Railway Herald

Issue 161 - 12th January 2009

The electronic journal for the railway enthusiast

Railway Herald

Issue 161
12th January 2009

Editor
Richard Tuplin

Contributing Editor
Brian Morrison

Railtour Editor
John Whitehouse

Advertising Manager
Ken Brunt

All editorial emails should be sent to the editor. To email a member of the team, send your message to firstname.surname@railwayherald.com

Publication
The Railway Herald is published weekly, 47 times a year.

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

Good quality scans of colour slides and prints are also acceptable. There is currently 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 back issues of the magazine and is available at **www.railwayherald.com**

© Copyright Railway Herald Limited 2006-2009

ISSN 1751-8091

Switzerland: Steam in Lucerne

As ***Fred Kerr*** explains, the Swiss transport network is an inter-twined selection of boat, bus, rail and tram operations. However, several operations are now offering holiday experiences to the region that take in some of the best steam action, across the rail network and the numerous steam-powered paddle-boats on Lake Lucerne.

Read the story on Page 28

In This Issue

Crossrail Developments
As work begins in earnest on the London CrossRail project, the Canary Wharf station gains private backing and Tottenham Court Road revamp commences.
Click here to read the story on Page 8

Preservation News
A full round-up from the world of preservation with details of the possible extension of the Wensleydale Railway and the steaming of 2800 Class No. 2807.
Click here to read the story on Page 13

Narrow Gauge News
David Lloyd-Jones updates readers on the latest news and events from the Narrow Gauge World, including details of a unique wagon in Welshpool!
Click here to read the story on Page 16

Worldwide Report
The first of our new regular reports looking at news and pictorial events from around the globe with specific reference to North America and Europe.
Click here for World News on Page 21

News Highlights

3 Manchester Airport expansion
The Transport Minister Geoff Hoon, was on hand to officially open the third platform at Manchester Airport station on 8th January, which it is hoped will ease congestion in the area and allow easier passage to the terminal and beyond for the increased number of people that are travelling by public transport to the airport.

7 Rolling Stock ITT issued
The Department for Transport has issued an Invitation to Tender (ITT) to the four pre-qualifying bidders that are competing to build 200 new vehicles, following negotiations with First Great Western, Northern Rail and Trans-Pennine Express

Essentials

10 Railtours & Excursions
All the latest news from the charter scene, with comprehensive tour listing.

17 Through the lens
A photographic look at recent events across the UK railway scene.

Front Cover Caption:

A true winters scene as Class 450/0 No. 450100 passes Totters Lane near Winchfield on 10th January in freezing fog.
David Warwick

Editorial

I mentioned in the editorial last issue, that we had a number of major changes happening at *Railway Herald*, and the fact that you are reading this means that you are already looking at the biggest one!

After many requests from readers over the past 18-24 months, we have moved to a landscape format, which we believe will allow those readers who view the magazine on-screen to browse the pages easier with less scrolling required, while at the same time, keeping a standard page size and format for those who print each issue.

Additionally, we have merged the worldwide edition of the magazine with the weekly UK issue, which will see the world news and world pictorial sections appearing at regular intervals.

Elsewhere, we have taken advantage of the latest PDF technology through a system upgrade, and as part of the new design, our contents page is now fully clickable, so wherever you see a icon, clicking it will now take you directly to the specified story, feature or section.

We hope you will like the new look and expanded magazine and welcome readers' constructive thoughts and suggestions on what should be featured and expanded.

Unfortunately, despite a very busy and chaotic Christmas and New Year, we are not quite ready to launch our new website and photo services. We apologise for any inconvenience and disappointment this brings, but assure readers that it will all be launched and online as soon as possible. Keep watching the website for further news!

Contents Page

Transport Secretary opens third platform at Manchester Airport rail station

The Transport Secretary, Geoff Hoon, visited Manchester on 8th January to unveil a plaque and formally open the newly-built third platform at Manchester Airport station.

The new £15 million platform was brought into use 11 days early in December, prior to the introduction of the December timetable change, and gives a vastly increased flexibility for rail operations, especially on those days when events don't run to the scheduled plan.

Peter Strachan, Network Rail's route director explained: "Having the extra platform gives us much more flexibility and improves the overall performance of trains in the area".

Geoff Muirhead CBE, Group Chief Executive for the Manchester Airports Group, said: "Manchester Airport is committed to encouraging more people to travel to and from the airport by public transport. The opening of the third rail platform not only contributes to this but also ensures ultra reliable rail travel. We look forward to welcoming Metrolink in the near future".

▶ **Transport Secretary Geoff Hoon unveils the plaque to formally open the third platform at Manchester Airport station on 8th January, accompanied from left to right by Councillor Whitmore, Vice Chairman of the GMPTA, David Golding, Route Manager of Network Rail, Vernon Barker, MD of TransPennine Express, Andrew Cornish, MD of Manchester Airport, John Jervice, Director of Transport Northern Way and Heidi Motram, MD of Northern Rail. Chris Dixon**

▼ **Opening day for the third platform at Manchester Airport station on a foggy 8th January. Class 185 No. 185101 stands in the new platform, forming the 08.55 service to Cleethorpes. In one of the two original platforms opposite stands Class 156 No 156468, awaiting departure as the 08.41 for Liverpool Lime Street. Chris Dixon**

Light aircraft and overhead wire problems bring chaos to services on the West Coast Main Line

A light aircraft struck the overhead power lines near Colwich Junction, Stafford, just before noon on 2nd January, all three occupants losing their lives.

The accident closed one of the main routes of the West Coast Main Line while air accident investigators completed their work at the scene and handed the site back to Network Rail on 4th January. Repairs to the damaged overhead power lines and signal cabling were then completed and the line partially reopened that day, allowing some trains to pass.

During the blockade, as many trains as possible were diverted via Birmingham New Street. Full services would have returned from first thing on Monday morning, 5th January, but overhead lines came down near Watford, casing further disruption, followed by similar occurrences at Rugby, Bletchley, Wembley and Atherstone over the next three days.

To say that Virgin Trains and London Midland were not happy with Network Rail is putting things rather mildly, particularly as Virgin reported that over 70% of its services had failed to run to time as a result!

However, the Government has taken the unusual step of urging passengers to claim compensation during the period that has been described as the 'nightmare week'.

On 9th January, Transport Minister Lord Adonis said: "This has been a nightmare week for passengers returning to work after the Christmas break, looking forward to an improved service on the West Coast line.

I strongly urge passengers who suffered from a series of different incidents that disrupted their journeys to claim what they are entitled to. Compensation forms are available at stations, and for passengers from Euston these can also be downloaded from the Virgin and London Midland websites as appropriate."

Virgin Trains has drafted in extra staff to handle compensation claims following the spate of delays and cancellations, and is inviting passengers caught up in the disruption to claim compensation as soon as possible. It says thousands of passengers have already received compensation forms and its Customer Relations team has handled three times the usual number of phone calls, mostly from frustrated passengers.

▲ One of the sets of three five-car Class 221s, forming a 15-coach service, powers through Princes Risborough on 27th December, with Class 221s Nos. 221131, 221111, 221114, on the 12.45 Birmingham International - Euston service. **Ken Brunt**

Virgin runs extra-long services on Chiltern diversions

Virgin Trains operated the longest present-day domestic daytime trains on 27th/28th December in order to keep passengers on the move, despite closure of the West Coast Main Line south of Coventry for key engineering work.

Three five-coach Class 221 Super Voyagers were used between London Euston and Coventry/ Birmingham International via Acton Wells Junction, Ealing Broadway, Greenford, Banbury and Leamington Spa. Unlike the previous shuttle operation through the summer months, major renewal work at West London Junction meant that only one track out of the four was open and that had a 20mph speed restriction in operation. As a result trains had to travel north from West London Junction to Wembley to reverse in order to run into Euston. Northbound services also had to run via Wembley.

The 15-coach trains had a driver at each end to enable a fast and safe reversal at Wembley, six catering staff, a train manager and an EWS driver who acted as a route conductor between Wembley and Coventry.

The trains connected at Birmingham International with Pendolino services to the north. Both Alstom and Bombardier supported the operation, which required all of the Class 221s to operate south of Birmingham, the Pendolino fleet being used north of Birmingham and specifically on the normally Super Voyager services from Birmingham to Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Low prices starter fare for Eurostar and Eurotunnel agrees to promote Pas-de-Calais

Eurostar has announced that its lead-in fare of just £59 return, which has been unchanged since 2003, will remain the same this year.

The very reasonable fare is available up to four months in advance of the date of travel and there are no surcharges or taxes. It is valid to Paris, Disneyland Paris, Brussels and any station in Belgium and children under the age of four can travel for free.

Eurotunnel has also signed a partnership agreement with the Conseil Général of the Pas-de-Calais in northern France to help promote tourism in the region. The agreement outlines 36 economic, tourism and sports development projects that have been designed to support wider objectives, including the international promotion of the 'Euroregional' destination and involving the region in activities surrounding the London 2012 Olympics. In addition, the project has a bid to establish the Dover Straits as a World Heritage Site, which would add to the UK's 28 existing sites on the world heritage list.

Other schemes include the centenary celebration of Louis Blériot's flight across the English Channel, the creation of a tourist destination at Sangatte, and the construction of facilities to host sports delegations involved in the 2012 Games. The Chief Executive of Eurotunnel said: "With strong development know-how, Eurotunnel is working with the 2012 Games in mind towards the emergence of a tourist destination with international visibility on its doorstep."

National Express East Coast goes green as on-board recycling plan commences with two-month trial.

National Express East Coast (NXEA) passengers are to be encouraged to recycle on board its trains in order to help the company cut the amount of waste it generates.

Trial recycling trolleys will operate on selected services during February and March, and if the trial proves a success, such trolleys will be introduced across all services to help NXEA meet its target of reducing the waste it generates by 50% by early 2010.

During the trial, a mobile trolley will travel the length of the train and staff will be on hand to separate waste into colour-coded bags. Passengers will also be encouraged to separate waste, such as newspapers, aluminium cans and plastic and glass bottles, and place items into different coloured bags on a static trolley, which will be located in Standard Class.

Carolyn Bell, Environment Manager for NXEA, said: "On-board staff will separate the waste on the mobile trolley, but we will also encourage customers to help us to recycle as much waste as possible by using the static trolley themselves. People recycle in their own homes so I'm convinced they will respond positively. The trolleys will be on different trains at different times of the day to get a comprehensive picture of how much recycling we can collect, and to gauge how customers have responded. We need to find out what works well before we can hopefully start full recycling operations on all of our trains in the second half of 2009".

The waste collected will be transferred to a recycling centre in Newcastle.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

NOW BETTER VALUE THAN EVER

** 80 Extra pages ** ** 357 Colour photographs ** ** 57 Full-Page illustrations **

Highlights include:

- Advenza Freight
- Roxby 'Binliners'
- 2012 Olympics traffic
- 'Silver Bullets'
- Fastline Coal
- GBRf coal
- Alloa line Coal
- Cement traffic
- 'S. & C.' freight
- Class 325 'drags'
- Plenty of Class 37 & Class 60 action
- 'Celebrity' locos 60040, 60074, 59001 and 59005
- Grand Central Trains diesel haulage on Durham Coast
- Wrexham, Shropshire & Marylebone top 'n' tail 67s
- Hull Trains and 86101
- 50 pages of Railtours and Heritage action

224 Pages
Full Colour Throughout
ISBN: 978-0-9558275-1-8
£16.95

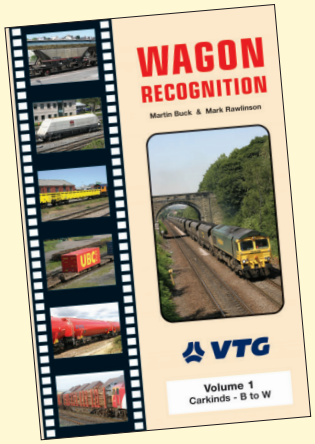
Special feature

Class 40

'Golden Jubilee'

Preserved 'Whistlers'

Past & Present



Special Offers

Loco Review + Freightmaster No.52
£26

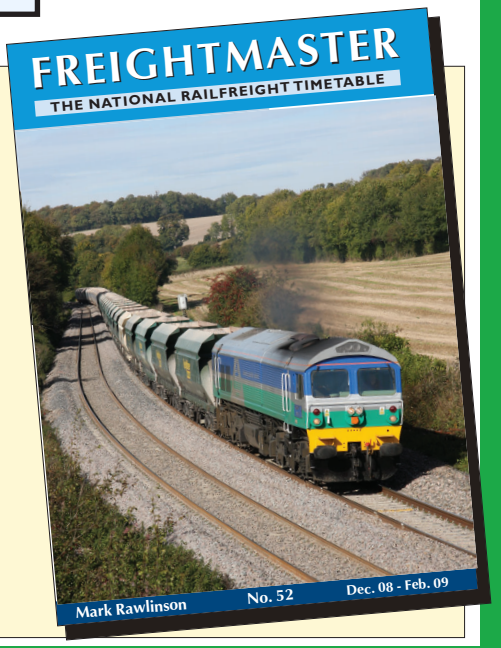
Freightmaster '5 for 4' Book Subscription
December 2008 - February 2010 inclusive
£54

Loco Review + Freightmaster '5 for 4'
£64

Don't forget our Best Seller

Wagon Recognition

The full colour guide of wagons running in the UK today.
Volume 1: **Carkinds BAA to WIA** - 224 pages - over 300 photographs



Post: Freightmaster Publishing, 158 Overbrook, SWINDON, SN3 6AY
Tel.& Fax: 01793 644957 (Mon-Fri 9am - 6pm)
email: info@freightmasterpublishing.co.uk
Website: www.freightmasterpublishing.co.uk

East Midlands Parkway : a drive-away success or failure?

The new £25 million East Midlands Parkway station is soon to open, but campaigners say the rail link, which is aimed at luring drivers from Nottingham, Derby and Leicester off the M1, needs a more regular London service to be successful.

The campaigners also fear it could lead to increased congestion out of Nottingham on the A453. Passengers in Beeston are also upset because the town has lost two popular morning commuter services to London, the 07.36 and the 08.34, allowing the trains to stop at Parkway instead. The planned timetable shows three trains an hour departing for the capital for most of the day, two direct and one changing at Loughborough. But they are bunched together, leaving within 11 minutes of each other, resulting in a 49-minute gap, in effect little better than having one train an hour. The situation should be corrected once the upgrade of the Midland Mainline is completed, but this will not be until 2011.

The local council say that if East Midlands Trains is serious about putting on a service to London, that it should have a 20-minute interval throughout the day, otherwise motorists won't use it as if they just miss a train, they have a long wait for the next one. East Midlands Trains has defended its timetable, saying that morning commuter trains were more frequent and regular, with a service every 20 to 30 minutes between 06.00 and 08.30. Also, the trains that call at Parkway come from other places and the route is already very busy and the company only has a limited number of paths so can only put on a limited number of trains to London in a day.

The National Rail Enquiries website list the first trains running from Parkway on 26th January. The station, off the A453, in the shadow of Ratcliffe-on-Soar power station, will have some 100 trains passing through it every day, and will provide 'park and ride' facilities for passengers on the routes from Leicester to Derby and Nottingham.

Building the 35-mile Borders rail link to start in 2010

Scottish Transport Minister, Stewart Stevenson, has confirmed that work to reopen the route between Edinburgh and the Borders will start earlier than expected, making the announcement on the 40th anniversary of the closure of the Waverley line to passenger trains.

He had previously said that work would start during the lifetime of the present Parliament, due to end in May 2011, but has now said it will start in 2010. The majority of land acquisitions necessary to reopen the 35-mile stretch of line between Edinburgh and Tweedbank, near Galashiels, scheduled for completion by April this year. It had previously been expected that construction work on the project, costing between £235 million and £295 million, would start in 2011, with completion due in 2013.

▲ Class 57/3 No. 57313 is pictured on the rear of the 16.15 Cardiff Central to Holyhead Arriva Trains service at Crewe on 7th January. This was booked to be the last time in service in this neutral Virgin Trains livery before undergoing a repaint at Cardiff Canton. Classmate No. 57316 was the leading loco. **Brad Joyce**

UK News In Brief

■ As soon as work on Castleford's new £14.5 million rail and bus interchange gets underway, the Castleford Town Centre Partnership wants to get the railway station's westbound platform brought back into use to allow services to run to York; platform works and a long-stay car park will be built in the first phase of the interchange scheme, scheduled to start next spring. Castleford Council has said that it will be ridiculous to spend the money on a new interchange but only have one platform in use. The project looks hopeful as Metro and other rail operators see the benefits of bringing the platform back into use.

■ Passengers in the Hartlepool area faced disruption on 20th December, when arsonists torched the signal box near Brus Tunnel in the West View area of the town. Fire crews spent more than three hours tackling the blaze, which destroyed the structure. Although the box is no longer in use, there was a lot of electrical equipment still being used in the relay room below that was damaged. In all nine trains were cancelled and 27 others delayed by an average time of 15 minutes.

■ Plans to significantly improve car parking provision at Morpeth station go before local councillors this month. Network Rail wants to create a new 92-space car park together with associated lighting and ticket machines. The project would increase the total number of parking spaces at the station to 165 – and aims to meet a growing demand as well as tackle problems of indiscriminate parking in the area. It will also mean the introduction of parking charges at the station – expected to be between £3 and £4 per day – to help recoup the investment involved, but Morpeth Town Council has called for the charges to be reclaimable, or part reclaimable, by train travellers as an incentive to encourage rail journeys.

■ Lancashire County Council is being pressed to buy the old railway line between Colne and the former county boundary near New Hague. The track is being offered for sale by the British Rail residual property company and was offered to the county council in July for £50,000, and were given six months to decide. Campaigners say that they want to see a multi-use recreational path, cycleway and bridleway created as soon as possible to keep the route under public control until the railway line can be reinstated, after which the recreational route could be provided alongside the railway. A letter has also been sent to Transport Minister, Lord Andrew Adonis, to ask him to step in to ensure the track is not sold to any unsuitable purchaser who might try to sell it off in bits.

■ The Ribble Valley Rail user group is campaigning to get Turton and Edgworth station, on the Clitheroe to Manchester Victoria line reopened. The station, which falls within the boundaries of Blackburn with Darwen Council, has been closed for 45 years. Turton residents have been calling for the station to be reopened for the last 10 years, the last public debate, instigated by parish councillors, having been held in 2007. The council says that it has always been in favour of the station reopening and thinks it is the same for the people who live close to it. Its reopening would make it more convenient for people living in Chapeltown and would cut down on people using their cars.

Stock exiled to Eastleigh as Old Oak Common closure looms nearer

▲ The advancing work on Crossrail will bring about the closure of Old Oak Common Depot in West London. As a result, all coaching stock is now being cleared from the depot, with most of the Riviera stock moving to Eastleigh. On 23rd December, Class 67s Nos. 67005 and 67019 'top and tail' the 08.58 ECS working from Old Oak Common CS through Eastleigh. **David Kirwin**

Invitation to bid for 200 new DMU vehicles released

Government plans to improve journeys for passengers on some of the busiest routes have taken a major step forward, train manufacturers having been invited to bid for a £300 million project to build 200 new diesel carriages, which are due to start in traffic by 2012 following negotiations with First Great Western, Trans-Pennine Express and Northern rail franchises.

The project is part of the Chancellor's pre-budget review, announced last month, which will see an extra £1 billion dedicated to accelerating major transport projects such as this in 2010.

Invitations to Tender have been issued to the pre-qualifying manufacturers, which are:

- Bombardier Transportation UK Ltd.
- CAF - Construcciones y Auxiliar de Ferrocarriles, S.A.
- CSRE Ltd - Chinese Sourced Railway Equipment on behalf of CSR Nanjing Puzhen Rolling Stock Co. Ltd.
- Hyundai Rotem Company

Closing date for bids is 16th February, and it is anticipated that an announcement on the preferred bidder will be made in April. Bombardier is the only pre-qualifier that has existing DMU products on the UK Rail Network. CAF has previously built rolling stock for Irish Rail, as has Rotem, which constructed the latest Irish Rail DMU vehicles in partnership with Mitsui of Japan and the Tokyo Car Corporation. However, this the first time that CSRE Limited and Hyundai (who are partnering with Rotem) have attempted to enter the UK market - no doubt following the lead set by Hitachi with the Class 395 'Javelin' trains.

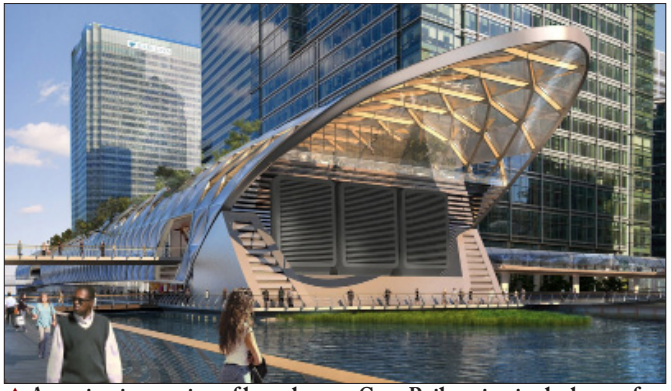
Study underway to ascertain station demand

The Middlewich Railway Steering Group has appointed The Railway Consultancy Ltd to carry out a detailed study to assess the potential for upgrading the Sandbach to Northwich line for passenger services, including plans for a new station in Middlewich.

This is the first stage of a lengthy process, but the future is said to be looking positive, as it should be treated as a priority in the next Local Transport Plans, work on which will be starting this year.

The study has to prove that there is a demand for a station, and the ultimate intention is to provide a regular passenger service between Crewe and Manchester, via Sandbach, Middlewich, Northwich, Knutsford and Altrincham. Currently more than 50% of Middlewich residents commute out of the town by car and it is the largest town in Cheshire – with a population of 13,000 – not to have a station since it was closed in 1960.

£150 million of private funding for Crossrail and work starts at Tottenham Court Road



▲ An artists impression of how the new CrossRail station in the heart of London's Docklands will look. **Crossrail**

Private sector funding of £150 million has been promised for a new Crossrail station in the Isle of Dogs.

The agreement between the Canary Wharf Group plc (CWG), the Secretary of State for Transport and Transport for London's subsidiary Cross London Rail Links Limited means that work on the new station can now begin. The Canary Wharf Group will build the station for a fixed price of £500 million and £350 million of the cost will be met from Crossrail's budget of nearly £16 billion.

With final planning approval received by CWG, construction of the new Isle of Dogs station will now start early this year. The station box is expected to be completed and handed over to Crossrail by summer 2012. The first trains are due to run in 2017 when Crossrail opens for passenger service.

Planning approval has been received for approximately 100,000 square feet of retail space and a rooftop park above the station. The park is a focal point of the design and will be semi-covered by an elegant and environmentally sustainable timber lattice roof, providing views of the docks and Canary Wharf beyond.

Journey times to and from Canary Wharf will be cut to many destinations across London, including Farringdon in 10 minutes, Paddington in 17 minutes and Heathrow in 44 minutes.

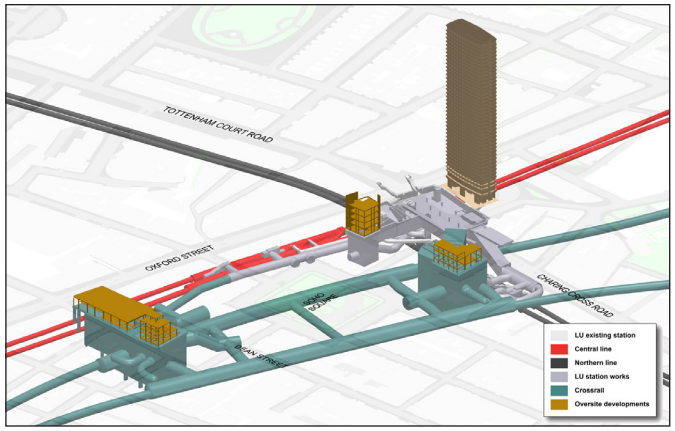
Work is also now starting on building a new £1 billion Underground and Crossrail interchange station at Tottenham Court Road and to create a piazza outside Centre Point. Traffic was diverted from 10th January, and the surface structure will be demolished this coming spring. The new station, which currently is one of the most congested on the Underground system with 150,000 passengers daily, will have a ticket hall that is six times larger than now, plus additional escalators and five new lifts to provide step-free access when it is eventually finished in 2016. Some existing surface buildings, including the rock venue the Astoria, are to shut this week and will be demolished, having been the subject of compulsory purchase orders.

Work will then begin immediately to prepare the buildings for demolition. This will take place in the spring when the visible work begins, floor by floor. Taking just over a year to complete, the demolitions are scheduled to finish in mid-2010.

Once the redevelopment of the station is complete, the existing cramped station entrances will be replaced with new, more spacious openings to accommodate the anticipated 200,000 passengers who will pass through the station each day.

Separately, Crossrail has advised that DHL, one of the world's leading logistics service providers, will shortly begin work on a logistics study to minimise the impact of Crossrail's construction on central London when main construction begin at other locations in 2010. The study will determine the most efficient way for materials and equipment to be delivered to key sites, while also ensuring smooth traffic flows.

▼ A graphic of how the station buildings, the underground Central and Northern lines and Crossrail will work at Tottenham Court Road. **Crossrail**



UK News In Brief

■ Eurostar is now offering its passengers the opportunity to buy public transport tickets for all its core destinations directly on board the trains. RATP tube tickets (Réseau autonome des transports parisiens-Paris public transport system) and STIB tickets (Société des Transports Intercommunaux de Bruxelles – Brussels public transport system) are now available for sale on Eurostar services. The move follows the recent introduction of Visitor Oyster cards for use in London. This system allows Eurostar travellers to save time, avoiding the lengthy queues that might be experienced upon arrival on the continent to buy tube tickets. Tickets can either be bought in euros or pounds at travellers' convenience.

■ Work to replace Moor Lane road bridge in York, that crosses the East Coast Main Line, was completed eight hours early after engineers from Network Rail worked throughout Christmas. More than 120 staff were on site on Christmas Day and Boxing Day to lift out the old and put the basic structure of the new one in place, the work including the overhead electrification being completely removed and replaced using four on-track access machines. Scheduled to be completed by 12th February at a cost of £1.8 million, the project is to prevent the need for future weight restrictions.

■ From 2nd January, passengers travelling between Perth and Edinburgh are now able to save more than 20% on the cost of their journeys, First ScotRail having introduced a 10-journey Flexipass priced at £98.90, a 23% saving compared with the price of a single ticket. The Flexipass is of particular benefit for people who travel regularly by train but not daily, and is aimed at passengers who travel on the same route several times a week. First ScotRail say it is a convenient, value for money option, providing a viable alternative to the car, and allow passengers the freedom of not committing to a full season ticket, which may not be appropriate for their specific travel requirements.

■ A specialist team is working on a historic railway viaduct that will take the new Metrolink tram line to Oldham. Abseilers are inspecting the arches of Smedley Viaduct, near Cheetham Hill, that opened in 1902 and carried the railway over the River Irk before the line closed in 1998. Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive is now restoring it as part of the £600 million project to double the size of the Metrolink network. The brick structure is just over 400 metres long, 30 metres high and has 26 arches. The abseilers, all structural engineers, are checking what work is needed to restore it to take the new Metrolink line that is planned to run through Central Park, and then replace the existing train line through Oldham to Rochdale, which is due to close in October this year. The existing stations on the Oldham and Rochdale line will be replaced with Metrolink stops, and six new stops will be built at Monsall, Central Park, South Chadderton, Freehold, and Newbold and outside Rochdale station.

■ Trains have started to run over a new £9 million railway bridge in Northolt, West London, for the first time. The installation of the 460-tonne Petts Hill bridge began on Christmas Day and contractors worked around the clock to replace the 100-year-old structure. The work was part of a four-year project, which includes widening the road below to ease traffic congestion.

The News In Pictures

◀ A signal failure in the Salford Crescent area on the afternoon of 29th December resulted in numerous southbound trains to Manchester being delayed at Preston. The signallers were stacking trains in Platforms 4 and 5 to cope with the disruption. Class 156 DMU No. 156424, on the right in Platform 4 in this view, was working one such service to Manchester Victoria and was held for almost an hour. Even after the problem was cleared, services were delayed as trains and crews were out of position. **Jonathan Stevenson**

◀▼ Regular readers, and indeed travellers, may not instantly recognise this as the new look Derby! After years of disruption, redevelopment work is finally showing its face. Class 220 No. 220033 pauses with a Plymouth service on 30th December.

▼ DRS Class 47 No. 47832 *Solway Princess* is ready to depart from Banbury with a Southampton Central to Manchester Piccadilly Cruise Saver service on 2nd January, using the ex-Stobart Pullman, DRS Mk3 set. **Both: Robert Jefferys**

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 January		
VSOE	2xDBS 67	London Victoria- London Victoria (Circular Trip)
17th January		
VSOE	35028	London Victoria- Southampton Eastern Dock & return
24th January		
Past Time Rail	34067	London Victoria- Ashford-Folkestone Harbour-(Folkestone Hbr- Folkestone East-Folkestone Hbr shuttle)-Canterbury (break)-Faversham-London Victoria
Pathfinder Tours	DBS 66 FL 66/5	**The Mersey Mancunian:** Bristol T M-Bristol Pky-Cam & Dursley-Cheltenham Spa-Stafford-Manchester Piccadilly (DBS Cl 66/0)- Fiddlers Ferry-Widnes-Regents Road L/C (rev)-Manchester Victoria (FL 66/5 & DBS 66/0 tnt)-Stockport-Wilmslow-Crewe (& return) (DBS 66/0)
30th January		
VSOE	35028	London Victoria- Guildford-Reigate-Redhill-London Victoria
31st January		
A1 Steam Loco Trust	60163	York-Newcastle upon Tyne (break/rev) & return
Past Time Rail	tbc	**The Cotton Mill Express:** Manchester Victoria Stalybridge-Huddersfield-Hebden Bridge-Copy Pit-Blackburn (break)-Darwen-Manchester Victoria
UK Railtours	DBS 92 DBS 60	London KX-Potters Bar-Stevenage-Peterborough- Doncaster-Leeds Skipton-Settle Jct-Wennington-Carnforth-Preston-Blackburn-Copy Pit-Hebdon Bridge-Wakefield Kirkgate-Doncater Royal Mail Siding & return
VSOE	2xDBS 67	London Victoria- London Victoria
1st February		
A1 Steam Loco Trust	60163	York-Newcastle upon Tyne (break/rev) & return 06 February
Pathfinder Tours	DBS 67	Swansea-Cardiff Central-Hereford-Crewe- Edinburgh Waverley
7th February		
A1 Steam Loco Trust	60163	Darlington- York-London KX (break/rev) (& return) *Limited Tickets : Contact Steam Dreams for bookings*
Past Time Rail	46115	(Manchester Victoria-Skipton-Hellifield)-Hellifield-S&C-Carlisle (break)-S&C-Hellifield-(Hellifield-Skipton-Manchester Victoria)
Spitfire Railtours	2xDRS 20/3	Birmingham International-Birmingham New St-Wolverhampton-Stafford-Crewe-Warrington BQ- Blackburn-Hellifield-S&C-Carlisle (break) & return
8th February		
Pathfinder Tours	2x DBS 66	Edinburgh Waverley-North Berwick- Monktonhall Colliery (rev)-Leith Docks (rev)-Powderhall Branch-Mossend-Grangemouth Docks Branch (rev)-Larbert-Stirling-Alloa-Dunfermline Town-Forth Bridge-Edinburgh Waverley
9th February		
Pathfinder Tours	DBS 67	Edinburgh Waverley- Crewe-Hereford-Cardiff Central-Swansea
14th February		
Past Time Rail	tbc	**The Cotton Mill Express:** Manchester Victoria-Standedge-Huddersfield-Hebden Bridge-Copy Pit-Blackburn (break)-Darwen-Manchester Victoria

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.

Royal Scot mainline February debut postponed

The much-anticipated mainline return of ex-LMSR 'Royal Scot' No. 6100 *Royal Scot* booked for 22nd February between London Liverpool Street and Norwich has been postponed in order to allow the final outstanding tasks to be completed and tested without the pressure of having to meet a mainline deadline.

The near £1 million overhaul of No. 6100, of which £400,000 was provided by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the balance by the Bressingham Steam Museum, is almost complete with the fitting of TPWS, OTMR and spark arrestor equipment remaining. However, as with all things of such magnitude, a delay with the smallest of components has a significant knock-on effect, and mainline testing is now scheduled to commence on 15th February with a 'light engine' movement around the Greenford Loop, followed next day with a run to Reading and possibly Swindon, again 'light engine'. A loaded test run has been pencilled in for 17th February to Westbury and back. These revised dates leave little opportunity to work on any problems identified, and it has therefore been considered prudent for the inaugural run on 22nd February be postponed. Steam Dreams has advised all passengers of the situation, with a new date to be announced shortly.

Looking ahead, the locomotive is in demand for railtour action with already potentially 14 tours in the diary. Also, at least three heritage railways are seeking the use of *Royal Scot* for their spring galas, and of course, the locomotive will return home to Bressingham from Mid-July to early September to operate on the demonstration line during the peak holiday season.

There has been much debate concerning the likely appearance of No. 6100, and Bressingham's General Manager, Howard Stephens, has confirmed that the locomotive will carry LMSR maroon-livery and be out-shopped without smoke-deflectors (although it is understood that a set of deflectors have been manufactured in case of need). However, the intriguing issue is what will it carry on the smokebox door? Both The Royal Scot nameplate and smokebox number plate have been produced, and it is understood that the smokebox door will be able to accommodate either!

▼ **The last Past Time Rail 'Yuletide Torbay Express' of 2008 stands in Paignton station on 21st December, with GWR 'King' No. 6024 *King Edward I* at the helm, shortly before departure back to Bristol. Nathan Williamson**

'Grid' traction on the S&C

◀ Hanson Class 56 No. 56312 leads EWS Class 67 No. 67022 on Pathfinder Tours 07.12 Derby - Carlisle 'Settle & Carlisle Explorer', seen here crossing Smardale Viaduct on the afternoon of 29th December. The Class 67 locomotive was included within the consist for train heating and ETS-supply purposes.
Paul Armitage

Spitfire Railtours announces Class 37 action

More DRS Class 37 action is featured in new tours announced by Spitfire Railtours, commencing with 'The Wessexman' on 23rd May from Crewe to Eastleigh (for the Works Open Day) with the option to continue for a day at the seaside at either Bournemouth or Weymouth.

The tour is routed via Birmingham New Street and Banbury. 'Mazey Day' at Penzance is the highlight of its next tour on 27th June, again with DRS Class 37s from Birmingham International via Cheltenham Spa and Bristol Temple Meads, which also offers set downs at Bodmin Parkway (for the Bodmin & Wenford Railway), Par (for the Eden Project) and Truro.

Earlier tours include a pair of DRS Class 20s working both ways over the Settle & Carlisle from Birmingham International to Carlisle on 7th February, and a pair of West Coast 37s from Preston to Edinburgh via Manchester Victoria and Huddersfield on 7th March, which also has the option of a Fife Circle mini-tour if you don't fancy ploughing around Edinburgh.

Steam and modern traction from Pathfinder

Pathfinder has 'A1' Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* lined up for the York – Durham – Newcastle-upon-Tyne leg of its 'Tyne Tornado' charter from Cardiff Central on 12th March.

The tour picks up via Bristol Parkway, Birmingham New Street and Burton-on-Trent en route to York, which will provide an opportunity for people in the south-west to sample the new Class A1 on the mainline.

Two new modern traction tours are also announced, commencing with a run to Blaenau Ffestiniog on 4th May with a DB Schekner (DBS) Class 66 from Salisbury, Bristol Parkway and Birmingham New Street, and then onwards via Crewe and Chester to Llandudno Junction, where the train will reverse for the trip along the highly scenic Conwy Valley Line. DBS Class 37s feature on the other tour, on 27th June, from Portsmouth Harbour and running in 'top and tail' mode via Salisbury to Westbury, where the locomotives will revert to double-heading for the remainder of the journey via Taunton to Penzance for the Mazey Day celebrations, also setting down at Plymouth, Par and Truro.

Look out soon for details of some shuttles based on the Eastleigh Works Centenary Open Days between 23rd-25th May.

News In Brief

■ Steam Dreams has now confirmed plans for the 'free-day' between outward and inward legs of the 'Coronation 2', which is scheduled to operate on 16th & 18th May. The 'free-day' is Sunday 17th May, and the plan is for a relaxed 'out and back' from Edinburgh to Dundee, taking in both Forth and Tay Bridges in each direction. The train will feature an 'A4' in each direction, outwards being the engine from the previous day's 'Coronation', and inwards being the locomotive diagrammed for the southbound 'Coronation' on the following day. The train is an optional extra, and passengers travelling on 'The Coronation' will have first refusal of available tickets for a period of 28 days. Any unsold seats will be available to the public from 23rd February.

■ NELPG has a trip scheduled on 4th May, behind its 'K1' 2-6-0 No. 62005, commencing at Newcastle to Carlisle and running via Leeds to Hellifield, where the 'K1' will take over. This will be the first time since the 1980s that the 'K1' has ventured over the Settle & Carlisle line, so demand is likely to be high. The S&C is steam-hauled in both directions.

■ It is understood that an announcement will shortly be made concerning the future of Kingfisher Railtours, which for the past few months has been seeking additional investment following trading problems last year. Its website indicates that a railtour programme for 2009 is also due to be unveiled soon, and the expectation is that the announcement concerning the future will be positive in nature..

Riley pairing to head the 'Tin Bath' via Barnsley and Buxton has three steam trips from Manchester

News of another potential repeat itinerary working for Past Time has emerged, but one of limited duration depending on when the Huddersfield to Penistone line goes over to 'tram-train' operations.

However, on Sunday 29th March, Riley's pairing of Nos. 45407 & 76079 are due to head out of Manchester Victoria with 'The Tin Bath' and attack Miles Platting bank to Ashburys, Romiley, Marple, Chinley and onwards via the Hope Valley to Sheffield for a short break. The train then heads east towards Meadowhall and onwards to Barnsley and Penistone, before taking the route to Huddersfield, the section between the latter two locations being the subject of a 'Tram-Train' trial due to commence in 2010.

It is this 'tram-train' trial that will limit the availability of the route to charters, and presumably once the trial is in operation it will be banned to any sort of 'heavy-rail' working. After Huddersfield, the charter is booked for the Calder Valley route and its return to Manchester Victoria will be via Hebden Bridge and Rochdale. Quite an itinerary, and if successful will add to Past Time's already enviable portfolio of regular routes in the North.

Talking of regular routes, and following the success of its 'Buxton Spa Express' on 30th November last year, Past Time has also announced three further trains to Buxton this year, dated for 15th March, 12th July and 29th November. With power provided again from the Riley stable the route is outwards via Chapel-en-le-Frith, with the return operating via Great Rocks, Peak Forest and Dove Holes Tunnel.

In a joint-promotion with UK Railtours, Past Time has 'Britannia' No. 70013 *Oliver Cromwell* operating out of London King's Cross on 25th April, picking up at Potters Bar and Stevenage for Lincoln, via Spalding and Sleaford. The return will operate via Newark, and then East Coast Main Line throughout back to King's Cross.

One other change is that the 'Cumbrian Fellsman' on 7th February is now steam-hauled both ways over the Settle &Carlisle between Hellifield and Carlisle, with No. 46115 *Scots Guardsman*, and that the tour will now run from Manchester Victoria and pick up at Skipton only en route to Hellifield.

Steam charter to Eastleigh Open Day and visit to the SVR and Long Marston in UK Railtours 2009 programme

John Farrow's UK Railtours looks forward to a full programme of trains in the early part of the year, with perhaps the highlight being a steam-hauled working from London Waterloo to the Eastleigh 100 Works Open Weekend on 23rd/24th May.

Featuring a rare non-VSOE working for No. 35028 *Clan Line*, the outward route is via Basingstoke, Andover and Southampton Central to Eastleigh, returning to London Victoria. Earlier, on 4th April, UK Railtours visits the Barrow Hill LNER Extravaganza from London King's Cross, running outwards via Peterborough and Chesterfield. Following the break at Barrow Hill, the train heads through the remains of Sheffield Victoria for a visit to Deepcar, where it reverses and regains the ECML for home via Worksop and Retford.

The year opens with a trip skirting the northern fells which is due to feature a Class 92 between London King's Cross and Doncaster, where a Class 60 will then take over for a scenic run via the Aire Valley to Skipton and onwards via Giggleswick and the 'Little North Western' to Carnforth and Preston for a short break. The return will be via Blackburn, Copy Pit and Hebden Bridge, again with the Class 60 as far as Doncaster, where Class 92 haulage will resume.

Valentines Day will have a working from London King's Cross to Sheffield and the infamous Peak Cavern known as the 'Devil's Arse'- check it out on www.peakcavern.co.uk if you think we are joking!

A southbound trip over the scenic Cumbrian Coast route follows on 18th February from London Euston, which is followed on 21st February, also from Euston, with a charter to either Long Marston or the Severn Valley Railway '1960s Gala'. The visit to Long Marston includes a complete circuit of the internal rail network in the now-privately-owned facility, hauled by one of the site's internal diesel-shunting locomotives. There will also be time to explore the facility on foot during a short break. The train also sets down at Kidderminster for the SVR, and Worcester Shrub Hill, from where it will be possible to book a mini-tour to Long Marston.

Other trips include a visit to the West Somerset Steam Gala on 28th April and Newcastle on 31st March.

▲ **Bulleid Battle of Britain Pacific No. 34067 *Tangmere* powers through Headcorn on 22nd December, with the 'Cathedrals Express - White Cliffs Luncheon' charter. Wayne Radford**

▲ S&DJR 2-8-0 No. 88 at Yarde Bridge, near Stogumber, on the West Somerset Railway on 28th December as it climbs up grade with one of the WSR's post-Christmas services. **John Newberry**

GCR General Manager steps down

Robert Crew has stepped down from his role as General Manager at the Great Central Railway, having suffered an extensive period of ill health last year.

He joined the railway as General Manager in March 2005, his appointment following substantial changes to the management structure and plc board. David Morgan, Chairman of the Great Central Railway said: "Robert has achieved a great deal in three and a half important years for the GCR. However, the reality is in the present uncertain climate, the position of General Manager as an employee of Great Central Railway plc has been made redundant and increasingly the management of the Company has now to be undertaken by volunteers. The Company places on record its thanks to Robert for his service to the railway and looks forward to welcoming him in future as a valuable and experienced railwayman and member of the GCR railway".

Celebrity EMU to be handed to Bluebell

On 17th January, Class 4VEP EPB No. 3417 *Gordon Pettitt*, a four-coach EMU built in the early 1970's and named after the last General Manager of British Rail Southern Region will be formally handed over to the Bluebell Railway at East Grinstead.

The unit, which is currently owned by South West Trains, is scheduled to arrive there at 12.58. The Bluebell Station site will be open from 11.00 until 15.00 and after the formal handover, the unit will be open for viewing. Guided tours over the viaduct towards Imberhorne Cutting will also take place at 11.30, 12.15, 13.30 and 14.15.

In addition, there will be displays, stalls and children's games, together with small vintage vehicle displays. A free bus service will run from East Grinstead to Kingscote Station on the Bluebell Line, departing at 11.10, 13.10 and 15.10, Returning from Kingscote at 11.42, 13.42 and 15.42.

Admission to these events will be by souvenir station ticket priced £2.00 if purchased before 10th January or £3.00 thereafter or on the day. Tickets are available now from the Sales and Information Office at Sheffield Park station or telephone 01825 720800. If any group or organisation is interested in having stall space, that also can be booked on the above number by the Customer Service office.

Cotswold Steam Preservation announces its 2800 Class 'Heavy Freight' is nearly ready for steaming

The restoration of Cotswold Steam Preservation-owned Class 2800 2-8-0 No. 2807 is nearing completion, and current predictions indicate that the locomotive can be in steam within six months.

The chassis is virtually complete and was displayed at the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway's Christmas Cracker Steam Gala on 29th/30th December. The boiler is currently being restored at Llangollen. The firebox repairs are complete. Work has moved to the boiler barrel, and it is expected that this will be ready for hydraulic and steam tests around the second quarter of this year.

At this stage the chassis will be transported to Llangollen to be re-united with the boiler. With the chassis and boiler both at Llangollen, work at Toddington will concentrate on completing the tender and boiler cladding. However, these plans are a few months later than previously announced due to financial constraints leading to some slowing of specialist work. To try to alleviate this situation and to allow the restoration to be completed to the new schedule, two schemes are in operation, one previously existing and one new. Cotswold Steam Preservation continues to offer its 'Final Push' share scheme. Shares are priced at £150 and can be purchased outright or by monthly instalments. As a shareholder, purchasers will be entitled to attend and vote at company meetings and therefore have a say in the future of the locomotive.

The affiliated registered charity, the 2807 Freight Locomotive Association, has introduced a new scheme to sponsor the boiler firebox stays that had to be replaced. A total of 1083 stays had to be replaced in both sides of the firebox at an average cost of £60 per stay. The scheme asks sponsors for £50 per stay, which after Gift Aid tax reclaim will cover the cost. If the project receives the financial help from supporters then No. 2807 will be running in the third quarter of 2009. If fund raising continues at current levels then completion is estimated at late 2010 or even 2011.

There is also another piece of relevant information; the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway is planning a huge gala in May/June 2010 to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the Great Western Railway. It would be a shame if after 27 years of restoration, the '2800'was not running and fully tested in time to appear at the gala and represent the Churchward inspired step change in locomotive design. The restoration project is, therefore, putting out a very strong appeal for financial help to make sure that No. 2807 is able to appear at this most significant event.

Further details of the schemes can be found at www.gwr2807.co.uk.

Wensleydale sets its sights on Bolton Castle extension

As well as restoring its connection with the East Coast Main Line at Northallerton, the Wensleydale Railway is now also considering extending west from Redmire to Bolton Castle (the village with a 600-year old fortress where Queen Mary was imprisoned in 1569) and then on to Aysgarth, where the station is close to the falls on the River Ure.

Chairman Ruth Annison said: "As a preliminary step, the current cost of rebuilding the railway from Redmire to Bolton Castle was calculated earlier this year and the board will shortly establish a team to take this important development forward".

The long-term aim of the railway is to relay the track and reopen the line all the way from Northallerton through to Garsdale on the Settle & Carlisle route, giving the market town of Hawes a rail passenger link for the first time since the line was closed to passenger traffic in 1959 and to freight in 1964.

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, North Yorkshire County Council and Richmondshire and Hambleton District Councils all recognise that there is potential for economic regeneration with such a move, but there is the harsh reality of Wensleydale's current economic and social situation – declining farm incomes, lack of affordable housing, reduced visitor numbers and of course the current recession.

However, it is recognised that the full re-opening of the railway between Northallerton and Redmire and the eventual reconstruction of the 18-mile 'missing link' between Redmire and Garsdale, would make an important contribution to the survival and future of the local communities and to the protection of the countryside.

◀ The GCR provided a token steam service on 10th January, the occasion of its diesel running day. Here, BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78019 is pictured during the run-round manoeuvre at Leicester North. Very evident is the construction work taking place on the new canopy that is due to be completed later this year. **Ian Allison**

▼ GCR Robinson 04 Class No. 63601 approaches Quorn station at sunset on Christmas Eve 2008 with the 15.30 Loughborough - Leicester North service. **Paul Armitage**

King Arthur 'N15' 4-6-0 No. 30777 *Sir Lamiel* spent the New Year period on the KWVR. On 3rd January, the visitor, powers away from Haworth with the 11.45 service from Keighley. **Fred Kerr**

▲ The Hampshire Narrow Gauge Trust's 0-4-0 saddle tank *Wendy* departs Amberley on 23rd December with a Santa Special. Originally ordered during the First World War by the Ministry of Munitions, it spent most of its working life in Welsh slate quarries. **Stuart Chapman**

▼ On 26th December, *Triumph* approaches Milton Halt with 13.25 ECS from Kemsley Down to Sittingbourne on the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Railway. **Mark Pichowicz**

First World War loco line-up

The last week of May this year at the Leighton Buzzard Railway will have a unique line-up of First World War narrow-gauge locomotives, representing the main combatants on the Western Front—believed to be the first of its kind in Britain.

This will mark the start of the celebrations of the 90th anniversary of the opening of the Bedfordshire line. The LBR's French twin railway, the Froissy-Cappy-Dompierre, will be sending its recently restored 0-6-0T No 5 (Décauville 1652/1916), which was built for military service, and subsequently worked at the Toury sugar refinery, near Chartres. The Froissy line is the last surviving fragment of the network of narrow-gauge railways built to supply the Somme battlefields. Closer to home, from the North Gloucestershire Narrow Gauge Company will come Brigadelok 0-8-0T No. 1091 (Henschel 15968/1918), which was built for of the German war effort, and then also worked in the sugar industry, at Nakło, in what later became part of Poland.

This has also been overhauled recently, and will be the first eight-coupled engine ever to operate on the LBR. From the 'home fleet', the United States will be represented by 4-6-0T No 778 (BLW 44656/1917), and the United Kingdom by the 40hp Simplex petrol-engined locos, LR2182 (MR 461/1917) and LR3098 (MR 1377/1918). No 778 is the first Baldwin 4-6-0T to work in the UK since the 1940s, entering service in 2007 after a major overhaul following a long spell in India. LR2182, formerly of the Museum of Army Transport, Beverley, and previously at a brickworks near Barrow, will have received some cosmetic restoration ahead of its planned return to full working order in the next few years. LR3098 is on loan from the National Railway Museum and is operational.

News In Brief

■ The Corris Railway has bucked the generally downward trend in passenger figures for heritage railways in 2008, and has recorded an increase of 17% in the numbers travelling between Corris and Maespoeth Junction. The railway hopes its programme of 150th Anniversary Special Events in 2009 will bring further visitors and working members.

■ There is a possibility of a further Isle of Man Railway loco being painted in an historic livery for the Manx Transport Festival between 30th July and 5th August. Since 2001, the loco fleet has all been painted in Indian red livery, but with since No.10 *G.H Wood* was repainted in 'Alisa' spring green last year, the door has opened to further liveries.

■ The Ashover Light Railway Society has purchased its first locomotive - a Ruston & Hornsby 20DL diesel fitted with a two-cylinder 2344cc engine, originally built for the Liverpool Water Corporation Water Works in the late 1940s.

New Austrian wagon for Welshpool & Llanfair

The Welshpool and Llanfair Light Railway has taken delivery of a rollwagen transporter wagon, the vacuum-braked six-axle bogie vehicle, No. W303, originally designed to carry standard gauge wagons on the 2ft 6in (760mm) gauge Zillertalbahn in the Austrian Tyrol.

A number are still in daily use on the line. Transporter wagons were also used on the 2ft 6in gauge Leek and Manifold Valley Light Railway in Staffordshire, but no examples survived into preservation.

The wagon was found in Romania and refurbished before its journey to Wales. W&LLR volunteers now intend to modify it, with a prime role being to carry a hedgecutter to ease the task of flailing back encroaching lineside vegetation. To avoid manual handling of heavy objects such as sleepers, the addition of a hydraulic crane may also feature in future plans.

W&LLR General Manager, Terry Turner, commented: "The wagon was spotted on a scrap pile during a visit to Romania and arrangements were made for refurbishment before delivery. With a weight of 7.6 tonnes and a very low centre of gravity, this wagon will be ideal for our hedge flailing operations after suitable modification".

The most popular passenger carriages on the W&LLR are the open balcony vehicles that were donated by the Zillertalbahn, the first arriving in Wales in 1968. One of the W&LLR locomotives, No. 10 *Sir Drefaldwyn*, also formerly worked in Austria.

Meanwhile the W&LLR is busy with its winter work programme. The relaying of half-a-mile of track on the Golfa bank is well underway, with the ex-MOD railcar The Wasp, purchased in the summer, proving a boon for crew transport. In the workshops at Llanfair, Beyer-Peacock 0-6-0 No 1 *The Earl* has been stripped down in readiness for its 10-year boiler overhaul, while work continues on returning Resita 0-8-0 No 19 to working order after its leading axle failure in August. Progress is also being made on the restoration of Kerr Stuart 0-6-2 No. 12 *Joan*, with the axle boxes being fitted to the frames in readiness for their re-wheeling.

▲ The unique-liveried Class 66/4 No. 66411 *Eddie the Engine* approaches Carlisle in full snow with the daily Daventry to Grangemouth Tesco Express on 7th January. **Brad Joyce**

▼ On 5th January, Class 390 No. 390021 speeds through a snowy Stafford, hauling a Glasgow Central to London Euston service. Since the introduction of the new timetable these services no longer call here. **Brad Joyce**

▼ On its way down the branch to Ironbridge, DRS Class 37/0 No. 37259 passes Lightmoor, Telford with a Derby RTC to Machynlleth test train on 5th January. On the rear of was Class 37/6 No. 37605. **Gary S. Smith**

With the New Year just six days old, CrossCountry-liveried powercar No. 43304 leads the 06.08 Edinburgh to Plymouth service through Littlehempston.
Robert Sherwood

▶ A shortage of HST sets resulted in National Express hiring a CrossCountry set (minus one powercar) on 3rd January. Formed of powercar No. 43301, with National Express classmate No. 43295 on the rear, the 10.45 from Newcastle arrives at London King's Cross. After a rapid turnround, it departed again as the 14.50 to Newcastle. **Brian Morrison**

▲ On 4th January, the situation was reversed, with CrossCountry hiring the National Express powercar! The set is pictured arriving at Taunton with the 15.21 Plymouth to Leeds service. **Steve Yarde**

▼ The set is pictured earlier in its journey to London at Colton Junction, near York, on 3rd January. **Mark Walker**

◀ Class 31/1 No. 31233 trails a Derby-Polmadie Network Rail test train, powered by classmate No. 31105, as it passes Carlisle Kingmoor TMD on 29th December. **Michael Dalgleish**

◀▼ An unusual visitor to Stafford on 22nd December, was Colas Rail Class 47/7 No. 47727 Rebecca working a Rugby OLE to Stafford trip conveying the big Balfour Beatty crane for Christmas engineering work at Stafford No.5 signal box. **Brad Joyce**

▼ The new First Great Western loco-hauled diagram has created a huge amount of interest with photographers. On 2nd January, Class 67 No. 67017 leads the 14.00 Cardiff-Taunton service up the incline from the Severn Tunnel into Pilning, with Class 67 No. 67028 on the rear. **Roy Hutchinson**

New coach contract signed with Bombardier & Alstom

The consortium Bombardier Transportation and Alstom Transport have signed a contract for 72 M6 double-deck cars with Belgian National Railways (SNCB).

The total contract value is approximately €128 million ($176 million US) with shares of around 50% for each partner. Deliveries are scheduled to take place from April 2010 until March 2011. This is the fourth follow-on order from a contract awarded in 1999, the total amount of M6 double-deck cars will now reach 492. The M6 cars are mostly used on the main lines in Belgian and operate at maximum speeds of 160 kph.

Bombardier transportation's site in Bruges will be responsible for the complete production of the four cab cars as well as the final assembly of the 68 intermediate trailer cars. The bogies will be manufactured at Bombardier's bogies centre of excellence in Crespin (France).

Alstom Transport's Belgian site in Charleroi will supply the auxiliary converters for all cars and the Atlas solution compatible with ERTMS for the four-cab cars. The Alstom Transport sites of Valenciennes and Villeurbanne (France) will respectively deliver the semi-finished trailer cars and the train control devices for the cars.

Coradia Lint sets ordered

German rail operator LNVG has placed a €28 million order with Alstom Transport for 10 new Coradia Lint regional trains.

Destined for Lower Saxony, they are scheduled for delivery in June 2010. This is the second order for Coradia Lint trainsets that Alstom has received this year from LNVG. The contract, which includes spares and service, will enable the operator to continue to modernise its fleet of regional trains. The two-coach diesel units will be designed and produced at Alstom's Salzgitter site in Germany. Each train can accommodate up to 127 passengers and travels at up to 120kph. The continuous low floor, entry steps that can be lowered and raised, and gangways between the coaches make it easier to access the train and move around on board, particularly for people with reduced mobility.

Since the launch of the first regional trains in the Coradia LINT range in 2000, Alstom has sold 437 to both public and private operators in Germany, the Netherlands and Denmark. They are tried and tested, and are particularly reliable, having covered over 350 million kilometres in commercial service.

Hungarian Hirings

▲ As part of the privatisation of the Hungarian Railways, a fleet of privately owned Class 1047 Taurus locomotives has been set up for spot-hire requirements. Here, 'Taurus' No. 1047.501 enters Budapest Nyugati, with a service train consisting of matching coaches and normal stock on the rear. **Fred Kerr**

Bulgarian Narrow Gauge

▶ One of the remarkable aspects of railways, especially throughout Eastern Europe is the number of narrow gauge lines still operating. On the Septemvri to Dobrinishte Narrow Gauge Railway, No. 75004 nears the end of the 124km journey as it approaches Bansko Station with the 15.00 Dobrininshte to Septemvri service on 4th September. **Steve Madden**

Deutsche Bahn orders more ICE3 sets

Deutsche Bahn (DB) has ordered 15 high-speed ICE trains for €500 million from Siemens, the contract said to launch a major economic upswing programme, safeguarding around 2,000 jobs in Germany for DB and Siemens.

Siemens Chief Executive Officer, Peter Löscher said: "This order is a major milestone in the partnership between Siemens and Deutsche Bahn. We are delighted at DB's confidence in our Velaro high-speed train, which has already enjoyed international success and now – after China, Russia and Spain – will also run as an ICE 3 in its home country".

The ICE-3 multiple units will be built at the Siemens plant in Krefeld-Uerdingen. They comprise 8 individual coaches and can carry up to 485 passengers and can run at speeds of up to 320 km/h. The first vehicles are scheduled to go into operation in December 2011 and the first trains will be available for in-depth testing in summer 2011. All 15 multiple units are to be delivered by 2012. Deutsche Bahn currently operates a total fleet of 250 ICE multiple units, comprising 59 ICE-1, 44 ICE-2, 67 ICE-3, 70 electric ICE-T with tilting technology, and 10 diesel-powered ICE-TD.

▼ How the new ICE3 sets will look. **Courtesy of DB**

Long train trials on Betuweroute for DB

To demonstrate the technical feasibility of the system, Deutsche Bahn and the Netherlands-based infrastructure operator KeyRail have tested 1,000-metre long freight trains on the Betuweroute between Oberhausen and Rotterdam for the first time.

The purpose of the trials was to obtain practical knowledge and experience in the operation of very long freight trains, DB operations being currently designed for trains with a maximum length of 750 metres. The project is being financed by the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology.

The Betuweroute is the first railway line in the Netherlands exclusively dedicated to railfreight traffic, and as a rail link for the Dutch seaports, it offers optimal prerequisites for very long freight trains.

Rail Cargo Austria & MÁV Cargo merger accepted

The merger procedure between Rail Cargo Austria and MÁV Cargo has been accepted by the EU Competition Authority.

After the Privatisation Commission in Hungary recommended the consortium Rail Cargo Austria/Raaberbahn as best bidder in autumn 2007, the sales agreement with the Hungarian government and MÁV was signed at the beginning of the year during a ceremonial event. Now the last hurdle has been successfully cleared with the approval of the EU Competition Authority.

The approval on the part of the EU Competition Authority was given on condition that the consortium Rail Cargo Austria/Raaberbahn be dissolved, that the interest of Speditions Holding in Raaberbahn be terminated, and that the holding structure in the forwarding companies be changed. All these conditions have been met. Rail Cargo Austria und MÁV Cargo together, aim to be Europe's new heavyweight in logistics. RCA has invested €400 million in the acquisition of MÁV Cargo, and the merger of the two companies forms the basis for sustainable growth in international freight transport.

With almost 11,000 employees, 141.5 million tons are transported by the two companies. The aim is to become number one on Europe's freight transport sector. Together Rail Cargo Austria and MÁV Cargo aim to play a central role in the wagon management in Central and South-eastern Europe.

Záhony is the transfer station from broad gauge track to standard gauge and is to be developed into a gate to the markets in Italy, France and Switzerland. The development of a network of logistics centres and terminal locations in CEE countries, the joint utilisation and the optimised use of rolling stock will make it possible to better meet customer requirements.

First Cisalpino train set delivered to Geneva

▼ **The first ETR Class 610, No. 610 008, was delivered from Italy to Geneva, via Domodossola, Brig and Lausanne on 27th November. Despite being over 18 months late, it was the first set with entire numbers, pictograms, logos and the blue ribbon livery. A total of 14 sets have been ordered for Cisalpino and should have been in service from December 2007, although it is now possible, that the first service trains will commence this summer. The set is pictured on its delivery run between St-Léonard and Sion in the Valais. Georg Trüb**

Surface Transport Board approves Canadian National purchase of Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway

Canadian National has welcomed the decision of the Surface Transportation Board (STB) on 24th December, to approve its purchase of the principal lines of the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway Company (EJ&E).

E. Hunter Harrison, President and Chief Executive officer of CN, said: "CN commends the STB for issuing its decision approving our railroad transaction – a transaction that was subject to unprecedented scrutiny and stakeholder involvement. We are pleased that the Board has recognized the public-interest benefits of the transaction – the critical need for rail-congestion relief in the Chicago region – while mitigating the rail acquisition's impact on certain communities situated on the EJ&E. While we are pleased that the STB has approved the transaction, we are nonetheless disappointed that it has mandated significant additional mitigation beyond the recommendations provided in the Final Environmental Impact Statement issued by the STB's Section of Environmental Analysis with respect to the grade crossings in Lynwood and Aurora. We are carefully reviewing the STB's decision."

The mitigation includes two highway-rail grade separation projects, cameras to monitor highway-rail crossings to assist in the timely response of emergency providers, various school and pedestrian safety and noise reduction measures.

In addition, the Board imposed a five-year, formal oversight period, with applicants required to submit monthly operational reports to the Board. Finally, the decision also requires applicants to comply with mandatory labour protection and with the negotiated agreements that they have entered into with Amtrak and communities in Illinois and Indiana.

The STB's decision will become effective on 23rd January and CN expects to be in a position to close on the transaction shortly afterwards. In September 2007, CN and US Steel announced an agreement under which CN would acquire most of the EJ&E for $300 million, subject to regulatory approval by the STB.

◀ A pre-dawn derailment of a light locomotive move involving GP15T No. 1515, GP40-2 No. 6086, and SD40-2 No.8468 (the latter not derailed) occurred in front of CSX Transportation's Barr Yard office on 2nd January, pictured here shortly after 07.30. Unit No. 1515 was pulled back on to the rails by No. 1561 about an hour later, and then No. 6086 was re-railed by a pair of Cranemaster cranes. The whole incident was dealt with and the locos re-railed within two hours of this picture! **Joel Hinkhouse**

▼ Led by General Electric AC4400CW-CTE No. 5869, Union Pacific's Craig local formally known as the LDZ11-29, departs from Phippsburg, Colorado. This local runs from Phippsburg to Craig on UP's Craig Branch, part of the former Denver & Rio Grande Western route. **Frank Keller**

More SD70s for CN

Canadian National (CN) has ordered 40 new 4,300hp SD70M-2 locomotives from Electro-Motive Diesel (EMD) for delivery in early 2010 and secured an option for 50 more.

CN currently has 75 SD70M-2s in service, and 25 additional units, previously ordered in 2007, will join CN's locomotive roster during the first quarter of this year.

The new EMD locomotives will be up to 20% more fuel efficient than the ones they replace and will comply fully with the latest regulatory requirements for reduced locomotive emissions. All will have improved crew cabs that will also be isolated from the frame to reduce noise and vibration for train personnel. In addition, the units will be equipped with distributed power (DP) capability, which enables remote control of a locomotive or locomotives throughout a train from the lead control locomotive.

DP also provides faster, smoother starting, improved braking and lower pulling forces at the head-end of a train. In addition, it significantly reduces the time required to charge a train's air brake system, a major benefit in cold weather conditions that slow charging rates.

BNSF looks to improve motive power management and turnaround times across the US

According to the BNSF News Web site, mechanical and transportation department teams are helping the BNSF Railway Co. to reduce locomotive dwell times and boost on-time departures by improving motive power management processes.

Workers at terminals in Kansas City, Galesburg, Illinois, and Northtown, Minnesota, have been working with a service excellence team to improve locomotive planning, servicing and motive power movement.

To improve planning, the focus has been to clarify plans and make them more consistent, ensuring all service track locations can update or change the motive power plan to accommodate exceptions or certain terminal opportunities, and developing a terminal-specific locomotive planning guide.

In addition, service track supervisors are being trained to help manage locomotives more effectively. In terms of motive power movement, a new program called 'Locoterm' has been developed that is designed to manage locomotives in a terminal by monitoring all their functions, and finally, to improve locomotive servicing, team members and workers have tweaked standard yard-turn processes, which can save up to four hours of dwell time. They also sought ways to reduce maintenance time.

Non-shop locomotive dwell time has decreased by more than one hour at the Kansas City and Galesburg terminals and originating train on-time performance has risen to more than 90%.

Weather creates problems for Amtrak as BNSF locos are drafted into passenger service

During the final two weeks of December, and even into January, unusually harsh winter weather across much of the northern United States caused maintenance problems for some Amtrak locomotives.

With no other options left, Amtrak leased Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) freight locomotives on several occasions, and some lease durations extended for more than a week.

◀ With BNSF C44-9W No. 5343 leading and Amtrak P42DC No. 169 on the rear, Amtrak 'Cascades' No.504 departs from Albany station on 29th December. This photo is unusual for a variety of reasons, aside from the freight locomotive on an Amtrak service! This train has power on both ends; normally the 'Cascades' trains operate with a non-powered cab unit on the north end and an EMD F59PHi on the south end. Also, the appearance of locomotives other than Union Pacific on this main line, the UP Brooklyn Subdivision, is somewhat uncommon, even with power-sharing and the run-through power agreements that are common among the Class 1 railroads. In 2008, most foreign power on the Brooklyn Sub has been from Canadian Pacific, and BNSF power was seen on only a few occasions, excluding those appearances on Amtrak.

Charles Bonville

▲ 'Sybic' No. 126 026 crosses the River Lot at Cahors with the 07.54 Paris Austerlitz-Toulouse on 27th August. **Michael Dalgleish**
◀ Class 103 No. 103 222 heads a test train through Frankfurt Sud on 15th September. **Ian Thurman**
▼ Class 07 No. 07 111 works a short passenger train from Dimitrovgrad to Plovdiv at Kaluinitsa on 6th September. **Steve Madden**

▲ 'Amtrak's schedules in the Pacific Northwest have been in disarray for days following the heavy storms in Oregon and Washington. Hence the eastbound 'Empire Builder' is running about three hours late as it crosses the Middle Fork of the Flathead River on the eastbound climb to the Continental Divide at Marias Pass on a cold grey Christmas Eve. Amtrak GE P42 No. 185 passes Java Creek Bridge in northern Montana. **David A. Blazejewski**

▼ A northbound MTA working from New York leaves Beacon and runs alongside the Hudson river on a beautiful fall day on 10th October. **Ian Docwra**

Switzerland

Steam in Lucerne

By Fred Kerr

The Swiss Transport Network is highly regarded for its seamless operation of timetabled services by boat, bus, rail and tram, which see connections made and timekeeping maintained to a perfection that earns the epithet – like clockwork.

A recent visit to Lake Lucerne run by Railtrail Tours of Leek made great use of this network but also highlighted just how much of the transport links involve the running of steam power in one form or another.

A late evening arrival on the first day at the lakeside Waldstaetterhof Hotel offered the chance to see the frequency of boat services operated by five steam-powered paddle steamers and 15 diesel-engined boats. The next day was free to explore the region, including the paddle steamers to Lucerne – 30 minutes by train but 2 hours 30 minutes by boat.

Lake Lucerne is surrounded by high mountains and the third day was spent sampling the Rigi Mountain steam service that operates every weekend. A 15-minute train journey from Brunnen brought us to Arth-Goldau where a short walk led to the Rigi-Bahn where RB17 was assembling its tourist train. This 0-4-2T rack locomotive was built by the Swiss Locomotive Company in 1925 as Works no. 3043, and still operates every weekend from July to September. Every Saturday during this period, the train climbs from Goldau to the 6,000ft summit at Rigi Kulm before reversing down to the terminus at Vitznau on Lake Lucerne, this journey operates in the reverse direction on the Sunday; connecting boat services at Vitznau give further opportunities to sample the various boat services.

▼ **Although the Rigi-Bahn is electrified, it still operates a regular steam service between July and September. The service on Saturdays operates from Goldau to the 6,000 ft summit at Rigi Kulm then reverses to Vitznau on Lake Lucern, running in the opposite direction on Sunday. On 9th August No. SLM 0-4-2RT No. RB17 stands at Rigi Kloesterli to take water while an electric railcar No. 22 passes on a normal service. All: Fred Kerr**

▲ **Class HG3/3 0-6-0RT No. 1067, built by SLM in 1910 runs through Bruenig station after taking on water for the next stage to Lungern**

On the Sunday, an early rise and three-hour train journey brought us to Brienz where the party joined the steam special operated by the Ballenberg Dampfbahn, which runs only five times a year from Interlaken to Giswil over the Bruenig Pass. Shortly after arriving at Brienz, the enthusiasts' train arrived from Interlaken hauled by Class G3/4 2-6-0T No. 208 of 1913 vintage, to work as far as Meiringen where the train was split.

No. 208 continued to Innertkirchen with the first coach, while Class HG3/3 0-6-0RT locomotive No. 1067 of 1910 backed onto the remaining four coaches to work the train over the Bruenig Pass to Giswil, including watering stops at Bruenig-Hasliberg and Lungern. At Giswil, No. 1067 reversed and ran round the stock for the return journey to Meiringen, where the party joined the normal electric service to Lucerne and back to Brunnen.

The following day was yet another early start as the party caught the train to Goeschenon, where a transfer was made to the narrow gauge route to Realp, where the Furkabanhn steam train was waiting. This service ran daily in 2008 from early July through to mid-August and on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 21st June through 5th October. The steam locomotive 2-6-0RT No. DFB1 was of interest in that it was one of two sold by the railway in 1947 to Vietnam; when enthusiasts began to restore the by-then closed line in 1983, the pair were purchased and returned to the line. The route had closed in the 1970s when a diversionary

section via a tunnel was provided between Realp and Oberwald but enthusiasts are progressively seeking to re-open the original line, which was the route of the Glacier Express. The line has opened in stages, reaching Tiefenbach in 1992 and Furka in 1993, and by 2000 trains were using Furka Tunnel to reach Gletsch and the Rhone Glacier which dominates the head of the valley. Efforts are now concentrated on the next link to Oberwald and the complete re-opening of the original route.

The final day was set for a return to Brienz where the party joined the Brienz-Rothorn Railway; this is now famous as Switzerland's oldest steam-operated rack railway, since the other rack systems have been electrified. This line opened in 1892 but has the fame of using the latest steam locomotives with the purchase of four oil-fired rack locomotives in the 1990s, designed to prove steam to be still the most efficient motive power on the line. Sadly, personal reasons meant I was unable to make this visit but other party members sampled the climb of 5,000ft from Brienz to the 7,500ft summit at Rothorn Kulm, achieved in a distance of only 4.6 miles and sampled the power of one of the locomotives built in the 1990s.

This visit brought to an end the experience of steam traction accessible within the Lake Lucern region and proved that even a transport network as modern as Switzerland can still find profitable use for steam power in its many guises while providing the precision of timekeeping that is the envy of the world.

◀ **The 96-year old preserved Class G3/4 2-6-0T No. 208 enters Brienz on 10th August while working the Interlaken to Giswil steam charter, en route to Meiringen where the train was split.**

▼ **SLM 2-6-0RT No. DFB1 stands at the head of the Gletsch valley as a maintenance vehicle is attached to act as banker through the Furka Tunnel; the use of rolling stock is unexpected – but it works. The train is pictured at Mutteach-vedere while working from Gletsche to Realp on the original 'Glacier Express' route. All: Fred Kerr**

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 starts 19.30.

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

Severn Valley Railway (Wolverhampton Branch)
Old Wulfrunians Club, 253A Castlecroft Road, Castlecroft, Wolverhampton. AGM followed by Q & A. Meeting starts 19.30. Contact Alan Davies on 01902 758882 (Evenings) for details.

Southern Electric Group (Sussex Branch)
The Deall Room, Southwick Community Centre. 'The Fascinating Railways of Col. Stephens' by John Blackwell. Meeting starts 19.30. Contact Bruce Cakebread on 01273 462094 for details.

Stephenson Locomotive Society
New Trinity Parish Hall, Saltcoats, Ayrshire. 'Mainline Diesel Preservation' by Alan Deans. Meeting starts 19.30. Contact the Secretary on 01294 822303 for 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 with GNER. Meeting starts at 19.30. Contact Robin Patrick on 01904 412232 for 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. Starts 20.00. Contact Ken Mumford at ken.mumford@ntlworld.com for 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.

RCTS (Nottingham Branch)
Nottingham Mechanics, 3 North Sherwood Street, Nottingham. 'Irish Narrow Gauge' by Ken Grainger. Meeting starts at 19.30.

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. Starts at 19.45. Contact Michael Lenz on 01606 44959 for details.

14th January 2009

Basingstoke & District Railway Society
Wote St.Club, New Road, Basingstoke. 'BR Traction in the 70's and 80's' by Ted Vaughan. Meeting commences at 20.00. Visitors will be made welcome. Contact the society secretary on 01256 326096 for further details.

Grimsby & Cleethorpes Railway Group
Royal Air Force Club, 5 Alexandra Road, Cleethorpes DN35 8LQ. 'Classic Film Night' with Mick Hayes. Meeting starts at 19.30. Contact Mike Hartley on 01724 341358 for details.

Permanent Way Institution (London)
10th Floor Restaurant, 55 Broadway (LUL HQ) London. 'DLR Woolwich Extension - A Case Study' by Gavin Livie, Pandrol UK, London. Doors open 17.30 for 18.00 starts. Contact Paul Gammage, by e-mail at pjgammage@aol.com for details.

Permanent Way Institution (North Wales)
The Town Crier Hotel, Chester. 'Laser Scanning of the Conway Bridge Railway' by Matt Levine, Severn Partnership. Doors open 18.00 for 18.30 start. Contact the society secretary Carl Baker on 01782 717472, mobile 07920 856703 or send an e-mail to carl.baker@networkrail.co.uk for further details.

RCTS (Hitchin Branch)
Hitchin Christian Centre, Bedford Road, Hitchin. 'Rail Atlas Great Britain and Ireland' by Stuart K. Baker. Meeting starts at 19.30.

Stephenson Locomotive Society
YMCA, Bridge Street, Guildford. 'Branch Lines from Brookwood and Other Southern Branches' by Peter Harding. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact the Secretary on 013732 379216 for further details.

Swiss Railways Society (London Branch)
The Model Railway Club, Keen House, 4 Calshot Street, London N1 9AT (near Kings Cross station). 'Alpine Winter' members' slide evening. Meeting commences 19.00, Refreshments available during the evening. A £2 donation is requested. Contact Ron Dawes (0208 660 3532) for further details.

15th January 2009

Breconshire Railway Society
R.A.F.A. Club, The Struet, Brecon. 'Steam Centres & Railways in the UK' by Keith W. Jones, President, Breconshire Railway Society. Starts 19.30. Contact Arthur Robinson on 01982 560219 for further details.

Holmesfield Village Society
Holmesfield Village Hall, Vicarage Close, Holmesfield. 'Rowsley - A Rural Railway Centre' with Glynn Waite and Fred Morton. Meeting commences at 19.30. Admission £3 to all.

Irish Railway Record Society (London Area)
The Exmouth Arms, 1 Starcross Street, London, NW1 2HR. 'West and North' by Michael Baker and AGM. Meeting starts at 19.00.

Locomotive Club of Great Britain (North West)
The Kirkfield Hotel, Church Street Newton-le-Willows, Merseyside. 'Mostly modern traction in the North West' by Doug Birmingham. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Marlow & District Railway Society
British Red Cross Society, Victoria Road, Marlow. 'A Final Evening with Colour Rail' by Ron White. Doors open at 19.45 for 20.00 start. Admission £2 for non members.

Monmouthshire Railway Society
Room LL1, UWCN, Allt-Yr-Yn Avenue, Newport. 'The A1 Loco Trust and the 'Tornado' Project' by Bob Alderman. Meeting commences at 19.30. Non-members £3. Further details at http://www.mrsoc.co.uk.

Permanent Way Institution (Nottingham and Derby)
The Midland Hotel, adjacent to Derby station, Derby. Graduate and Young Members Presentations. Meeting commences at 18.30. Contact Colin Cowey on 01949 837067, or e-mail colin.cowey@talk21.com for further details.

RCTS (Darlington Branch)
The Scout Building, Widdowfield Stteet, Darlington. 'Nigel Gresley, The Man and His Achievements' by Chris Nettleton. Meeting commences at 19.00.

RCTS (Hull Branch)
Upstairs, The Highway Public House, Willerby Road, Hull. 'Footplate Days at Normanton 1962-1968' by Alan Dawson. Meeting commences at 19.30.

RCTS (Pudsey Branch)
The Fulneck Room, Pudsey Civic Hall, Pudsey. 'Out and About in the Last Year' by Hugh Gould. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Stephenson Locomotive Society
United Reform Church Hall, Mowbray Road, New Barnet. 'The RH&DR' by Peter Groom. Starts 19.30. Contact 0208 368 6200 for further details.

16th January 2009

Great Western Society (Taunton Group)
The Village Hall, Stoke St. Mary. 'Home and Away with a Cornishman' by David Letcher.

Locomotive Club of Great Britain (Central London)
Keen House, Calshot Street, London N.1. 'Just in Front of the Good Doctor (no 9) by Blake Paterson. Meeting commences at 19.00.

Purbeck Railway Circle
Catholic Church Hall, Rempstone Road, Swanage. 'Swanage Railway...to Wareham and the Future' by Mike Stollery and Peter Foster. Also Purbeck Railway Circle AGM. Doors open at 19.00 for 19.30 start.

Scarborough Railway Society
The Public Library, Vernon Road, Scarborough. 'Fred's Earlier Encounters' by Fred Rowntree. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact the Secretary, Adrian Scales by email at email@scarboroughrailwaysociety.org.uk for further details.

Should your society information be listed on this page?

If so, then please email the details to the editor, remembering to include the date, starting time and location, together with details of the event, speaker and entrance charges if applicable.

It is not necessary, but helpful to people, if you can also include a contact name and phone number/ email address for the organisation that can be published.

Railway Herald reserves the right to edit details entered in this section, which may also be displayed on our online events diary.

Internet Links

Links to the various society websites can be found in our links section on the website, or by clicking here.

▼ Painted in the Weardale Railway's own Chocolate & Cream colour scheme, Class 141 'Railbus' No. 141103 awaits departure from Stanhope on 29th December with a 'Mince Pie Special'. **Andrew Laws**

17th January 2009

Great Western Society (South West Group)
The Parish Centre, Church End Road, Kingskerswell, Torbay.
'Narrow Gauge in Germany' by Les Folkard. Meeting commences at 18.30.

Stephenson Locomotive Society
The Friends Meeting House, Mount Street, Manchester.
Area AGM followed by 'Locomotives of the Highland Railway' by Clive Holden. Meeting commences at 14.00. Contact the Secretary on 0161 928 2461 for further details.

19th January 2009

Great Central Railway (Spinkhill Branch)
The Angel Hotel, 26 College Road, Spinkhill, Sheffield S21 3YB
Members Evening (slides or digital). Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact Frank Greaves on 01909 473927 for further details.

Locomotive Club of Great Britain (Dorking)
Pethick-Lawrence House, 85 South Street, Dorking, Surrey.
'Travels in South America' by Donald Wilson. Meeting commences at 19.30.

RCTS (Chester Branch)
The Town Crier, City Road/Station Road, Chester (opposite station entrance).
'The New Welsh Highland Railway' by Dave Kent. Meeting commences at 19.45.

RCTS (Oxford Branch)
West Oxford Democrats Club, 1 North Street, Osney, Oxford.
'SNCF Today' by Mike Bunn. Meeting commences at 19.30.

RCTS (Northampton Branch)
Weston Favell Parrish Hall, Booth Lane South, Weston Favell, Northampton.
'Southern Electric' by Bruce Oliver. Meeting commences at 14.00.

20th January 2009

Stephenson Locomotive Society
Fox Covert Inn, High Leven, Nr Yarm, Teeside.
'The Glorious Years - North Eastern Region' by Martin Green. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact the Secretary on 01642 321205 for further details.

21st January 2009

Institute of Mechanical Engineers (Rail)
Chartwell House, 1 Brunel Parkway, Pride Park, Derby.
'The Welsh Highland Railway' by Peter Randall. Doors open 17.15 for 17.45 start.

Permanent Way Institution (Glasgow)
Upstairs Lounge, The Iron Horse, West Nile Street, Glasgow.
'Bottom up Track Renewals' by Hugh Delahunt and Jamie Breckenridge, Babcock Rail, Hamilton. Meeting commences 17.30. Contact Jack Scott on 0141 952 2562, mobile 077889 765291 or e-mail jack.scott1@btinternet.com for further details.

RCTS (Eastleigh Branch)
(in conjunction with Mid Hants Rly & The Somerset & Dorset Trust)
Eastleigh Railway Institute, Romsey Road, Eastleigh. 'John o' Groats to Lands End Part 2' by Alistair Jeffrey. Meeting starts at 19.45.

RCTS (West Riding)
Pudsey Civic Hall
'Out and About in the Last Year' by Hugh Gould. Meeting starts 19.30.

22nd January 2009

Gravesend Railway Enthusiasts Society
Emmanuel Baptist Church, Windmill Street, Gravesend DA12 1BB. 'On and Off the Footplate' by Bill Davies, Ratired Railwayman. Meeting commences at 19.45. Contact Roger Hart on 01474 8333320 or by e-mail www.gres.org.uk for further details

RCTS (Brighton Branch)
Brighthelm Church and Community Centre, North Road, Brighton.
'Railways of Southern France' by Michael Bunn. Meeting commences at 19.30.

23rd January 2009

Shropshire Railway Society
The Gateway, Chester Road, Shrewsbury
'Settle - Carlisle Perspectives' by Tony Icke. Meeting commences at 19.30. Minimum donation of £3 requested for non members. Contact Tony Hatch on 01691 650985 or by e-mail at colin.hatch531@btinternet.com for further details.

24rd January 2009

Stephenson Locomotive Society
The Mining Institute Lecture Theatre, Neville Hall, Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne.
'Thomas Bouch - Railway Engineer' by Professor A.I.B.Moffatt. Meeting commences at 19.00. Contact 01434 688946 for further details.

26th January 2009

RCTS (Maidenhead Branch)
Cox Green Community Centre, Highfield Lane, Cox Green, Maidenhead.
'An Overview of the Crossrail Project - Consent to Contruction' by Peter Fry. Meeting starts at 19.30.

RCTS (Sheffield Branch)
St Mathews Church Rooms, Carver Street, Sheffield. Branch AGM. Meeting commences at 19.30.

27th January 2009

RCTS (Nottingham Branch)
Nottingham Mechanics, 3 North Sherwood Street, Nottingham.
'Ten Years of Medium Format Photography' by Gavin Lake. Meeting commences at 19.30.

RCTS (Welwyn GC Branch)
The Methodist Church, at the junction of Ludwick Way and Colegreen Lane, Welwyn Garden City. 'Branch Lines' by David Soggee. Meeting starts at 14.15.

RCTS (West Riding)
Saltaire Methodist Chapel, Saltaire Road, Shipley.
'Tales of a Signalman' by Malcolm Riley. Meeting commences 19.30.

RCTS (Woking Branch)
Woodham Hall, Christ Church, Town Square, Woking.
'The Challenge of Delivering a Bigger, Better Railway' by Richard O'Brian. Meeting starts at 19.15.

28th January 2009

Basingstoke & District Railway Society
Wote St.Club, New Road, Basingstoke. Members AGM. Meeting commences at 20.00. Visitors welcome. Contact 01256 326096 for details.

29th January 2009

Locomotive Club of Great Britain (Croydon)
United Reformed Church Hall, Addiscombe Grove, East Croydon.
'21st Century loco-hauled Trains' by Geoff Brocket. Starts 19.15.

RCTS (Preston Branch)
Claremont Hotel, Blackpool Road, Preston. 'The North Wales Coast Railway since 1989' by Ian Pilkington. Meeting starts at 19.30.

30th January 2009

Great Central Railway (London Branch)
The Exmouth Arms, 1 Starcross Street, Euston, London NW1 2HR. TBA. Starts 19.30. Contact Richard Butler on 01525 372487 for details.

Great Western Society (North West Group)
St Hilda's Clubroom, Slater Street, Latchford, Warrington.
'West Highland Railway'. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Great Western Society (Oxford Group)
Pauling Human Sciences Centre, 58 Banbury Road, Oxford.
'The Industrial and the Deltic' by John Hubbard.. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Scarborough Railway Society
The Public Library, Vernon Road, Scarborough.
'A Rover's Double Decade' by Terry Digney. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact the Secretary, Adrian Scales by email at email@scarboroughrailwaysociety.org.uk for further details

3rd February 2009

Gravesend Railway Enthusiasts Society
Emmanuel Baptist Church, Windmill Street, Gravesend DA12 1BB. TBA by Andrew Munden, Network Rail. Meeting commences at 19.45. Contact Roger Hart on 01474 8333320 or www.gres.org.uk for further details

Locomotive & Carriage Insitution
London Underground Limited, Broadway, St James Park Station, London. 'Crossrail Project' by Simon Bennett. Meeting starts at 18.00.Contact Stuart Smith, by Secretary email smithstuart@btinternet.com for further details.

Locomotive Club of Great Britain (Bedford)
St John's Church Hall, St John's Street, Bedford. 'The History & Upgrading of the Victoria Line' by Peter Neal. Meeting starts at 19.30.

Locomotive Club of Great Britain (North London)
Wood Green Labour Club, 3 Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, London N22 5NJ.
'The Committee Entertains'. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Southern Electric Group (South Hampshire Branch)
Eastleigh Railway Institute, Romsey Road, Eastleigh.
' The Isle of Man in the 1970s and 1980s' by David Mead. Meeting commences at 19.30. Admission charge of £2. Contact the Secretary, John Goodrich on 023 8067 0028 for further details.

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

4th February 2009

Burton Railway Society
Marston's Social Club, Shobnall Road, Burton upon Trent.
'Preserved Steam on Video' by Karl Jauncey and Dave Richards. 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.

Back Issues

All of the back issues of the magazine are available on our website, along with previously issued supplements and editions of RH Worldwide, simply log on, 24 hours a day, to:

www.railwayherald.com

Rear Cover Caption

The strength of the sun may defy the actual time of year, but on 9th January, EWS Class 66/0 No. 66142 hauls fuel tanks past Malago Vale, Bristol, en route to Tavistock Junction, Plymouth
Roy Hutchinson

Magazine Information

Editorial Address:
The Railway Herald, PO Box 252, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire. United Kingdom. DN17 2WY
Telephone: 01904 500175

Railway Herald is produced by Railway Herald Ltd (Registered as company number 05837609 in England).
VAT Registraion: 942 6509 14
Registered office: Hobarn House, 12 Brompton Road, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL6 1DY

Advertising in Railway Herald

We welcome advertisements from any industry, business or organisation connected in some way, shape or form with the railway movement. A rate card is available from our advertising manager. Please email advertising@railwayherald.com for further details. Discounts can be offered on advertising plans covering a longer period and advertisements do not need to appear in consecutive issues. All artwork must be recieved by mid-day on the Friday, prior to publication on a Monday. Advertising on the Railway Herald website is also available at competative rates. Please contact our advertising manager for details.

Reading the magazine

Railway Herald would advise all readers to view the magazine using the very latest version of Adobe Acrobat Reader (AAR). This software is available to be downloaded free of charge from http://www.adobe.com or click on the button below. If you are viewing this PDF document on a corporate system, you should contact your system administrator for details about upgrading to the latest version of Acrobat Reader. We do not guarentee that the document will view correctly on any other software.

Get ADOBE® READER®

Copyright, printing and distribution

The content, design and style of this PDF file, referred to as 'this issue of Railway Herald magazine' is protected by copyright. All photographs remain the copyright property of the stated photographer. Readers are permitted to print copies for their own reading or to provide to friends/colleagues. But being a complimentary magazine, Railway Herald must not be sold by any means, printed or electronic. All of our back issues are freely available from http://www.railwayherald.co.uk and our PDF files may be passed onto interested parties in either a printed or electronic format.

66142

Welcome to a new look for 2009

A number of changes have taken place to *Railway Herald* over the festive period, some of which will be more apparent to readers and users of our website, than others, so to bring readers right up to speed at the start of the new year, the Editor presents a run-down of whats new!

If you downloaded this issue from the website, then you'll have seen the second biggest change - we've a new website! Working with our IT partners, Fizix Studios, we've spent the last five months working on a number of developments, several of which are incorparated in the site you now see before you, while others will reach fruition over the coming weeks. The entire aim has been to introduce new features that offer you, the users, added services. The basis of the website remains the same as ever that the core information, the downloading of the magazine and viewing of images on the Imaging Centre will not only remain free, but that you do not need a user account to access them. However, for those who have not yet created such an account, doing so gives you the ability to sign up to receive optional email notifications everytime a magazine is published, it will allow you the ability to upload your own images to the Imaging Centre, which now totals over 14,000 pictures, and gives easy access to our new eShop - see below!

We have listened to the comments and suggestions made to over the old site. The entire user sign-up procedure has been rewritten and you can now retrieve both your username and password via the website. All existing user accounts have been transferred over to the new site, but all users have been given a temporary password, and you'll receive this via email to your registered address shortly. When your first log into the new site, the system will automatically ask you to change your password - giving you the ability to choose a secure password that can be anything you want it to be.

The new site provides several new features, not least is the launch of *RH Imaging* - our long-awaited Photo Website System. Built on the basis of, like many other sites, allowing users to share their own image collection on the web, our system goes one step further than most. The system is available on either a six-monthy or yearly paid subscription and allows readers a significant amount of space with which to upload their images, in addition you have control over the look of your site through the use of our easy-to-use template design system, allowing you to change a variety of aspects from the colours used to the actual style of layout. There are a number of templates available at present, but these will be added to over the coming weeks and months.

In addition, on the Advanced accounts, users have the ability to create their own blog, which may use images uploaded to your website, and they have the ability to upload video content.

RH Imaging is being launched as of 12th January in beta test mode - in that it is available to a limited number of people, on a first come-first served basis, until the full launch on 2nd February. As part of the beta test mode, we are looking to our initial users to provide construction feedback on all the different aspects of the new system. One of the best aspects of RH Imaging, from the research that we've undertaken is the lack of adverts on YOUR site. If you currently have a photo website with an alternative provider, why not check out the benefits of the new RH Imaging system?

Elsewhere, we've redesigned the file uploader used for uploading images to the Imaging Centre and for submitting images to the magazine, which should eliminate the errors which have occasionally occurred in the past.

Any supplements issues since we started publication are back online again and we've a totally residesigned and upgraded 'Help & Support' section to assist users with the various functions throughout the site.

There are several additional features to launch over the coming weeks and we'll keep readers up-to-date on them through the pages of the magazine, but do remember to keep checking the website for whats new.

RH Imaging

	Basic	Advanced
Total Space	1Gb	2.5Gb
Upload Pictures	●	●
Unique Web Address	●	●
Own Domain Name	●	●
Moderate Comments	●	●
Watermark Images	●	●
Statistics Information	●	●
Gallery Search	●	●
Create Sub Galleries	●	●
Extra Space Available	Yes	Yes
Upload Video	-	●
Create Blog	-	●
Create Custom Pages	-	●
Advertising	No*	No*
File Size Limit	No	No
Style Templates	Yes	Yes
Maximum Galleries	Unlimited	Unlimited
Cost	**£35**	**£55**