Railway Herald

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The electronic journal for the railway enthusiast

Railway Herald

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6th April 2009

Editor
Richard Tuplin

Contributing Editor
Brian Morrison

Railtour Editor
John Whitehouse

Advertising Manager
Ken Brunt

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Fred Kerr

Barrow Hill LNER Festival

With large crowds visiting the roundhouse at Barrow Hill over 4th/5th April, the stage was set for a true LNER Festival with the first 'A1', 'A2' and 'A4' line-up since the end of steam in addition to Classes 'K1', 'O4' and 'N7' adding to the programme.

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Non-destructive testing undertaken after boiler problems threaten to further delay the mainline return of *King Edward I*

The cancellation of Past Times' 18th April 'Red Dragon' and the 6024 Preservation Society's own 'Royal Albert 150' tours has fuelled recent reports that No. 6024 *King Edward I* has a problem with a fracture in its firebox tubeplate.

Railway Herald has been advised that some non-destructive testing has been done on the copper tubeplate, and as yet the results are inconclusive. Further testing is planned after Easter.

The current situation is that the Society is hoping for a good result from the new tests, and that any problem is presently considered potential and not actual.

There is disappointment within the camp as winter maintenance had gone well, but the cancellation of the tours was regarded as a necessary contingency.

The 'King' is currently resident on the West Somerset Railway where it was due to appear in its recent steam gala, but was withdrawn just prior to the event.

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Front Cover Caption:

'A4' No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*, **'A2' No. 60532** *Blue Peter*, **'A4' No. 60009** *Union of South Africa* **and 'A1' No. 60163** *Tornado* **at Barrow Hill. David Gibson**

Freightliner marks Stephenson Locomotive Society centenary by naming one of its latest Class 66/9

▲ **The Stephenson Locomotive Society (SLS) celebrated its centenary on 30th March, when Freightliner named one of its latest Class 66/9s after the organisation. The naming of No. 66957** *Stephenson Locomotive Society 1909-2009* **was carried out jointly by Sir William McAlpine Bt, Patron of the Society, and Tim Shackerley, Engineering Director, Freightliner Group. John New, Publicity Officer for the SLS commented: "As the oldest railway enthusiast group in the World achieving our centenary is newsworthy in itself. To know that the railway industry recognises our value in the serious study of railways and railway locomotion in this way, makes it worthwhile. In December, we notch up our 100th birthday, a significant milestone for any organisation and our challenge now is maintaining progress and going on to 200!". No. 66957 manoeuvres out of Locomotion as it prepares to return to Leeds Midland Road Depot after being named. Both: John Lewins**

Burnley Manchester Road upgrade delayed due to lack of funds

Burnley Manchester Road station will not now have its £2.5 million renovation for at least two years, because of a cash shortage.

The situation is a blow to rail campaigners who want a modernised station to act as a gateway on a direct link from Burnley to Manchester. The upgrade included substantial car parking, new buildings on the platforms and a manned ticket office. The European Commission and North West Development Agency were expected to fund the scheme, but only if Lancashire County Council also contributed, but currently it has no funding that could support the scheme as it has other priorities.

TfL announces £9.2 billion budget

Transport for London (TfL) has announced a £9.2 billion budget for 2009/2010, which will fund a series of major transport improvements as part of its multi-billion pound Investment Programme.

The new budget, up from £8.1 billion last year, makes provision for the delivery of all the current transport initiatives and includes: completion of the Jubilee line upgrade to provide a 33% increase in capacity to serve an extra 10,000 passengers an hour; starting the redevelopment of Tottenham Court Road Underground station to provide additional capacity and serve Crossrail; starting work at the new Isle of Dogs Crossrail station, and intensification of the work to extend the East London line as part of London Overground in preparation for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Hourly service for London to Lowesoft

The passing loop at Beccles station to allow an hourly service to London on the Ipswich to Lowestoft line, looks set to finally become a reality.

Network Rail announced on 31st March that the loop would be one of its key projects in a five-year £1 billion spending programme in the Anglia region and could be in place as early as next year. The prospect has delighted local campaigners who welcomed the decision that comes 30 years after the idea was first mooted!

Currently there is only a single length of track between Lowestoft and Beccles, meaning that trains cannot pass until they are some 20 miles down the line towards Ipswich. The loop would also benefit other local stations on the line, such as Halesworth and Darsham.

Walks over Ribblehead Viaduct in July

Network Rail has agreed with the Settle and Carlisle Railway Trust to allow 3,000 people to cross Ribblehead Viaduct in organised parties on Sunday 26th July, as this year marks the 20th anniversary of the decision not to close the line.

Network Rail's route director said: "This year is an important anniversary in the history of the line, which is why we have decided to open the viaduct to the public for one last time. Had the line not been saved, rail travellers would have been denied one of the world's most scenic railway journeys, coal traffic from Scotland to power stations in Yorkshire and the Midlands would have had to use either the east or west coast main lines, both of which are heavily congested, and we wouldn't have been able to use it as a diversionary route. As it is, we are investing heavily in improving the line and stations along it, all of which are looked after and promoted by the Trust, the Friends of the Settle-Carlisle Line and the Settle-Carlisle Railway Development Co. Ltd".

Tickets for the walk, which have to be booked in advance, are now on sale at a cost of £15 per person for adults and children aged 14 years and over. Children aged under 14 years, and anyone with impaired mobility, will not be allowed across the structure.

£2.5 million committed for Swindon to Gloucester route re-doubling research

Improvements to the Swindon to Gloucester line have moved closer following the Department for Transport announcing £2.5 million of Government funding for preparatory research into double-tracking 12 miles of the route.

The stretch of line was singled in 1968 and the study is needed before detailed plans for improvements can be drawn up.

Transport Minister Lord Andrew Adonis said: "Doubling the 12 miles of single track between Swindon and Gloucester is an excellent project, which has the potential to make a real difference to people travelling through the South Cotswolds on this line. It is also an important diversionary route between South Wales and London when the Severn Tunnel is closed. My Department will now work with the South West Regional Assembly and Welsh Assembly Government to explore other funding opportunities for the full scheme. The co-ordination between three organisations is a demonstration of the importance of this project. In total the Government has committed to investing £15 billion of public money in the railways in the next five years".

New contract for Intermodal

A new contract has been signed between Tate & Lyle plc and the Russell Group, making some 65 lorry journeys a week between Silvertown, in East London, and various points in Scotland redundant.

Five times a week, an intermodal rail service now departs from the Russell Group's Barking railfreight terminal heading for Freightliner's Coatbridge terminal. Operated by Direct Rail Services, each train moves on average over 350 tonnes of bulk cane sugar products in liquid and granulated forms, all destined for major customers in Scotland. The new Barking-Coatbridge train routes via the Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal and Russells is now talking to other customers interested in using the daily freight linking London, the Midlands and Scotland.

▲ Freightliner Class 90 No. 90045 threads a path through the mass of building work underway at Stratford on 25th March, hauling the long but half-empty 11.43 Felixstowe to Trafford Park intermodal service. Visible behind the train is the new nearly completed London Overground island platforms 1 & 2 and the massive overbridge to allow entrance to the station from the north side. **Brian Morrison**

London Overground platforms at Stratford almost ready for services

Two new platforms to serve the London Overground network are due to open at Stratford station on 14th April, forming part of the station's redevelopment for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The Olympic Delivery Authority has contributed £32 million towards the project as well as an another £100 million to treble capacity and improve accessibility at Stratford for 2012 and beyond.

The new island platforms are 250 metres long and will be capable of taking six-car trains. Passengers have access to the rest of the station complex via two subways, which are connected to the platforms by lifts as well as stairs. The platforms also have new help points, clearer signs and information screens and new CCTV cameras. They are situated on the north side of the Stratford station complex, adjacent to National Rail Platform 12.

Until the closure of the North London line between Stratford and North Woolwich, London Overground trains used platforms located at Stratford Low Level, next to the Jubilee Line terminus. These are now being converted for use by the Docklands Light Railway as part of its Stratford International extension.

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Network Rail announces £35 million programme to build a 'bigger and better' railway system

Network Rail has started its £35 billion programme of expenditure targeted at building a bigger and better railway.

Dyan Crowther, Network Rail Route Director, said:" Britain is poised on the brink of a rail revolution. On 5th April we embarked upon one of the most exciting chapters in the history of our railways. Network Rail is ready to unleash the biggest expansion of Britain's railways since the age of Brunel. The next five years will see massive investment in improving the railways for passengers and freight users by adding capacity and relieving overcrowding. We will see a transformed railway through ambitious plans that will deliver more trains, more seats, longer trains and faster trains. Services will be even more reliable, delays caused by the infrastructure will be cut by nearly 25% and we will embark upon an investment programme that is bigger and more ambitious than anything seen in a generation. Delivering all this will require major change across the industry and we should not underestimate the scale and difficulties of the challenge that lies ahead. "

Of the £35 billion to be spent on Britain's railways over the next five years almost £12 billion will be invested on projects designed to relieve overcrowding by lengthening platforms and increasing capacity and capability to enable more trains to run, and in fairness a number of these project have already been announced. £11.5 billion will be invested in replacing older parts of the network (rail, signalling bridges etc), and a further £9.2 billion will be spent on day-to-day maintenance and the costs of operating and running the network safely over the period, with a further £2.2 billion on non-controllable operating expenditure. Mr Coucher continued: "Stations will be transformed and new ones built. Speeds will be increased, bottlenecks will be unblocked, thousands of new trains will debut, services will run more frequently at weekends and at Bank Holidays, and all this while time keeping is ramped up, costs driven down and safety boosted". The last five years has been about putting right the ills of the railway - this has been achieved with train punctuality, passenger satisfaction and railway safety all at record levels and billions cut from the cost of running the railway. The next five years will be focused on doing the basics even better and delivering a bigger, better railway for passengers and freight. Network Rail is committed to making even more trains run on time. By 2014 it is committed to record punctuality levels of 92.6% across England and Wales, and 92% in Scotland. This compares to just over 90% now and 78% at the time of Railtrack's demise. Network Rail will also provide even better value for money for the British people – making savings of an extra 21% – on top of the 27% already achieved since 2004. Network Rail's planning horizons extend far beyond the next five years and is looking up to 30 years ahead with detailed reviews already well underway into possible main-line electrification and the building of further high speed lines. The next five years will also see Network Rail committing itself to furthering its environmental sustainability. With carbon emissions an ever-growing cause for concern, Network Rail will champion the cause for rail, the most environmentally friendly form of mass transit. He added: "Rail is the greenest way to travel, I think it's the greatest way to travel and I intend to champion the cause of rail in Britain over the years to come".

▲ **London Midland Class 350/1 No. 350126 departs from Rugby on 4th April as the 13.56 Northampton - Birmingham New Street service, while Class 390 Pendolino No. 390032 runs past with the 13.40 London Euston - Manchester Piccadilly working. The West Coast Main Line could benefit further from the £35 million investment, through improvements at Tamworth. Phil Beard**

▲ **One route which will see investment is the Cotswold line, which is to be doubled, meaning scenes such as this, with Class 180 No. 180104 leaving the single line section at Norton Junction on a London Paddington to Hereford service on 2nd September last year, will be confined to the history books. Jack Boskett**

Major projects include many items that *Railway Herald* has previously reported in detail, and in the case of some projects, that are already well underway, but are listed here again to show where the massive outlay is to be spent. On Thameslink the biggest rail project ever in Great Britain. The scheme will provide massive benefits to passengers with much longer, more frequent services on the route.

Birmingham New Street is to be transformed in a collaborative project called the Gateway Project. Originally designed to handle 650 trains a day, the station now takes over 1,250 every day. The new concourse will be over three times its current size and passengers will have better, modern facilities in a light and spacious station. Links to the city will be improved and the New Street Gateway will create 3,000 new jobs and deliver economic benefits of almost £2 billion

Crossrail is the largest civil engineering project in Europe, with the huge redevelopment at Paddington taken with the Thameslink expansion, there will be viable through-London north-south and east-west routes for the very first time. The King's Cross station site is to be completely redeveloped to handle 47 million passengers a year. By completion in 2013, the project will triple the size of the concourse area, providing more space and shops for people to use while waiting for trains; deliver a glass and aluminium concourse roof; improve access, including that for disabled passengers, as well as link to Underground, Thameslink, and domestic and international St Pancras services. An extra platform will also be added to increase the stations' train capacity.

Reading will have its railway lines untangled, leading to faster, more reliable trains. New tracks and platforms will be added to improve train speeds, reduce delays and ease overcrowding

Scotland will have a new passenger line from Airdrie to Bathgate, to be rebuilt after 50 years of closure. It will be a double track, electrified railway connecting communities in central Scotland to both Edinburgh and Glasgow. The Glasgow Airport Rail Link will provide a fast, reliable service between Glasgow Central and Glasgow International Airport. The new nine-mile link will call at Paisley Gilmour Street before reaching its final destination at a new purpose-built station at the airport.

Improvements on the East Coast Main Line include remodelling junctions, removing or altering level crossings and works to bridges and platforms, and benefits will include capacity for more trains, faster and heavier trains and higher and wider freight containers. This will free up capacity on the ECML for more express services. There is to be a new link between the East Coast Main Line and Cambridge to create extra capacity to run more services to and from London every hour, reduce delays to train services by nearly 30,000 minutes every year, and allow Network Rail to keep the railway open when essential maintenance is needed, by keeping one link between Hitchin and Cambridge running when the other is being worked upon.

The Edwardian roof above Platforms 9 to 12 at London Paddington is to be restored, passengers benefiting from a lighter, brighter station, as the metalwork and reglazing of the roof will allow the light back in. Plans are being investigated to build a short section of new track north of Nuneaton station to allow freight from Peterborough to join the West Coast Main Line without the need to cross it at grade, offering capacity benefits and reducing potential causes of delay.

In the Midlands, key projects include signalling renewals at Nottingham station, Midland Main Line speed improvements, train lengthening, improvements to stations including Nottingham and Derby, freight line improvements and planning for electrification. There is cross-party support for the electrification of the Midland Main Line and Network Rail will be looking in more detail into how this work would be done.

Other projects include Westerleigh Junction to Barnt Green line speed improvement to reduce journey times between Bristol and Birmingham. The electrification of the Cross-City Line from Barnt Green to Bromsgrove, provision of extra track capacity to Redditch and a new station at Bromsgrove.

In South Wales a Barry to Cardiff Queen Street corridor to facilitate the increase of South Wales valley line services from 12 to 16 trains an hour through the central Cardiff corridor by 2014, while railway infrastructure on the Western route (Wales and South West of England) to be renewed. These investments include refurbished station buildings at Exeter St. Davids, Pontypridd and Shrewsbury, and track renewals at Pwllheli, Gobowen and Panteg. In mid-Wales Cambrian line enhancements to provide additional passing loops on the Cambrian line facilitating an hourly service between Shrewsbury and Aberystwyth commenced in 2008. A state-of-the-art signalling system adopted widely by Europe will now be implemented on the line to allow trials to take place, have the added benefit of providing a more reliable service.

On the Cotswold line, redoubling will take place to facilitate a robust hourly train service, reduce the impact of delays throughout the Thames Valley corridor to and from Paddington, and reduce delays to north-south services via Oxford. Also, the Department for Transport is considering the Great Western Main Line for an electrification programme, and has commissioned Network Rail to develop, design and implement preparatory work on platforms and tracks to facilitate the introduction of electric Intercity Express trains on the route.

Network Rail is to heed the environment agenda by targeting the re-use of a total of 85% of the water removed from the Severn Tunnel by 2014. It will also be looking to set up a new track-recycling centre at Westbury, which will become one of the four rail recycling hubs it operates in Great Britain.

▲ Colas Rail Class 47/7s Nos. 47727 and 47739 power through Washwood Heath on 26th March working the Thursdays Only Burton On Trent to Dollands Moor steel service, this is booked to run for 12 weeks - seven weeks of which remain. **Brad Joyce**

Metro and Light Rail News

▲ The new South Quay station under construction on Docklands Light Railway on 25th March. **Brian Morrison**

ScotRail and Transport for Scotland investment benefits stations

A new round of investment by ScotRail and Transport Scotland is benefiting stations across the Highlands.

At Inverness, a former shop unit has been converted into a new waiting room, providing a sheltered heated area on the main concourse. In addition, a courtesy counter is to be installed within the Travel Centre at the station that allows wheelchair-users to be served at their height. Automatic sliding doors will also be provided to improve access for people with mobility difficulties, and REACT signage will be installed around the station to assist the visually impaired. All the work is due for completion by early summer. All stations on the Inverness-Aberdeen and Inverness-Perth routes have received automated loudspeaker systems that provide travellers with more comprehensive train-running information, and the autodial Help Points at stations on the Inverness-Kyle, Inverness-Perth and Oban-Crianlarich lines, have been renewed where required, allowing passengers to speak to staff in a Customer Services Centre.

New Electrostar trains for Stanstead Express and ex-London Midland '321s' for National Express

Bombardier Transportation has signed an order with Lloyds TSB and London Eastern Railways, a subsidiary of National Express, for 30 four-car Electrostar EMUs plus a three-year maintenance agreement, the order value being approximately £173 million.

The new EMUs will be built at Bombardier's Derby site to operate on 'Stansted Express' services from London Liverpool Street as part of the Department for Transport (DfT) campaign to ease over-crowding on the rail network.

The new trains are designed for service speeds of up to 100mph and are equipped with large luggage racks, saloon air conditioning, comprehensive CCTV coverage and a WiFi system to enhance the level of passenger communication and information to and from the trains. The units will also feature the Bombardier Mitrac propulsion and controls system to recover and feed back energy while breaking. All 120 coaches are scheduled for delivery between March and June 2011.

The new fleet will replace the older Class 317s, and Bombardier will maintain them, using the facilities at Ilford Maintenance Depot.

A further 68 carriages will be added to the fleet from the London Midland franchise with cascaded Class 321s, being replaced on the West Coast route by the newly introduced Siemens Transportation-built Class 350/2s.

Donnington opens

On 23rd March, DB Schenker operated the first train to the newly reopened Donnington (Telford) rail freight terminal in nearly 20 years.

The service formed part of the rail freight service provision contract that the Ministry of Defence has with the freight haulier. Containers from Marchwood Military Port and Bicester were transported to the terminal, re-establishing a permanent link to the rest of the rail network.

◀ **DBS Class 60 No. 60040** *Territorial Army Centenary* **worked the first revenue earning train to the new Telford International Railfreight Park, conveying containers from the Ministry of Defence on 23rd March. The loco, in the livery commemorating the Territorial Army, passes through Haybridge on the Donnington branch just after heavy rainfall, with the return working to Warrington Arpley. The inward working was fully loaded but this return train carried just three containers at the rear. Gary S. Smith**

Bristol rail link could take six years

The envisaged reinstatement of the rail link from Bristol to Portishead could now take some six years to build, and at an estimated £28 million the cost is almost double the previous estimate.

A feasibility study into the scheme is currently underway and is due to be published this summer. Included in the study is a discussion about which stations the Portishead services will stop at in Bristol in addition to Temple Meads. In August last year, North Somerset Council bought a three-mile section of defunct track on the line, to safeguard its future.

The line closed to passengers in 1964.

UK News In Brief

■ Frinton's manned level-crossing gates could be closed for the last time on 17th April, the Secretary of State for Transport being expected to sign a level crossing order the day before works are due to start to replace them with a barrier system operated via CCTV from Colchester. The scheme is part of a multimillion-pound investment on the Colchester to Walton line.

■ Robin Hood line passengers at Bulwell station have missed out on Sunday service trains since they were introduced in the December timetable last year, East Midlands Trains saying that it would make the timetable too complicated if stops were made there. Now, however, £360,000 of track improvements are to be carried out this summer that will reduce journey times by a few minutes, allowing room for the Bulwell stop.

■ The new Regional Route Director for Network Rail, Richard Lungmuss, has said that he will make it a crusade of his to improve Hartlepool station. He said: "It is an eyesore and a disgrace. I am going to do whatever it takes to make it look better, as the people of Hartlepool do not deserve that". Network Rail plans to spend £122 million on track and signal renewal projects in the North over the next five years.

■ First GBRf now has a new intermodal train at Felixstowe Port, taking the number of services it operates at the Port from four to five, and leading to a new five-year deal with the Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC). First GBRf currently runs two paths from the Port to Hams Hall, with one of these on contract to MSC, along with the MSC service to Selby. The acquirement of a third path to Hams Hall means it has been able to negotiate a new agreement to manage all three MSC contract services for a further five years for the shipping line. The new 22-wagon train will run six days a week to the West Midlands, taking the total number of daily departures from the Port to 27.

■ Transport Scotland has denied reports that the construction of the line between Edinburgh and the Borders is behind schedule. It says that it has taken more time than anticipated to find bidders to take part in the construction of the multi-million-pound project, but maintain that construction should start in 2011 and finish in 2013. Funds have recently been accelerated to allow Transport Scotland to undertake advanced works later this year, earlier than scheduled, and land purchase for the railway has been substantially completed. It expects to issue the Official Journal of the European Union notice for the main work later this year.

■ East Midlands Trains is to help the environment by recycling more waste. A new recycling scheme implemented at Neville Hill Depot is expected to result in 90% of the company's 'on train' waste arriving there being recycled.

New twice-hourly Oxford service on the horizon as Chiltern announces Evergreen 3 project

The idea of building a new, fast service line between London and Oxford goes back over a decade to when it was first mooted by Chiltern Railways when it took on the Chiltern franchise.

It became a formal aspiration as part of the company's second franchise agreement in 2002, and the following year a number of options for such a service were examined in a report compiled by Chiltern for the Department of Transport. After extensive discussion and consideration, these options were narrowed down to those that are now being considered as part of the current Evergreen3 project. As its name suggests, Evergreen3 is the latest in a series of service improvements that are being implemented as part of Chiltern's 20-year franchise.

It was preceded by Project Evergreen1, which comprised 18 miles of track doubling between Bicester and Aynho, and Evergreen2 that included various measures to improve line speed, extra signalling between London and Bicester and two extra platforms at London Marylebone - a 50% increase in capacity and both completed in 2006.

The latest project could be achieved by constructing a short connecting line just south of Bicester, where Chiltern Railways' London-Birmingham line crosses over the proposed east-west line that will run between Oxford and Milton Keynes. This is to be upgraded from just east of Bicester Town station to Oxford, including restoring much of the double track that was removed many years ago and installing new signalling and safety systems. Bicester Town and Islip stations will be rebuilt and additional platforms provided at Oxford, while a new station will be constructed near Water Eaton to serve Kidlington and the north of Oxford.

Chiltern Railways envisages operating two London-Oxford trains each hour in each direction, throughout the day. All trains are scheduled to call at Bicester Town and Oxford stations, and the new Parkway station in north Oxford. Most trains will call at High Wycombe, and some will call at Islip. Projected journey times will be around 66 minutes from Marylebone to Oxford, 58 minutes from Marylebone to Water Eaton, 14 minutes from Bicester Town to Oxford and 38 minutes from High Wycombe to Oxford.

The new works will require an order under the Transport & Works Act (TWA), which is the standard procedure for giving statutory authority for new rail lines. Chiltern will be submitting an application in the autumn, and this is likely to be followed by a public inquiry prior to the order being granted.

If the application proves successful, work to upgrade the existing Chiltern line between London and Bicester does not require TWA authority and this could, therefore, commence earlier than the Bicester to Oxford leg of the route. The key project priority prior to submitting the application is to evaluate options within the agreed parameters of the scheme and carry out a full consultation exercise as part of this process. To this end, Chiltern has engaged the environmental consultancy ERM, which is carrying out a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) as required by law and leading a stakeholder engagement programme with statutory consultees and other stakeholder groups and individuals.

ERM is also carrying out a stakeholder consultation programme, which is designed to allow consultees, such as local councils and nature conservancy groups, to consider and comment on the proposed route and to discuss design options. A number of specialist surveys are being carried out to gather information and assess the relative impacts of the preferred scheme in each of the above areas.

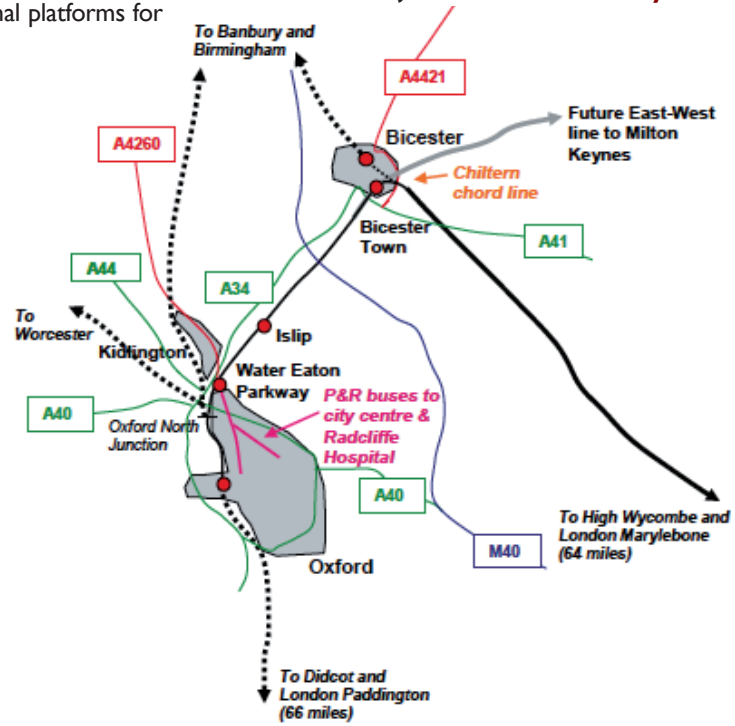
The new route will bring a wide variety of benefits, including extra trains to/from Oxford, the Chiltern service complementing the Great Western line to Paddington, and not replacing it. It would also be an alternative to the existing route during disruption while Reading station is remodelled and the CrossRail project is built. The new Water Eaton station will give easy access to the railway for passengers from north and east Oxford, Kidlington and Yarnton, without having to drive through the city to reach the existing station, and direct bus links from Water Eaton will make travel to and from the city centre and the Radcliffe hospital even easier. The line would provide a fast and frequent commuter service between Bicester and Oxford, giving a realistic alternative to the congested A34 and provide direct rail services between Oxford and High Wycombe for the first time in over 40 years, and give connections to Wembley Stadium. A new independent line would be built between Oxford North Junction and Oxford station, using the trackbed of the old line that runs parallel to the existing main line, all within the existing railway boundary. At Oxford station the bridge over the Rewley Abbey Stream will be widened, and the former parcels depot rebuilt to give two additional platforms for passenger trains.

Bicester Town station would be rebuilt with two platforms, to allow reinstatement of double track and long enough for eight-car trains. Islip station will also be rebuilt with two eight-car long platforms, with level access throughout, and a new station will be built near the Water Eaton 'park and ride' site, with direct bus links to Kidlington, north Oxford, the John Radcliffe Hospital and the city centre. The station will also have two eight-car platforms, with level access throughout, the passenger facilities including a ticket hall and coffee shop.

In addition, the route between Bicester and Oxford will also be used for the East-West Rail Link. This project is sponsored by a range of public bodies, including the relevant local authorities, and seeks to re-open the rail link between Oxford, Bletchley/Milton Keynes and East Anglia. The Chiltern Railways scheme will materially assist in the delivery of the East-West project, and Chiltern has thus established a close working relationship with the East-West Rail Consortium. This ensures that the two projects complement each other, and that Chiltern's design work takes full account of East-West Rail needs.

The complete Evergreen3 project will be financed by Chiltern Railways as part of its franchise agreement, and is not dependent on public funds.

▼ **How the new route will link Oxford and Bicester with the existing Birmingham - London Chiltern Railways line. Chiltern Railways**



First through train from London reaches Swanage

The Swanage Railway played host to UK Railtours 'Purbeck Pioneer' on 1st April.

The charter originated at London Victoria behind DB Schenker-liveried Class 66/0 No. 66152 and EWS-liveried Class 66/0 No. 66142 and became the first passenger train to work through from the National Network - after a gap of some 37 years.

▲ **Currently the uniquely-liveried Class 66/0 No. 66152 approaches Corfe Castle on the Swanage Railway. Neil Walking**

◀ **DB Schenker driver and Swanage Railway volunteer Dave Gavell, gets the 'right-away' at Swanage with the return working to London. Peter Milford**

New direct summer service from London to Avignon

Eurostar will be introducing a direct service between London and the south of France for the first time this summer. Starting on 11th July and running until 12th September, passengers will be able to travel direct from St Pancras International to Avignon Centre.

The service will depart on Saturdays at 07.09, arriving in Avignon at 14.13, enabling passengers to breakfast in London and lunch in the south of France. Direct return trains depart from Avignon on Saturdays at 16.09 and arrive in London at 21.30. Both the outbound and inbound journeys stop at Ashford International. Tickets for the service are available now. A non-flexible return for two people departing on 11th July, returning on 18th July costs £288.

UK Steam & Modern Traction Railtour Listings

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

6th April		
Railway Touring Company	34067	The Great Britain: Day 1: London Victoria-Staines-Newbury-Bristol TM
7th April		
Railway Touring Company	5029 & 70013	The Great Britain: Day 2:(Bristol TM-Penzance)-Penzance-Bristol TM
8th April		
Railway Touring Company	6201	The Great Britain: Day 3: Bristol TM-Hereford-Crewe-Preston
9th April		
Railway Touring Company	46115	The Great Britain: Day 4: Preston-Shap-Carlisle-Beattock-Glasgow Central
10th April		
Past Time Rail	tbc	The Scottish Chieftain: Day 1: Taunton-Bristol TM-Bristol Parkway-Gloucester-Lydney-Abergavenny-Hereford-Leominster-Shrewsbury-Crewe- Carlisle (break)-Dumbarton
Pathfinder Tours	DBS 67	The West Highlander: Day 1: Salisbury-Bath Spa-Bristol Parkway-Cheltenham Spa-Telford Central-Shrewsbury-Crewe-Preston
	2xDBS 37	Preston-Shap-Penrith-Carlisle-Beattock-Fort William
Railway Touring Company	45407&45231	The Great Britain 2: Day 5: Glasgow Central-Perth-Aviemore-Inverness
UK Railtours	2xDBS 67	The Arran & West Highland: Day 1:London KX-Doncaster-Skipton-S&C-Carlisle (break)-Dumfries-Glasgow Central
11th April		
Green Express Railtours	2xWCRC 47	Huddersfield-Penistone-Sheffield-Stratford upon Avon-Oxford & return
Past Time Rail	tbc	The Scottish Chieftain: Day 2:Dumbarton- Oban & return
Pathfinder Tours	2xDBS 37	The West Highlander: Day 2:Fort William-Mallaig-Fort William
Railtourer	2xWCRC 47	Cleethorpes-Scunthorpe-York- Newcastle upon Tyne-Edinburgh Waverley-Stirling-Perth & return
Railway Touring Company	61994	The Great Britain 2: Day 6: Inverness-Kyle of Lochalsh-Inverness
UK Railtours	tbc	The Arran & West Highland: Day 2: Glasgow Ctl-Fort William & return
Vintage Trains	5029 & 5043	Tyseley Warwick Road-Hereford-Newport-Tyseley **Postponed**
12th April		
Past Time Rail	tbc	The Scottish Chieftain: Day 3: Paisley-Ayr-Stranrear and return
Pathfinder Tours	2xDBS 37	The West Highlander: Day 3: Fort William-Oban-Fort William
Railway Touring Company	45407&45231	The Great Britain 2: Day 7: Inverness-Aberdeen-Dundee-Tay Bridge-Forth Bridge-Edinburgh
UK Railtours	tbc	The Arran & West Highand: Day 3: Glasgow Central-Ardrossen Harbour-Ayr-Waterside-Glasgow Central
13th April		
Past Time Rail	tbc	The Scottish Chieftain: Day 4: Dumbarton-S&C-Hellifield-Crewe-Shrewsbury-Hereford-Lydney-Gloucester-Bristol Parkway-Taunton
Pathfinder Tours	2xDBS 37s	The West Highlander: Day 4: Fort William-Preston
	DBS 67	Preston-Crewe-Shrewsbury-Cheltenham Spa-Bath Spa-Salisbury

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

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

The Week Ahead

As *Railway Herald* is taking an Easter break, this preview covers the period up to 19th April, which is particularly busy with a host of railtours, commencing with next week's invasion of Scotland.

Five tours are scheduled to cross the border, of which all but one are land cruises. It is debatable whether Railway Touring Company's 'Great Britain 2' can be classed as a land cruise rather than an extravaganza, but whatever the definition, it certainly dominates the Easter period. It gets under way around lunchtime on Monday 6th April, when Battle of Britain Pacific No. 34067 *Tangmere* heads west from Paddington to Bristol Temple Meads, via Newbury, for the first of seven overnight stops. Classic diesel traction is the feature of the westbound working on Tuesday morning with No. D1015 *Western Champion* very much on home turf at the head of the Bristol Temple Meads to Penzance section. The dreaded gauging issues have decreed that the afternoon return from Penzance will be single-headed with 'Britannia' Pacific No. 70013 *Oliver Cromwell* to Plymouth, where 'Castle' 4-6-0 No. 5029 *Nunney Castle* will then join the train in readiness for the assault on Hemerdon and the return to Bristol Temple Meads. A big red engine will await the intrepid voyagers at Temple Meads on Wednesday morning in the shape of 'Princess Royal' Pacific No. 6201 *Princess Elizabeth*, which has charge of the train along the Welsh Marches to Shrewsbury, after which there is a change to the original routing as the train will then run directly to Crewe and then north to Preston via the West Coast Main Line. A highlight of 'GB2' is the first scheduled northbound ascent of both Shap and Beattock by a 'Royal Scot' for the best part of 45 years, which is due to happen on Thursday 9th April when No. 46115 *Scots Guardsman* takes charge of the train from Preston through to Glasgow Central. Stanier-power continues from Glasgow Central on 10th April, when 'Black 5s' Nos. 45231 and 45407 have the task of lifting the train over Druimuachdar and Slochd summits to Inverness, and then two-day's later from Inverness to Edinburgh, via the East Coast route through Aberdeen, Montrose and Dundee. At Dundee No. 45231 is due to leave the train with No. 45407 then continuing alone via the Tay and Forth Bridges to the Scottish capital. Between these two runs there is an add-on from Inverness on the 'rest-day', 11th April, which features 'K4' Mogul No. 61994 *The Great Marquess* on a return working between Inverness and Kyle of Lochalsh. The final day, 13th April, has 'A4' Pacific No. 60009 *Union of South Africa* returning 'GB2' south from Edinburgh as far as York, where a Class 47 is booked to return the tour to London King's Cross. Quite a tour, almost certainly the tour of the year!

Joining RTC on Scottish metals will be UK Railtours, Pathfinder, Past Time and Railtourer. Three land cruises start out on Friday 10th April, commencing with UK Railtours 'Arran & West Highland' to Glasgow Central, which includes day excursions to both Fort William (11th April) and Ardrossan Harbour (12th April), while Pathfinder's 'West Highlander' heads straight to Fort William on day one, then Mallaig on day two and finally Oban on day three. Meanwhile Past Time has its 'Scottish Chieftain', which visits Oban (11th April) and Stranraer (12th April) from the overnight base at Dumbarton. Also operating, on 11th April, is a joint WCRC-Railtourer venture from Cleethorpes that sets down at Edinburgh Waverley, Stirling and Perth. Details of traction, where known, will be available in the RH website Railtour Listings. Also operating on 11th April is a 'Green Express' charter, which starts with a rare locomotive-hauled departure from Huddersfield to Penistone, and then to Barnsley and Sheffield for a day out at either Stratford-upon-Avon or Oxford.

Please remember to mention *Railway Herald* when speaking to railtour companies

NORTHERN CHARTERS

PROUDLY PRESENT

THE AYR BRUSH. SAT 06 JUNE 2009

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

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

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

Fares for this special train are First Class £74.00 Adult, £69.00 Child. Premier Dining £128.00 per person, sorry no reductions. A supplement for a private table for two in First Class £15.00 per table (limited basis). Std Class £59.00 Adult, £49.00 Child. Special Standard Class only fare for passengers Joining at Carlisle £49.00. Also 5% Discount for all Rail Staff on production of Valid Railway Staff ID.

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

Buffet Car and Draft Real Ale Bar available on Train

To Book Please Contact Northern Charters on 01925813182 or send Chqs postal orders payable to Northern Charters to 56 Lincoln Close, Warrington, Cheshire WA1 4LU.

E Mail Enquiries to info@northerncharters.co.uk. Or http://www.northerncharters.co.uk

The Fortnight Ahead!

Steam Dreams has No. 70013 *Oliver Cromwell* **in action on 13th April from London Victoria to Yeovil Junction via Epsom, Liss, Petersfield, Havant and Salisbury.**

On 15th April there is a VSOE Pullman working to Bath Spa and Bristol Temple Meads with Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35028 *Clan Line* operating from London Victoria to Westbury, via Salisbury outwards, and from Westbury to Victoria, via Newbury, on the return. A DBS Class 67 will fill in on the non-steam section from Westbury to Bristol and back. The mid week activity concludes on 17th April with a Compass Railtours' charter from Hooton to Aviemore, also setting down at Stirling, Perth and Pitlochry with Riviera Class 47s.

Saturday 18th April and three big Pacifics are in action; 'A1' No. 60163 *Tornado* heads the VSOE Pullman throughout on a return 'Yorkshire Pullman' London King's Cross to York charter, re-dated from 28th February, while 'A4' No. 60009 *Union of South Africa* takes over Railway Touring Company's 'Heart of Midlothian' at York for the run to Edinburgh Waverley. The train is diesel-hauled from Huddersfield to York, and on the return throughout from Edinburgh.

Meanwhile, on the West Coast 'Princess Coronation' Pacific No. 6233 *Duchess of Sutherland* is also on home ground heading a PMR Tours 'Citadel Express' from Lincoln to Carlisle, which features the 'Duchess' both ways over Shap with the steam section beginning and ending at Crewe. To complete a busy day for steam haulage, Past Time has another of its 'Cotton Mill' services from Manchester Victoria to Huddersfield, Copy Pit and Blackburn. 'Riley-power' will feature.

April 18th also provides plenty of diesel action, with Compass again in action with 'The Cumbrian Fellsman' from Stafford and Crewe, via Shrewsbury, to Carlisle, running northbound over Shap, returning along the Settle & Carlisle and Blackburn. 'Green Express' also heads for Carlisle (it will be a busy place with three tours booked to descend on Citadel station) from Holyhead and North Wales coast pick-up points, which is booked via the S&C both ways.

Nenta Traintours also opens its 2009 account with a trip to Torquay and Paignton from Norwich and stations through to Cambridge and Hitchin. Class 47s from either WCRC or Riviera should feature on these tours.

▼ **Battle of Britian No. 34067** *Tangmere* **heads south past Garstang,Lancashire, on the 12.51 Carnforth-Southall on 3rd April. Anthony Roberts**

Flamboyant names for Flamboyant trains as Yorkshire invades Whitby, Brighton, Blackpool and Lowestoft!

Flamboyant Trains is a new Doncaster-based operator for 2009, whose stated aim is to run a small programme of tours that look to be aimed at the South Yorkshire and North Derbyshire area.

The company has put together a succinct programme of four trains, all featuring Cargo-D rolling stock and each with specific traction. The first tour is 'The Yorkshire Independence Day' on 4th July, which has Class 37 traction from Barrow Hill to Whitby, via Sheffield, Doncaster, Leeds and York. Class 86 and 73 power features on the next tour, 'Brighton Rocks with AC/DC', scheduled for 25th July from Doncaster, Retford, Newark Northgate and Peterborough through to Brighton.

The bracing air of Blackpool follows with Class 56 traction on 29th August, which has a circuitous route, outwards from Barrow Hill via Derby, Chesterfield, Sheffield, Hope Valley, Buxton and Manchester Victoria, and returning via Northenden and Altrincham. Maybe the train name 'Hope for Blackpool' reflects the route and, that hopefully they will get there!

The 'Goyle Gosh, it's Lowestoft' on 3rd October perhaps says everything you need to know, except of course that it originates at Barrow Hill, and picks up at Sheffield, Retford, Newark Northgate and Peterborough, and reaches Lowestoft via the East Suffolk Line after a diversion to Felixstowe Town. The return runs via Reedham and the Wensum Curve at Norwich to Ely and then Peterborough and home as outwards. As you may have guessed already, Class 31s are the booked traction!

Cwm today and 'gronk' tomorrow

▶ **Pathfinder Tours 'Cwm and Go(ne)' railtour on 28th March featured haulage by three DB Schenker locos, Class 37/4 No. 37401, Class 60 No. 60024 and Class 08 No. 08567, the latter hauled the train from Uskmouth Fifoots Point to Newport. The charter is pictured shortly after arrival at Newport. Brad Joyce**

Class 40 railtour heads to Aberystwyth

Following the highly successful trip to Edinburgh earlier this year, the Class Forty Preservation Society will now be recalling the halcyon days of Class 40 haulage on the Cambrian Coast holiday trains on 13th June with the 'East Lancs Crusader'.

The train starts double-headed with Nos.40145 *East Lancashire Railway* and D335 at Rawtenstall, then picking-up at Ramsbottom, Bury Bolton Street, Heywood (where No. D335 detaches), Manchester Victoria, Warrington Bank Quay, Crewe and Shrewsbury, before heading west via Welshpool and Machynlleth to Aberystwyth. The return is as outwards, including double-heading the Class 40s from Heywood back to Rawtenstall.

Bookings made before 30th April will receive a 5% discount, full details of which plus a downloadable booking form are available at www.cfps.co.uk

DRS traction supreme as Spitfire heads northwards

Cumbria and the West Highlands feature strongly in Spitfire's summer season workings.

The highlight has to be an overnight working from Preston to Mallaig, and back via Oban. The 'West Highlander' is scheduled to leave Preston around 08.00 on 17th July, DRS Class 37 hauled over Shap to Carlisle where a DRS Class 20 will be added for the 'slog' over Beattock, and later over Rannock Moor to Fort William. At Fort William the Class 20 will run-round and the train will then continue in 'top and tail' mode for a return working to Mallaig. Next day, the Class 37/20 pairing continues as a double-header from Fort William to Crianlarich, where after a further run-round, the train diverts for a visit to Oban. After a short break, it will be back on the train for the return to Preston, again via Beattock and Shap. Spitfire point out that this will be a 'limited load' train and early booking is essential.

Following on, Spitfire has the 'Cumbrian Crusader' on 1st August from Wolverhampton via Birmingham New Street and Derby to Leeds, and then to Carlisle, via the S&C. The return to Leeds is via the West Coast, and this tour should feature DRS Classes 66, 37 & 20 in tandem, 37s in tandem and a 57. The 'Cumbrian Coaster' sets out from Birmingham International on 12th September with a DRS Class 66 at the helm through to Crewe via Shrewsbury. Class 37s then predominate through to Carlisle via Shap, and afterwards along the Cumbrian Coast on the return.

Do not forget either, that instead of taking the 'Electric Scot' throughout to Glasgow Central with Class 87 No. 87002 *Royal Sovereign* from Birmingham International on 11th July, there is an option to leave at Carlisle in order to visit the DRS Kingmoor Depot Open Day. Spitfire has obtained a supply of tickets from DRS that are available with this tour. For those who stay on-board for Glasgow, there is the add-on option of a trip to Ayr, running via Paisley and Kilwinning, which will be WCRC Class 47-hauled outwards and back to Glasgow with the Class 87.

▲ The Diesel Traction Group's 'Western' No. D1015 *Western Champion* passes Lostwithiel on 5th April, piloting BR 'Britannia' No. 70013 *Oilver Cromwell* on 'The Royal Dutchy'. The train was double-headed by GWR 'Castle' No. 5029 *Nunney Castle* and the 'Britannia' from Bristol Temple Meads as far as Newton Abbot, where the 'Castle' developed a 'hot box' and had to be removed from the train. As *Western Champion* had already run south to Plymouth the locomotive was recalled to Newton Abbot to pilot the charter forward. **Craig Munday**

▼ How things change! In this view, 'Castle' No. 5029 *Nunney Castle* and 'Britannia' No. 70013 *Oilver Cromwell* head 'The Royal Duchy' charter along the banks of the River Teign at Luxton's Step on 5th April, No. 5029 being just minutes away from being failed at Newton Abbot with a hotbox. **Robert Sherwood**

Bent rod causes steam failure

Vintage Trains excursion from Tyseley to Didcot and Bristol on 28th March was diesel-hauled forward from Didcot following the failure of the booked loco.

GWR 'Castle' No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* failed with a bent Radius Rod, resulting in Class 47 No. 47770 being called out from Tyseley to work the train forward..

▼ The bent radius rod can be clearly seen alongside the replacement in this view at Didcot on 28th March. **Peter Jennings**

Route change for Cambrian Mountaineer and first-ever railtour working for Network Rail Class 97/3

'The Cambrian Mountaineer' charter scheduled for 9th May has been re-routed and will now originate at Bristol Temple Meads instead of Swindon.

The train will run via Bath Spa, Chippenham, Swindon and Oxford to Birmingham and Shrewsbury, before proceeding to Aberystwyth instead of the originally advertised route via Cheltenham Spa. The tour is being organised by Network Rail signalling employees from Bristol and Swindon, the proceeds of which will be donated to the Railway Children Charity. A Class 50, probably No. D444, from the Class 50 Alliance will cover the outward journey from Bristol to Shrewsbury, and then from Aberystwyth throughout on the return. The organisers have, however, secured the first-ever use of one of Network Rails Class 97s for the Shrewsbury to Aberystwyth section.

To make a booking, contact Spitfire Railtours, which are acting as booking agents.

Making no excuses for another shot of Past Time Rail's 'The Tin Bath' charter on 28th March, BR Standard 4MT 4-6-0 No. 76079 and LMS 'Black 5' 4-6-0 No. 45407 approach Hall Royd Junction, Todmorden, bound for Manchester Victoria. **John McIntyre**

During the South Devon Railway's '40th Anniversary Gala' weekend, GWR Pannier 0-6-0PT No. 1369 heads the morning goods towards Staverton on 5th April. **Mick Rogers**

Photographic opportunities abound at Bo'ness & Kinneil Mixed Traffic gala weekend

The Bo'ness and Kinneil Railway is planning a number of photoshoot opportunities on Friday 19th June and a Mixed Traffic Gala over Father's Day weekend, 20th and 21st June.

Subject to availability, the photoshoot will provide a once-only opportunity to photograph a line-up of three former North British Railway locomotives, Class J36 0-6-0 formerly No. 673 *Maude*, D34 class 4-4-0 No. 256 *Glen Douglas* and Class Y9 0-4-0T No. 42. A second photo opportunity will be to photograph a line up of three locomotives in BR black livery, ex-North British Railway Class J36 0-6-0 No. 65243 *Maude*, ex-Caledonian Railway 0-4-4T No. 5189 and ex-BR 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80105. Other locomotives involved will be ex-LNER Class D49 4-4-0 No. 246 *Morayshire* and industrial 0-6-0T No. 1 *Lord Roberts* and 0-4-0T No. 13 *Kelton Fell*.

The photoshoots will take place at Bo'ness station and yard at 12:00, 15:00 and 18:00 and the locomotives will be positioned on both freight and passenger trains. Cost will be £30 per person. Interested readers should contact Lee Sutherland by email at ruston165@hotmail.co.uk or telephone 07704 797923.

The Mixed Traffic Gala will have a 50 minute interval service of both freight and passenger workings, hauled by both steam and diesel locomotives. Different locomotives will work the individual trains on each day. Subject to availability, the Swindon Class 126 DMU and the Class 303 EMU will be in operation. On the Saturday evening 20th June, it is planned to operate a steam-hauled wine and dine train, serving a silver service three-course set meal with tea and coffee at a cost of £30 per person. Those wishing to book a place should email Chris Lothian at clgopher@hotmail.com

▲ The Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway's Diesel Gala Weekend was blessed with good weather. Sulzer Class 24 No. 24081 rolls through Gotherington with a Toddington to Cheltenham Racecourse service during the April Diesel Gala on 4th April. **Jack Boskett**

Barrow Hill LNER Festival

▼ **LNER 'K1' 2-6-0 62005** *Lord of the Isles* **and 'A4' Pacific 60007** *Sir Nigel Gresley* **stand in company with Ivo Peters' Bentley at Barrow Hill Roundhouse on 3rd April.**
Stuart Chapman

▲ GCR '04' 2-8-0 No. 63601 simmers on display on 5th April. **Richard Tuplin**

▲ GER 'N7' 0-6-2T No. 69621 stands on display on the roundhouse turntable on 5th April. **Richard Tuplin**

▼ **The historic line-up of Pacifics. 'A1' No. 60163** *Tornado*, **'A2' No. 60532** *Blue Peter* **and 'A4s' Nos. 60007** *Sir Nigel Gresley* **and 60009** *Union of South Africa*, **with 'K1' 2-6-0 No. 62005 on 3rd April. David Gibson**

Locomotion holds annual diesel gala

Locomotion, the NRM at Shildon, is holding its annual diesel gala on 18th/19th April.

Subject to availability and being fit to travel over Network Rail to Shildon, visitors will be 'Deltic' No. 55022 *Royal Scots Grey*, 'Western' No. D1023 *Western Fusilier* and Class 37 No. D6700. All three will be on static display with cab access and will make occasional demonstration line runs during both days. Passenger services will be run by Class 03 No. 03090 and brake van, maybe Dutch 'Gronk' No. 663 and certainly Leyland Railbus demonstrator RB004,

On display outside the museum with cab access (weather permitting) will be *DELTIC*, while inside the building will be models, societies and trade stands. The event runs from 10.00 to 17.00 on both days and entry is free, although there will be a small charge for train rides.

Rock & Roll at Llangollen DMU gala

The Llangollen Railway's 'Rock & Roll DMU Gala' is being held on 16th/17th May. The East Lancashire's Class 122 No. 55001 is visiting, and it will be the first time that a 'Bubblecar' has been on the railway.

There will also be a first appearance of Llangollen's Class 104 unit Nos. M50454 and M50528 in early BR blue livery, it having been in green since its last full repaint in 1996.

The Gala will also herald the last appearance of Llangollen's Class 105 No. M56456 before withdrawal for rebuild. It was preserved in 1984, and now requires an extensive body overhaul.

Also in operation over the weekend will be Classes 108, 109 and 127, and the opportunity to compare a DMU with what they replaced – a GWR auto-trailer with 6400 class 0-6-0PT No. 6430 running three services each day at 11.00, 13.00 and 15.00 from Llangollen.

Altogether there will be 15 departures each day from Llangollen between 09.30 & 16.5, with an additional late 18.30 on the Saturday only. There is free parking at Carrog station.

SDR celebrates its 40th anniversary

The South Devon Railway celebrates its 40th Anniversary this year, being notable for being re-opened, back in 1969, by Dr. Beeching, the then chairman of the British Railways Board.

To celebrate the event, the line held a 40th Anniversary Gala over the weekend of 4th/5th April with visiting GWR 0-6-2T No. 6695, GWR Pannier No. 6435 and GWR Prairies Nos. 5542 and 5552 joined by residents GWR 0-6-0PT No. 1369, GWR 2-8-0 No. 3803, GWR Prairie No. 5526 and GWR Pannier No. 5786, the latter having been temporarily repainted into BR Black livery for the event.

GCR '04' and mainline steam for KWVR June gala

Following on from the success of last year's steam operations between Keighley and Settle Junction, the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway has announced plans for more mainline operations at a new early-summer event.

The railway are to hold a Steam Gala weekend on 26th-28th June which will feature the National Railway Museum's Class 04 No. 63601, more usually based at the Great Central Railway, along with several members of the home fleet.

An intensive passenger service over the KWVRs own Keighley to Oxenhope line, with mainline operations from Keighley to Hellifield on the Saturday and Sunday of the event, with one train continuing to Ribblehead Viaduct. Traction for the mainline operations will be LMS 'Jubilee' 4-6-0 No. 5690 *Leander*.

KWVR's Traffic Manager, Sam MacDougall, said: "Such was the response to that event and our main line operations and intensive services on our own line that we realised we were on to something." "We've got together with Network Rail, West Coast Railways who will provide the trains and other interested parties, to plan this new event in our calendar."

▶ **With a special '40' headboard, visiting No. 6435, masquerading as No. 6412 (which hauled the re-opening train in 1969) heads for Totnes Riverside as it approaches Riverford Bridge with two GWR Autocoaches on 5th April. Mick Rogers**

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▲ Following attention to its interior, ex-Hull Trains Class 222/1 No. 222101, now repainted in EMT colours, passes Kegworth on 21st March with the 12.18 Derby - St Pancras International service. **Geoff Dingle**

▶▲ Contrasting liveries at Redcar Central on 2nd April. On the left, Class 142 No. 142079 is still in Arriva Trains Northern colours, while the new Northern Rail livery can be seen on classmate No. 142020. **Stephen Marsh**

▶ One of the latest Class 377/5 deliveries to First Capital Connect, but minus branding, No. 377504 is pictured at Farringdon on 3rd April, while working the 14:04 Brighton to Bedford. **Kim Rennie**

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Double 'Sheds'

◀ Class 66/0 No. 66121, with classmate No. 66077 'dead' in tow pass Magor on the South Wales main line with the 10.15 Westbury to Newport Alexandra Dock Junction 'trip'. As part of Network Rail's cut-backs, this service was due to finish running last week but received a stay of execution for one week! No. 66077 was 'dead' due to having sustained a broken windscreen and side window following vandalism.
Richard Dunn

▼ Class 66 No. 66025 had run out of fuel while working an intermodal service from Ipswich to Birch Coppice. With rescue in the form of Class 66 No. 66180, the ensemble passes the site of Attenborough Nature Reserve as the weather deteriorates. **John Illingworth**

With a mixed rake of blue & grey and Virgin liveried stock in tow, First ScotRail-liveried DBS Class 90 No. 90021 pauses at Stafford with Virgin Trains' Fridays-only 18.46 London Euston - Preston service on 3rd April.
Stuart Rogers

▲ In 2006, the Portuguese national railways ordered 15 electric locomotives from Siemens Transportation, with the option of a further 10. The first of the new LE4700 fleet, No. 4701, appeared on 19th March last year. On 2nd April this year, the latest member of the fleet, No. 4712 - believed to be on its maiden run - stands at Mangualde station, close to Viseu City. The LE4700 class is based around Siemens EuroSprinter product line, but with the latest modifications to the cab design. The add-on option for 10 further locos was awarded in February 2007 and delivery is expected to follow on from the original 15. **Pedro Sabino**

News In Brief

■ The last major construction contract on the Gotthard base tunnel in Switzerland has been awarded to a consortium that included Balfour Beatty. The tunnel will be the longest railway tunnel in the world and will bypass winding mountain routes to establish a direct route for high-speed passenger and heavy freight traffic. The contract, worth £790 million, is for the design, installation and commissioning of rail infrastructure equipment for the Gotthard Base Tunnel. Commercial rail services are due to start through the tunnels in 2017.

■ A joint venture including tunnel specialist Wayss & Freytag is to build the 7.4km Silver Mountain tunnel in Germany's Thuringian Forest. The tunnel forms part of a new high-speed line between Ebensfelde and Erfurt. Construction will start this summer, with completion expected in 2013. Most of the tunnel will be constructed by drill and blast methods and in total, more than 1.5 million cubic metres of rock will be removed. The new route forms part of a new link that will cut travelling times between Munich and Berlin from six to four hours.

■ Bombardier Transportation is to supply seven double-deck coaches to Regentalbahn in Germany in an order worth □0 million. The vehicles will be used on Länderbahn-Express services between Munich, Regensburg and Hof.

Irish link costs €640 million

A new report has estimated that the cost of connecting Derry to Sligo by rail would be an estimated □640 million.

The estimate includes the design, construction and operation of the link, which the report states, would also generate 'very significant direct and indirect employment' for the region.

As well as providing modern, sustainable passenger and freight transport for the north-west of Ireland, the route would also have extremely high scenic amenity, with 'significant tourism benefits'. A feasibility study is currently being undertaken by the local councils in the region.

New Germany, Sweden and Greece freight links

The Swiss-based intermodal operator Intercontainer-Interfrigo SA is expanding its unaccompanied combined transport network.

A new connection has been inaugurated between Germany and Sweden, which will also act as a link between the networks in Sweden and south-east Europe.

The frequency of the Mannheim-Sopron Container-Express was increased from two to three services a week in the west to east direction in February, and from three to four a week in the opposite direction.

A new service between Herne and Austria was launched by Intercontainer on 9th March, linking the Ruhr area with Austria three times a week in both directions.

The existing Mannheim to Sopron service was extended to Thessaloniki / Inoi in Greece, starting from 14th March. The 'Austrolink' service between Wels and Sopron has been given a third weekly departure in both directions, and a new block-train service from Cologne to Vienna and Sopron commenced on 16th March, running three times a week in each direction.

Finally, a new block-train service from Herne to Helsingborg in Sweden commenced on 4th March, with a daily overnight service operating from Tuesday to Friday.

$60 million investment in Michigan signalling technology upgrade

The USA state of Michigan is to benefit from a $60 million investment in advanced signalling technology to be installed on its Porter, Indiana, to Kalamazoo line, part of the Detroit to Chicago route.

The technology, called Positive Train Control (PTC), is an advanced system of monitoring train locations, speed and routes that helps to prevent collisions, derailments and other hazards. Congress recently mandated the installation of PTC on all routes used by intercity passenger trains by 2015.

The funding also covers installation of PTC on the south end of Amtrak's New York-Washington line, which comes as part of $1.3 billion in stimulus grant funding that will roughly double the size of Amtrak's capital investment programme over a two-year period.

▲ A Norfolk Southern intermodal service rolls into Bristol Yard led by GE C40-9W No. NS9604, with dynamic brakes roaring. A sign of the current economic climate is the long line of stored boxcars on the opposite siding. **Jonathan McCoy**

New 5.2mile line to be built in Indiana

The Indiana Rail Road Co (INRD) has signed an agreement with Peabody Energy to construct a 5.2-mile industrial spur to serve Peabody's new Bear Run Mine in Sullivan County, Indiana, the largest surface coalmine in the eastern United States.

Construction is expected to start after the Surface Transportation Board (STB) issues a declaratory order on the project. INRD submitted filings to the STB in October last year, and the railroad's officials expect to complete the new line by early 2010. Peabody plans to spend between $350 million and $400 million to develop the mine, which is expected to produce up to 8 million tons annually after 2010. INRD will spend about $17 million to build the spur, and an additional $5 million during the next two years to improve infrastructure to accommodate increased traffic volumes generated by the mine.

"Peabody's investment is one of the most significant industrial developments in Indiana in this decade, and the largest single new business opportunity ever awarded to the Indiana Rail Road," said the INRD President and Chief Executive Officer. "We project that it will increase our current coal transportation volumes by more than 30 percent".

San Antonio Intermodal Terminal opens

Union Pacific's San Antonio Intermodal Terminal in South-west Bexar County opened on 19th March, the facility representing an investment of more than $100 million by the railroad to provide efficient transportation, bringing environmental and economic benefits to the south Texas region.

The new 300-acre terminal processes containers carrying clothing, electronics and other household items that arrive at West Coast ports via ships from the Pacific Rim. Containers are then loaded onto trains headed to the San Antonio facility, with one Union Pacific double-stack intermodal train taking as many as 300 long-haul trucks off America's congested highways. Advanced technology provides high security access control at the complex, and keeps trucks moving. Within 30-90 seconds of arrival, the drivers' fingerprints are processed, and the truckers receive information on their containers' locations and destinations. Drivers find their assigned containers, located in one of 1,300 parking slots, and haul them to their final destinations. Also, trucks spend less time idling and release fewer emissions due to the facility's technology and streamlined operations.

Pan Am and Norfolk Southern receive clearance for Pan Am Southern venture

Pan Am Railways (PAR) and Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NS) have received Government approval for their proposed Pan Am Southern joint venture, clearing the way for more than $87 million in rail infrastructure investment, designed to enhance the service capabilities and commercial offerings that NS and PAR provide in upstate New York and New England.

The project is expected to commence operations on or about 1st May this year. It was May 2008 when PAR and NS announced an agreement to improve railfreight services and increase track and yard capacity in upstate New York and New England through the newly formed company, its focus being the 155-mile mainline track that runs between Mechanicville (Albany), New York, and Ayer, Massachusetts. (approximately 30 miles west of Boston) known as the Patriot Corridor. PAR will transfer to the new joint venture, along with 281 miles of secondary and branch lines, including track rights in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, and Vermont. NS will transfer cash and other property valued at $137.5 million to the joint venture, $87.5 million of which will be invested within a three-year period in capital improvements on the corridor. Included in this investment is a new intermodal and automotive terminal in Saratoga County, New York, a new automotive terminal in Ayer, expansion of the existing intermodal terminal in Ayer, as well as track and signal upgrades.

These improvements will be implemented as quickly as possible, and will comply with conditions imposed as part of the Federal regulatory approval process. Pan Am Southern is expected to bring immediate benefits to shippers doing business in upstate New York and New England, and the Patriot Corridor is designed to revitalise freight rail in the region, reducing highway congestion and improving air quality.

BNSF cuts shipping times by 12-hours on average for freight traffic

BNSF achieved a 12-hour reduction in average transit time for domestic and international intermodal traffic during the first quarter of 2009.

Over the last 10 years, BNSF has spent approximately $30 billion to improve its infrastructure and expand its locomotive fleet. At the end of 2007, BNSF operated on about 32,000 miles of track. Of this amount, almost 5,000 miles is double tracked, including most of the Southern Trans-continental. To ensure future performance, BNSF is investing in the latest cutting-edge transportation technologies. Advanced automated gate systems were recently installed at BNSF intermodal facilities in Chicago, Dallas-Fort Worth, San Bernardino, and Memphis. These new entry gates employ recorded remote inspection of trucks and biometric identification of drivers through the collection of fingerprints and other information, giving a much faster turnaround.

Amtrak Cascades celebrates 10 years of operation

The Washington State Department of Transportation, Amtrak and the Oregon Department of Transportation are celebrating 10 years of the Amtrak Cascades passenger rail service in the Pacific North-west between Eugene, Oregon, and Vancouver, British Columbia and are to commemorate the anniversary with a special celebration during the National Train Day event on 9th May at Seattle's King Street station.

Passenger rail services along the I-5 corridor began in 1993 when Amtrak started offering one daily Seattle to Portland round trip. Amtrak Cascades debuted in 1999, providing inter-city passenger rail services in the Pacific Northwest from Vancouver to Eugene.

Today, Amtrak Cascades consists of four daily round-trips between Portland and Seattle, with connecting services between Portland and Eugene and between Bellingham and Seattle, and one daily round-trip between Seattle and Vancouver. More than six million passengers have travelled on the service over the last 10 years, resulting in a 71% increase in passengers since 1999. In 2008, passenger numbers reached nearly three quarters of a million, making it the most successful year in the history of the service. Washington State is one of 13 states that provide operating funds to Amtrak for inter-city passenger rail service.

Amtrak Cascades uses five European designed Talgo trains for daily operations. Three of the five trains are owned by Washington State and the other two by Amtrak itself. Various 10th anniversary promotions are scheduled throughout the year.

▲ **Electrified passenger services in the US are not observed in the press all that often. Earlier this year, Acela unit No. 2007, built by Alstom, arrives at Stamford, Connecticut, with a service from Boston, captured in a glow of light during a frigid and brisk winter snow storm on 19th January. Mitch Goldman**

New cross-Taiwan Straits railway line planned

China is planning a cross-Taiwan Straits railway line to link Beijing with Taipei.

The line via Fuzhou, capital of Fujian Province, will be part of the network that connects the mainland and Taiwan. The cross-Straits railway network, with its hub in Fujian Province, may also cover the inland cities of Kunming in the southwest and Hefei in the east, according to the plan. Another proposal is to have a railway to link Xiamen in Fujian and Kaohsiung in Taiwan. Fujian has started construction on a high-speed line linking provincial capital Fuzhou and Xiamen, which is due to open in November. The line will cut the journey from Fuzhou to Xiamen to one and a half hours, at least an hour shorter than the current expressway alternative.

It is said that trains on the new Beijing-Shanghai high-speed line that is under construction will run at 350km per hour, the fastest in the world and that the 1,318km line, with a designed speed of 350 kilometers per hour, will beat the fastest trains in the world at present. Services will take less than five hours to make the run from the capital to Shanghai, which is now at least 11 hours. The new line will be used exclusively for passenger services, while the existing one will be used for freight. The Chinese Ministry of Railways has said that it is planned to invest 1.2 trillion yuan (about 175.44 billion U.S. dollars) to improve the railway system, aiming to have 13,000km of passenger lines by 2012.

China locos for Kiwi Rail

New Zealand is to get its first new railway locomotives for 20 years, but they will be bought from China at a cost of $75 million, not built in local railway workshops, which it is said would have created jobs.

The Government has approved $115 million for new carriages and locomotives for KiwiRail and the establishment of a small unit within the Treasury to manage the next stages of its infrastructure programme.

The first 10 of the 20 locos are expected to arrive in April next year and remainder, four months later.

▲ On its first northbound revenue run, brand new GT46-ACe type No. LDP003 leads QR National's Melbourne to Brisbane intermodal service through Dynon Junction on the evening of 31st March. Behind the lead loco is a colourful display of older power; hired No. SCT G521 (introduced 1984) and Nos. QRN CLP13, CLF1 and CLP11, the latter in the latest QRN livery. The GT46-ACe are similar to the 15 locomotives operated by SCT Logistics, both classes built by Downer EDI (which has the GM/EMD license for Australia) at its Cardiff Workshops, in Newcastle, New South Wales. The latest locomotives were a speculative build by Downer EDI (formerly Clyde) to enter the locomotive leasing market. All nine of the build were signed up to QR National (Queensland Rail) late last year and the first three were out-shopped in a black, blue, white and yellow Downer EDI livery, with the Downer EDI corporate logo on the front, but this logo has since been replaced by QR National signage. All three have now entered crew training and revenue service. No. LDP004 onwards will emerge in the QRN latest yellow and black livery, as shown on the two CLP class locos in the photo. The locomotives will be used on QRN's Melbourne - Brisbane service, which currently runs three times a week in each direction. Older classes are being transferred to QRN's Melbourne/Adelaide/Perth services. **Chris Nuttall**

Bombardier VLocity DMUs for State of Victoria, Australia

Bombardier Transportation has been awarded a contract by the Victorian Government, in Australia, to build a further 32 VLocity DMU cars, to be supplied as a mix of two and three-car units, valued at approximately £75 million.

The new vehicles will be operated as part of V/Line Passenger's regional rail fleet. The order brings the number of the DMU cars operated by V/Line Passenger to 134. The trains have proved popular with both V/Line and the travelling public and provide rapid and comfortable links from Melbourne to Victoria's major regional centres. Since the introduction of the DMUs into service in 2005, V/Line has experienced excellent passenger growth.

The units are being constructed at Bombardier's plant in Dandenong, Australia. The trains are made out of stainless steel, operate at 160kph, and have large panoramic windows, air-conditioned interiors and luggage space including bicycle and surfboard storage. A three-car DMU provides 214 fixed seats, six wheelchair locations with eight folding seats and two on-board toilets. The new order will be delivered through 2010 and 2011 and is in response to V/Line's growing capacity requirements.

6th April 2009

Permanent Way Institution (London Branch)
10th Floor Restaurant, 55 Broadway (LUL HQ), London St James Park tube. Presidential Address by Bob Cummings. Also the Section AGM. Doors open 17.30 for 18.00 start. Contact, Alison Stansfield on 07703 326080 for further details.

RCTS (Ashford Branch)
The Elwick Club, Church Road, Ashford. 'The Spa Valley Railway Extension' by Brian Halford. Meeting commences at 19.30.

RCTS (Croydon Branch)
Small Hall, Croydon Reformed Church Hall, Addiscombe Grove, Croydon. 'Delivering the Oyster Card to London' by Richard Thomas. Meeting commences at 19.30.

RCTS (Port Sunlight Branch)
The Lever Club, Greendale Road, Port Sunlight. Branch AGM and Members' Slides with an RCTS theme. Meeting commences at 19.45.

RCTS (Wellingborough Branch)
British Rail Sports and Social Club, Broad Green, Wellingborough. 'Engine Sheds Part 1' by Chris Banks. Meeting commences at 14.00.

Severn Valley Railway (Wolverhampton Branch)
Old Wulfrunians Club, 253A Castlecroft Road, Castlecroft, Wolverhampton. 'Leeds Central to Leeds City' by Gavin Morrison. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact (Evenings) Alan Davies on 01902 758882 for further details.

Southern Electric Group (Sussex Branch)
The Deall Room, Southwick Community Centre. 'A Photographic Selection from the Collection of the late JJSmith of Eastbourne' by Tony Hillman. Meeting commences at 19.30. Donation of £2 requested. Contact, Bruce Cakebread on 01273 462094 for details.

7th April 2009

Gravesend Railway Enthusiasts Society
Emmanuel Baptist Church, Windmill Street, Gravesend, DA12 1BB 'Steam & Diesel, Mainline & Preserved Digital Extravaganza' by Andy Wood. Meeting commences at 19.45. Contact Roger Hart on 01474 833320 for further details

Locomotive & Carriage Institution
London Underground Limited HQ, Broadway, St James Park Station, London. 'BLS Lötschbergbahn (Switzerland)' by Willi Frauenfelder, Locomotive Drivers' Manager. Meeting commences at 18.00. Contact Stuart Smith by email smithstuart@btinternet.com.

Locomotive Club of Great Britain (Bedford Branch)
St John's Church Hall, St John's Street, Bedford. '50 Years of UK Steam' by Hugh Ballantyne. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Locomotive Club of Great Britain (North London Branch)
Wood Green Labour Club, 3 Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, London N22 5NJ. 'European & Asian Steam' by Jim Pentney. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Monmouthshire Railway Society
Room A28, UWCN, Allt-Yr-Yn Ave, Newport, South Wales. 'Out and About in the Last 12 Months' by Hugh Gould. Meeting commences at 19.30. Admission: non-members £3. See www.mrsoc.co.uk for further details.

Permanent Way Institution (Darlington & North East Section)
Railway Athletic Club, Brinkburn Road, Darlington. 'London Overground - The First 12 Months' by Rob Brighouse. Meeting starts 1900. Contact the Secretary, Dave Lugsden on 0782 576 6328 or by e-mail at David.Lugsden@Networkrail.co.uk for details

Permanent Way Institution (Edinburgh Branch)
The Scots Guards Club, 2 Clifton Terrace, opposite Haymarket Station, Edinburgh. 'Edinburgh Tram' by Willie Biggins. Meeting commences at 18.00. Contact the Secretary,Nicola Topping on 0791 912 7995 or by e-mail at nicola.topping@networkrail.co.uk for further details.

Permanent Way Institution (Wessex Branch)
details.The Rose and Crown, Columbo Street, Waterloo, London. 'Modern Bridge Building' by Chris Fry. Also the Section AGM. Meeting commences at 18.00. Contact the Secretary, Eddie Gosling on 01252 614558 or by e-mail at e.gosling@ntlworld.com for further details.

RCTS (Nottingham Branch)
Nottingham Mechanics, 3 North Sherwood Street, Nottingham. 'In Retrospect - Covering the Years 1978/1988/1998/2008' by Roger Jones. Meeting commences at 19.30.

RCTS (Watford Branch)
St Thomas's United Reformed Church, Langley Road, Watford. 'My Career in British Railway Signal Boxes' by Malcolm Riley. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Southern Electric Group (South Hampshire Branch)
Eastleigh Railway Institute, Romsey Road, Eastleigh. 'The Railways of Hampshire' by Steve Bigley. 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. 'The Dragon's Dying Breath' by Ken Horan. Meeting commences at 20.00. Contact Lionel Jones on 01934 628289 or e-mail fotophile69@talktalk.net for further details.

8th April 2009

Grimsby and Cleethorpes Railway Group
Royal Air Force Club, 5 Alexandra Road, Cleethorpes DN35 8LQ. 'Classic Film Night' with Bill Hutchins. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact Mike Hartley on 01724 341358 for further details.

Permanent Way Institution (North Wales Branch)
The Diva Show Bar, Station Road, Chester. 'Crewe and Stafford Remodelling' by Andrew Went. Also the Section AGM. Doors open at 18.00 for 18.30 start. Contact the Secretary, Carl Baker on 0792 085 6703 or by e-mail at carl.baker@network rail.co.uk for further details.

Oxfordshire Railway Society
Seacourt Day Centre, Seacourt Road, Botley, Oxford OX2 9LN. 'Moscow to Beijing' by Howard Quayle. Meeting commences at 19.30. Visitors welcome £3.

Permanent Way Institution (North Wales Branch)
The Diva Show Bar, Station Road, Chester. 'Crewe and Stafford Remodelling' by Andrew Went. Also the Section AGM. Doors open at 18.00 for 18.30 start. Contact the Secretary, Carl Baker on 0792 085 6703 or by e-mail at carl.baker@network rail.co.uk for details.

RCTS (Hitchin Branch)
Hitchin Christian Centre, Bedford Road, Hitchin. 'The Longmoor and Shoeburyness Military Railway' by Mile Walshaw. Meeting commences at 19.30.

RCTS (Newcastle Branch)
The Brunswick Methodist all, Newcastle. 'Rails to the Arctic' by Phil Lockwood and Enid Vincent. Meeting commences at 18.30.

Stephenson Locomotive Society
YMCA, Bridge Street, Guildford. TBA. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact the Secretary on 01372 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) 'Gotthard part 1' by John Jesson. Meeting commences 19.00, Refreshments available during the evening. A £2 donation is requested. Contact Ron Dawes (0208 660 3532) for 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. The information is believed to be correct at the time of publication.

Internet Links
Links to the various society websites can be found on the website, or by clicking here.

▼ **A sight not normally witnessed on the WCML outside of engineering possessions, as Network Rail's Plasser & Theurer EM-SAT 100/RT No. 999801 infrastructure monitoring machine runs north through Tamworth (Low Level) on 23rd March. John Stretton**

9th April 2009

Locomotive Club of Great Britain (St Albans Branch)
United Reford Church Hall, Watford Road, Chiswell Green. 'Railways at Home and Abroad' by Nick Lera. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Permanent Way Institution (Birmingham Branch)
The Gateway Centre, Shrewsbury. 'Cambrian Line Enhancements' by Richard Langford. Meeting commences at 18.00. Contact the Secretary, Ian Wardle on 07824 410961 for further details.

Permanent Way Institution (Croydon Branch)
Matt MacDonald House, Sydenham Road, Croydon, CR0 2EE. 'The Tram Train Concept' by Tim Kendell. Also Section AGM. Doors open at 17.30 for 17.45 start. Contact the Secretary, Martin Creswell on 07803 260645 or by e-mail at martin.creswell@atkinsglobal.com for details.

Permanent Way Institution (South & West Wales Branch)
Kings Hotel, High Street, Newport. 'Innovations' by Peter Shrubsall. Also the Section AGM. Starts 18.00. Contact Andy Franklin on 07824 410762 for further details

13th April 2009

Stephenson Locomotive Society
New Trinity Parish Hall, Saltcoats, Ayrshire.
Ayrshire Centre AGM and Members' Night. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact the Secretary on 01294 822303 for further details.

York Railway Society
Archbishop Holgate's School, Drama Studio, Hull Road, York.
'LMS Locomotives - slides from the Armstrong Collection' by David Tyreman. Meeting commences 19.30. Contact Robin Patrick on 01904 412232 for further details. Visitors £2 entrance fee.

14th April 2009

Abergavenny and District Steam Society
Upper Room, The Hen & Chickens, Flannel Street, Abergavenny
'45 Years of Railway Photography (Part 1) by Les Nixon. Meeting commences at 20.00. Contact the Secretary, Ken Mumford at ken.mumford@ntlworld.com for further details.

Great Western Society (Bristol Branch)
BAWA, 589 Southmead Road, Filton, Bristol.
'More Golden Oldies' by Peter Gray. Meeting commences at 19.45. Contact the Secretary on 01454 324230 for further details.

Permanent Way Institution (Lancaster, Barrow and Carlisle Branch)
Carnforth Station Visitor Centre. 'Encapsulated Track Forms' by Bob Vennell. Also Section AGM. Doors open at 17.30 for 18.00 start. Contact the Secretary, Philip Bull on 07920 702614 or by e-mail at bullp@pbworld.com for further details.

Tewkesbury Railway Society
YMCA, Church Street, Tewkesbury. 'Railway Landscapes Through the Seasons' by Paul Woollard. Meeting commences at 20.00. Contact the Society Secretary, Mike Dodd on 01242 576907 for further details.

15th April 2009

Basingstoke & District Railway Society
Wote St Club, New Road, Basingstoke. 'The Midland & Great Northern Joint Line' by Max Wilkinson. Meeting commences at 20.00. Contact the Secretary on 01256 326096 for details.

Kent and East Sussex Railway (Ashford Group)
The Railway Staff Club, Beaver Road, Ashford, Kent. TN23 7RR.
'Pullmans in Preservation' by David Jones. Meeting commences at 19.30. Donation of £2 requested. Contact the Secretary, Keith Mapley on 01303 269138 for further details.

Permanent Way Institution (Glasgow Branch)
Upstairs Lounge, The Iron Horse, West Nile Street, Glasgow.
'A Queensland Rail Odyssey' by Chris Rose. Also the Section AGM. Doors open at 17.15 for 17.30 start. Contact the Secretary, Jack Scott on 07789765291 for further details.

RCTS (Eastleigh Branch)/Mid Hants Railway/S&D Trust
Eastleigh Railway Institute, Romsey Road, Eastleigh. 'Goslings Gallivants' by Paul Gosling. Meeting starts 19.45.

RCTS (West Riding Branch)
Day out to Nuneaton. Call Malcolm Riley on 01274 589488 for details.

16th April 2009

Breconshire Railway Society
R.A.F.A.Club, The Stuet, Brecon. 'Pot Pourri - Here & There, Familiar & Unfamiliar' by Mike Clemmens. Contact Arthur Robinson on 01982 560219 for further details

Locomotive Club of Great Britain (North West Branch)
'St David's Social Centre, 249 Wargrave Road, Newton-le-Willows. 'Roade to York - a railwayman's photographic journey from 1963 to 2008' by Robin Patrick. Starts 19.30.

Marlow and District Railway Society
British Red Cross Society, Victoria Road, Marlow.
'Tour de France by Narrow Gauge' by Michael Bunn. Doors open 19.45 for 20.00 start. Non-members admission £2.

Permanent Way Institution (Manchester & Liverpool Branch)
Ove Arup Offices, St James Building, Oxford Street, Manchester.
'Railways of South Africa' by Paul Costello and Matt MacDonald. Meeting commences at 12.30. Contact the Secretary, Rob Cummings on 0779 885 8784 or by e-mail at rob.cummings@networkrail.co.uk for further details.

Permanent Way Institution (Nottingham and Derby Branch)
Jurys Inn Hotel, Station Street, Nottingham.
'Light Rail in France - The Current Scene' by Graham Jellett. Also the Section AGM. Meeting commences at 18.30. Contact the Secretary, Colin Cowey on 0794 648 2343 or by e-mail at colin.cowey@talk21.com for further details.

RCTS (Darlington Branch)
The Scout Building, Widdowfield Street, Darlington.
'The BTC Police' by Brian Bell. Meeting commences at 19.00.

RCTS (West Riding Branch)
Saltaire Methodist Chapel, Saltaire Road, Shipley.
'Random Thoughts about the Railways' by Stanley Hall MBE. Meeting commences 19.30.

Stephenson Locomotive Society
United Reform Church Hall, Mowbray Road, New Barnet, Herfordshire. 'Pictures from the Society's Photographic Collection' by Keith Greenwood. Meeting starts at 19.30. Contact the Secretary on 0208 368 6200 for details.

17th April 2009

Great Western Society (Swindon Group)
Lawn Community Centre, Guildford Avenue, off Windsor Road, Lawn, Swindon. 'Travels with a Camera' by Bernard Pearce. Starts 19.00. Contact 01793 495970 for details.

Great Western Society (Taunton Group)
Village Hall, Stoke St. Mary, Nr Taunton. 'More Golden Oldies' by Peter Gray. Meeting starts 19.45. Contact on 01823 334188 for details.

Locomotive Club of Great Britain (Central London Branch)
Keen House, Calshot Street, London N1. 'Fifity Years of Slides' by John Cramp. Meeting starts 19.00.

RCTS (Edinburgh Branch)
Quakers Meeting House, 7 Victoria Street, Edinburgh. 'Steam in Ayrshire in the 50's and 60's' by Bill Hamilton. Meeting commences at 19.30.

Scarborough Railway Society
The Public Library, Vernon Road, Scarborough. 'York to York Via Penzance, 1980s Style' by Geof Dickson. Meeting commences at 19.30. Contact Adrian Scales at email@scarboroughrailwaysociety.org.uk for further details

Shropshire Railway Society
The Gateway, Chester Road, Shrewsbury 'Just Pacifics' by Douglas Capewell. Meeting starts at 19.30. Minimum donation of £3 requested for non members. Contact Colin Hatch on 01691 650985 for details.

18th April 2009

Great Western Society (South West Group)
The Parish Centre, Church End Road, Kingskerswell, Torbay.
'Here, There & Everywhere' by Amyas Crump. Meeting commences at 18.30. Contact the Secretary on 01803 326329 for further details.

RCTS (West Riding Branch)
Brake Van Trip - Corus Scunthorpe by Mini Bus Contact Malcolm Riley on 01274 589488 for details.

Back Issues

All of the back issues of the magazine are available 24 hours a day, on our website **www.railwayherald.com**

Rear Cover Caption

Seen waiting for the road at Slateford on 18th March, are DRS Class 37/6s Nos. 37610 (on its first mainline trip in almost 12 months) and 37605 as the pair 'top and tail' the Torness to Carlisle flasks. Michael Dalgleish

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