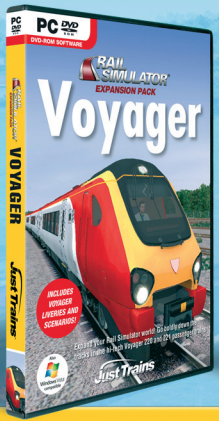

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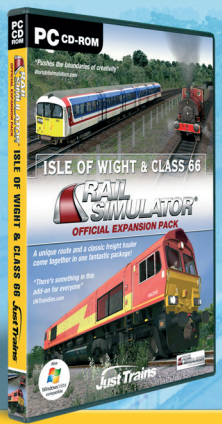

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Countdown to Kent high-speed commuter service begins

The one-year countdown to the commencement of high-speed commuter services from Kent to London St. Pancras International via High Speed 1 (HS1) was marked on 12th December.

Southeastern-branded Class 395 'Javelin' No 395002 paid its first daylight visit to southeastern's platform 13 at St Pancras International, carrying the Minister of State for Transport, Lord Andrew Adonis, who joined the train at the Hitachi Depot at Ashford.

No. 395002 is one of four of the six-car units at present in the country for trials and is to be joined by the 25 production series sets from Hitachi before September next year. The first of these, No. 395005 has already started its sea journey from Hitachi's factory in Kasado, Japan and is scheduled to arrive in Great Britain in January, together with two cars from unit No. 395006. The shipment follows successful testing of the first four units on the line between Ashford and St Pancras.

With most of the trials and shake-down tests having now been completed, the '395s' will be employed on mileage accumulation runs over the next nine to 10 months prior to being accepted. In order to do this, shadow running will commence in the new year and *Railway Herald* understands that the possibility does exist for a very limited high-speed service to start earlier than the December timetable change, subject to unit acceptance and staff training being completed in good time.

The 'Javelins' are capable of 140mph on HS1 and the run on 12th December more than halved the average Ashford-London journey time of currently 83 minutes to just 37 minutes.

▲ ***With the Minister of State for Transport on board, Class 395 No. 395002 forms the first official arrival and also the first daylight arrival for the Class into London St. Pancras International on 13th December, with a special working from Ashford Depot.***

▶ ***The bright interior to the Class 395 'Javelin' trains is shown off during the media and stakeholder viewing on 13th December.*** **Both: Brian Morrison**

Major enhancements for Scottish Rail network, but Glasgow CrossRail is off the agenda

The Scottish Government has unveiled its Strategic Transport Projects Review, setting out investment plans for the next 20 years.

Much of the document relates to roads and includes a new toll-free Forth crossing, estimated to cost around £2 billion. However, rail does get a reasonable look-in with plans for electrification of the rail network and major enhancements to the link between Glasgow and Edinburgh, aimed at reducing the journey time to 35 minutes and increasing the number of services from five or six to 13 per hour.

The Aberdeen Crossrail scheme is back on the table and there are to be improvements to the services between Aberdeen and Inverness. Also, the creation of a station at Kintore is to be considered.

Other major factors are improvements in Glasgow, including the construction of new city centre stations linking the rail networks to the north, south and east of the city, and the development of a Metro/ Light Rapid Transit network across Glasgow. Faster, and more frequent services, linking Fife, Aberdeen, Inverness, Edinburgh, Perth and Glasgow are envisaged, aiming to reduce journey times between Inverness and the central belt by up to 30 minutes, and cut the journey between Aberdeen and Edinburgh by up to 20 minutes. Upgrading of the Haymarket interchange is on the agenda, and also in the capital, there are plans for a new station at Gogar to integrate with the Edinburgh tram network and provide an onward connection for passengers using Edinburgh Airport. A new national integrated ticketing scheme to allow people to travel across all forms of public transport using just one ticket is proposed and there is also the likelihood of rail and road infrastructure work to improve freight links from the major terminals at Grangemouth, Mossend and Coatbridge to key points in both Scotland and England.

One anticipated item NOT to be included, however, is the £130 million Glasgow Crossrail plan to link Glasgow Central and Glasgow Queen Street stations, which would have allowed people from Ayrshire and the south to travel to Glasgow and on to Edinburgh and beyond without changing stations.

Many Scottish Parliament members were very critical of the omission, saying that it was a 'missed opportunity' and that the project as put forward by Strathclyde Partnership for Transport was 'realistic, cost-effective and deliverable, providing economic benefits not just to Glasgow but to the whole of Scotland'.

Devon Class 142 units head back north

▲ *In what appears to be a repeat of history, the appearance of some members of the Class 142s, recently transferred to First Great Western, is to be short-lived. It is understood that five of the units on loan to FGW, Nos. 142004/028/062/067/070, are returning to Northern Rail for the start of the new timetable. Only 12 Class 142s carry the old 'Gold Star' livery of First North Western, as all the remaining units allocated to the Northern TOC have been repainted into Northern Rail's own colours. First Great Western-liveried Class 142 No. 142004 awaits a path through Chester Station on 8th December.* **Mark Riley**

Cotswold Line blockade for upgrade work

Parts of the Cotswold Line are scheduled to be closed for six weeks during next summer.

A blockade will be put up in mid to late July and remain in place for six weeks to allow the 'redoubling' of the line to make trains more reliable and frequent. Network Rail has decided to carry out the work during the school summer holidays when they envisage fewer people will use the trains, with the project expected to extend until at least the end of August.

The first two weeks of the work are expected to concentrate on the area between Evesham and Hanborough and the remaining four weeks are set to take place on the line between Evesham and Moreton. There is also expected to be a closure in 2010 for one or two weeks with a view to the project being completed by October. In order to facilitate the project, Network Rail is to arrange for preparatory works to take place early next year, which will include clearing vegetation and installing new signalling cables.

❖ Hanson Aggregates is reported to be mothballing its rock quarrying operations at Penmaenmawr after losing a rail ballast contract with Network Rail. Up to 16 jobs are likely to go as a result of the decision, the loss of the contract coming on top of a significant decline in the construction market, which has already had a severe impact on output of other stone products from the site. The asphalt and ready-mixed concrete production plants at the site will continue to operate as normal, and the sale of stone for the local market will also continue from existing stocks. Penmaenmawr quarry has supplied rail ballast to the rail network via Crewe for almost a century.

❖ Bath station is to have a £10 million facelift as part of the new transport interchange being undertaken at the SouthGate centre that will represent a 21st century gateway into the city. The work is due to begin early next year.

❖ Haymarket station was shut to passengers from about 18.00 on the evening of 5th December after a power failure plunged it into darkness. The closure caused extreme problems outside the station during the evening peak period, with British Transport Police ushering people away and advising them to move on to Waverley. A team from Scottish Power carried out emergency repairs and said there had been a cable fault at Dalry Road. First ScotRail ran a bus shuttle between Haymarket and Waverley.

❖ Following on-going business growth within the coal sector, First GBRf has opened a new coal headquarters in Doncaster and created a new role as Head of Coal within its operation. John Smith, Managing Director of First GBRf said: "We are really excited about the opening of our new office in the heart of the UK's coal operation. It will not only add to our existing facilities in the Port of Tyne and Peterborough, but also because of its location, management of our coal business will now become local to the customer, allowing us to further strengthen our relationships with coal suppliers and users." Taking on the new role as Head of Coal will be First GBRf's contract manager Phil Webster. Having worked in the railway industry for over 30 years he will bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to the post, with previous roles including head of customer service for the coal division at EWS and prior to that various positions within the coal sector for British Rail.

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Work starts on Northern Line's Goodge Street

Tube Lines has started the planned modernisation work on the Northern Line station of Goodge Street, the work being designed to bring the look of the station up to date.

Built in 1907, it was first called Tottenham Court Road before it was changed in 1938 when a separate interchange station was built to link the Northern and Central lines. Goodge Street has the typical red terracotta façade designed by Leslie Green, the British architect, well known for his historical station designs. The oxblood red symmetrical exterior of the station was designed with a separate entrance and exit system and is one of the few Tube stations that still have this. The use of these separate entrances is paramount to enable the 13,000 plus passengers a day to make their way in and out of the station with minimum congestion as they have to depend solely upon lifts rather than escalators to get to and from platforms. This system does not look set to change anytime soon and will be beneficial to the contractors when doing the upgrade work on the platforms. This is because the lifts prove to be a time-saving and efficient way of transporting equipment around the station. The modernisation work will include general redecoration of the platforms interior and exterior areas, giving the location a fresh look in keeping with the surrounding areas. New signs will be more prominent throughout the station and there will be new lighting to brighten up the passages and the platforms.

Make-over for Oval and Clapham too

The London Underground stations of Oval and Clapham on the Northern line, which are both over a century old, are to receive a modern makeover from Tube Lines to lift them into the 21st Century.

Walls and floors will be cleaned and repaired, passageways re-painted and lighting improved to lift their overall ambience. As far as the communication systems are concerned it will be a case of 'out with the old and in with the new' as each station will be equipped with new and improved passenger information systems, CCTV and fire systems. Work has already started and both stations will be completed by May next year.

ODA provides £80 million for Docklands upgrade work

Docklands Light Railway is to get £80 million from the Olympic Delivery Authority for improvements being made on the network for the 2012 London Olympics and Paralympics.

It is said that these will assist in boosting passenger numbers from the present 67 million per annum to 100 million by 2012.

The money received will contribute to the extended six-car platforms, the additional trains and coaches (the first of which are now in service), expanding the network with four new stations at Abbey Road, Star Lane, Stratford High Street and Stratford International, all of which are on the Stratford International extension and will provide residents in the area with better and more frequent connections to the Olympic Park and other 2012 venues. In addition, the various upgrades will provide a much-enhanced system for years to come.

A tale of two stations ... linked by one line!

▲ *A Victoria Line service from Brixton arrives at its to Walthamstow Central destination on 6th December, formed of 1967/72 Stock with Driving Motor No. 3003 leading.*

▼ *The 13-mile long Victoria Line is, with the exception of the ex-BR Waterloo & City line, the only underground route to be entirely underground. Here, a service from Walthamstow Central to Brixton arrives at its destination on 6th December, formed of 1967/72 Stock with Driving Motor No. 3011 leading.* **Both: Brian Morrison**

Fujitsu wins ticketing technology contract

The Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) has signed a £13 million, five-year contract renewal for Fujitsu to upgrade the technology supporting key ticket sales services.

The Rail Journey Information Service (RJIS) provides data vital to ticket sales, including timetables, fares and route planning, as well as ticketing and transaction services. This is sent to all ATOC members, including Eurostar, Gatwick Express and First ScotRail. It is also provided to the National Rail Enquiry Service, online retailers, and nearly 500 stores selling tickets.

The service provider initially developed RJIS in the 1990s, moving ATOC's ticketing systems onto a single platform. Fujitsu will also upgrade the RJIS database, to better handle a range of requests at ticket machines. With a 25% annual growth in online ticket sales, there is a growing demand for ticket collection services at the machines.

Each day, RJIS processes one million ticket transactions, plans 80,000 rail journeys and responds to 820,000 enquiries. It stores 300 million possible fare combinations, and links in to 1,600 ticket machines at stations.

▲ ***Class 67 No. 67029* Royal Diamond *was in charge of the EWS Company train on 12th December when the set visited locations in East London connected with the forthcoming Olympics. The train is seen passing through Stratford with the Bow Olympic to Dagenham Down Yard section of the booked working.*** **Stuart Chapman**

Funding for borders and Northern Ireland work starts

The Scottish Government is has agreed to provide additional funding to the Borders Railway Project for preparatory work to take place.

Up to £1 million will be allocated before the end of the current financial year in March 2009 to allow such work to begin. The additional money being committed will be used to develop and prepare the line when actual rail construction begins in 2010, the advance works involving the diversion of key utility services along the route of the railway and other major associated works.

Meanwhile, Northern Ireland Railways has announced the beginning of the second phase of works to upgrade the Derry to Belfast line. The number of passengers on the route has jumped by 20%, with more people set to use the line as journey times between the first and second cities in the North are slashed as a result of the new works. The project aims to offer faster, more comfortable journeys, maintain high safety standards, improve drainage and remove current speed restrictions, allowing trains to run at 70mph. The second phase of the project will concentrate on the Coleraine to Ballymena stretch of the line.

First visit of Class 221 to Wrexham

The first-ever visit of a Virgin Voyager set to Wrexham, Class 221 No. 221103 *Christopher Columbus* occurred on 8th December.

The run was undertaken mainly for assessment of platform clearances and siting of '4/5 Car' stop signs on Platforms 1 and 2.

Virgin Trains' spokesperson Steven Knight confirmed to *Railway Herald* that the company has a new Track Access agreement, which came into operation at 02.00 on Sunday 14th December. He said "The new Track Access Agreement was approved by the ORR last Monday and signed by both Virgin Trains and Network Rail before noon on Wednesday 10th December. The agreement also includes the Wrexham operation."

The new Track Access Agreement means that the original PUG2 deal - the plan for 140mph operation on the West Coast - agreed with Railtrack has now been formally cancelled. It applied up until 01.59 and 59 seconds on 14th December.

The service departs from Wrexham at 07.00, arriving in London Euston at 09.38 and returning at 18.10, arriving back in Wrexham at 20.44.

▲ ***Class 221 No. 221103* Christopher Columbus *stands in Platform 2 at Wrexham General having arrived on a trial run, via Chester, prior to the start of Virgin's new Wrexham-London Euston services on 14th December.*** **Mark Riley**

▲ *The economic downturn, which has seen a drop in demand for plasterboard has seen a corresponding decrease in the number of gypsum trains being operated. During the week commencing 8th December, First GBRf operated a Cottam - Kirkby Thore service in the path of the normal Drax - Kirkby Thore working which is pictured on 11th December accelerating away from Ribblehead Viaduct behind Class 66/7 No. 66722 Sir Edward Watkin.* **Fred Kerr**

New CCTV system introduced by EMT at Long Eaton station

Passengers travelling from Long Eaton station are the first to benefit from the pilot of a new improved CCTV monitoring system.

East Midlands Trains has chosen Long Eaton to trial the new system, which will potentially be provided to a number of its other 87 stations next year. The new digital system provides live images directly to East Midlands Trains Integrated Control Centre (ICC) in Derby, which is manned round the clock. The team at the centre work closely with Network Rail and manage the smooth running of the railway in the East Midlands area.

The new cameras move away from a VHS system that simply records images for future reference, i.e. not available to be viewed live, to a state of the art digitally recorded system that can be monitored live in the ICC. This is made possible by the use of broadband technology.

Rob Mason of East Midlands Trains said: "We hope that the new CCTV system here at Long Eaton will give passengers a sense of reassurance. Knowing that images are being beamed live over a secure internet connection to a control centre should provide people with an added sense of security when using the station here at Long Eaton, particularly at times when the ticket office is closed."

Mr Mason continued: "An added bonus is that on occasions when we have service disruption, the live images will enable our control team here in Derby to better manage the situation out at stations, helping us to get trains running on time again sooner than would otherwise be possible. It is our intention during the East Midlands Trains franchise to spend £90 million on improvements for passengers, including better facilities at stations, refurbished trains and depot upgrades".

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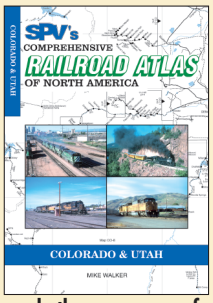

It is nearly fourteen years since the first COLORADO & UTAH edition of SPV's COMPREHENSIVE RAILROAD ATLAS OF NORTH AMERICA was published during which time much has once again changed following the mergers of Burlington Northern and the Santa Fe and the merger of Southern Pacific into Union Pacific. In addition to general updating, this new edition has been expanded with additional enlargements to show complex areas in greater detail and includes for the first time the interurban electric lines, light rail and principal logging railroads. Also shown are proposed extensions to the Denver and Salt Lake City light rail systems.
The Atlas shows all currently operated common carriers, tourist and major industrial railroads along with abandoned routes. £ 16.50 (FREE UK & European p&p)

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CHRISTMAS BARGAINS

Canadian Pacific's Mountain Sub & Rogers Pass

The description 'superb, magnificent and overwhelming' even though vastly overused cannot adequately do justice to the scenery on CPs Mountain Sub, the line over Rogers Pass. The line runs through the Rockies and the Selkirks and is a challenge even to today's high horsepower locos. It is one of the most difficult places in the world to run a railroad with narrow valleys, steep grades and heavy snowfalls with the attendant risk of avalanches. AC4400s and SD90MACs challenge the grades and big as they are, they are dwarfed by the magnificent snow covered peaks. The engineering difficulties in building Rogers Pass, CP's crossing of the Continental Divide, were formidable as were the problems facing CP when they built the new line through Rogers Pass (opened May 1989). The sub runs for 125 miles from Field to Revelstoke, British Columbia, through some of the most spectacular scenery on the continent. Shot in June 1999 all the famous locations are seen, including both old and new Stoney Creek bridges, Mount MacDonald and Shaughnessy tunnels.

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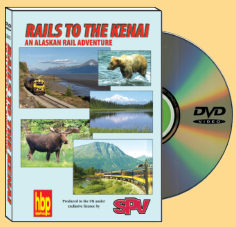

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Ohio Central

In September, 2001, ex-Grand Trunk Western 4-8-4 6325 returned to the High Iron after completing a thorough overhaul by the Ohio Central Railroad. See this magnificent loco run over the OHCR's ex-Pennsy main line between Dennison and Columbus, Ohio. See beautifully photographed trackside, in-cab, and pacing sequences, along with rare archive film footage of the 6325 and other GTW steam power in regular freight and passenger service. As a bonus, there is exciting coverage of ex-CN 4-6-0 1551 on the regular Sugar Creek excursion runs, plus highlights of the OHCR's first railfan weekend featuring the 1551, ex - CP 4-6-2 1293, and ex-Buffalo Creek & Gauley 2-8-0 13 in action!

by Mark1 ***110 mins • colour • narration***

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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.

16th December			
Steam Dreams	34067	London Victoria-East Croydon-Guildford- Winchester & return	
18th December			
Steam Dreams	30777	London Waterloo-Woking- Sherborne & return	
20th December			
Past Time Rail	45407/76079	Manchester Victoria-Copy Pit-Manchester	**Cancelled**
Past Time Rail	6024	Newport-Bristol TM-Taunton-Exeter SD- Paignton-Kingswear & rtn	
Past Time Rail	6024	Cardiff Central- London Paddington & return	**Cancelled**
Pathfinder Tours	D1015	Swindon-Didcot Parkway-Reading-London Liverpool Street-(Cl67) London Liverpool Street-Cambridge-Ely-Wymondham (sd for Norwich)-Acle-Great Yarmouth (break/rev)-Great Yarmouth-Reedham-Norwich (break/rev)-ipswich-Colchester-London Liverpool Street (D1015) & return (EWS Class 67)	
Railway Touring Company	30777	(Huddersfield-Dewsbury-Leeds-York)- York-Newcastle upon Tyne-Edinburgh (break/rev) (& return)	
Steam Dreams	60007	London KX-Potters Bar-Cambridge- Norwich & return	
UK Railtours	EWS 67 (pair)	Ealing Broadway-Southport & return	**Cancelled**
Vintage Trains	86259	Birmingham NS-Wolverhampton-Manchester Piccadilly & return	
Vintage Trains	86259 & 47773	Manchester Piccadilly-Hadfield & return	
21st December			
Hastings Diesels Limited	Hastings DEMU	Folkestone Harbour-Hastings-Battle-Etchingham-Tunbridge Wells-Tonbridge-London Victoria-Folkestone Harbour & return	
Past Time Rail	6024	Bristol TM-Taunton-Exeter SD- Paignton-Kingswear & return	
Railway Touring Company	45407	Liverpool Lime Street-St. Helens Jct-Manchester Victoria-Rochdale-Wakefield Kirkgate-Normanton-Church Fenton-York & return	
22nd December			
Steam Dreams	34067	London Victoria-Bromley South-Tonbridge- Dover & return	
29th December			
Pathfinder Tours	Hanson Cl 56	Derby-Burton upon Trent-Tamworth HL-Coleshill Parkway - Birmingham New St-Wolves-Codsall-Telford Central-Wellington-Shrewsbury (pu)-Crewe - Warrington Bank Quay-Blackburn-Hellifield-S&C-Carlisle (break/rev)-Shap-Preston-Warrington Bank Quay & return (Hanson Class 56/3)	
3rd January			
Past Time Rail	40145	Rawtenstall-Heywood-Manchester Victoria- Preston-Shap-Carlisle-Carstairs-Edinburgh (break/rev) & 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.

▼ ***Class A4 Pacific No. 60019 Bittern approaches Putney on 9th December, bound for the Mid-Hants Railway at Alton, with its support coach.*** **Brian Morrison**

The Week Ahead

The 'Christmas Season' peaks this coming week, after which most people can relax, put their feet up and get stuck into the turkey and associated beverages. Before then, however, there is much to be done and for all those involved in charter operations a well-earned rest is just over a week away.

Steam Dreams maintains its punishing schedule with a further three tours, commencing with a London Victoria to Winchester working with Battle of Britain Pacific No. 34067 *Tangmere* on 16th December. Two days later, and 'King Arthur' 4-6-0 No. 30777 *Sir Lamiel* is again in action from London Waterloo (where it does not have a gauging issue) via Salisbury to Sherbourne.

The third hectic week in succession then draws to a close on 20th December with 'A4' Pacific No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* heading a London King's Cross – Norwich train, which runs via Cambridge. Incidentally, at Norwich it will be side-by-side with No. D1015 *Western Champion* (see below), as the Steam Dreams tour is booked to depart for King's Cross at 17.17 and the Pathfinder to Liverpool Street at 17.43. Different generations, but both great machines!

The steam tour of the week, though, should conclude a busy few days for *Sir Lamiel*, as following its run on the 18th December 'Cathedrals Express', it is due to move north to, perhaps, become the first 'King Arthur' to work north of the border with the Railway Touring Company's' Heart of Midlothian on 20th December. The steam section is from York via Newcastle-upon-Tyne to Edinburgh. There is a 'but', which is up to a few days ago the locomotive had not been gauged for the route. This train has become something of a nightmare for RTC, as the original specification had No. 60009 *Union of South Africa* in the frame, which was withdrawn from mainline activity following a spate of failures, to be replaced by No. 850 *Lord Nelson* which has yet to make a mainline return following its withdrawal in 2007 with serious firebox issues. RTC's last tour of 2009 is booked for 21st December with 'Black 5' 4-6-0 No. 45407 operating another 'Yuletide York Express' from Liverpool Lime Street to York, via Manchester Victoria, Rochdale and the Calder Valley.

Past Time has a 'Yuletide Torbay Express' operating on both 20th & 21st December, with the former running steam-hauled from Newport via Bristol Temple Meads to Kingswear outwards, but only as far as Bristol Temple Meads on the return, with the final leg to Newport being diesel-hauled. The inclusion of Newport is to cater for passengers booked on the now cancelled 'Capitals United Express' from Cardiff to Paddington, which was also due to operate on 20th December, but was cancelled as EWS could not resource two steam-hauled charters on the same day. The Sunday train operates as advertised, with 'King' 4-6-0 No. 6024 *King Edward I* booked to provide the traction on both services.

However, if modern traction is more to your liking, then 20th December is a vintage day for heritage locomotives. Three outstanding tours operate, each providing something new; Class 86 activity between Birmingham New Street and Manchester Piccadilly is, perhaps, not exactly new, but a Class 86 to Hadfield is! The tour, organised by Vintage Trains on behalf of BBC Radio WM's 'Kidney Kids' Appeal to raise £1.5 million towards a new kidney unit at Birmingham Children's Hospital is due for haulage by Class 86/2 No. 86259 *Les Ross*. As *Les Ross* both owns the locomotive and is a famed presenter with Radio WM, it is natural that No. 86259 should have the honours. It will ▶

▲ *The image of SR 4-6-0 No. 30777* **Sir Lamiel** *is reflected in standing water from the previous night's rain, as it powers through Vauxhall with a Steam Dreams working to Salisbury on a cold, sunny 9th December.* **Ian Docwra**

Jacobite, Cambrian and Scarboroughs for 2009

With Christmas looming, there will be few thoughts of the summer ahead, but to lighten things up a little, the West Coast Railway Company has announced details of its 2009 season.

'The Jacobite' will always take pride of place, and its silver anniversary season will run from 18th May until 9th October, operating weekdays only, and for the high season from 27th June until 30th August, it will run daily.

It is planned to continue building 'The Cambrian' brand, which in 2009 will be extended to run through to Pwllheli from Machynlleth each day, picking up at Dovey Junction, Aberdovey (instead of Tywyn), Barmouth, Harlech, Minford and Porthmadog. The season will be from 27th July to 28th August, running each weekday.

Finally there is 'The Scarborough Spa Express', which is due to operate Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 21st July to 27th August on the same itinerary as before, namely York, Harrogate and Leeds, back to York and then onwards to Scarborough. It is hoped that an earlier path can be obtained from Scarborough, leaving about one hour earlier than this year's operation, which gives an earlier arrival back in York (either before or after the Harrogate Circle leg) which will give more options for passengers.

The Week Ahead

◀ work the main charter throughout, plus the Manchester Piccadilly to Hadfield leg of the add-on special, with the return being handled by Tyseley's Class 47/7 No. 47773. It is possible to pay on the day for the Hadfield trip; contact Vintage Trains on 0121 708 4960 for full details of both specials.

On the same day is the long awaited return of the Hastings DEMU to the mainline following a prolonged absence, during which TPWS, OTMR and central door locking equipment was fitted to the train. Co-promoted by Hastings Diesels Ltd and the Remembrance Line Association Ltd, the tour heads for Folkestone Harbour some eight months after the branch was supposed to have closed (see separate story). An additional feature is the now obligatory 'dummy departure' of the train from the Harbour station up the steeply inclined 1 in 30 branch to Folkestone East sidings, and return. The tour originates at Hastings and travels via Battle, Etchingham, Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge to London Victoria, where it reverses and heads for the coast. It is understood that there may be some limited seats available for the Hastings to London Victoria section, but from Victoria to Folkestone the train is a sell-out. Go to www.hastingsdiesels.co.uk for further information, but it can be confirmed that tickets for the shuttle between Folkestone Harbour and Folkestone East can be purchased on the day from stewards on the train.

However, tour of the day is probably edged by Pathfinder with its 'Great Eastern Western' which takes No. D1015 *Western Champion* into East Anglia for the first time. The tour originates at Swindon and is Class 67-hauled through to London Liverpool Street, where the 'Western' takes over for the run to Great Yarmouth via Hackney Down, Cheshunt, Cambridge, Ely, Thetford and Reedham. Following a short break, the train then returns to Norwich, booked via Acle, for a further break prior to a dash up the Great Eastern mainline through Diss, Ipswich and Colchester, back to Liverpool Street, where the train reverts to Class 67 haulage for the return to Swindon.

◀ *LNER 'A4' Pacific No. 60007* **Sir Nigel Gresley** *sits at Didcot Parkway with the return leg of Steam Dreams' 'Cathedrals Express' from Oxford to London Victoria on 11th December. Here, the 'A4' awaits departure to the capital.* **Mike Cole**

How West Coast and S&C steam survive in 2009

With the upgrade of the West Coast Main Line now virtually complete, the new Virgin timetable, which boasts of providing an additional 1,000 trains each week, was launched on 14th December.

A consequence of this is that the Network Rail planners have now been able to concentrate on additional paths for charter operations. The lack of paths south of Crewe has been a major handicap to charter operators over the past few years, with, in recent times the re-modelling of Rugby being the most significant obstacle. The Euston to Crewe corridor is important as it can get trains from London and the south-east to the gateway for the north-west quickly, thus opening up many options for the Cumbrian Coast, Shap and the Settle & Carlisle, as well as north of the border. There are now two identified charter paths on Saturday mornings between Euston and Crewe, with balancing return paths in the evening.

Equally significant in recent years has been the difficulty in pathing steam over the Settle & Carlisle due to the increase in freight workings along that line. Now, due to new signalling arrangements, which have created three new block sections between Horrocksford Junction on the Blackburn to Hellifield line and Appleby means that there are now four charter paths each way on Saturdays.

A long running issue has also been resolved, as the revised signalling arrangements mean that the Blackburn–Clitheroe service will not effectively block the line for an hour, which in the past has contributed to delays. All this represents a substantial improvement in capacity, so look out for a more detailed article concerning the Settle & Carlisle in a future issue.

Then there is the West Coast Main Line, which is going to see a much more intensive Virgin timetable with both Pendolino and Voyager services. Speculation has been rife for some time that the introduction of the new timetable would spell the end of charter trains over Shap, which has been one of the most sought after routes for steam-haulage, particularly in recent years. The problem facing the planners is when a steam-hauled train re-joins the WCML after a stop, as it takes a critical amount of time for the locomotive to reach its maximum operating speed for the particular section of line. This means that headways with following traffic are tight, especially if the following train is a Pendolino.

However, the good news is that the Network Rail planners and the Special Trains Unit, after sorting out south of Crewe and the S&C, have now turned their attention to the WCML between Preston and Carlisle - and the word is that they are confident of producing at least one path that will enable steam operations over Shap to continue. Earlier thinking was that if a path could be found it would require a fast timing, which would restrict trains to a Class 8 Pacifics plus probably no more than eight vehicles in order to stay clear of the service trains. However, a potential further bonus is that it also appears likely that train lengths will not need to be reduced either. This is vitally important, as shorter trains would have a devastating impact upon ticket prices.

Steaming through the Capital

▲ ***Just a few years ago, the idea that there could be three mainline steam workings around London on the same day would have been absurd! However, this occurred on the 9th December. In addition to the movement of LNER 'A4' Pacific No. 60019* Bittern *(see page 10), the 11.10 'Cathedrals Express' from Waterloo to Salisbury was hauled by 'King Arthur' class 4-6-0 No 30777* Sir Lamiel. *Here, the train approaches Putney.***

▼ ***Merchant Navy Pacific No 35028* Clan Line *approaches Clapham Junction on the same day, with the VSOE Luncheon Circular from London Victoria to Guildford, which travelled outwards via Staines and returned via Purley.* Both: Brian Morrison**

Will it ever close? More charters to Folkestone

The Railtour Preview draws attention to charter trains again using the steeply graded branch from Folkestone East to Folkestone Harbour.

Following the 'last' steam departure of No. 34067 *Tangmere* on 12th April this year it was generally believed that the branch would close. However, VSOE British Pullman services have continued to use the branch throughout the year, and this coming weekend sees the Hastings DEMU visiting the Harbour with a charter from Hastings and London Victoria. Next year on 24th January, Past Time visit, again with *Tangmere*, and Andy Staite has professed an interest in running further trains to this popular charter destination.

So what has happened to the closure? EWS, which operate the VSOE British Pullman, objected to Network Rail's proposals and it is understood that as the matter could not be resolved between the respective organisations, the issue has been escalated to the Department for Transport for a ruling.

In the meantime, and until such a ruling is received, Network Rail has decided to continue to consider requests to operate charter trains to Folkestone Harbour, subject to developments with the closure proposals.

In the background is the Remembrance Line Association Ltd, whose aim is to keep the line intact and redevelop it both for incoming charters as well as daily services to London.

For more details of the plans, go to http://www.theremembranceline.org.uk

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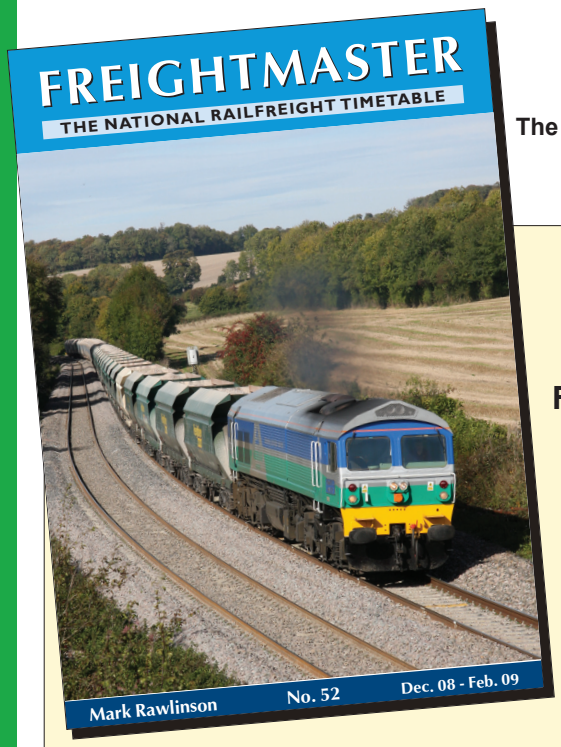

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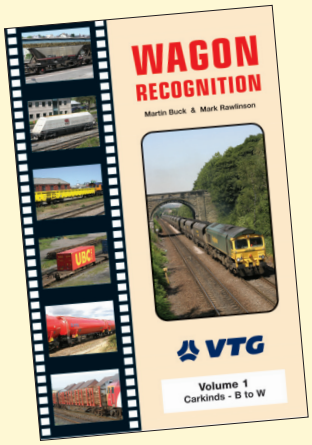

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▲ *The peace and tranquillity of the Stour estuary at Manningtree is shattered as Class 20/3 No. 20313 and Class 37/6 No. 37607 make a rare daylight run south of Ipswich with an RHTT service to Shenfield on 10th December.* **Stuart Clapham**

▼ *The RHTT workings ceased on 13th December with the new timetable beginning the following day. On 11th December, Class 37/6 No. 37602 works through Ribblehead in 'top and tail' mode with classmate No. 37612 on the rear of the Carnforth - Carlisle service as dawn breaks over the viaduct.* **Fred Kerr**

▲ *Class 66/7 No. 66723 hauls Class 87s Nos. 87006, 87003 and 87034 as the 12.15 Long Marston to Crewe 'light engine' move, passing Lower Moor, near Evesham, on 10th December.* **Ken Brunt**

▼ *The last remaining weekday Virgin loco-hauled diagram, consisting of the 06.20 Rugby to London Euston and the 16.51 from Euston to Birmingham and 19.00 return, finished on 12th December. There will be a loco-hauled diagram remaining, but this will be a Fridays-only early afternoon relief from Euston to Preston and return. On the penultimate day of operation, 11th December, Class 90 No. 90029* **The Institution of Civil Engineers** *awaits departure in Platform 2 at London Euston with the 16.51 to Birmingham New Street.* **John Whitehouse**

▲ *On a dull winter's afternoon, Class 60 No. 60099* **Ben More Assynt** *brightens the scene as it passes Northway, south of Worcester, running early with the 13.21 Round Oak to Margam empty steel working on 12th December.* **John Stretton**

▼ *On 11th December, Class 60 No. 60068* **Charles Darwin** *encounters a signal check while working a scrap metal flow, as southeastern 'Networker' No. 465918 passes Wandsworth Road.* **Ian Docwra**

▲ *Looking smart in its Arriva Trains Wales (ATW) blue and white colours, Class 175 No. 175003 restarts from the Craven Arms stop on 5th December, and heads towards the array of semaphore signals, while working the 08.55 Swansea to Manchester Piccadilly service.* **John Stretton**

▼ *Class 143 No. 143621 approaches Dawlish Warren en route to Paignton from Exmouth. This is believed to be first Class 143 to be introduced into service in Devon. It is still in the 'Bristol' livery and is one of the impending group to take over from the Class 142s heading back to Northern Rail.* **Stacey Thew**

▲ *Shortly after being unveiled in front of the people who had paid for its construction, Peppercorn 'A1' Pacific No. 60163 stands on display at the NRM.*

Britain's newest steam locomotive for Royal Train duties?

In front of interested enthusiasts, and hundreds of covenantors - those people who have paid over the past 18 years to make the dream come true - the freshly painted 'A1' was unveiled to the world.

The event took place at the National Railway Museum in York on 13th December, highly appropriate as the NRM was originally the steam shed at York and was the home depot for the last operational 'A1' Pacific No. 60145 *Saint Mungo*.

When *Saint Mungo* was withdrawn in June 1966, and after a failed preservation attempt was scrapped in September of the same year, nobody ever thought that just over 42 years later a brand new 'A1' would be back 'on shed' at York.

With the widow of Arthur Peppercorn, Mrs Dorothy Mather present, the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust Chairman, Mark Allatt, invited a chosen few to "unveil *Tornado*".

The 'A1' will now be on display at the NRM until mid-January, when final preparations will be undertaken for its first mainline working for A1 Trust Covenantors on 31st January and 1st February from York to Newcastle and return.

The crowning glory of the A1 Project will, however, come in mid-February. Rumours have been circulating within the industry for several weeks that the locomotive will see Royal Train duty in 2009. These appear to have been confirmed by the *Daily Mail*, whose online site reported on 14th December that the locomotive would haul the Royal Train with HRH The Prince of Wales and HRH The Duchess of Cornwall on board in February. Nobody from the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust was available for comment.

Further to that, the official naming of No. 60163 *Tornado* will take place in March, with the plates being unveiled by HRH The Prince of Wales.

After that, further mainline work will be undertaken during the year, including a spell with Steam Dreams, and *Tornado* will be the star guest at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway's Summer Gala in early May.

▶ ***Hundreds of enthusiasts and A1 Trust covenantors look, photograph and marvel at the sight that has been 18 years in the making - a real 'A1' back 'on shed' at York.***
Both: Richard Tuplin

WATCH NOW!
Watch the unveiling at York and see the new look 'A1'
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▲ *BR Standard 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80151 comes to a stop at Horsted Keynes with a down 'Santa Special' service on 14th December.* **Tony Sullivan**

Yorkshire Cromwell

National Railway Museum-owned BR Standard Pacific No 70013 *Oliver Cromwell* has been hired for the 13th-15th February Steam Gala on the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway (K&WVR).

The 'Britannia' will perform alongside K&WVR's resident fleet of locos and there will be opportunities for night time photography.

New industrial shunter for PBR

The Pontypool and Blaenavon Railway took delivery of Vanguard diesel hydraulic 136C No.2 *William Elli* on 29th November.

The locomotive was rebuilt by Thomas Hill in 1964 from a Sentinel-geared steam locomotive and worked at ARC's Whatley Quarry before being saved for preservation by the North Somerset Heritage Trust. The locomotive was to have been used on the proposed Frome-Radstock railway, but when that project fell through it moved to the East Somerset Railway. Unfortunately, the locomotive owners were recently asked to remove it from the railway and the PBR was more than happy to offer the group and the locomotive a home.

Oswestry coal yard could be secure following council plan

A piece of land seen as the linchpin in Oswestry's heritage railway could soon be purchased by Shropshire County Council, and plans for the coal yard platform at Gobowen station to provide vital extra parking for the mainline station are underway.

The yard was to have been put onto the open market by British Rail Residual, but after talks, it agreed to offer the land to the council, and councillors agreed to proceed with the purchase, although the cost has not been disclosed. Martin Allard, council spokesman, said: "British Rail Residual was going to put the land on the open market, but we said we believed it could still have a future for rail-related uses. Councillors agreed to the acquisition and negotiations now continue." The coal yard has its own platform that could be used as the terminus for the Cambrian Railways heritage railway project. Rail enthusiasts want to reopen the line between Gobowen and Blodwell, via Oswestry. Owen Paterson, MP for North Shropshire, welcomed the news, saying: "The heritage railway would need the coal yard platform to bring its line into the station and both it and the mainline need more car parking. With the promised new direct link to London, there will be even more pressure on the station."

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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.

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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.

15th December 2008

The Great Central Railway Society (Spinkhill branch)
The Angel Hotel, College Road, Spinkhill. 'Main Line Steam: 25 years of trying to get the rods down' by Phil Taylor. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact the society secretary on 01909 473927 for further details.

RCTS (Cheltenham)
The Victory Club, Burlington House, Lypiatt Road, Cheltenham GL50 2SY.
'Tyrolean Teasers - Austria 2008' by Richard Morris. Meeting commences at 19.30. Visitors welcome.

RCTS (Chester)
The Town Crier, City Road/Station Road (opposite station entrance) Chester.
'The Abermule Disaster' by David Burkhill Howart. Meeting commences at 19.45.

RCTS (East Croydon)
Small Hall, Croydon Reformed Church Hall, Addiscombe Grove, East Croydon.
'Lynton and Barnstable Railway' by Paul Gower. Meeting commences at 19.30.

RCTS (Oxford)
West Oxford Democrats Club, 1 North Street, Osney.
Members Slides and Mince Pies. Meeting commences at 19.30.

RCTS (Brentwood)
Shenfield Parish Hall, 80 Hutton Road, Brentwood
Branch Annual General Meeting and Members' Slides. Meeting commences at 19.30.

16th December 2008

RCTS (Nottingham)
Nottingham Mechanics, 3 North Sherwood Street, Nottingham. Social Evening. Commences at 19.30.

RCTS (Woking)
Woodham Hall, Christ Church, Town Square, Woking.
'Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway' by Danny Martin. Meeting commences at 19.15

Stephenson Locomotive Society
Fox Covert Inn, High Leven, Nr Yarm, Teeside.
'The Royal Scots' by Bob Goodman. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact the Society Secretary on 01642 321205 for further details.

17th December 2008

RCTS (Sheffield)
St Mathews Church Rooms, Carver Street, Sheffield.
Christmas Social Evening for Fun and Seasonal Refreshments. Commences at 19.30.

18th December 2008

Locomotive Club of Great Britain (Merseyside)
The Kirkfield Hotel, Church Street Newton-le-Willows, Merseyside.
'Italy for Railfans (40 years of railway scenes) by John Sloane. Meeting commences at 19.30.

RCTS (Darlington)
The Scout Building, Widdowfield Street, Darlington.
'Quiz Night and Mince Pies' by Jim Sedgwick. Meeting commences at 19.00.

19th December 2008

Great Western Society (Taunton Group)
Stoke St. Mary Village Hall, near Taunton.
'The Summer of 1968' by Mark Smith. Meeting commences at 19.30, Contact Peter Triggs on 01823 334188.

RCTS (Bristol)
St Peters Church Hall, Church Road, Filton
'Christmas Buffet and Quiz' by Arthur Turner. Meeting commences at 19.30.

20th December 2009

Great Western Society (South West Group)
The Parish Centre, Church End Road, Kingskerswell, Torbay.
Christmas Meeting. Meeting commences at 18.30.

22nd December 2008

RCTS (Maidenhead)
Cox Green Community Centre, Highfield Lane, Cox Green
'Plandampf 94 (East German Steam)' by Steve Olive. Meeting commences at 19.30.

RCTS (Northampton)
Weston Favell Parish Hall, Booth Lane South, Weston Favell
'Railways of Northern France' by Mike Bull. Meeting commences at 14.00.

2nd January 2009

LCGB Overseas Tours
Tour to India and Nepal. Further details are available on www.lcgb.org.com. Please note that LCGB membership is compulsory for these trips, due to insurance reasons

RCTS (Bristol Branch)
St Peters Church Hall, Church Road, Filton, Bristol.
'Members Evening of Ten Minute Presentation Digital and Slide Photos'. Meeting commences at 19.30.

5th January 2009

RCTS (Northampton Branch)
St Crispin Social Club, Berrywood Road, Duston, Northampton.
'The North Wales Coast Part 2' by David Scudamore. Meeting commences at 19.30.

RCTS (Port Sunlight Branch)
The Lever Club, Greendale Road, Port Sunlight.
'Golden Oldies Slides Part 2, Last Few Years of Steam in the 1960's' by John Cashen. Meeting commences at 19.45.

Swanage Railway (Bath Area)
St John's Church Hall, St John's Road, Bathwick, Bath.
'Narrow Gauge Railways of Wiltshire' by Mike Dodd. Meeting commences at 19.30. Admission £1. Contact the secretary John Lakey on 01225 315918 for further details.

6th January 2009

Gravesend Railway Enthusiasts Society
Emmanuel Baptist Church, Windmill Street, Gravesend DA12 1BB
'Life on the Footplate' by Brian Heyes, Terrier Trust. Meeting commences at 19.45. Contact Roger Hart on 01474 8333320 or by e-mail www.gres.org.uk for further details

Locomotive & Carriage Institution
AGM and Institution Lunch at the Middleton Railway, Leeds. AGM commences 12.00.

Permanent Way Institution (Birmingham)
The 11th Floor Boardroom, Network Rail Offices, The Mailbox, 100 Wharfside Street, Birmingham B1 1RT.
'Light Rail in France O the Current Scene' by Graham Jellett, Area Officer, Light Rail Transit Association. Doors open 17.45 for 18.15 start.

RCTS (Watford Branch)
St Thomas's United Reformed Church, Langley Road, Watford.
Branch AGM followed by 'That Was the Year that Was, Part2 ' by Geoff Plumb. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Southern Electric Group (South Hampshire Branch)
Eastleigh Railway Institute, Romsey Road, Eastleigh.
'Polish Tramways 2008 - preparing for 2012' by Mike Russell. Meeting commences at 19.30. Admission charge £2. Contact the Secretary, John Goodrich on 023 8067 0028 for further information.

Weston super Mare Railway Society
The Function Room, The Conservative Club, Alexandra Parade, Weston super Mare.
'The Heritage Railway Association' by Mark Smith. Meeting commences at 20.00. Contact Lionel Jones on 01934 628289 or e-mail fotophile69@talktalk.net for further details.

7th January 2009

Burton Railway Society
Marston's Social Club, Shobnall Road, Burton upon Trent.
'The Dragon's Dying Breath' by Ken Horan. Meeting commences at 19.30. Admission £1.50 non members, 50p members. Contact Mark Ratcliffe on 01283 221537 for further details.

Permanent Way Institution
Sussex House, Reading.
'Reconstructing the Welsh Highland Railway' by Andy Savage, PWI President. Start 17.45. Contact Peter Simmons, e-mail peter181102@yahoo.co.uk for further details.

RCTS (Ipswich Branch)
St Thomas Church, Back Rom, Bramford Lane, Ipswich.
'Mr Smiths Video Show' by Mark Smith. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Stephenson Locomotive Society
Hayes Village Hall, Hayes Street, Hayes, Bromley.
'The Early Days of the Mid-Hants Railway (up to about 1985)' by Chris Lecorney. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact The Secretary on 0208 289 9935 for further details.

8th January 2009

Continental Railway Circle
St Paul's Church Centre, Rossmore Road, Marylebone, London NW1 6NJ
'Four decades in France and Germany' by Brian Stephenson. Meeting commences at 19.15. Contact Adruab Oakner ib 01932 850624 or e-mail akpalmer@talktalk.net for further details.

▲ *Ahead of a planned joint operation between a world cruise promoter and Northern Belle in 2009, DRS Class 47/4 No. 47802 and 47832 operated in 'top and tail' formation with the DRS Mk3 rake as the 07.09 Manchester Piccadilly - Southampton Western Docks on 11th December, here passing South Moreton.* **Ken Brunt**

Permanent Way Institution (South & West Wales)
Kings Hotel, High Street, Newport. 'Railway Surveying - Which Way Now?' by Chris Preston, Network Rail, London. Meeting commences at 18.00. Contact Andy Franklin on 0207 557 8664, mobile 07824 410762 for further details.

RCTS (Newcastle Branch)
The Brunswick Methodist Hall, Newcastle. 'Slides from the 50's and 60's' by Bob Payne. Meeting commences at 18.30.

RCTS (Preston Branch)
Claremont Hotel, Blackpool Road, Preston. 'Quiz Nigh for the Dick Dyson Trophy'. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Stephenson Locomotive Society
St John Ambulance Centre, Sandes Avenue, Kendal. New Year Social Evening with Slides, Quiz and Buffet. Meeting commences at 19.15. Contact The Secretary on 01539 720706 for further details.

9th January 2009

Altrincham Electric Railway Preservation Society
Altrincham Methodist Church Hall, Barrington Road, Altrincham, Cheshire. 'Manchester Railway Stations' an illustrated presentation by David George. Admission £3 for non-members Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact Andrew Macfarlane on 0161 928 9394 for further details.

Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway (Birmingham Area)
Northfield Library, Church Road, Northfield, Birmingham. 'Members Miscellany'. Doors open 19.00 for 19.30 start.

Great Western Society (Swindon Group)
Lawn Community Centre, Guildford Avenue, off Windsor Road, Lawn, Swindon SN3 1JE. An Evening of Steam Nostalgia on video and DVD. by Trevor Young & Pete Tough. Meeting starts at 19.00.

RCTS (Edinburgh Branch)
Quakers Meeting House, 7 Victoria Street, Edinburgh. 'Round and About in 2008' by Hugh Gould. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Shropshire Railway Society
The Gateway, Chester Road, Shrewsbury.
'Slide Show' by Alistair Grieve. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact Colin Hatch on 01691 650985 or by e-mail at colin.hatch531@btinternet.com for further details.

Stephenson Locomotive Society
The Mining Institute Lecture Theatre, Neville Hall, Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne. 'A Year in the Life of a Railway Enthusiast - 1976 (with a bite of '75)' by Malcolm Paul. Meeting starts at 19.00. Contact t01434 688946 for further details.

10th January 2009

Bournemouth Railway Club
All Purpose Room, Winton Methodist Community Centre, Bournmouth. 'Rails to Infinity' by Terry NIcholls.Meeting commences at 14.30. Entrance £2 to members and non-members. Contact the club secretary Martyn Tresh on 01202 742099 or email martyn.thresh@ntlworld.com for further details.

Cornwall Railway Society
The Community Centre, Foundry Row, Redruth. 'The Blue and Silver Years' by Ian Cavill. Meeting commences at 18.30. Contact the club secretary Derek Buttivant on 01637 860627 or derekbuttivant@onetel.com for further details.

12th January 2009

RCTS (Croydon Branch)
Small Hall, Croydon Reformed Church Hall, Addiscombe Grove, Croydon. 'Tourist Railways of North Eastern France' by Michael Bunn. Meeting starts at 19.30.

RCTS (Sheffield Branch)
St Mathews Church Rooms, Carver Street, Sheffield. 'Members' Ten Minute Papers' Meeting commences at 19.30.

RCTS (Wellingborough Branch)
British Rail Sports and Social Club, Broad Green, Wellingborough. '1,000 Eggs on a Bicycle' by Colin Boocock. Meeting commences at 14.00.

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, including the name of the society or group, venue and meeting details.

Southern Electric Group (Sussex Branch)
The Deall Room, Southwick Community Centre.
'The Fascinating Railways of Col. Stephens' by John Blackwell. Meeting commences at 19.30. Donation of £2 requested. Contact the Branch Secretary, Bruce Cakebread on 01273 462094 or by e-mail at b.cakebread@ntlworld.com for further details.

Stephenson Locomotive Society
New Trinity Parish Hall, Saltcoats, Ayrshire. 'Mainline Diesel Preservation' by Alan Deans. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact 01294 822303 for details,

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