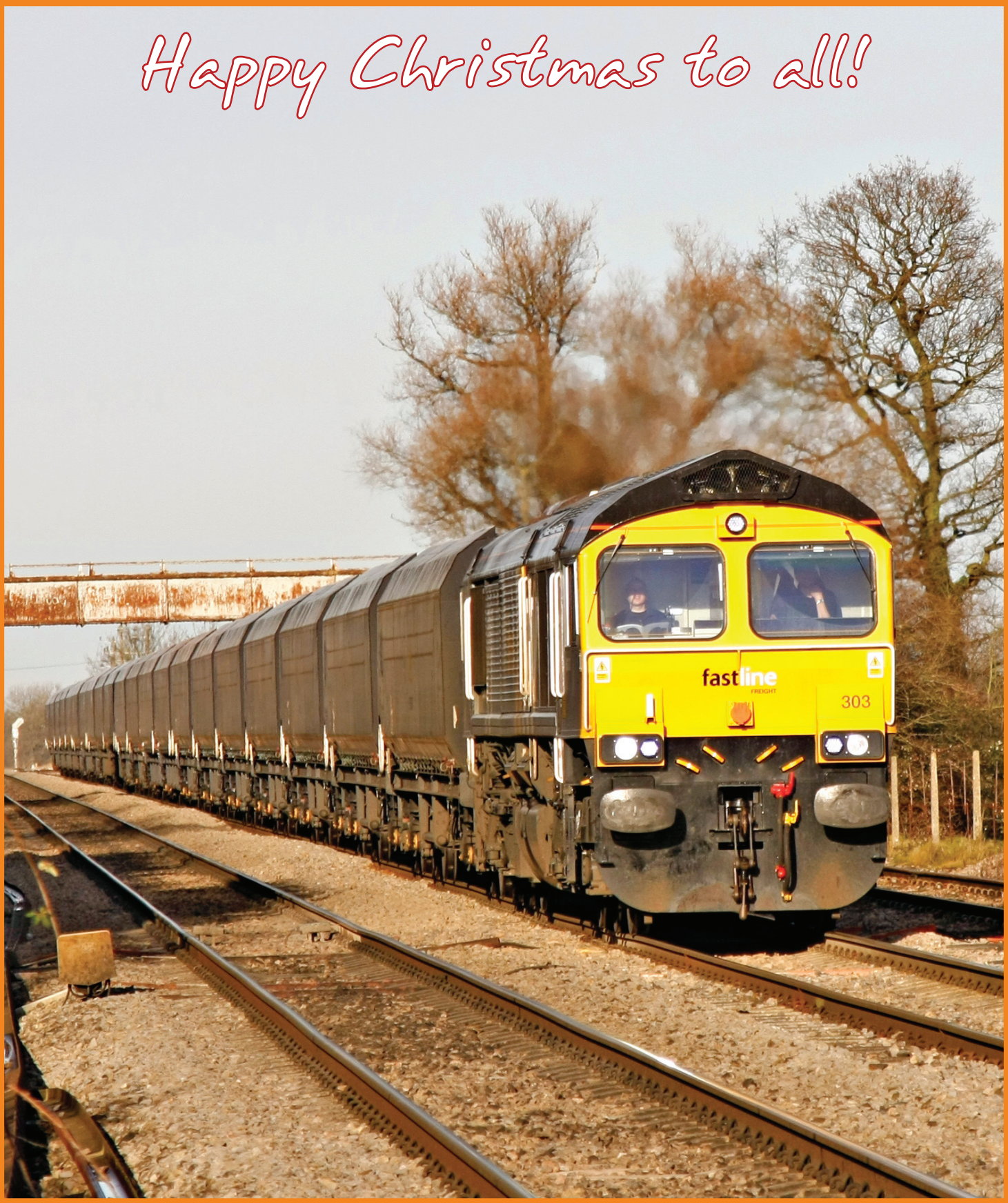
The Railway Herald



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Front Cover

***On the newly timetabled 11.08 Chaddesdon-Portbury service, Class 66/3 No. 66303 heads south with its rake of Fastline coal hoppers, on the approach to Ashchurch station on 17th December.* John Stretton**

Rear Cover

***Masquerading as 'Western' No. D1035* Western Marksman, *No. D1015* Western Champion *becomes the first of its class to reach Norwich, just one in a series of 'firsts' undertaken on the charter to Great Yarmouth.* 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

Despite the fact that a year has passed since I last sat down to write a Christmas editorial, it seems more like a couple of months!

The past 12 months have seen much water pass under the bridge (or should that be many trains over the bridge?) with the completion of the WCML upgrade, the fallout from the horrendous over-run of engineering work at Rugby last year and the official opening of the Alloa line in Scotland.

We have a Class 87 back on the mainline, especially notable after the problems encounted on the farewell charter last December. Heritage traction has continued to play a major role on the network with HNRC's Class 20s being used on aggregate trains for Lafarge Cement upgrade work, the four Network Rail Class 97/3s (ex-Class 37s) being outshopped from Barrow Hill for use on the Cambrian ERTMS trials, Colas Rail and West Coast Railway Company returning more Class 47 locomotives back to the mainline, the return of Class 50 No. 50044 *Exeter* to mainline operation to replace classmate No. 50049 *Defiance* and the use of a pair of 'Grids' on a daily scheduled freight trial, bringing the total number of Class 56/3s to five!

In addition, we have a brand new manufacture of UK freight locomotives on the horizon to deliver its first Type 5 during 2009, and there are now 10 passenger diagrams (including the sleepers) for Class 67s across the country! A few years ago, when EWS withdrew the Class 37s, 47s and 56s and Virgin replaced loco-hauled and HST services with the Voyager fleet, a number of people, myself included, said that for the enthusiast, the variety in railway operations was about at its end as passenger trains became dominated by DMUs and EMUs and freight was in the hands of the originally GM-built Class 66s. How wrong we were!

2009 will no doubt prove to be as interesting a year as the last, with the challenges for the industry that lie ahead, but hopefully we will see more investment and new services and less in terms of traffic decline. But the changes that readers of *Railway Herald* see, will not just be about the rail industry, but about the magazine as well,

There are changes ahead, although they are ones that we believe you will like and enjoy! 2009 will bring with it new ways to read and enjoy the magazine. A new way of reading each issue online, without having to download the current PDF will be launched during the first half of the year, and the latter half should see a method launched to help those mobile users!

From January, our Worldwide title will be discontinued, mainly because the small editorial team simply does not have the time to produce it! However, we are not abandoning those readers who have enjoyed, supported and contributed to the title as from January it will be rolled into the main RH magazine on a bi-weekly basis. There is far more to be unveiled as well, but you'll have to log into the website from mid-day on 12th January to find out more!

All that remains is for me to thank the entire Editorial team for the help and support with the magazine and to wish all our readers a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Richard Tuplin
Editor

A very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our readers

The next issue will be published on 12th January 2009

2009 Calendar

The Railway Herald 2009 Steam and Modern Traction calendars will be available to download from 23rd December.

A new-look for a new year, with new features as *Railway Herald* rings the changes in 2009

Christmas is traditionally the time when the *Railway Herald* team looks ahead to the new year, and with a two-week break in the publishing schedule of the magazine, complete the development of the its new website.

At mid-day on 12th January 2009, the new-look *Railway Herald* website will officially be launched. Recent months have seen the popularity of the magazine increase beyond our expectations, and partly as a result of that and due to the new features being introduced, the whole website will be relaunched with an entirely new IT infrastructure behind it.

So what are the new features? Well, we're keeping some of them under our hat for the launch day, but what we can confirm is that the long-proposed Photo Website System will be introduced with a special offer for existing readers, However, the system we are launching offers users far more than was originally proposed - with more space, more features and we believe, better usability.

Elsewhere, readers comments of problems, or issues with the existing website have been taken on-board and a number of changes will come about as a result of this. But January isn't the definitive launch. There are so many improvements and new features coming online that we are staging their introduction, with the final sections launching in April or May next year.

We hope that readers and users of our website will continue to enjoy the magazine every week. The increasing feedback that we receive suggests that we are providing what you, the readers, want but if not, tell us! The magazine is produced by enthusiasts for enthusiasts, and while we can't guarantee to make every change suggested, all of your opinions on the magazine are welcomed.

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▲ *Class 66/5 No. 66587 approaches Manningtree over a flooded River Stour on 9th November, powering the 07.30 Felixstowe-Lawley Street Intermodal service. The upgrade work at Felixstowe will allow more traffic to exit the docks with greater reliability.* **Brian Morrison**

Port of Felixstowe track upgrade work

In order to further improve the efficiency and reliability of its rail operations, the Port of Felixstowe is to commence work to upgrade its South Rail Terminal on 27th December, with the entire 465 metres of track being replaced. The upgrade is expected to be completed by 5th January.

Further critical track upgrades, in co-operation with Network Rail are also being undertaken at the South Rail Terminal on the curve of the track by the Felixstowe Seafarers' Centre, alongside Carr Road. Chris Lewis, Chief Executive Officer of Hutchison Ports (UK) Limited, which owns the Port of Felixstowe, said: "We are committed to optimising environmentally friendly rail transport opportunities for our customers. We have experienced very high volumes of rail traffic in recent months – breaking through the 9,000 rail moves per week threshold for the first time ever in September this year – and this highlights the need to improve freight capacity on the rail network so that more traffic can be distributed by sustainable modes."

The South Rail Terminal was extended by 39 metres on all three lines earlier in the year, meaning that it is now able to accommodate trains up to 22 wagons in length. The Port has also invested to provide the latest equipment for the Terminal, A brand new rail-mounted gantry crane becoming fully operational in October. The Port currently offers 52 services a day to and from Coatbridge, Trafford Park, Liverpool, Leeds, Cleveland, Birmingham, Tilbury, Selby, Wakefield, Hams Hall, Ditton, and Doncaster.

❖ London Midland is seeking people to join a new 1,000-strong passenger consultation body to help shape the future of the railway. Those who join the panel will have the chance to discuss issues such as timetables, design of trains, coffee shops and car parking. Those wishing to sign up for the Passenger Panel can do so via the London Midland website on www.londonmidland.com.

❖ Trains are again running through Bradway tunnel after improvement works costing £11 million were completed. The project partially closed the line between Sheffield and Chesterfield from 8th September to 14th December. The tunnel was built between 1865 and 1868 and needed to be repaired and relined. It was also due for track replacement in 2011/12, which was brought forward to avoid two closures and to reduce costs.

❖ Improvements have been made to the London Liverpool Street ticket office. It has been completely redecorated and now features new open-style ticket counters with new displays making it easier for passengers to see which desk to use, and the design includes an adjustable height-counter for those using wheelchairs or disability scooters. In addition there are hearing induction loops installed at every desk, a new heating system, new lighting and flooring.

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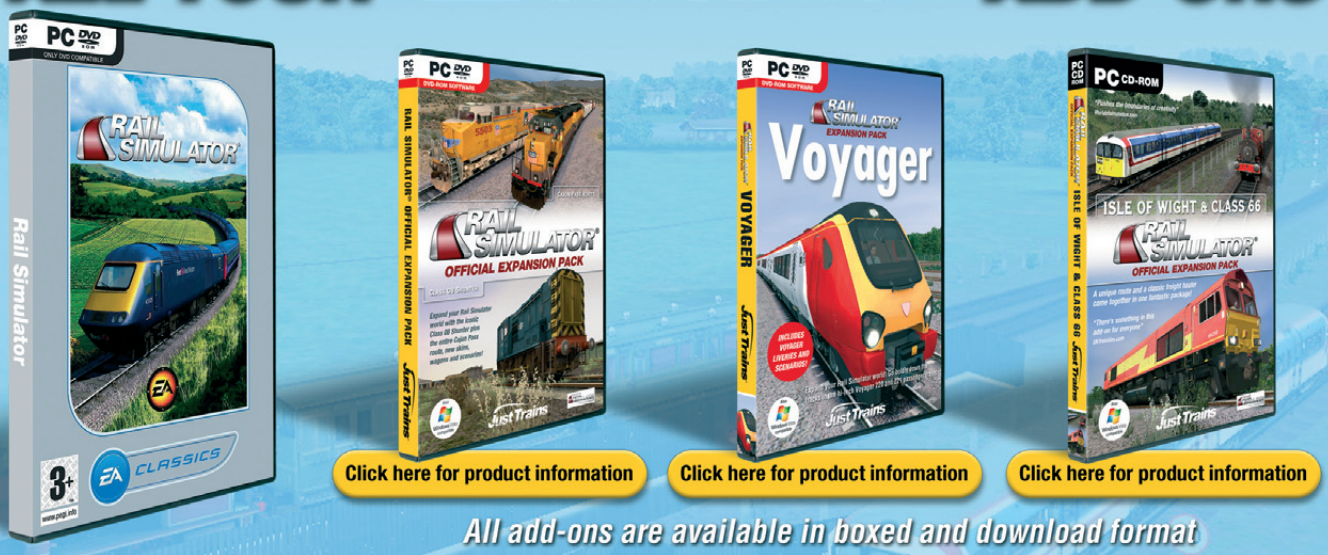

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NEW TIMETABLE LAUNCHES ■ NEW TIMETABLE LAUNCHES ■ NEW TIMETABL

Network Rail completes £9 billion upgrade of WCML as Virgin West Coast launches its new High Frequency timetable.

The completion of one of Europe's biggest civil engineering projects means new opportunities for millions of rail passengers, including those travelling to and from Glasgow.

The last piece of work on Network Rail's £9 billion upgrade of the West Coast Main Line is now finished and should bring about a step-change in the frequency and speed of services. From 14th December over 1,100 extra trains every week will run and journey times will be reduced by up to 30%. Freight users will have a 70% increase in capacity, while weekend passengers will also benefit with shorter journey times and more services. Journey times from Scotland to London Euston will improve dramatically with up to 90 minutes being cut from the length of some services between the two cities. The average journey time will also be significantly reduced to just four hours 26 minutes, compared to the current journey time of 5hrs and the 2003 journey time of 5hrs 35mins.

For the first time, an hourly service will operate for most of the day between Euston and Glasgow Central, with most trains running non-stop from London to Warrington Bank Quay. From the end of January, a new premier express will run between London and Glasgow, stopping only at Preston, and providing a 4hrs 10mins journey time. An hourly service will continue to operate between Birmingham New Street and Scotland, with trains alternating between Glasgow Central and Edinburgh Waverley, to provide each with a service to Birmingham every two hours. At peak times, an additional two trains an hour will increase this hourly pattern.

Iain Coucher, Network Rail's Chief Executive said: "It has been a long road to this day, but Network Rail has delivered West Coast on the day we said we would. I would like to thank everyone in the industry who has worked hard to make this possible and rail users for their patience. This has been an extraordinarily complex project to rebuild Europe's busiest mixed-use railway. Now it is complete, passengers and freight operators will reap the benefits. Network Rail has made good on decades of under-investment, and will continue to invest in the route in the years ahead as demand continues to grow."

The considerable changes that have been made include alterations to all 13 major junctions on the route, including a significant bottleneck at Rugby, enabling trains to travel at up to 125mph; more than 22 miles of new track has been laid through the Trent Valley, meaning that four tracks now run nearly all the way from London to Crewe; there are 174 new or altered bridges and 53 new or extended platforms at locations such as Milton Keynes and Manchester Airport; over 800 points have been replaced and there have been line speed improvements across the whole route, including between Preston, Carlisle and Motherwell and between Euston and Wembley; and finally over 11,000 structures have been put up and over three million yards of rail, ballast and sleepers have been laid.

▲ *One of the new services introduced with the timetable change is a regular London Euston - Chester service. Here, the 13.10 from Euston to Chester passes South Kenton at speed on 15th December, formed of Class 221 Super Voyager No. 221105* **William Baffin.**

▼ *Pendolino No. 390022* **Penny the Pendolino** *passes through Cheddington at speed, forming a service from Liverpool Lime Street to Euston.* **Both: Brian Morrison**

A personal view

Virgin Trains Communications Manager Steven Knight gave his personal insight into the massive changes on the West Coast Main Line: "For me personally, yesterday was the culmination of around 12 years of close involvement in the West Coast Upgrade, which started in December 1996 when, as a journalist, I reported on the award of the West Coast franchise to Virgin Rail Group (VRG), just months after VRG had gained CrossCountry. Having joined VT in 2000, it has been something of a rollercoaster ride, but yesterday brought everything together."

Mr Knight continued: "But it's not the end, merely the start of another phase. We acknowledge, however, that what we have is a railway for the next 30 years and it will not be perfect in the next 30 days. It is not just Virgin Trains that has changed its timetable, what we have seen is a massive industry change which will take time to 'bed in'."

Some of his personal highlights of the first day were the arrival of the 05.40 Glasgow-Euston, with six intermediate stops, in London just four hours and 25 minutes after leaving Glasgow and with a non-stop Warrington to London time of just one hour, 45 minutes, giving an average speed over the 401 mile journey of 90.79mph. This is quite remarkable considering that the Virgin Trains/Railway Magazine record run completed the same journey two years ago, non-stop in three hours and 55 minutes!

At least three trains achieved or got close to the two hour barrier, with the 12.35 Manchester - Euston service travelling over 184 miles with three intermediate stops in a straight two hours, the 12.24 Bangor - Euston completing the 179 miles from Chester in the same time and the 11.07 Euston - Liverpool travelling 192 miles and arriving in Merseyside just two hours and eight minutes after departure from London.

LE LAUNCHES ■ NEW TIMETABLE LAUNCHES ■ NEW TIMETABLE LAUNCHES ■

▲ *Class 180 No. 180108, now in Northern livery, stands in the shadow of Blackpool Tower on 15th December as it waits to work the 11.20 service to Manchester Victoria*
◀ *Councillor Matt Colledge, Chair of Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority, joined Northern Rail's Area Director Lee Wasnidge (left) to officially open a new customer information point at Manchester Victoria.* **Both: Fred Kerr**

Northern introduce Class 180s and commence new hourly service

In the north of England, the start of the timetable saw several key Northern Rail projects reach fruition.

One of the most helpful of these, from the passengers view point, was the opening of a new £60,000 Customer Information Point in the former Northern Belle office at Manchester Victoria. The office will be staffed by Northern's customer service advisors who will provide help and guidance to the 1.3 million passengers who use Victoria every year.

As previously reported in *Railway Herald*, the north-west is benefiting from the leasing of Class 180 DMUs, which will operate the Manchester Victoria to Blackpool service. The Class 180s are part of a timetable revamp, that itself is the result of months of planning and means an extra 100 services every day, with many routes benefiting from more frequent journey opportunities. With the Northern Rail franchise spanning the whole of the north-west and north-east, there were benefits for other areas as well.

The company is now operating direct services between Nottingham and Leeds for the first time in 25 years, with its new regular hourly passenger working.

The new service connects the two cities with a two-hour journey time and serves intermediate stations including Alfreton, Langley Mill, Dronfield, Chesterfield, Sheffield, Meadowhall, Barnsley and Wakefield Kirkgate.

To mark the occasion Secretary of State for Transport, Geoff Hoon, and Councillor Stella Smedley, Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways, Nottinghamshire County Council named Class 158 No 158791 *County of Nottinghamshire* at Nottingham on 15th December. The '158' then formed the 10.11 departure for Leeds. On arrival in Leeds it was welcomed by the world-renowned Black Dyke Mills Band and invited guests.

▼ *Secretary of State for Transport, the Rt Hon Geoff Hoon MP and Councillor Stella Smedley, Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways, Nottinghamshire County Council named Class 158 No. 158791* **County of Nottinghamshire** *at Nottingham Station on 15 December.* **S. Forest**

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NEW TIMETABLE LAUNCHES ■ NEW TIMETABLE LAUNCHES ■ NEW TIMETABL

Services from Wrexham improve as Virgin's London service starts

Ian Lucas, MP for Wrexham, joined Chris Gibb, Chief Operating Officer of Virgin Trains and other passengers on the new Virgin Trains service connecting Wrexham with London on 15th December.

The direct Virgin service will run Mondays to Fridays, leaving Wrexham at 07.00 and arriving in Euston at 09.38. The return journey will leave London at 18:10, arriving in Wrexham at 20.44.

The service is being introduced on a trial basis, and more services on weekdays and weekends have not been ruled out if it is successful.

Wrexham MP Ian Lucas said: "Virgin's decision to start a direct service to London is great news for business, shoppers and will bring more visitors to see the improvements in our town. It is a vote of confidence in Wrexham's future."

The alternative and existing London service, operated by Wrexham & Shropshire has also had a timetable improvement, with reductions of up to 28 minutes in some journey times. For business travellers, the changes mean that it will be possible to arrive in London before 09.00 on the first train. This, along with changes to the late afternoon service from London, means that there will be greater opportunity for a full day's business in the Capital.

▶ *The first of the daily Virgin Trains' services from Wrexham to London Euston, via Chester and Crewe, worked by Class 221 No. 221103* **Christopher Columbus** *prepares to depart from Wrexham on 15th December.* **Tony Miles**

For leisure travellers, the changes to the timetable allow greater flexibility in planning days out along the route. Those who wish to spend a Saturday shopping in London can catch the first train, arriving in the West End before 10.30. Journey times will also be reduced for those travelling to other attractions along the route – from a day out at RAF Cosford, to exploring Wrexham and the beautiful countryside of the Dee Valley.

Andy Hamilton, Managing Director of Wrexham & Shropshire, said: "Since we launched direct rail services in April, we have always had the intention of improving journey times for our customers. We have worked hard to create this new timetable, which brings significant improvements to our service. We are very pleased to announce that we have been able to reduce many of our journey times and reschedule some of our services to make them more convenient for passengers."

▼ *2008 has been a major year for Wrexham & Shropshire, with not only the start of the entire service, but more recently the introduction of DVTs and now, a speeded up timetable. The 12.17 service to Wrexham General awaits departure time at Marylebone on 15th December, led by DVT No. 82301 and powered from the rear by Class 67 No. 67015* **David J. Lloyd.** *Entering the station is Class 165/0 Turbo No. 165006, forming the 11.02 Chiltern service from High Wycombe.* **Brian Morrison**

New Class 350/2s enter service

The first 10 of a fleet of 37 additional Class 350 'Desiro' EMUs were due to enter service with London Midland on 15th December.

The 100mph 'Desiros' maintained at Siemens' Kings Heath Depot in Northampton, are all due to be in service by July next year. The deal between London Midland, Siemens and leasing company Porterbrook is worth approximately £190 million and includes maintenance of the fleet.

The new 'Desiros' have been purchased to replace the existing WCML Class 321 EMU fleet, originally built in the late 1980s by BREL at York, which are to be cascaded to other operators.

A further 38 'Desiros', which will enter service in late 2010, are to be built for Transport Scotland and First ScotRail

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▲ *Carrying a 'Y Gerallt Gymro' headboard, Class 57/3s Nos. 57315 and 57314, hired from Virgin Trains and now in Arriva livery, depart Chester station with an empty coaching stock working that should have been the 05.32 Holyhead to Cardiff service. The train was cancelled on its second day of operation, due to over-running engineering work on the North Wales coast line, leading to this rare daylight photograph on 16th December.* **Stuart Harrison**

Loco-hauled revival commences with cross-border Welsh service

Monday 15th December was, in many ways a landmark day, as no less than three passenger train operating companies made an official return to loco-hauled operation, albeit on a small scale.

In Wales, a new premier train service operates from Holyhead to Cardiff, covering the distance in four hours 26 minutes, half an hour faster than the current journey time. Offering First Class facilities, including its own travelling chef, passengers will be able to enjoy their journey between North and South Wales in better comfort and style than on the DMU stock employed on other trains.

First Class passengers will be treated to a complementary cooked breakfast on the morning service and a three course meal on the north-bound service in the evening. Arriva Trains Wales First Class chefs will be on board to cook the food from fresh produce, much of it sourced in Wales. Hot and cold snacks will be available for purchase from the buffet for Standard Class passengers.

A standard single or return ticket from Holyhead to Cardiff is valid for this service. First Class travel is available for an extra supplement on the standard fare, priced between £30 and £50 depending on the length of the journey being made. There are also deals available for passengers booking in advance with First Class Advance single tickets, priced between £59 and £76, available for purchase subject to availability.

The service leaves Holyhead at 05.32, Bangor at 06.02 and arrives in Cardiff Central at 09.58. The evening service leaves Cardiff at 16.17, arriving Bangor at 20.12 and Holyhead at 20.49.

The service is the first of its kind and will be regularly reviewed by Arriva Trains Wales in partnership with the Welsh Assembly Government as it grows and develops.

◀ *Class 57/3 No. 57315 leads the inaugural Holyhead - Cardiff service across the pointwork as it departs from Shrewsbury on a very frosty and wintry 15th December. On the rear of the train was classmate No. 57314.* **Eryl Crump**

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NEW TIMETABLE LAUNCHES ■ NEW TIMETABLE LAUNCHES ■ NEW TIMETABL

EMT launches Lincoln - London service

Lincoln's recently appointed town crier, Karen Crow, officially dispatched the first direct service from Lincoln to London since the 1960s – by ringing her bell.

The new service is timetabled to run daily on weekdays and Saturdays, leaving Lincoln at 07.08, arriving at St. Pancras at 10.00, and returning at 18.30, arriving back at Lincoln at 21.24. David Maxwell of East Midlands Trains, said: "Our new timetable will bring many benefits for our whole network, including more trains on key routes, faster journey times and improved connections, but we are particularly proud to be delivering this new, direct service between Lincoln and London".

▲ *Lincoln's recently appointed town crier, Karen Crow and EMT Driver Malcolm Lowe celebrate the imminent departure of the inaugural EMT service from Lincoln to London St. Pancras International on 15th December.*

▲▲ *Class 222 No. 222012 awaits passengers for the inaugural 07.08 service to London.* **Both: Richard Tuplin**

Class 67s find use on new TOC work

Class 67 locomotives are finding increasing amounts of work on TOC passenger services as loco-hauled travel increases.

The latest two TOCs to adopt this form of motive power for services are First Great Western and First ScotRail. The latter TOC is making use of the class on early morning and evening peak hour Fife Circle services, while First Great Western are utilising a pair on an intensive diagram bounded by Cardiff and Taunton.

◀ *On the first day of operation, Class 67s Nos. 67028 and 67017 were employed in 'top and tail' formation on the Cargo-D set of stock being used by First Great Western on a frequent service between Cardiff, Bristol and Taunton each weekday. Here No. 67028 prepares to bring up the rear of the 21.10 Taunton - Barton Hill ECS working on the first day of operation.* **Brian Garrett**

▲ *Formed of Class 165/0 Turbo No. 165028 & Class 168 'Clubman' No. 168112, the 07.56 service from Marylebone arrives at Aylesbury Vale Parkway on 15th December, for the official opening of the station, although trains had started from there the previous day. The station building and surrounds are still under construction and not expected to open before May 2009.* **Both: Brian Morrison**

Aylesbury Vale opens for business

The latest station on the national network, Aylesbury Vale Parkway, opened to passengers on 14th December with a journey time to Aylesbury of around four minutes and London Marylebone in just an hour.

Trains will run twice an hour at peak times on weekdays and once an hour off-peak and at weekends.

The station, which is located on a previously freight only route to the north of the town, was originally scheduled to open in 2010 after the the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister announced in April 2006 that it would provide £8.17 million to improve track and signalling.

Aylesbury Vale Parkway is three miles north-west of Aylesbury town station and adjacent to the A41. It will provide a key transport link for existing and new residents as the town doubles in size over the next few years.

The owners of Chiltern Railways, has contributed £2.8 million and Buckinghamshire County Council a further £1 million.

Parking for up to 400 cars is being provided as part of a combined rail / bus based 'park and ride' facility linking Berryfields to the town centre via the A41 public transport corridor.

The main station building is still under construction and will open later, although a temporary portacabin style hut is available at the site for selling tickets.

▼ *Construction of the station building at Aylesbury Vale is well underway, as illustrated here, on 15th December.*

Ivybridge gains London service

South Devon MP Gary Streeter officially launched the new High Speed Train services from Ivybridge station on 19th December.

It is the first time that long-distance HST services have stopped at Ivybridge and is one of the alterations in First Great Western's new December timetable.

First Great Western Regional Manager for the West of England, Julian Crow, said: "This change is made possible by First Great Western's investment in Selective Door Opening, which allows us to stop our High Speed Trains at stations like Ivybridge, which have shorter platforms. The train manager can now select which doors to open when the train is longer than the platform, allowing customers to get on and off the train safely."

Trains heading for London Paddington now call at Ivybridge at 09.06, 16.06 and 19.45. The 07.43 and 10.01 morning services to Penzance will also stop at the station, as will the 17.00 to Plymouth.

Other Devon and Cornwall timetable improvements to branch line services, include a more frequent service on the Newquay line, the extension of the Looe line's summer service to run all year round and the Exeter – Barnstaple line also gains an hourly service for the first time.

Increased TPE service for Scotland

First TransPennine Express is to run extra services and cut journey times between Edinburgh, Glasgow and Manchester.

The improvements will see an extra two services in each direction between Manchester and Edinburgh on weekdays and one additional service either way on Saturdays. Two extra trains will also run between Glasgow and Manchester/Manchester Airport.

Since First TransPennine Express started to run services to and from Scotland a year ago, it has seen an 83% growth in passenger journeys from Glasgow/ Edinburgh to Manchester Airport.

The new look for the New Year at London Waterloo on 20th December, with the new ticket barriers now installed, although not yet operational. **Brian Morrison**

Thameslink upgrade moves closer

The multi-billion pound Thameslink upgrade programme moved a step closer to completion on 15th December, when Network Rail finished work to extend the platforms at Luton Airport Parkway station.

The station is the first to have its platforms extended on the Thameslink route before 2012, all four platforms having been extended by 80 metres to accommodate 12-car trains.

Work is also well underway on the next station due for completion, Mill Hill Broadway, and work has now begun at West Hampstead. Overall, the scheme will have more than 4km of platforms lengthened along First Capital Connect's Thameslink route, and by 2012 will enable a 50% increase in capacity with longer trains and more services during the morning and evening peak periods. This will be realised as new trains are introduced from 2012 to 2015.

To promote the programme and work underway, Class 319/3 No. 319364 has been painted in the same colourful 'rainbow-style' livery as the promotional website at www.thameslinkprogramme.co.uk

2009 Calendar

The Railway Herald 2009 Steam and Modern Traction calendars will be available to download from www.railwayherald.com from 23rd December - click here!.

The latest Locomaster DVD re-release…

DAY ROVER

47 236 + 47 375 Longbridge-Swindon & Return

This *'Wired for Sound'* re-issue on DVD not only features some classic Class 47 nostalgia, but also a large slice of railway history. This cab-ride programme was filmed on board Railfreight Distribution's 6V27 Longbridge to Swindon automotive service in July 1997. The locos are 47 236 + 47 375 and the outward journey is via Bromsgrove, Cheltenham and Kemble. At Swindon, a consignment of Rover car components are collected to form the 4M08 return working to Longbridge which is routed via Didcot, Oxford, Banbury and Solihull. The train recesses in Washwood Heath yard where the locos are swapped for another pair of Tinsley Type 4s – 47 285 + 47 286. There's a stirring finale as the two RfD 47s tackle the famous Camp Hill incline before arriving in the Rover sidings at Longbridge.

This programme features the highlights of the 200-mile circular trip with the views from the cab accompanied by the once-familiar Sulzer sound. Most of this programme is now but a memory – RfD, Rover, the Tinsley 47s – and of course the trains themselves. This DVD has been completely re-mastered to include a completely new commentary to reflect the many changes since the journey was filmed. Savour both history and classic traction action in one nostalgic 110-minute programme.

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Glasgow rail improvements are on track

Work to reduce journey times and increase frequency of services between Glasgow and Edinburgh is ahead of schedule and key design contracts will be signed next month, Glasgow's Eleventh State of the City Economy Conference was told on 16th December.

First Minister Alex Salmond confirmed that the timing of the design contracts would accelerate construction on the next stage of the Edinburgh - Glasgow Improvements Programme, which is worth up to £1 billion, to increase the rail capacity between the two cities.

The design contracts are specified and funded by Transport Scotland as part of the Scottish Government working in partnership with Network Rail who will procure and manage the design contracts. They will cover the electrification of the route and a programme of 22 different major infrastructure works.

These plans are in addition to the new £300 million project between Glasgow and Edinburgh via Airdrie and Bathgate which is on track to commence public services from December 2010.

Elsewhere, seven of Europe's biggest construction companies are to bid to build a key element of the new rail link to Glasgow Airport.

A shortlist of BMV (Balfour Beatty, Morgan Est and Vinci joint venture), Carillion, Morrison Construction and Roadbridge/Sisk have been selected to bid for the construction of the 'St James Spur' - the main branch line viaduct stretching across the M8 to the new airport station.

The contract - expected to be worth between £90 million and £130 million - represents the most significant single element in the Glasgow Airport Rail Link (GARL) project. The tender competition will now begin in spring 2009 with GARL scheduled to be operational in early 2013, in time for the Commonwealth Games in 2014.

Following the Office of Rail Regulation's recent Final Determination of Network Rail's costs for the period 2009-2014, the current estimated out-turn cost range for the combined GARL project is £365.5 million to £395 million excluding VAT. This figure cannot be compared to the original cost range for GARL as the project is now combined with a significant Network Rail signal renewal scheme.

❖ THE NEWS IN PICTURES ❖

▲ *Standing below the footbridge, which will be dismantled over the Christmas closure period for export to the USA where it will be used in a Harry Potter Theme Park, a Hull trains Class 222 waits to depart northwards with the 11.48 First Hull Trains service from London King's Cross on 19th December.* **Graham Lightfoot**

▲ *Class 86/2 No. 86259* **Les Ross** *crosses Dinting Viaduct on 20th December, as it becomes the first of its class to reach the Pennine village of Hadfield, the western limit of the former Woodhead route from Manchester to Sheffield. The railtour was a mini excursion added to the itinerary of Vintage Trains' 'BBC WM Kidney Kids Christmas Special' which ran from Birmingham New Street to Manchester Piccadilly. Unfortunately, the tour ran in miserable weather, but the sight of a loco-hauled train on this usually EMU-only commuter line gives an idea of what might have been had the much-lamented Woodhead route not closed in 1981.* **Jonathan Stevenson**

▼ *Croydon Tramlink's No. 2531 stands at East Croydon on 20th December, in the new Tramlink livery, which is rapidly being applied to the fleet.* **Robert Jefferys**

All lines lead to Clacton

Refurbishing CrossCountry's Turbostars

Clacton, it has to be said, is not the logical destination for a CrossCountry Turbostar, but it is the base of Transys, which is responsible for refurbishing the company's fleet of Class 170 DMUs.

With the penultimate unit, No. 170110, still retaining its old Midland Mainline/Central Trains mixed livery with CrossCountry branding, ready for dispatch and the final unit to be treated, No. 170116, resplendent in its new CrossCountry livery stripped ready for work to commence, it provided the ideal opportunity for a visit by the railway press to see the scale of the work involved.

Interior refurbishment is taking place to provide a bright and fresh atmosphere, with more seats and luggage space, and has been ongoing since April. Seats are being retrimmed, new carpets fitted and at-seat power points installed in the two-plus-one seating of the First Class accommodation on every train.

Exterior repainting, due as part of a scheduled overhaul, is being carried out at the EWS depot at Toton and Marcroft at Stoke-on-Trent.

▲ *The last two Turbostar units to pass through the facility for refurbishment. On the left is Class 170/1 No. 170116, which is the final unit and has been stripped ready for work to commence, while on the right is classamate No. 170110 which is ready to return to service.*

▶ *The interior of No. 170116.* **Both: John Day**

▲ *The driving cab on Class 170 No. 170110.*

▶ *The First Class area, like Standard Class, employs a moquette in the standard CrossCountry maroon colour scheme. The whole area has a bright and attractive finish to it. As is usual the First Class seating is in 2+1 configuration.*

◀ *Standard Class is laid out in the usual Class 170 2+2 style with mainly airline seating, interspersed with table seats.*

▼ *Between the entrance way and the disabled toilet, is the wide open plan space of the wheelchair and disabled area.*
All: John Day

by John Whitehouse

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.

		22nd December
Steam Dreams	34067	London Victoria-Bromley South-Tonbridge- Dover & return
		29th December
Pathfinder Tours	Hanson 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
		3rd January 2009
CFPS	40145	Rawtenstall-Ramsbottom-Bury Bolton Street-Heywood-Rochdale-Oldham-Manchester Victoria- Preston-Shap-Carlisle-Carstairs-Edinburgh (break/rev) & return
		17th January 2009
VSOE	35028	London Victoria- Southampton Eastern Docks & return
		24th January 2009
Past Time Rail	34067	London Victoria- Ashford-Folkestone Harbour-(Folkestone Hbr-Folkestone East-Folkestone Hbr shuttle)-Ashford-Canterbury (break)-Faversham-London Victoria
Pathfinder Tours	tbc	Bristol T M-Bristol Pky-Cam & Dursley-Cheltenham Spa-Barnt Green-Birmingham New St-Stafford-Manchester Piccadilly (EWS Cl 66/0)- Fiddlers ferry-Widnes-Regents Road L/C (rev)-Manchester Victoria (Flr 66/5 & EWS 66/0 tnt)-Stockport-Wilmslow-Crewe (& return) (EWS 66/0)
		30th January 2009
VSOE	35028	London Victoria- London Victoria
		31st January 2009
Past Time rail	tbc	Manchester Victoria Stalybridge-Standedge-Hebden Bridge-Copy Pit-Blackburn (break)-Darwen-Bolton-Manchester Victoria
		6th February 2009
Pathfinder Tours	2x EWS 67	Swansea-Neath-Port Talbot Pky-Bridgend-Cardiff Central-Newport-Pontypool & Tram Inn-Abergavenny-Hereford-Ludlow-Shrewsbury-Crewe-Edinburgh Waverley
		7th February 2009
Past Time Rail	46115	Manchester Victoria- Bolton-Blackburn-Hellifield-S&C-Carlisle-Penrith-Carnforth-(Carnforth-Manchester Victoria)
Spitfire Railtours	2x20/3	Birmingham Int-Birmingham New St-Wolverhampton-Stafford-Crewe-Warrington BQ- Carlisle (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.
GREEN Tours postponed to a future date by the operator
WCRC West Coast Railway Company
RED Tours cancelled by the operator
BLUE Provisional excursion
(Locations) in brackets on a steam tour listing indicates a diesel or electric-hauled section.

◀ ***Rare traction was used on the Wigan to Southport line on 13th December when Network Rail allowed Pathfinder Tours to run a locomotive-hauled charter to Southport. The train arrived behind Freightliner Class 66/9 No. 66957 and departed behind EWS Class 60 No. 60004. The latter is pictured in fading light, curving through St Lukes with the delayed return service to Ealing Broadway.*** **Fred Kerr**

The Week Ahead

As the year draws to a close there is cause for some optimism amid the general economic gloom, as tour operators report an encouraging level of advance bookings for 2009 tours.

Indeed, it is believed that all four Scottish Landcruises booked for the Easter weekend are either already full or loading well. This indeed is encouraging news for a sector, which is very exposed to changes in the economic climate.

As for this year, there are just two more tours remaining, commencing today (22nd December) with the last mainline steam operation for four weeks, when Steam Dreams also conclude its 2008 season with Battle of Britain Pacific No. 34067 *Tangmere* on 'The White Cliffs Luncheon' Express' from London Victoria, Bromley and Tonbridge to Canterbury West and then through Deal, Dover and Folkestone West back to Tonbridge, and then as outwards back to Victoria.

The next mainline steam working is on 17th January with a VSOE British Pullman working from Victoria to Southampton Eastern Docks with rebuilt Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35028 *Clan Line*.

Pathfinder plan to blow away the post-Christmas cobwebs on 29th December with a day out from Derby to Carlisle, which picks up via Burton-upon-Trent, Tamworth High Level, Coleshill Parkway, Birmingham New Street, Sandwell & Dudley, Wolverhampton, Codsall, Wellington, Shrewsbury and Crewe. The route north is via Blackburn, Hellifield and the Settle & Carlisle, returning over Shap. Motive power is scheduled for a Hanson Class 56/3. Pathfinder advise that there is only limited availability remaining.

The early part of the New Year is also sparse for railtour action, with the solitary exception being the Class Forty Preservation Society tour from Rawtenstall to Edinburgh on 3rd January. 'The East Lancs Ambassador' runs to Edinburgh via Shap in each direction, and also picks up at Ramsbottom, Bury Bolton Street, Rochdale, Oldham and Manchester Victoria. The train is booked for the Society's Class 40 No. 40145 *East Lancashire Railway* throughout, with the added bonus of being double-headed with stablemate No. D335 while operating on the East Lancashire Railway. Go to www.cfps.co.uk for more information.

Except for the customary VSOE New Years Eve workings, which this year feature departures from London Victoria with the 'British Pullman' and both Liverpool Lime Street and Manchester Victoria with a 'Northern Belle' circular, that is all for 2008.

As always, the New Year is looked forward to with anticipation, and perhaps more so with the brand new Class A1 Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* now ready for mainline action, another rebuilt 'Royal Scot' and already a number of exciting tours in the diary and selling well.

www.railwayherald.com/railtours

The magazine may be taking a short break over the festive period, but rest assured you can keep up to date with any changes to the railtour programme and new additions through our website. Simply log on at your convenience 24 hours a day!

Final year ahead for the 'Duchess'?

With the debate concerning livery now seemingly consigned to the back burner, 'Princess Coronation' Pacific No. 6233 *Duchess of Sutherland* emerges from winter maintenance for possibly its last year in traffic before overhaul, with some hill climbing in prospect on 28th March for the Railway Touring Company on its 'Cambrian Mountain Express' from Worcester Shrub Hill.

Both the S&C and Shap should provide a sufficient test, northbound from Hellifield to Carlisle, and then south to Preston to head the 'Cumbrian Mountain Express' from Hellifield to Carlisle, and back. It is also believed that No. 6233 is one of RTC's 'pool engines' for its August programme, with provisional runs to Scarborough from Crewe on 31st July and 14th August, Liverpool Lime Street to Holyhead on 2nd August, Crewe to Carlisle on 8th August and Liverpool Lime Street to Carlisle on 22nd August.

PMR Tours has also announced its spring programme featuring *Duchess of Sutherland*, which commences on 4th April with 'The Yorkshire Coronation' from Leicester to Scarborough, which is booked for steam-haulage throughout. Shap is earmarked for two visits, on 18th April with 'The Citadel Express' from Lincoln, and on 30th May with the 'Royal Scot' from Milton Keynes Central, which both feature No. 6233 from Crewe to Carlisle and return.

Finally, Holyhead is also visited twice, on 9th May with 'The Welsh Dragon' from Gloucester and on 13th June with 'The Ynys Mon Express' from Sheffield, with the steam section for each run being from Crewe to Holyhead and return.

▲ *Hastings DEMU No. 1001 climbs away from Folkestone Harbour on 21st December, having travelled from Hastings to London Victoria and then to the Harbour branch, returning via the same route.* **Brian Morrison**

WCRC and Railtourer offer joint excursions

West Coast Railway Company is edging ever closer to also becoming a retail provider of railtours, with the announcement of a series of trains early next year to be operated in conjunction with Hull-based tour operator Railtourer.

Each of the five tours visit a different geographical area and offer good itineraries in the north, commencing with a northbound trip over the S&C and returning along the Tyne Valley and ECML from Bedford on 21st February. Whitby is the next destination, from Preston, Hellifield and Leeds on 14th March, followed seven days later with a northbound S&C returning via Shap from Milton Keynes and selected Trent Valley stations.

Easter Saturday features a Cleethorpes to Edinburgh charter picking up at selected Humberside stations, outwards via the S&C and Beattock, returning via the ECML. Finally, on 23rd May from Wolverhampton, Sandwell & Dudley, Hampstead, Walsall, Bloxwich, Cannock, Rugeley and Stafford to Carlisle, outwards via the Cumbrian Coast and returning over the S&C.

Western Champion finds the path to Kyle in 2009

Pathfinder's 'Western Clansman' promises to be one of the highlights of 2009, as it will take No. D1015 *Western Champion* further than any member of the Class has ever ventured before, to the Kyle of Lochalsh.

The tour has been confirmed to run over the weekend of 19th-21st June, and will feature the 'Western' from Bescot on the outward leg through to Kyle of Lochalsh, and as far as Birmingham New Street on the return.

On Friday 19th June, the tour sets out from Bristol Temple Meads with an EWS Class 67, picking up at Bristol Parkway, Cheltenham Spa and Birmingham New Street, before continuing to Bescot where the 'Western' is scheduled to take over. Further pick-ups at Stafford, Crewe and Preston precede the northbound ascent of Shap, and a historic first northbound ascent of Beattock. At Carstairs ,the train turns right and heads for Haymarket and Edinburgh Waverley, prior to a clockwise run around the Edinburgh suburban lines ahead of crossing the Forth Bridge to reach Inverness via Kirkcaldy, Ladybank, Perth, the Highland mainline and the small matters of Druimuachdar and Slochd summits.

The following day is more leisurely, with a lunch time departure for Kyle of Lochalsh, where there will be a short break before returning to Inverness. The return, on 21st June, is again via the Highland mainline, Stirling, Whifflet and Motherwell and then WCML back to Birmingham New Street, where No. D1015 will give way to an EWS Class 67 for the return to Bristol.

'Western' to Great Yarmouth

Carrying the name of long-lost classmate No. D1032* Western Marksman, *the DTGs No. D1015* Western Champion *reverses stock back into the station at Great Yarmouth, after it became the first member of the class to reach Norwich and Great Yarmouth on 20th December. The locomotive carried a wreath to commemorate the life of Chris Broadhurst, who died on 5th November, having lost his fight against cancer. He was an early member of the DTG, whose engineering skills, especially related to his favoured diesel-hydraulics, provided a huge contribution to the success of the Group. He will be sorely missed. **John Whitehouse**

by John Whitehouse

King Arthur conquers Scotland!

▲ *Standing in for several locomotives that are either unavailable or not passed for the route, SR 'King Arthur' class 4-6-0 No. 30777* **Sir Lamiel** *climbs away from Berwick-upon-Tweed and crosses the border into Scotland at Marshall Meadows with 05.58 Huddersfield - Edinburgh Waverley Railway Touring Company charter on 20th December. WCRC Class 47 No. 47760 was unusually marshalled behind the steam loco to provide assistance and ease pathing along the East Coast main line.* **Paul Armitage**

▼ *Your editor narrowly avoided any jokes about the Merchant Navy taking West London as well - so rebuilt 'Merchant Navy' Pacific No. 35028* **Clan Line** *passes Kew East Junction box on a re-routed Surrey Hills Luncheon charter on the same day.* **Leslie Bailey**

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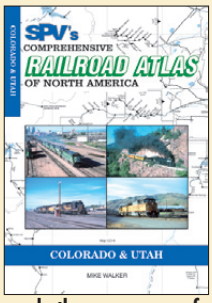

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▲ *In the latest East Midlands Trains livery, Class 156 No. 156415 awaits departure time at Norwich on 18th December, forming the 16.57 service to Manchster Piccadilly. Note the lower positioning of the bodyside branding.* **Brian Morrison**

▼ *Signs of change at Southport on 13th December as Class 142 No. 142052, newly repainted from Merseyrail yellow to Northern purple livery, departs with a Southport - Rochdale working while Class 66/9 No. 66957 waits with Pathfinder's Ealing Broadway - Southport charter to access a platform after the original platform was apparently occupied by mistake due to a signalling error at Sandhills!* **Fred Kerr**

▲ *A 12-car Class 325 set forms the 06.04 Christmas Mail additional service from Shieldmuir RMT on 15th December. Led by No 325011 with Nos. 325007 and 325003 behind, the train passes Kenton heading for Willesden Princess Royal Distribution Centre (PRDC).* **Brian Morrison**

▼ *London Midland-liveried Class 350/1 No. 350124 became the first train to call at Stone in five years.* **Railway Herald** *reported in the last issue on the new Crewe to Euston service and this set arrived to a massive welcome (in terrible weather!) while forming the 10.38 Crewe to Stafford service on 14th December. The station building here was refurbished and reopened for community use in May 2005.* **Tony Miles**

▲ *Now the RHTT season has finished, Class 57/0 No. 57007 hauled classmates Nos. 57012, 57009 and 57011 through Stafford on a Stowmarket to Crewe Gresty Bridge 'light engine' move on 15th December. Hopefully they will receive some attention from a high pressure jet wash before long!* **Brad Joyce**

▼ *Pictured at its destination, a very dirty Colas Rail Class 47/7 No. 47727* **Rebecca** *works in 'top and tail' formation with classmate No. 47749* **Demelza** *on a Par - Eastleigh working. The wagons will, in the fullness of time, be returned to York for examination and overhaul before their next use.* **David Kirwin**

▲ *Having just climbed the Lickey Bank, a rather dirty pair of Class 47s, not having been cleaned since their use on Cornish RHTT duties, approach Barnt Green on 18th December. The Colas-owned pair are 47727* **Rebecca** *(leading) and 47749* **Demelza** *and are hauling track maintenance machinery.* **John Edkins**

▼ *On 19th December Class 66/6 No. 66611 is seen approaches Cogload Junction, near Taunton, with ZWA DR 76501, YOA DR 92285, YDA DR 92318, and YOA DR 92286 in tow, bound for the Plasser and Theurer Works at West Ealing, where they will undergo maintenance over the Christmas period. The Network Rail yard at Taunton Fairwater closes during the Christmas period, giving an ideal opportunity for maintenance of vehicles from the Track Relaying Train.* **Brian Garrett**

Going up and over at Highley

The Severn Valley Railway's Highley station is to get a new passenger footbridge, 35 years after the old one was demolished as 'unsafe'.

With grant aid of £150,000 from the Government regional development agency, Advantage West Midlands, and £100,000 from the European Regional Development Fund, work on laying the foundations has already begun, with completion expected by Easter.

Passenger access to the single platform at the station has been by a wooden- boarded crossing since 1974, but when a train is standing in the station, the carriages block platform access. Since the SVR's new Engine House Visitor Centre opened at Highley last Easter, thousands more passengers are now alighting and rejoining trains there.

The new bridge is being constructed at the south end of the station close to the site of the original one, and will resemble a traditional GWR footbridge, in keeping with the 19th century 'period' appearance of the station.

▲ *SE&CR O1 Class 0-6-0 No. 65 leaves Horsted Keynes on 20th December bound for Kingscote with the first of the Bluebell Railway's Christmas season 'Victorian Trains'.* **Tony Sullivan**

Imberhorne Cutting pilot clearance completed

The initial clearance of the municipal tip which is 500 metres long and 10-12 metres deep, just south of East Grinstead, has come to an end.

The clearance is required to allow the Bluebell Railway to reconnect with the station and the main line at East Grinstead. It was only scheduled to last for a couple of weeks, as a trial to establish the needs when work commences in full next year.

Blocking the route are thousands of tonnes of domestic waste, which were dumped in the Imberhorne Cutting in the 1960's and which now need to be dug out. During the trial two week period, 524 lorry loads were removed to landfill elsewhere, removing 10,386 tonnes of waste.

Infrastructure Director, Chris White said: "At present the estimated cost of this project, is just that, an estimate. The pilot run will enable us to make a more accurate prediction of exactly how much waste on a daily basis can be removed to landfill or sent for recycling, what it costs per day and how long absolute clearance is likely to take".

The pilot was funded directly as a result of the Bluebell Railway's share offer which was launched this summer and which has raised over £500,000.

The Share Offer remains open until the 31st December. Anyone who wishes to receive a prospectus can obtain one by ringing 01825 720800 or via the Bluebell Railway website at http://www.blubell-railway.co.uk.

▼ *GER 'N7' 0-6-2T No. 69621 is pictured on the North Norfolk Railway powering 'Santa's Pullman' on 7th December, near Weybourne. It is not known, or reported whether Santa preferred steam to reindeer traction!* **Steve Allen**

Diesels for GCR in January

The Great Central Railway has added a diesel event into the early part of 2009 for the first time on 10th/11th January.

Newly arrived Class 27 No. D5401 will be in action together with Class 33 No. D6535 and Class 37/3 No. 37314. There will also be three return steam-hauled trips during the event, with the Class 101 DMU making a return trip along the whole line at the start of each day.

The gala will take advantage of the newly commissioned ex-Irish Rail steam heating carriage, which will run in one of the train formations, providing constant heating. It is the first time the GCR has been able to offer regular diesel-hauled, steam-heated services.

The GCR hope traction enthusiasts will support this event in what can be regarded as a quiet part of the year for diesel fans. To encourage visitors the railway is keeping fares at the standard weekend prices.

Following on from the diesel event, a three day steam gala is being held on 30th January to 1st February, with BR Standard 7MT 'Britannia ' Pacific No.70013 *Oliver Cromwell* topping the bill, joined by guest LNER Q6 0-8-0, owned by the North Eastern Locomotive Preservation Group and running as No. 69395, which will make a perfectly prototypical sight at the head of the GCR's Windcutter wagon train. Up to five other engines will appear including LMS 8F 2-8-0 No. 48305, renumbered as a classmate running railtours in 1968, GCR O4 0-8-0 No. 63601 (now entering the last year of a 10-year boiler ticket) and the Southern's 'King Arthur' class 4-6-0 No. 30777 *Sir Lamiel*. On the Friday evening there will be a photographers' night shoot around the shed front at Loughborough with engines being prepared.

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The Blue & Grey Years

We continue our occasional photographic feature looking at the Blue & Grey years as Paul Hepworth looks at the Great Northern area around London.

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

▲ At the time this photograph was taken, Paul was assisting as a Signal Engineer with the 1970's GN suburban electrification programme. An unidentified Class 31 arrives at Farringdon with a Moorgate-bound commuter service.

▶ A Class 47 departs from London King's Cross during the track remodelling in the late 1970s. Just visible on the left hand side is the old York Road platform and tunnel mouth, now trackless, leading down onto the widened lines, now used by Thameslink from the Midland Region. **Both: Paul Hepworth**

The Blue & Grey Years

▲ *The first-ever electric train on the Great Northern, a trio of GE Class 305/1s, led by unit No. 443, is pictured on the through lines at Welwyn Garden City after earthing tests.*

◀ *Brush Type 4, later to become Class 47 under the TOPS renumbering scheme, No. 1721 departs London King's Cross with a northbound express. Of note is that the classic arches of King's Cross are being rebuilt, along with the whole of the station roof at this point.*

▼ *A four-car DMU from the Midland Region departs from King's Cross (Metropolitan) platforms in the late 1970s with a service to Moorgate.*

All: Paul Hepworth

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.

22nd December 2008

Locomotive Club of Great Britain (Brighton)
Brighton Model Railway Club Room, BR London Road Station, Shaftesbury Place, Brighton.
'Members Memories of 2008 (slide show). Meeting starts at 19.45.

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 starts at 14.00.

1st January 2009

Great Central Society (Rotherham Branch)
The Three Horseshoes, Bawtry Road, Wickersley, Rotherham, S66 2BW.
'Classic Film Night' with Mick Hayes. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact Mick Hayes on 01709 820544 for further details.

2nd January 2009 - TBC

LCGB Overseas Tours
Tour to India and Nepal. Further details are available on www.lcgb.org.com. Note: LCGB membership is compulsory 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 starts 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 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.

Locomotive Club of Great Britain (Bedford Branch)
St John's Church Hall St John's Street, Bedford. 'Football Clubs; An A to Z of Railway Connections' by Colin Briggs. Meeting starts 19.30.

Locomotive Club of Great Britain (North London)
Wood Green Labour Club, 3 Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, London N22 5NJ.
'The Severn Valley Railway' Film show presented by Dave Baker. Meeting commences at 19.00.

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

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 starts 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 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 or visit the Society's website at www.burtonrailwaysociety.co.uk 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 Adrian Palmer on 01932 850624 or e-mail akpalmer@talktalk.net for further details.

Locomotive Club of Great Britain (St. Albans)
United Reform Church Hall, Watford Road, Chiswell Green.
'Building & Operating 60163 Tornado' by Mark Allatt. Meeting commences at 19.30.

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, by mobile 07824 410762 or e-mail Andy.Franklin@networkrail.co.uk 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 the society secretary 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 commences 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.

▲ *Carol singers representing churches in the Wirral area of Merseyside joined with the Railway Mission on a carol singing run from Liverpool Lime Street to London Euston on 15th December. Singing commenced under the Christmas tree on Lime Street station and continued on board the 08.48 departure through to the Capital. The singers are photographed before boarding Pendolino No 390005* **City of Wolverhampton. Chris Dixon**

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 commences at 19.00. Contact the Secretary on 01434 688946 for further details.

9th-12th January 2009
LCGB Overseas Tours
GERMANY: 'Steam Meeting in Zittau'
LCGB membership is compulsory for participants on these tours due to insurance reasons.

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 start 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 start 14.00.

Severn Valley Railway (Wolverhampton Branch)
Old Wulfrunians Club, 253A Castlecroft Road, Castlecroft, Wolverhampton.
AGM followed by Nick Rails - Q & A. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact (Evenings) Alan Davies on 01902 758882 for further 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 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 the society secretary on 01294 822303 for further details,

York Railway Society
Archbishop Holgate's School, Drama Studio, Hull Road, York.
'Four Railways and a Sandwich Course - A southerner goes north' by Richard Bourne BSc CEng MIMechE, laterly Fleet Development Engineer for GNER. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact Robin Patrick on 01904 412232 for further details. Visitors £2 entrance fee.

13th January 2009
Abergavenny and District Steam Society
Upper Room, The Hen & Chickens, Flannel Street, Abergavenny
'Gloucester & Hereford Railways' by Brian Miles. Meeting commences at 20.00. Contact the society secretary, Ken Mumford at ken.mumford@ntlworld.com for further details.

Great Western Society (Bristol Group)
BAWA, 589 Southmead Road, Filton.
'A Broad Gauge Journey - Part 2' by Brian Arman. Meeting commences at 19.45.

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.

The 8E Railway Association (Northwich Branch)
The Gladstone Club, Station Road, Northwich CW9 5RB.
'2008 Main Line Steam Review' by Carl Jauncy and Dave Richards. Meeting commences at 19.45. Contact Michael Lenz on 01606 44959 for further details.

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