

Railtalk Magazine

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Virgin's Class 57's, really useful engines.

Front cover

Virgin's Class 57's are now used by quite a few different operators. This is "Kyrano" with the Amec 6J37 Carlisle-Chirk Timber train.

Dave Harris



Submissions

Pictures and news can be entered through the forum, or by email to: entries@railtalk.net

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When is it published

Railtalk Magazine is published on the last Sunday of each month. More information can be found by visiting Railtalk forums. © Railtalk

From The Editor

Welcome to issue 22 of Railtalk Magazine. Within this issue you can find out all the latest news and pictures that have made this month, another great month on the UK and International rail scene. Following on from last months "Bold" decision to go into Landscape format, we have had overwhelming support for this change. However, as always we have listened to your concerns regarding one or two issues with this change and we hope that they have been resolved with this edition.

This month much like many months nowadays we have seen a lot of classic traction in mainline use, and a lot of has been on the ECML.

This month has seen a wide range of traction in York area, with Grand Central services using 47s and 57s. DRS have shown that classic traction is not dead, with a variety of Class 37's, 47's and 57's all spending time in York Parcel sidings. Other Class 47's on the ECML include the frequent Advenza scrap train working between Stockton and Cardiff.

This month saw two well populated open day events. One of these being the Long Marston open event (a special edition magazine, can be found by visiting the website), and other was held at Tyseley. The Long Marston event was held to mark the end of the Class 87's in UK, ahead of export to Bulgaria. There was also a large amount of other traction and rolling stock at the event, from Class 86's, Class 20's and a very well hidden Virgin Pendolino.

The last weekend in June saw Tyseley depot open its gates for its 100 years open event, where there was a wide range of traction on show. These varied from the steam era to the modern Class 139 Stourbridge line unit. The event also saw the naming of Class 47 580, "County Of Essex" after a quick speech from Les Ross the owner of Class 86 259.

Once again many thanks this month to: Richard Hargreaves, Jon Jebb, Ian Furness, Jonathan Gill, Carl Grocott, David Dawson, Jonathan McGurk, Dave Harris, Derek Elston, Peter Cheshire, David Mead, Liam, Mike Byrne, Julian G, Tom Loader, Brian Battersby, Steve Madden, Rowan Jackson, Yorkie, Max, Nick W, Jim, Daniel and Rob Maynard.

Andy Patten



If only Class 25's ran trains like this. Masterclass once again with Peter Cheshire at the helm.

To the casual glance, this is just a rat with a long tail, but the coaches were added in sections, we think!. He's so good maybe even the rat was not there? Only Pete knows. [Peter Cheshire](#)

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Charter Scene

Welcome to this month's round up of the British Charter Scene, brought to you by the Railtalk Magazine team.

Below: PMR Tours "Ynys Mon Express" to Holyhead was hauled by Class 47 787 leading with West Coast's maroon Mk1 coaches and Class 47 851 "Traction Magazine" on the rear, seen as it passes through Winwick Jct on June 14th.

Dave Harris

Top Right and Bottom Right: The pair of Class 47's are seen on the same tour at Warrington.

Class47





Left: On the 14th June, Class 37 401 and 37 417 are seen at Chirk working Pathfinder Tours "The Lake District Explorer" 1Z66 Cardiff Central - Ravenglass.

Carl Grocott

Below: Later the same pair are seen speeding through Warrington, heading for Ravenglass.

Class47





For the Mendip Rail/ Bardon Aggregates special Quarry Gala Weekend on the 21/22nd June, there were special shuttles operating between Westbury & Cranmore.

On the Saturday Class 59 001 and Class 66 200 were used, and on the Sunday it was 59 102 and 66 200. It was reported that the Shuttles were full with a few standing.

At Cranmore, people had either the option to go to the East Somerset Railway or get the vintage buses to transport them to the Merehead Rail Terminal.

Julian G

A bit of Deltic action on the sea wall on June 28th as Class 55 022 works 1Z55 0520 Birmingham International - Penzance railtour, past a cloudy Langstone Rock.

Liam





Left: Class 47's 47 712 and 47 832 work the outward Northampton to Minehead 'Stobart Pullman' special as it enters onto the WSR on the 21st June.

Jonathan Gill

Below: Class 37 422 stands at Liverpool Lime Street waiting to depart to Crewe with the ECS off the Compass tour on the 14th June. Class 47 843, the loco behind the Class 37 having failed earlier in the day with a coolant leak.

Mike Byrne





Above: DRS Class 37s 37 606 & 37 423 on the outward Spitfire Railtours
'Paignton Pudden' special from Crewe to Paignton on the 21st June.

Jonathan Gill

Top Left: The same pair are seen stabled at Goodrington Sidings, Paignton, now with 423 leading.

Richard Hargreaves

Bottom Left: Class 37 423 on arrival back at Crewe, an excellent tour, with many of the Railtalk team
onboard which ran very well. The only problem on the day seems to have been the weather.

Class47



Left: Class 60 084 And Class 66 008 stand between duties in one of the UK's main freight yards, Warrington.

Class47

Above: Class 31 105 leads DBSO 9714 at Kettering South with 4Q31 Derby RTC - Cricklewood on the 30th May.

Derek Elston

Below: A cab view of the livery that has been applies to Class 185 108 for the Liverpool '08 Capital of Culture year. Why not just have the logo's, whats the pink mess about?.

Class47





MERSEYRAIL SELECTION

In Conjunction with the Liverpool Capital of Culture celebrations, Merseyrail have reliveried several Class 507/508 units. We have the pleasure in presenting a selection here, all taken in June on the Merseyside network.

All: Brian Battersby



Above: In connection with an “Army - be the best” campaign Class 60 040 stands on display at the NRM in York.

Andy

Left: Class 66 107 on the 6K05 Carlisle-Crewe infrastructure train seen at Redbank on the 2nd June.

Dave Harris

Right: DRS continue to stable a variety of classes of loco at York. Recently there has been a variety of Class 57's the latest being this one, 57 010, seen with 57 009.

Andy





Top Left: Wrexham and Shropshire's new services continue to fill our inbox, and with quality like this why not.
Class 67 015 passes Madeley Jct. on the 13th June.

Jon Jebb

Above: Class 66 415 with Class 47 712 "Pride of Cumbria" dead in tow approaches Wilsons Crossing, Northampton on Monday 9th June.

Derek Elston

Bottom Left: Class 37 606 and 37 609 on the Serco Test Train Derby - Mossend seen here at Winwick Jct. on the 9th June.

Dave Harris



Top Left: Winwick Jct on June 9th saw Class 67 005 and 67 006 with the 1X01 Royal Train set hauling Her Majesty The Queen to Arbroath in Scotland.

Dave Harris

Bottom Left: Seen at Bromham on 17th June is Class 31 459 'Cerberus' Top'n'Tail with 31 602 working 4Q07 Derby RTC - Selhurst Depot.

Steve Madden

Below: Class 334 010 and 334 039 are seen passing Milton, between Dumbarton East and Bowling, heading towards Bowling while working the 07.35 2H74 Helensburgh Central - Drumgelloch service on the 13th June.

Jonathan McGurk





Grand Central continues to interest the enthusiast market with it's Sunderland to York shuttle service.

This service is running until the HST problems with both stock and power cars have been resolved.

During early June Class 47's were used, and on the left we see Riviera's 47 839 and 47 853.

However these were replaced in mid June with Virgin Class 57's and on the right we see Class 57 301 and 57 308.

What's next?????

All: Class47







Above: The 6573 Bescot - Mossend Enterprise working seen heading north through Winwick Jct on June 9th. With a superb train load consisting of a loco, Class 66 426, China Clay tanks and Network Rail self discharging hoppers! Hauled by one of only two Class 92's in EWS livery 92 001.

Dave Harris

Right: Power car 43072 in MML livery spoils the uniform appeal of the East Midlands Trains HST with 43058 on the tail at Great Bowden. Thu 5th June

Derek Elston

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Left: CrossCountry HST with 43 007 leading nears York on the 10th June.

Andy

Bottom Left: It makes a pleasant change to get photo's of London Tube Stock. This Metropolitan service passes Northwick Park.

Tom Loader

Bottom Right: Virgin Pendolino Class 390 024 is seen at Glasgow Central High Level station with its front coupler protector cover non - existant while waiting to prepare to work the 16.10 1M18 Glasgow Central High Level - London Euston Virgin West Coast service on the 14th June.

Jonathan McGurk



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Above: EWS branded Class 92 041 leads various wagons up the West Coast Main Line in the sun on the 4th July.

Tom Loader

Right: The South West Trains network is spreading!, these units have recently been seen all over the North West, whilst on hire to East Midlands Trains, also a Stagecoach owned company. Here is Class 158 884 at Crewe on the 21st June.

Ian Furness





Left: Class 320 313 is seen passing through Bowling station while working the 12.25 2H94 Helensburgh Central - Drungelloch on the 15th June. [Jonathan McGurk](#)

Above: 1497 sits at Lymington Pier awaiting the return to Brockenhurst on the 14th June. [Liam](#)

Below: Class 67 021 and 67 026 depart Bristol having worked the 1655 Weymouth-Bristol, pictured here heading to the depot. [Liam](#)





Left: Class 334 002 is seen approaching Bowling station working the 11.40 2F75 Motherwell - Balloch on the 15th June. [Jonathan McGurk](#)
 Above: On the 8th June Class 150 127 and 150 233 work the 09.35 Frome - Bristol TM. [Jim](#)
 Below: Class 37 605 heads towards Orpington on one of the last trips of the day seen here at Petts Wood, 10th June. [Tom Loader](#)







Left: Recently returned to traffic and working for Fastline Freight, Class 56 311 thunders past Heamies Farm on the 20th June. [Pete Cheshire](#)

Bottom Left: Class 222 008 in East Midlands Trains livery passes Great Bowden with a London bound service on Thursday 5th June. [Derek Elston](#)

Below: A view of the driver of the 16.00 1K31 Glasgow Central High Level - Ayr service standing at platform 12 waiting for his commuters, a couple of minutes before he is ready to depart on the 14th June. [Jonathan McGurk](#)





Above: Recently outshopped in the new National Express livery, Class 91 111 approaches Doncaster on the 24th June. [Ian Furness](#)



Top Left: This is the future, we are told. London Midland take delivery of their first Class 139 001, for use on the Stourbridge Jct line. [Class47](#)



Bottom Right: DRS Class 20s 20 313 & 20 310 hauling SDR based locos D6737, 20 110 & D7612 onto the WSR at Norton Fitzwarren for the WSR's mixed traffic gala, on the 10th June. [Jonathan Gill](#)



London Midland's Tyseley 100 Open Day

To celebrate 100 years of operation, the depot, just south of Birmingham, and next door to the Birmingham Railway Museum, was opened to the public on the 28th June.

Above: Class 47 580 renamed at the event "*County of Essex*".

Top Right: Another livery to see was that of Class 08 616, now wearing the colours of London Midland.

Left: There were two Class 121 Bubble Car's present, this is 55 034.

Right: There were plenty of units to see and visit at the depot.

All: Class47



Clapham Junction Engineers 14th June



Track renewal was taking place at Longhedge Junction, just north of Clapham Jct. on the route to Kensington Olympia. First train seen into the possession was

Above: 6G10 Eastleigh - Longhedge Jn in the hands of Class 66 704.

The next arrival on site was

Top Left: 6G11 Class 66 702, all workings were from Eastleigh. The best location was at the end of platform 4, as the trains ran down platform 3.

The next arrival which was originally booked two ED's turned out to be

Left: Class 66 728 on 6G12, this working actually made a short stop in the station so I took advantage of this and got some more photos.





The following day, Class 66 728 was stabled at Eastleigh with 66 704. Class 66 728 was photable from the bridge north of the station and the platforms. *James P. 2008*



A day out Down Lymington

Decided to make a visit down to Lymington recently to have a ride on the branch.
Class 421498 was the “slammer” for the day complete with “Lymington Flyer” headboard.

A rather enjoyable way to spend a Sunday.

All: © James P. 2008

Welcome to the another “Nosh Report”, remember that this is your chance to let everyone know where to go for something to eat or drink, (ie cafe, takeaway, sandwich shop) when out and about.

Bit of a difference this month, this is an “on-train nosh report”

This months report was sampled on: “The Paignton Pudden” operated by Spitfire Railtours and catering was by ‘The Gravy Train Catering Company’.



Offers a two simple menus split between your outward journey in the morning and the return in the evening.

Available in the morning are Bacon butties or a Breakfast platter of hash brown,beans,fried bread and a freshly cooked fried egg are available all cooked to order.

Available on the return journey was a freshly cooked ‘Hot Pot’ and a dish of Chili Con-Carne and Rice also both cooked to order and both priced at £4.50

A nice unique menu on offer here but humble and freshly cooked in the MK1 Kitchen Car. Downside due to it’s huge popularity the queues for your food were lengthy, maybe a trolley might help, however this may raise costs.

Highly recommended though and all the buffet prices were quite reasonable.

Thanks to Spitfire Railtours and the Gravy Train Catering Company for keeping us fed and watered throughout an excellent tour.

Until the next time.....Steve.

Don’ forget if you have any reports or thoughts for this column, email me at :

steve.roberts@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

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Rob’s Rail Review

Robert K.



Desiro Disaster

When things went wrong at North Sheen recently, in the form of a class 450/5 Desiro pulling out, only to abruptly stop having crossed the level crossing with a mechanical fault, it was only a matter of time before the queue of trains built up right the way back to Clapham Junction and even Waterloo. The train was stuck in this position for at least 30 minutes, if not, longer and was still stuck when I boarded my Waterloo bound train.

Shortly after, at Stratford, a class 360 became stuck in the platform with a door problem involving the penultimate coach of an 8 car train being irresponsive to the numerous times the driver attempted to shut the doors. The unit remained here for a period of time and moved off eventually, quite late.

This rather interesting event certainly doesn’t give off the impression that Siemens’s strong Desiro fleets are in fact as reliable as possible, although, I think this can be noted quite accurately as a co-incidence, yet still rather amusing!





Welcome back to the Thumper

This was a rather interesting sight at Clapham Junction recently.

Having been told it was seen on the South Eastern patch earlier in the morning, I was mildly disappointed when during my class 455 journey this beauty came rushing past in the opposite direction, between Twickenham and Whitton.

Thinking nothing more of it, I disembarked at Feltham and crossed platform to get the class 458 returning to Waterloo.

It wasn't until just after Wandsworth Town that one of the friends I was with pointed out that we had just passed it and that it would probably be coming through Clapham Junction.

Alighting at Clapham Junction, we had no longer than 1minute to wait before it rolled in to a stop, and enthusiasts both old and young flocked round to get a picture of something which has been absent for so long..... Welcome Back

Remember to... mow the lawn,
wash the plates, cook dinner,
and...

STOP AT ROMFORD?!

Either the managers and drivers at National Express have no idea about a place called Romford that simply appears to be on their route-map, or in an attempt to ensure there are no minor operational hiccups, they have implemented this rather amusing reminder system at Stratford.

Placed strategically on platform 10 just under the mirror, this little sign is, I suppose, an attempt to remind mainline drivers to check or remember as to whether they are or in fact are not (as increasingly seems to be the case) stopping at Romford!

These little reminders, are, for those who do know why they are there and their meanings, slightly less reassuring, if this is the sort of reminder that is necessary. Why don't we put "? trousers" underneath it to make sure that the drivers are wearing the correct uniform?



Multi coloured trains, again

As most will recall, during 'one', it was noted that for the first time since at least "Intercity" days, the entire mainline (LHCS) sets were in a consistent livery!

This has recently been shattered, and again the multi-coloured GEML returns, despite the fact it has always been slightly multi-coloured particularly with the various other fleets of trains included.

The concern here, is that National Express are not rebranding the trains fast enough. With branding almost at a standstill here, yet London Midland can rebrand a set a week, something doesn't add up!

Although, it must be appreciated that the example such as the Class 323 relivery scheme is actually a recognised arrangement during which they visit on a schedule to be repainted / vinyled, whilst National Express, in this case are just periodically applying the livery when a train is stood still long enough. This is, however, a shame, and I for one doubt the entire fleet will have been done by the end of the franchise.



Talking to.....

Rowan Jackson

British Diesel Locomotive Preservation Group

Formed in the spring of 2007, the British Diesel Locomotive Preservation Group (B.D.L.P.G.) aims to preserve part of Britain's heritage, in the form of British built diesel locomotives or first generation diesel multiple units. There are well over 200 stored or condemned diesel locomotives, that were built within the United Kingdom, that are now sat around in the scrap lines in this country. The members and supporters of the group see this as a terrible waste of the craftsmanship and man hours that went into building these magnificent locomotives, and the group is here to stop this becoming more and more common.

The group has had a few false starts, as any group does in our position, and progress, from the outside, seems to be slow, or even non apparent. But this is far from the case. Members are constantly giving up their free time to help the group; either by producing flyers, helping with the travelling trade and information stalls or simply ringing people within the rail industry and explaining what the group is about and seeing if they can secure the support of big name companies. We all share the same vision, and that is, one day, to have some of Britain's most well maintained and top performing diesel locos as part of the B.D.L.P.G. The group is made up entirely of volunteers, giving their free time and devotion to help us succeed in the goals we have set ourselves. Most of the members of the group have

railway backgrounds either on the heritage line scene or working for National Network Train Operating Companies.

All of us within the B.D.L.P.G. realise that things aren't going to happen over night. The fact that we aren't going to go to bed one night and wake up the following morning owning a fleet of pristine diesel locomotives. We are working round the clock to set items in stone, so that when we do either purchase a loco, or receive it on long term loan, then all the other parts of the puzzle will slot into place. But, as with anything, the parts may not entirely fit correctly and have to be tweaked and altered to the specific loco or unit, but all the ground work is there waiting for it.

The long-term plan for the group is to preserve as many aspects of diesel operation as possible, not just the locomotives. The skills for both operating and maintenance are vitally important and it is the long-term aim of the group, that we want these skills and the mechanical and technical knowledge passed onto future generations. As a group, the BDLPG is not aimed towards a specific building or class of locomotive or multiple unit. Our aim is to be able to provide a wide ranging portfolio, again from both a skills and assets viewpoint, that has the ability to cover from the humble Class 03 to the popular 'Heavy Freight' Type 5s and first generation multiple units.

We believe in being a forward thinking group and welcome comments, ideas and suggestions from our membership, not just the management committee. The group welcomes contact from

other groups and locomotive owners, whether such contact provides the opportunity to exchange ideas and knowledge, or provide the opportunity for the BDLPG to become the custodians (short or long term) of a locomotive.

Apart from preserving diesels, the B.D.L.P.G. also has other aims. One of which is the inclusion of young persons, wherever possible within the group, and in any manner of work, be it fundraising or design work, and in the future, loco restoration. We feel very strongly that we have to involve young people wherever possible. Because, say in 50 years time, when you and I are infirm and can not continue with the active volunteering that we do now, if we don't encourage the younger generations, who will there be to take over where we leave off? That would surely be an end to railway preservation, for both steam and diesel. We aim to teach skills, both physical; in looking after locos and maintaining them in top condition, and basic life skills in working within a group and being part of it, and they, as well as ourselves, will find the experience entirely rewarding.

If we don't act now, future generations will not have the sights to enjoy that we have, and our heritage railways will have no future if we don't encourage the younger generations to take part in them now.

Also you can visit www.bdlpg.co.uk for up-to-date information about the group.

WSMR impresses

Open-access operators don't seem to be faring particularly well lately. Hull Trains have suffered with their loss of a Pioneer unit, leading to severe reliability problems in their fleet and Grand Central are struggling with their HSTs too. In sharp contrast however, despite problems acquiring their own stock Wrexham and Shropshire have managed to start on time spot hiring 67s and Mk 3 coaches. The service I experienced was thoroughly proficient and the uniforms are particularly smart.

Due to the relatively small size of the trains there are a disproportionately high number of staff per passengers. Whoever said bigger was better, this beats franchised operators any day, except for the fact that it takes quite a while. In the time spent on this train I could have got all the way to Scotland. It is over 4 hours to Wrexham, but it's worth it for the quality of the journey. Despite the relatively low key launch the loading is pretty reasonable, but not too busy. It's not too slow until the crawl through Birmingham, but you can definitely tell that there are some pathing conflicts with Chiltern which need some resolving. Lots of room on the train – and particularly roomy in the temporary declassified first class coaches. The platform was announced in plenty of time at Marylebone and the trains were smart and clean. Catering was provided in the buffet car, as well as a free meal for first class ticket holders. Overall I was impressed by the whole operation and it was one of my best journeys by rail recently.

Adam Greenland
Colchester

Aberdeen breaks the rules again

I have a young persons railcard, and often buy a Saver return from Aberdeen - Arbroath, costing £12.15, travelling off peak after 09:15, but last week a gentleman in the ticket office said "it's £16.00 if you are travelling before 10am" he checked with a colleague who agreed with him. Was he right to do this?

Jordan Kearney
Aberdeen

Yorkie's reply: No, he was wrong. The minimum fare on all Saver returns before 10am with a Y-P railcard is £8.00. Staff at Aberdeen station have a well-documented history of disobeying the rules and have been investigated for malpractice recently. Next time ask them to look it up in the National fares Manual, but meanwhile request a refund from First Scotrail customer services. We also suggest writing to NXEC, as Scotrail may be unfairly overcharging passengers for the 09:52 service. Let us know what response you get.

New NXEC timetable woes

I'm expressing my concern about the proposed new ECML timetable, as the only way NXEC can speed services up is by cutting stops from the timetable.

The fastest London Edinburgh journey in the current timetable is 4 hours 13 minutes (calling at York, Newcastle and Berwick-upon-Tweed), and from what I've read recently, that is the sort of service they want to provide through the day.

One example of how things are going to be more difficult: previously, when going to Scotland, I only had to change at Doncaster. Now it will be a case of changing at Doncaster and York or Newcastle.

A couple of alternatives are changing at Sheffield and getting a Cross Country service from there, or even going to Manchester, changing there for another TPE service, and possibly changing at Preston as well. No matter what option I choose, I'm still faced with increased journey times and added hassle when travelling to Scotland.

David Perks
Scunthorpe

Letters can be submitted by emailing them to: editor@railtalkmagazine.co.uk.

Wessex Round Trip

It was an early start for me as I boarded the 0700 York-King's Cross (Class 91 hauled), this service was well patronised by business people heading to the Capital, and made my way to Paddington arriving around 0920 in plenty of time before our onward train to Bristol.

After getting supplies, we boarded the 1015 HST to Temple Meads. Back then, MTUs were unheard of, so there was no risk of missing out on the Paxman scream. At Bristol our group size was bolstered to 10. Soon 31452 at the head of a rake of pink Mk2 coaches, with 31601 at the rear, appears in the through road before shunting into it's platform. We could relax now, in the knowledge that we were not going to get 'bowled' by the usual Class 158 traction on such workings.



Photo: Andrew May

The 1252 service 1098 Bristol-Brighton - a journey of around 4 hours - was booked for top'n'tail Class 31s hired in from Fragonset on Fridays only. This being half-term, the train loaded very well, and I can't imagine what it would be like on a single Class 158 given that the 31s were full and standing for parts of the journey. Windows were at a premium with just about every one taken by enthusiasts on this pleasant Autumn afternoon. The fine weather resulted in dozens of photographers out to photograph the 31s on one of their final journeys. The trolley remained in the guards van; it would have been difficult to get through.

After several hours of EE thrash, we had a choice at Brighton. Our original plan was to take the 31s back as far as Salisbury, for a boring 159 back to London, or alternatively take the 31s to somewhere like Havant, for a CIG back to London. In the end 4VOP 423902 on the 1630 Portsmouth gave us a chance to sample the West Coastway on a slam-door all stations for the final time, so we decided to take it. The end was nigh for the 'slammers' and the 90-minute journey was over all too quickly.



Photo: Jonathan Lewis

By the time we got to Pompey it was dark, and we were starving, so we went to the Britannia fish'n'chip shop. We headed back to Harbour station in search of a 400-series to Waterloo, but only Desiros turned up, other than a Winchester service but this was deemed too 'out of the way' at this hour. We let a few Desiros go, but after 'flagging' the 19:17 semi-fast, we knew we had go get the 19:22 stopper regardless of traction as it was getting late. As an 8CIG came into view, some fireworks went off in the town - how appropriate! We claimed the leading compartment in 421318 and enjoyed every minute of the just-under 2 hour journey back to Waterloo. One of our group was quite scared of the sparks, not being used to 400 series EMUs!

Some chavs were throwing stones at the train at Bosham, so a call to BTP was made, but other than that the journey was uneventful - though enjoyable - until after Woking, where we raced a Desiro which was on the Up Slow to our left.



Photo: Andrew May

From the open window in our compartment, we were able to actually touch the Desiro as it was going at precisely the same speed as us. But by now, our 'stopper' had become a fast and we soon overtook the Desiro, being non-stop to Clapham. We got to Waterloo at 2117 giving me ample time to make the last York train from the Cross.



Photo: Andrew May

Part 1 - Hull Trains

Innovation comes from the most unlikely sources, and the rail industry is no exception. Hull in 1999 - depressed, crumbling and in decline. The fishing industry on which the city had relied so heavily for around 150 years collapsed after the famous 'Cod Wars' with Iceland during the 1970s, and industries based around the fisheries left in their droves, many relocating across the Humber to Grimsby, others disappearing altogether. The loss of the industry caused great damage to the city's economy, and an era of decline set in; in the words of the great poet Phillip Larkin, 'all round...close-ribbed streets rise and fall like a great sigh out of the last century'.

The railways had also seen massive decline in the city, the dense network of lines and sidings reduced to a handful of substandard routes with poor capacity, and a only a token return Hull-London service was retained, although a shadow of its former self. This left Hull as the largest city in the UK (243,000 as of 2001) without a regular direct train service to London. However, change was on the horizon.

Since the creation of the rail franchises as part of the Railways Act 1993, competition was heavily moderated by the government, making the creation of independent enterprises virtually impossible. However, the relaxation of these circumstances created new opportunities in the rail industry, and the result was the creation of Hull Trains by Renaissance Trains in 1998, the first UK open access rail venture. The company was formed with the intention of offering a dedicated and personal service to the capital from Hull and the East Riding, a key concept of the open access idea being to focus on a niche market.

The main ethics were to provide fast, direct services, excellent levels of customer service, and in terms of the wider picture, encourage economic prosperity in the region. After years of economic stagnation, the proposals offered the prospect of attracting southern businesses to invest in area, as well as providing a new platform for existing Humber companies to do business in the capital. Meanwhile, there was also the expectation that a fast service would help to boost tourism in the city. As a result, as well as the backing of Anglia Railways

parent company GB Railways, Hull Trains received a great deal of support from such bodies as the Hull Chamber of Commerce, Associated British Ports and local councils.

To the company's delight, the application to the Rail Regulator for 3 return weekday journeys was approved in January 2000, and after the confirmation of timetables, services commenced on Monday 25th September 2000. Things started off small. At first, 100mph class 170 units were hired from Anglia Trains. Although seen as potentially unsuitable for such a long journey, the units were ideal at first, providing 29 first class and 129 standard class seats, as well as luxuries such as air conditioning and a buffet. Meanwhile, the company cleverly tapped into two clear markets. Leisure passengers were enticed with advance fares starting from only £25, whilst business passengers were offered heavily discounted 'Hull Trains only' Saver return tickets, and complimentary meals in first class, a benefit not enjoyed by fellow GNER passengers. Features such as this helped to revitalise the reputation of train travel out of Hull, particularly to London, and Hull Trains itself quickly became widely regarded as a top ambassador of rail travel. Just 2 years after the launch, Hull Trains were ranked as the top long distance operator for reliability, with 86% of its services running on-time, whilst in a separate survey, 100% stated that expectations in terms of customer service had been met.

Six years on, the company, now known as First Hull Trains after the acquisition of majority shareholder GB Railways by First Group in 2003, still continues to evolve. 125mph Class 222 Pioneer trains provide faster journey times and higher levels and comfort than their predecessors, whilst the number of return weekday journeys have increased from 3 to 7. However, things haven't been trouble free. In January 2007, disaster struck, as 222 103, one of Hull Trains' four Class 222 trains, fell from lifting jacks at Crofton works near Wakefield, causing significant damage to 2 coaches. The coaches in question were written off, leaving Hull Trains with only 3 trains, and no spares. For several months, the 222 units performed admirably, but during the second and third quarters of 2007, performance dipped to an average of 83% of trains arriving on-time, down from 88.4% in 2006. Because of the worsening mechanical state of the 222s, Hull Trains took the brave decision to hire in a Class 86 loco and 5 Mk3 carriages for use between Doncaster and London Kings Cross, a combination not used on passenger rail services since 2005. However, the venture proved a successful short term

solution to the reliability issues of the 222s, and allowed one Pioneer to receive essential maintenance every weekend.

With the financial backing of parent company First Group, Hull Trains are now the in the process of acquiring a number of class 180 units previously used with sister company First Great Western, and hope to modify them internally to provide higher levels of comfort and a new kitchen for cooking meals in first class.

Now in their 8th year, Hull Trains are firmly established in the UK rail industry, carrying 670,000 passengers each year. Their success can be attributed to their 'start small and build up' strategy, which has led to consistently high reliability and excellent levels of customer service. Other key factors have been their competitive pricing across advance and walk on fares, which have helped to push down advance ticket prices on National Express through competition, and at the same time, the backing of transport giant First Group has provided significant investment financially, and additional assistance in terms of industry advice and resources.

Hull in 2008 – vibrant, up-and-coming and buzzing with investment and development. A nationally award winning transport interchange has just opened its doors thanks to funding from Hull City Council in partnership with Hull Trains' parent company First Group. Meanwhile, next door, a new state of the art 40 acre retail and leisure complex has transformed the previously derelict area of St Stephen's Square. The city is at last getting back on its feet, but this is only the beginning. Hull Trains has helped to put the city back on the map, but with a bright future ahead, things can only get better for this former fishing centre.



It has been widely reported that ticket restrictions on Cross-Country (XC) have been made far more draconian recently, but misunderstandings are rife over the nature of the restrictions and reasoning behind them. Both XC and the media have sent out conflicting and confusing messages.

How to beat the XC restrictions for shoulder-peak journeys

Example 1 - Darlington-Derby (Saver return)

BEFORE CHANGES:

Darlington-Derby Saver £60.00
First valid train arrives Derby 1056

AFTER CHANGES:

Darlington-Derby Saver £60.00
First valid train arrives Derby 1206
To arrive 1056 would cost £95.00

AFTER CHANGES COMBINING TICKETS:

Darlington-York Saver £19.80 (set by NXEC; Valid any train)
York-Sheffield Saver £17.70 (Set by NT; Valid any train)
Sheffield-Burton Saver £20.10 (Set by EMT; Valid after 0900)
Total £57.60
First valid train arrives Derby 1056

These are both entirely false. In both cases, the restrictions only apply to tickets priced by XC. Many journeys are possible on XC services using tickets that are not priced by XC; indeed it is a possibility that the majority of walk-on tickets used on XC are priced by other TOCs. Also, bear in mind that only restricted Savers were given the

Passenger Focus raised the issue with XC and was assured that train managers should be aware of the flows that are priced by other operators and the Head of Revenue is now taking up the matter with regional managers. Guards should no longer give anyone any grief over this, but anyone who experiences a similar problem should inform Passenger Focus.

[illegible]

James Palmer - Retro Railtours

I'm sure many people dream of making their own railtour company. It's not an easy task but James Palmer has done just that!

I asked James where he got the idea to run a Railtour company, "I've been a steward for a well known Railtour company for 3 years and I gained experience from that and I wanted a challenge and I am going to do a degree in transport management, so I decided to start my own company.

I questioned how he would reply to calls that are already too many tours being run at the moment, "I think it's a very competitive market, however for the average punter wanting to make day trips from the North West, I feel that there aren't that many operators catering for normal excursions." Don't worry though - although James' priority is the 'day trip' market - he is also aiming to entice enthusiasts by using 'classic' traction. Ultimately, he wants both day trippers and enthusiasts to book on his tours so he must appeal to both, which is not always easy.

Relying on the choosy enthusiast market alone would be a risky business, and James already feels that this area is well covered

by existing operators

So, for James' first railtour, he picked a popular locomotive and an attractive city to visit. The original plan saw the train heading North along the Settle-Carlisle line, but paths proved too difficult to obtain and the break in Edinburgh would have also had to be compromised. In any case, enthusiasts wishing to experience this scenic route have plenty of tours to choose from this Summer! Besides, as James points out, "the WCML gives us the added benefit of high speed running with a Deltic, plus a Napier assault of Shap AND Beattock!" Heading back via the ECML is bound to prove a hit with Deltic fans, and the trans-Pennine journey is likely to recall memories of the final years of Deltics, displaced onto this route. It's sure to be a winner!

It all sounds so easy... but actually organising it all was a difficult task. Nevertheless, things seemed to be running smoothly when rumours of engineering work to the Chorley arches surfaced.

At first this was dismissed by the operator, on the basis that Network Rail had not informed them of any closure. But a

friend introduced James to a NR train planner at a diesel gala, who gave him the bad news: the rumours were true and he could not go via Chorley! Furthermore, the Bolton stop would probably have to be omitted as the route via Westhoughton had no spare paths with TPE already diverted that way.

It was all a bit disappointing; as with only 11 weeks until the tour, NR should not be announcing blockades (they are committed to a T-12 timetable). But after a few frantic calls, the tour was re-routed via the Chat Moss line, and rare curve joining the WCML at Golborne Jn- then calling additionally at Wigan North Western and Leyland. Bolton, Horwich & Chorley were removed due to the closure. Several passengers - mostly from Bolton - were informed of the decision, and all agreed to board at alternative stations. "They were very understanding," said a relieved James, "there should be more communication within the industry. Thankfully, problems were 'nipped in the bud' before anything major arose". The Retro Deltic Scot is scheduled to run to Edinburgh on Saturday 30 August 2008.

Photo: Richard Armstrong



RETRO RAILTOURS LTD

Welcome to Retro Railtours. We are a new company, providing both tours for enthusiasts, and daytrippers.

OUR FIRST RAILTOUR WILL BE AN EXCITING DAY OUT BEHIND 'DELTAIC', 55022 ROYAL SCOTS GREY, FROM HUDDERSFIELD TO EDINBURGH, ON AUGUST 30TH

NOTE: Due to a Network Rail blockade between Chorley and Euxton Jn, we are no longer able to call at Bolton, Horwich Parkway or Chorley. We have requested alternative pickups at Wigan NW and Leyland. The train will serve: Huddersfield (0600), Stalybridge (0625), Manchester Victoria (0650), Wigan NW (0740), Leyland (0750) and Preston (0800) (Wigan NW and Leyland are to be confirmed, also timings are approx)

PRICES: First Class £80, Standard Class £55 (plus £6 for Continental breakfast in both classes)

Visit our Website:
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Phone: 0161 330 9055
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ELEPHANT HERD DEPARTS LONDON LIVERPOOL STREET STATION - DESTINATION NORWICH

On Thursday 19th June, a herd of fibreglass elephant sculptures departed Liverpool Street Station en route to Norwich. Their arrival will mark the imminent opening of the Go Elephants! exhibition that culminates in a mammoth 10 week public art exhibition in Norwich city centre.

Star attraction is Meiluami, an elephant calf that recently travelled to Kenya and back. Meiluami, which means 'always alert' in Maa, was named by children from Ol Moti school in Kenya and is now an official Born Free Ambassador. She will join over 50 of these unique elephant sculptures, which will be displayed throughout Norwich this summer.



Virginia McKenna OBE, the founder of the Born Free Foundation who accompanied Meiluami on her epic journey said, "This little elephant symbolises the spirit of Africa. Her vivid colours, her delicate Maasai beading and brown earth skin conjure up the magic of the open plains".

The Go Elephants! public art exhibition opens in Norwich city centre on 23rd June, and as a special incentive to see the elephant sculptures, National Express will be offering a '2 for 1' offer on all train tickets to Norwich for the duration of the exhibition. 'Meiluami' will be on display for the 10 week exhibition in the Cloisters of Norwich Cathedral.



London Underground reveals plans to help passengers 'stay cool'

Innovative projects this summer, as major works continue to find long-term solutions to cool the Tube, supplying new fans, and innovative measures such as the ground-water cooling system at Victoria are welcome weapons in our fight to keep passengers fresh. Mayor of London, Boris Johnson has said that London Underground has a number of new and improved measures to help cool the Tube network this summer.

Industrial-sized fans will be used to improve air-flow and an award-winning ground water cooling scheme will keep temperatures lower for passengers at Victoria. Air-conditioned by 2010. In the long-term there are plans for passengers to benefit from air-conditioned trains on the Circle, District, Hammersmith and City and Metropolitan lines; with the first of these services up and running in 2010.

Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, continued "It always perplexed me that boffins could produce mobile phones the size of a credit card yet passengers would emerge dripping with sweat from Tube trains that lacked air conditioning. That is why I am chuffed to bits that plans are afoot to finally put these systems on Circle, District, Hammersmith and City and Metropolitan Lines trains."

"Cooling the Tube does, though, remain a major challenge, especially on the deeper lines such as the Northern and Piccadilly, where we will continue to strive for a solution to the problem. However, supplying new fans and innovative measures such as the ground-water cooling system at Victoria are welcome weapons in our fight to keep passengers fresh."

Doubts Over West Coast Mainline Upgrade Finish Date

Stagecoach, who owns a 49% share in Virgin Trains, has cast doubts over whether WCML upgrade work will be finished on time. The remodelling and realignment work is crucial for the December timetable change which will see a more intense WCML service.

Ian Dobbs, head of Stagecoach's rail business said, "We have always been concerned that the programme is very ambitious. That is not to say that Network Rail won't deliver as the company has more track access this summer,"

Stagecoach will make a decision in August as to whether it will press ahead with the timetable changes or delay it until Easter, next year. Network Rail defended the schedule, claiming that it had the backing of other passenger and freight operators, and feared that delaying the timetable changes would have a knock-on effect to WCML operations.

However the new timetable is controversial and has raised criticism particularly from residents living in the Trent Valley and Crewe. Lichfield, Tamworth and Nuneaton will only be served by intercity trains in the peak period. These stations would be served by an hourly "desiro" stopper service between London and Crewe, via Northampton, leading to a 40% increase in journey times and a limited number of destinations without changing. Crewe, which grew from a population of 70 to almost 70,000 as a result of the important railway station being built, will no longer be served by Euston to Glasgow and Liverpool services, however it will still be served by Euston to Manchester and Birmingham to Glasgow services. The WCML continues to suffer from weekend closes south of Coventry and Nuneaton due to works at Rugby. However Virgin Trains recently announced it would operate a replacement shuttle service between Birmingham and London via the Chiltern mainline, a move perhaps inspired by the new open-access operator, WSMR. [Nick W](#)

Virgin to run West Coast Replacement Shuttle Train Service

Virgin Trains will operate a direct Birmingham International to London Euston train service on all dates when the West Coast Main Line is closed at Rugby due to route upgrade work, offering a much better service for customers than during previous closures.

The special service will call at Coventry and then run non-stop using an alternative route through Warwickshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire before reaching London Euston via tracks normal used only for freight trains. The diesel Super Voyager service will operate hourly, provide more than 430 seats an hour, and take approximately an hour longer than the usual route. It will supplement the electric Pendolino service that, on most dates, will operate twice an hour between London and Northampton for coach connections which will serve Birmingham International. Virgin Trains services to Manchester, Liverpool and Scotland will operate from Birmingham International, with some through trains to / from London Euston.

The special service will operate for the first time on Saturday 28 June, and will then run on all days when the West Coast Main Line is closed in the Rugby/Milton Keynes area. With the additional closures Network Rail is now seeking, this will be more than 35 days in the next twelve months. Virgin Trains Chief Operating Officer, Chris Gibb said: *"The upgrading of the West Coast Main Line is essential to provide a state-of-the-art railway. We want to make travel during these route improvement works as painless as possible for our customers. That is why we have decided to provide this through train service."* Valuable support for getting this new service running so quickly has come from Chiltern Railways, EWS, Network Rail and Bombardier. Light refreshments will be available on the trains, which will run every hour. Full details will be available in special timetables that will soon be available at stations or through online journey planners.



First GBRf has signed a new five-year deal with British Gypsum, at their site at East Leake, Leicestershire.

Present at the signing was British Gypsum's Managing Director Mike Chaldecott, who officially put pen to paper with John Smith, Manager Director of First GBRf, in a deal that will extend the business partnership between the two organisations to a period of ten consecutive years. Having completed a five year contract, which included the movement of desulphogypsum (DSG) from West Burton power station in Nottinghamshire, which started in 2003, First GBRf were able to successfully negotiate the new multi million pound deal without British Gypsum putting the contract out to tender.

Understanding British Gypsum's need for flexibility in the sourcing of raw materials from a number of different locations has been key to giving them the ability to switch transportation from different sites, including UK mines, power stations and a number of UK Ports, much more quickly.

John Smith said: *"We are delighted to have negotiated a new contract with British Gypsum. Having listened to their need for more flexibility in the routes in which the trains run we think that our innovative new deal offers them both this and also great value, whilst securing for First GBRf a key client for another 5 years".*

Mike Chaldecott, Managing Director of British Gypsum commented: *"We are extremely pleased with the new arrangement, which will provide the extra flexibility the business needs to manage its raw material requirements efficiently. Moving deliveries from road to rail is a key objective of our corporate sustainability strategy, and this new contract with First GBRf means we have now switched 80% of all gypsum deliveries onto rail".*

ZIM awards EWS Network intermodal contract

ZIM Integrated Shipping Services has awarded a contract to EWS Network, part of the DB Schenker organisation, to move intermodal containers by rail. These containers were previously transported in the UK by road haulage. ZIM handles over two million containers per annum with ships calling at 180 ports worldwide. The contract with EWS Network is the first time in the UK that ZIM has used rail freight services in a major way.

The contract will see EWS Network transport containers for ZIM from Felixstowe to Wakefield and Tilbury to Wakefield. Over 100 containers per a week will be moved by rail, with volumes expected to increase over the coming months.

SOUTHERN INTEGRATES WITH GATWICK EXPRESS

Train operator Southern ran its first Gatwick Express service on Sunday 22 June, leaving London Victoria at 03.30 and bound for Gatwick Airport. The premium service comes under Southern's stewardship as part of the outcome of the DfT's Brighton Main Line Route Utilisation Strategy. Although this is a new chapter in the Gatwick Express story, Southern's managing director, Chris Burchell is clear that it's very much business as usual for the time being. He said: *"We are delighted to operate this prestigious service alongside our own superb services. Passengers using Gatwick Express from Sunday will see little change, as we will continue to deliver the standards that they have become accustomed to. However, there will be some immediate improvements, such as the new ticket machines we've purchased for Victoria and Gatwick stations. This will make it even easier for customers to buy their tickets."* The next major step for this new alliance comes in December 2008 when Southern's commitment to deliver extended Gatwick Express services to Brighton in the morning and evening peaks will become a reality. There will be newly re-fitted trains to support the new extended services and these will help to provide 2,000 additional seats into London.

NATIONAL EXPRESS SUBMITS EXCITING PROPOSALS FOR NEW SERVICES AND FASTER JOURNEYS

Train operator National Express East Coast has revealed exciting proposals for new services and faster journeys linking Yorkshire and Lincolnshire with London.

The plans include:

- a new service every two hours to and from Lincoln, additionally serving Market Rasen, Grimsby and Cleethorpes once a day
- an extra service every two hours between Harrogate, Pannal, Horsforth, Leeds, Garforth and London
- an extra service every hour direct from Bradford Forster Square to Leeds and London, by extending some Leeds services
- possible extra services from Skipton and the Aire Valley, subject to electricity supply issues being tackled by Network Rail

The city-to-city average journey time between Leeds and London would fall to 2 hours 10 minutes (from 2 hours 20 minutes), thanks to a new, even interval timetable with a more balanced spread of fast and frequent services.

The plans – which would be the biggest improvement to the East Coast timetable since the route was electrified in 1991 – offer significant benefits to customers and a unique opportunity to deliver a bigger and better railway.



National Express East Coast has also revealed exciting proposals for faster train services linking Scotland with London.

The capital-to-capital journey time between Edinburgh to London would fall to 4 hours 20 minutes (from 4 hours 30 minutes), as proposed new services linking Yorkshire and Lincolnshire with London would allow more trains to run faster along the southern half of the route.

The proposals also make the most efficient use of available track capacity on the busy East Coast route, while creating at least 7,000 extra seats a day on the line from December 2009.

National Express East Coast managing director David Franks said: “As an experienced train operator, our proposals offer a great solution for rail passengers, taxpayers and national and regional economies along our route. We are proposing a new, even interval timetable with a more balanced spread of fast and frequent services. Our proposals are unique in that they spread the benefit of additional services throughout the East Coast route, including to Scotland.”

National Express East Coast has formally submitted an application to the Office of Rail Regulation to run 25 new services to and from London from December 2009. The new services are subject to regulatory approval, and face competition from ‘open access’ operators for the limited available track capacity from Yorkshire southwards.

To run its proposed services, National Express East Coast would lease Class 180 ‘Adelante’ diesel trains, capable of 125 mph running, in addition to its existing fleets of refurbished diesel and electric trains.

THE INVISIBLE WIRELESS WONDER NOW ARRIVED AT YORK STATION

The latest arrival at York station is invisible, doesn't cost a penny – and is set to make communications easier for millions of travellers every year.

Train operator and station manager National Express East Coast has introduced free wireless internet across most of the station, which is used by more than 10 million rail passengers a year.

When combined with the free Wi-Fi already available on all National Express East Coast trains, the move means travellers on the East Coast Main Line can stay connected from the moment they enter the station until they reach their destination.

Steve Soards, station manager for National Express East Coast at York, said: *"A major advantage of choosing the train over alternatives such as driving or flying is the ability to stay connected to the internet throughout the journey."*



A WARM WELCOME FOR CUSTOMERS AT KEY NATIONAL EXPRESS EAST ANGLIA STATIONS

Have you ever found yourself wandering around a large station, not quite sure where you need to be and when you need to get there, looking for a member of staff to ask?

Well train operator National Express is taking steps to improve customer service at Liverpool Street and Norwich stations by introducing new 'Welcome Hosts', who will greet passengers and provide help and information. The hosts will help to provide timetable information, as well as answer specific enquiries about journey times and any other questions customers may have - as well as offering a welcoming face at the stations.

Currently the team consists of one host at Norwich, and six at Liverpool Street, where 'Welcome to the Team' boards will also be erected to let customers know who does what at the station - making it easier who passengers to understand who they need to talk to about a specific problem or query.

London Terminals Manager, Paul Barnfield, said:

'London Liverpool Street and Norwich are two of our key stations, particularly for day-trippers and tourists. The Welcome Hosts will be providing a very important service by being on hand to answer their queries and provide assistance to make their journeys as simple as possible.' **Daniel**



Lymington Line marks 150th anniversary

The Lymington to Brockenhurst railway line will be holding a birthday party on July 12 to celebrate its first 150 years – and everyone is invited. A host of entertainments are being planned for Brockenhurst and Lymington Town stations between 2pm and 5pm, including a bouncy castle, Punch and Judy shows, stilt walkers, face painters, Morris dancers, balloon modellers and even a magician.

There will also be tea and cakes available, with Carey's Manor Hotel doing the honours at Brockenhurst Station, and Stanwell House serving cream teas at Lymington. Joining them at Lymington Town Station will be Lymington Women's Institute, who will be selling teddy bears for charity. The bears, which have been knitted by volunteers, sell for £1, which will buy four bricks to help build a school or hospital in Africa.

Local schools are playing a role in the celebrations with pupils drawing pictures of the railway from the past and present. The drawings will be judged and two schools will each scoop £200 of art vouchers and each winning pupil will receive an art kit. South West Trains' employees will be joining in the party spirit by donning old-fashioned costumes and displaying historical photographs and memorabilia of the line, which first opened on July 12, 1858.

Our Managing Director Stewart Palmer said: *"This invitation is open to everyone, so don't be shy and come along and help us celebrate this big birthday bash in style. The community have really pulled together to make sure this is a day to remember and the day promises to be fun packed for both children and adults!"*

HADRIAN'S WALL TAKES TO THE RAILS

Northern Rail, the UK's largest train operator, has teamed up with Hadrian's Wall Heritage Ltd to promote the iconic World Heritage Site and its surrounding landscape to passengers and potential visitors across the north of England.

Northern Rail's train 156 448 now boasts stunning new livery showcasing the beauty of Hadrian's Wall Country and its Roman sites, which collectively attract around half a million visitors each year. The train will travel across the Northern network, which serves a population of 15 million, with the images acting as a rolling promotion of Hadrian's Wall Country.



LIFT-OFF FOR HISTORIC FLYING ARCHES

The line between Chorley and Preston, Lancashire, will close between Saturday 26th July and Sunday 7th September to allow Network Rail to carry out £5.5m of investment work on 16 'flying arches' 2 miles to the north-west of Chorley station.

The arches are designed to support a narrow, 15m deep cutting, and are the only remaining example of the flying buttress arch left on the British rail network after the similar but larger set were removed from Camden Town in London years ago. They were designed by Alexander James Aird, who believed the soft clay either side of the retaining walls, 5m high and 1.1m thick at the base, would give way and let the walls collapse inwards.



The 16 grade II listed arches, made from gritstone, have a span of about 8 metres and are half a metre wide. They are spaced every 4.5m. Subject to permission, Network Rail will remove them and place them in storage for later reinstallation. The railway beneath the arches is perfectly safe, however, a 20mph speed restriction is in place due to drainage issues. The work will increase the speed to 75mph.

During the closure, Northern services will terminate at Chorley from the south, with replacement buses running between here and Preston, calling at Leyland. First Transpenning Express services will divert via Wigan and hence will be unable to call Chorley. [Nick W.](#)

All aboard the first train from Mitcham Eastfields

A brand new station in South London has opened to passengers, with trains now calling at Mitcham Eastfields. Network Rail has invested £6m in constructing the station, which offers services to Central London and a range of other destinations. Mitcham Eastfields is located in Zone Three between Streatham and Mitcham Junction stations and has been developed in partnership with Merton Council, Southern, First Capital Connect and Transport for London. As well as providing better rail links for the area, Mitcham Eastfields is also one of the first in a new generation of modular stations built by Network Rail.

The station building was constructed off-site and lifted into place at the station in sections, meaning less disruption for residents and rail users. The building is designed to minimize energy use and incorporates solar panels and rainwater harvesting facilities. Accessibility is also a key feature, with a footbridge and lifts to connect the two platforms.

Network Rail's route director, Fiona Taylor said: "Network Rail's investment in this brand new station shows our commitment to building a bigger and better railway while supporting both the environment and communities. Mitcham Eastfields offers an opportunity for

passengers to benefit from not only a new station but one that is sustainable, smart and easy to use."

Merton Council Cabinet Member for Regeneration Councillor Diane Neil Mills said: "We are proud that Network Rail has chosen Mitcham as a place to invest £6 million in building one of its pioneering modular, flexible and environmentally-sound stations. It's testament to the co-operation between all the partners and the interest from Mitcham residents over the years that the station is here today. The station will bring a lot of opportunity to Mitcham as it links the town to central London. I hope it will also draw business to the area especially now Mitcham can provide affordable office space such as The Generator Business Centre." Southern's Head of Franchise and Track Access contracts Dave Walker said: "We are delighted to be managing the first new station to

be built in South London in the last 60 years or so. This will provide a much needed additional facility for commuters and leisure travelers alike, linking Mitcham with central London."

MINISTER SEES RAIL FREIGHT FUNDING IN ACTION IN HULL

On the 10th June, Rosie Winterton MP, Minister of State for Transport, visited Hull Port, to see the final work of a £14.5 million project to more than double capacity on the rail freight line. This investment is part of the first scheme to be delivered by Network Rail under the Government's Transport Innovation Fund. The works have also received funding from The Northern Way and Yorkshire Forward.

Associated British Ports (ABP) has also invested £2.85m on its infrastructure.

Rosie Winterton said: *"I am delighted to visit Hull Port to see how TIF funding is delivering real benefits to business and supporting regional development. This train line improves the connectivity of ports throughout the Humber area strengthening its role as an economic driver for this region, the North and the UK as a whole."*

The Hull Docks capacity works are the first stage of a package of improvements designed to improve rail freight access to the ports at Hull and Immingham; bringing substantial economic and environmental benefits to the region.

The work involved:

- installing a brand new signalling system to replace the current token operated one, allowing for faster and freer traffic movement.
- doubling one mile of track to smooth the flow of traffic into the port.
- strengthening 15 bridges. removing one bridge entirely at Ella Street (involving closing a railway access road).
- strengthening one mile of embankment. major track and other works on the Hull river bridge.
- smoothing and realigning the whole six miles of track.
- installing a new double junction at Hessle Road where the freight line joins the passenger route to Hull

Neil Henry, route director for Network Rail said: *"Freight routes are vital in supporting the ports as they expand to meet international demand. This work is the first step to allow the ports at Hull and Immingham to continue to expand. Network Rail is delighted to be delivering this scheme which more than doubles the capacity of the Hull Docks Branch. Completion of this work in parallel with the Brigg line freight upgrade - which ends in late June - also marks the successful completion of the first key elements of the Humber Ports capacity freight programme."*

Pictured right are: R Terry Hodgkinson, chair, Yorkshire Forward Neil Henry, route director, Network Rail Rt Hon Rosie Winterton, Minister of state for Transport Matt Jukes, port director, ABP



CHOIR VISITS SOUTHEND VICTORIA STATION

National Express East Anglia's Southend Victoria station hosted a performance by the Singing Children of Africa last week, to the delight of customers and staff alike. Twenty four children between the ages of 8 and 16 sang for commuters as they passed through the station during the morning.

Lynda Stone National Express East Anglia's Group Station Manager for the Southend and Metro route commented: *'We all really enjoyed the performance. Customers and staff were clapping and joining in. It was a wonderful start to the day and brought a smile to our faces.'*

The Singing Children of Africa is the choir of the Samson Chivatsi Children's appeal which was established in 1998 by Maureen and Ian McIntyre after visiting a school in Kenya, whilst on holiday. They were so affected by the poverty, poor health and lack of facilities at the school that on returning to Scotland, Maureen set up the charity and sponsorship programme in the hope of giving the poorest children access to a good education. The charity was named after the first child that Maureen and Ian sponsored. It is now educating over 750 children in Kenya



KIDS GO FREE WITH STANSTED EXPRESS

Worried about rising fuel prices, traffic congestion, parking fees and kids shouting 'are we nearly there yet?', or worse still fretting that you may even miss your flight – words and thoughts that fill many parents with sheer dread.

Going to Stansted Airport? Ditch the car, take the train, and walk directly into the airport terminal on time saving money on the way.

To help families get their summer holiday off to a flying start by arriving at the airport in comfort, on time and stress-free, train operator Stansted Express is running a great online summer promotional offer where 'Kids go FREE'. A return ticket for a family of two adults and two children costs just £48. The promotion runs from 1 June through to 30 September 2008 for return travel from London Liverpool Street to Stansted Airport.

Derek Noakes, Business Director at Stansted Express, said: *"Travelling to Stansted Airport by train and virtually straight to check in*

definitely offers families many advantages over the car, not least time, cost and ease of travel. I am sure our Kids go

FREE summer promotion will prove very popular with families. And we know how kids just love trains, so it's sure to start the holiday off right".

Freightliner Group Ltd announces that it has been acquired by Arcapita

Freightliner Group Ltd has announced that it has been acquired by Arcapita, an international investment firm based in Bahrain, for an undisclosed sum, and subject to clearance by the European Commission. Arcapita will acquire Freightliner Group Ltd from its previous owners 3i, Electra Private Equity and Freightliner management and staff.

3i and Electra were the founder majority shareholders of Freightliner at privatisation in 1996.

Freightliner is a successful and growing organisation, with an excellent reputation for reliability and innovation in a demanding market. During 3i and Electra's ownership, Freightliner has expanded its activities to include the haulage of bulk freight as well as becoming the largest haulier of maritime containers in the UK. Furthermore, it has developed into Europe with an operational subsidiary in Poland. During 3i and Electra's ownership, employment numbers have grown from 1095 to 1828.

The change of ownership will ensure that Freightliner can continue to invest in and develop its Intermodal and Heavy Haul businesses, and enhance its international activities. The operating companies, executive directors, management and staff, will continue with little change to lead the company in the future. All existing contractual relationships, including contracts of employment and pensions will remain unaltered by the change of structure.

3i and Electra are pleased with the development of their investment in Freightliner and say that Freightliner's management have delivered an exceptional performance by concentrating on the efficient delivery of customer focussed rail based logistic services.

Arcapita are pleased to have the opportunity to back the highly professional management team at Freightliner, and their plans for continued growth of the Group.

"I see this as the next stage in the development of Freightliner. 3i and Electra have been very supportive partners, enabling the business to grow into the market leader it is today" said Eddie Fitzsimons, Chief Executive of Freightliner Group Ltd. "We look forward to the next stage of development in our existing businesses and emerging overseas activities. Freightliner Group has been very successful in a competitive market place, we have a clearly developed business strategy and investment plans remain in place, therefore, it is very much, business as usual".

CLACTON STATION BURSTS INTO FLOWER

On Friday 20 June National Express East Anglia invited students of Ravenscroft Primary School to plant up a flowerbed at Clacton-on-Sea station. The children enjoyed planting a selection of sustainable plants, alongside a few seasonal ones such as Lobelia, Sweet Williams and Geraniums.

The initiative was the idea of National Express East Anglia Duty Station Manager Mark Tye who commented: *'I really want the wider community to take an interest in the station. By inviting Ravenscroft Primary School to plant up the flowerbed, they have not only contributed to making the Station a brighter more welcoming environment, but they have also contributed to the town's efforts in the Anglia-in-Bloom competition.'*

This flowerbed is the final part of a new planting scheme at Clacton Station, which includes standard Bay trees, alongside Heathers, Ivy, seasonal bedding plants and additional shrubs for all year round interest. Mark Tye, his team and community volunteers have been going to great lengths to create floral displays at stations along the Clacton line, including Alresford, Wivenhoe, Bentley, Thorpe-le-Soken, Frinton and Walton-on-the-Naze.



LATEST IMPROVEMENT WORK ON SETTLE – CARLISLE LINE

The latest phase of work to upgrade the famous 72 mile Settle to Carlisle railway line begins at 9.35 pm on Saturday 5 July. Train services will be replaced by road transport to allow Network Rail to continue with its five-year, £60m programme of track improvements. The line reopens at 5.45 am on Monday 21 July. Old jointed track at four separate work sites will be replaced with continuously welded rails to bring it up to the latest standards and give passengers a much smoother, quieter ride. These new rails also mean less wear and tear on the trains using the line.

The four sites are Aisgill, Grisedale, Dent and Stainforth, where a total of nearly seven miles of new rail will be laid on 9,600 sleepers embedded in 24,000 tonnes of ballast (the grey stone chippings that the track sits on). There will also be earthwork in the Blea Moor area.

ROYAL WELSH SHOW SPECIAL TRAIN

Arriva Trains Wales is again running a special train to the Royal Welsh Show which takes place from 21 to 24 July. The train will depart from Cardiff Central station calling at Bridgend, Port Talbot, Neath and Swansea and travel via the Heart of Wales line to Builth Road rail station. Other timetabled services will operate as normal.

The price for the rail fare is £18 return from Cardiff and normal Railcard and child discounts apply. For visitors to the show arriving by train, a discounted bus and admission ticket is available from Arriva Trains Wales that allows travel to and from the showground plus admission.

Arriva puts out tender for coaching stock.

Arriva has plans for a high speed, high quality service from Holyhead.

A tender document has apparently been circulated by Arriva Trains Wales - seeking loco hauled stock either Mk.2 or Mk.3 for at least 1 or 2 Brake Firsts, 2 to 4 Standard class stock and at least 1 first class buffet vehicle. The tender refers to a 'high speed service in Wales'

Government backs rail freight and rejects superlorries on Britain's roads

EWS, Britain's largest rail freight operator, strongly supports the decision taken recently by the Secretary of State for Transport Ruth Kelly MP not to permit the introduction of longer and heavier lorries onto the road network in Britain.

Research for the Department for Transport concluded that longer and heavier lorries would increase CO2 emissions due to freight shifted from rail to road, creating serious implications for the management of the road network. The research also recognised that these longer vehicles would be unsuitable for many roads and junctions, as they would introduce additional safety risks to the road network. The decision underlines the view that rail freight is seen by Government as an essential transport mode to help reduce CO2 emissions. Freight trains emit five times less CO2 per tonne km than road haulage.

Graham Smith, EWS Planning Director, said: *"EWS strongly supports the decision by the Government to reject the operation of longer and heavier lorries on the road network. The decision firmly places rail freight as the key low-carbon and high volume transportation mode of choice for British industry. EWS is doing its part and working with British industry to increase the use of rail freight transport."*

Mr Smith continued: *"Freight by rail has grown by nearly 70% in the last twelve years and its market share of land hauled freight has increased by 3.5%. Government, the rail industry and its customers expect 50% growth by the middle of the next decade and a doubling of rail freight in the longer term. Increased costs from road congestion and fuel, and a need to use a transport mode that reduces CO2 emissions, feature in the decision making of customers to make more use of rail freight."*

A MORE PLEASANT AND WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT FOR RAIL PASSENGERS AT NEEDHAM MARKET

Train operator National Express East Anglia has given Needham Market station a new lease of life following a redecoration programme.

The work was undertaken in-house by the train operator's rural buildings team over a number of weeks. The skilled work necessitated great attention to detail, including the architectural details on the decorative Victorian iron work of the canopy columns. In addition to this, the fencing, windows and doors were also all repainted, together with extensive redecoration of the passenger subway and steps to improve the lighting levels in the subway. The redecoration and maintenance programme has benefitted customers by making the station a lighter, brighter and more pleasant place. The work has really rejuvenated the station, where trains call on an hourly frequency serving both Ipswich and Cambridge.



Anita Miles, National Express East Anglia's Group Station Manager for the Rural Route commented: *'The redecoration work at Needham Market has made a real difference to the station. It has really rejuvenated the station environment and enhanced the experience of our customers when they visit. The station has been given a new lease of life.'*

Wrexham & Shropshire honours local railway hero

Wrexham & Shropshire has paid tribute to David J Lloyd, a prominent figure in Shropshire's rail history and founder of the Shrewsbury Chester Rail Partnership, by naming a locomotive after him in a special ceremony at Gobowen station.

Richard Harper, Wrexham & Shropshire's Commercial Manager, said: "I am delighted that one of our trains will be named after David J Lloyd. I first met David in the mid 1990s when he was campaigning for rail improvements as there was only one train every two hours through Gobowen. He was an enthusiastic supporter of the railway and it was no surprise that he was one of the first to telephone and offer his support when we announced plans for the Wrexham & Shropshire service."

Ceinwen Lloyd, David's daughter, and Emma Lloyd, his widow, joined Andy Hamilton and Richard Harper from Wrexham & Shropshire to unveil the name. The ceremony was part of local community rail day celebrations attended by over 100 people. Richard Harper continued: "The team at Wrexham & Shropshire was deeply saddened when David died. He was very keen to see the launch of a London service and we regret that he cannot be here today to share in the experience. It therefore seemed fitting to honour him by naming one of our locomotives so that his memory will live on."

Wrexham & Shropshire recently launched a competition across Wrexham, Shropshire and Telford giving schools along the line a chance to name the remaining 3 locomotives. Winners will be contacted shortly and will attend a special naming ceremony before taking their tickets to board one of Wrexham & Shropshire's trains to London.



Pictures with a Different View



Left: A Close up view of one of Class 334 002's six passenger door cameras which are linked up to monitors in the drivers cab for the driver to look at who is boarding and alighting the train at station. This is a safer method than the driver getting up out of his/her seat to look out the side window to see who is boarding and alighting the train.

Right: Looking through the 'O' on the 20MPH speed sign to the West End Yard at Yoker Depot where Class 320 and Class 334 EMU's can be seen. *Both: Jonathan McGurk*



Left: A picture looking through the two drivers side doors which were open at Glasgow Central High Level station (probably to let some air into the drivers cab because of the hot weather). The side doors are looking through to a Virgin West Coast Pendolino which is seen sitting at Platform 1 in the station on the 14th June.

Jonathan McGurk

Right: An old gradient post is seen hiding in the foliage on on behind platform 4 at Dalmuir station on the 6th June.

Jonathan McGurk

Below: I'm sure that there is a good reason for putting this sign upside down, but it makes an interesting photo anyway.

Class47









Top Left: Great Western “King” 6024 runs round its train at Bridgenorth, Severn Valley Railway on the 15th June.

Richard Hargreaves



Top Right: Another Great Western loco, this time Prairie 4566, is seen arriving at Bridgenorth with a service from Kidderminster on the 8th June.

Richard Hargreaves

Right: This line-up of steam locos round the turntable, was seen on the occasion of the Tyseley 100 open day, on the 28 June.

Class47







The Keighley and Worth Valley Diesel Gala had quite a few visiting loco's this year. As well as a pair of Class 37's on the previous page, there was:

Top Left: Class 20 110 stands with another member of the class at Haworth. Top Right: The NRM's Class 52 D1023 is started up for the day.

Bottom Left: Class 31 108 from the South Devon Railway put in a good performance. Bottom Right: Another view of D1023 as it departs Keighley in true Wizzo style. *All: Class47*







Don't Forget The GWR's Summer Diesel Gala

****Now also starring Class 47 701****

**SUMMER
DIESEL
GALA!**

**Gloucestershire
Warwickshire
Railway**

Friday 4 to Sunday 6 July

**Featuring D8137, 24081,
37215, 37324, 47105,
73129 and VISITING
Class 31, 5580!**

All locos subject to availability



Includes visiting Class 31, 5580



**High mileage available with trips to Cheltenham
as well as shuttles to Winchcombe!**

Timetable and loco roster available shortly from the GWR website.

**Includes a bus rally on the Sunday! Many vehicles on display and
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Above:
The Paignton and
Dartmouth's Class
25 D7535 is pictured
shunting the stock for
a private charter at
Paignton on the 21st
June.

Richard Hargreaves

C58LG

CLASS 58
LOCOMOTIVE
GROUP

The Class 58 Locomotive Group was formed in 2001 with the aim of one day preserving at least one of these fine machines. As this day draws ever nearer, we invite YOU to join us. Membership costs just £10 per year and in return, you will receive quarterly copies of our in-house magazine *Red Diamond* as well as invitations to Group activities. Thank you for your support!



For more information on the Class 58 Locomotive Group, please write to: C58LG, 107 Woolaston Avenue, Cardiff, CF23 6EW, e-mail c58lg@tiscali.co.uk or visit our website at www.c58lg.co.uk where an online membership application form can be found.



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY
LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

“MAIL BY RAIL” GALA DETAILS

26th and 27th July 2008

Last run for vintage wooden bodied Gresley post office carriages
Railway Vehicle Preservation Ltd chalks up 40 years

A feast of steam and diesel traction will thundering down the Great Central main line in charge of the famous ‘non stop postal drop’ train. Up to six locomotives will power an intensive service of passenger and freight trains with up to four demonstration postal drops taking place on Saturday and Sunday.

It will be on occasion of mixed emotions for the group who look after the mail train, Railway Vehicle Preservation Ltd. This year marks their 40th birthday, during which time they’ve won many awards for their high quality restoration work. However, their wooden bodied Gresley mail carriages will retire from active service immediately after the gala.

“This isn’t the end of the mail train” said RVP Chairman Darren Martin “far from it. We’ve recently acquired three new Mk1 style post office carriages. They will go with our established Mk1 exchange vehicle to form a new demonstration train. However, the Gresley set complete with its famous postal museum will now be saved for best and will need a comprehensive restoration to handle the rigours of a full mail train run. We wouldn’t rule it out in future though...”

Gala visitors will be able to see behind the scenes at Rothley carriage works to see the restoration work being carried out by RVP on their vehicles. RVP are also behind the project to relay a short section of the former mineral line which branched off from the GCR at Swithland Sidings.

Remarkable progress towards clearing the trackbed of the branch ready for relaying has been made. While it’s too early to allow visitors to access the branch itself, the Rothley display should help to tell the story.

Meanwhile the recently restored 1937 observation saloon should be on passenger trains allowing travellers a great view of passing trains on the Great Central Railway’s unique double track network. RVP own a sister carriage which is also being restored. “The group celebrates it’s 40th birthday this year” concluded Darren “and we hope to form a Saturday night special of all of our restored vehicles for a round trip to Leicester North. It’s a way of thanking and remembering all of those who have put in so much hard work on our collection down the years.

“We’re proud of RVP’s achievements, said GCR president Bill Ford, “and this gala is about saluting them and providing a good send off for the wooden bodied mail vehicles. They’ve been real stars of the GCR in preservation. Having said that, the sight of four immaculately restored Mk1 vehicles lining up for the new mail train is really something to look forward to!”

Full gala details including times, fares and the precise motive power line up will be available soon on the Great Central Railway website.

FAIRBURN 2-6-4T NO. 42085 TO VISIT THE GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY IN 2008/2009



Lakeside and Haverthwaite Fairburn tank No. 42085 is leaving its Cumbrian home this summer to travel 170 miles south by road for an 11-month visit to the Great Central Railway.

BR-built No. 42085 (Brighton, 1951) was due to move by road from Haverthwaite to the Great Central on Tuesday 17th of June and will remain at Loughborough until June 2009. The 2-6-4T will undergo a seven-month light repair by Loughborough Standard Locomotives Group volunteers, with assistance from the GCR’s full time engineering staff. LSLG Director and volunteer Andy Fillingham will lead 42085’s repair programme.

Due to be completed in January 2009, this repair will be followed by five months as a working engine on the GCR’s 8 mile, part double track main line to Leicester North. No. 42085 will return by road to the LHR in June 2009 – the LHR insists that there will be no visits elsewhere by 42085.

GCR President Bill Ford said, “We are naturally delighted to be welcoming a Fairburn Tank to Loughborough. This visit followed a chance conversation between GCR Director Nigel Harris and LHR Director Stephen Maher, who spent their early teens, from 1973, as volunteer cleaners, firemen, and finally drivers, on the LHR. Stephen was impressed by the quality of the work on 78019’s tender, and the N2 tanks. We all agreed it made sense that the easiest place to replace the tanks was Loughborough. The repair programme with Loughborough Standard Locomotive Group and five months running flowed from there. I would like to add my personal thanks to everyone involved in the partnership deal.”

WORK INVOLVED - No. 42085 needs new side tanks, to be designed by LSLG Director and GCR fireman Chris Reed, and fabricated by Standen Engineering, at Ely, Cambridgeshire. This company previously manufactured the tender tank, cab, boiler lagging plates and running boards for LSLG’s BR Riddles Class 2MT 2-6-0 No. 78019, new side tanks for Gresley Society ‘N2’ 0-6-2T No. 69532 and the tender tank for Bolton Steam Locomotive Company BR Standard Class 5 4-6-0 No. 73156, all based on the GCR all to a high standard.

The tanks will be of all-welded construction, with dummy rivet heads on all visible platework, to maintain the original appearance. All filler caps, handrails and other reusable brackets and fixtures will be salvaged and re-used.

No. 42085 is one of a unique pair of Fairburn 2-6-4Ts (the other is 42073) which have been based entirely on the LHR since being transferred there by rail from Steamtown, Carnforth, in 1970, shortly before the Lakeside branch was severed from the national network. Neither 2-6-4T has made any working visits elsewhere in the 38 years since, although 42085 visited Steamtown for repairs in the 1980s.

GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY OPENS NEW TEA ROOM

Visitors to the Great Central Railway now have a new place to unwind, relax and enjoy some refreshments. At the award winning (and haunted) Rothley station, a derelict Victorian store shed has been fully restored and converted into a quality tea room.

The tea room has been called “Ellis’s” after the building it’s in. It was built in 1899, when the Great Central Railway was opened. Local firm Joseph Ellis and Sons Ltd. used it to store Corn and Coal, ready to be collected by wagons and sent around the country by train. The building fell out of use well before the GCR was preserved but has now been fully restored and carefully converted.

LONG LOST MOUNTSORREL RAILWAY BRANCH LINE REBORN

*Generous donation of ballast from Quarry company gives boost to track laying
Community involved with rebuild project – school children set to recreate Edwardian day out*

Coming soon to the Great Central Railway, 900 metres of brand new track! A former branch line which once carried millions of tons of stone from a local quarry is being partly re-laid. The project is being undertaken jointly by the GCR and resident group Railway Vehicle Preservation Ltd. The branch line ran north east from the Great Central Railway's Swithland Yard towards the village of Mountsorrel. It was built at the same time as the main line, opening in 1899. It fell out of use in the 1950s, the track was taken up in the 60s and the route abandoned - until now! The Quarry it served is still operating, taking it's stone out by a conveyor belt over another branch line formation. Working at weekends, volunteers have cleared the 900 metres and thanks to a generous donation of ballast from the Quarry itself, track laying is due to start soon.

Heading up the project for the GCR and RVP Ltd is Mountsorrel resident Steve Cramp. He said, "We're very grateful to Lafarge Aggregates, who operate the quarry for agreeing to donate 2000 tons of ballast. This will form a bed for the re-laid railway to sit upon. Naturally it's exciting to have the support of a major company and the fact the line used to serve their quarry makes an interesting connection with the past as well."

The new railway will add another aspect to the GCR, demonstrating how freight trains used to arrive in Swithland Yard from the quarry, their wagons ready for shunting, so the stone could be sent onwards by train across the country. The local community have become involved in the rebuilding with even a group of school children helping to clear the overgrown route. Steve continued, "There are important educational aspects to the branch, hence the tie up with schools. Village life was very different a century ago. Some Mountsorrel children, from the age of just nine, would work in the Quarry pushing wagons around. Rebuilding the branch provides an illustration not just of railway operation but rural life. It wasn't all hard work though. Once a year, the Martin family who owned the quarry opened the doors of their house to entertain families. Children would ride in the wagons, pulled by steam engine to get there!"

Community support for the project doesn't end with the clearing of the trackbed. Three wagons at the Great Central are due to be repainted by local groups into the colours of the Mountsorrel Granite Company. An original vintage engine which ran over the branch line still survives and it's planned to eventually recreate an original train from the branch and arrange for school children in period costume to pose with it!

The GCR also hopes on special occasions to provide the chance for visitors to ride over the branch line, albeit in carriages – not wagons! Tim Deal, Senior Planning and Estates Manager for Lafarge Aggregates said, "We've been impressed with the work done so far to clear the original route of the branch line. It's good to be able to support this Great Central Railway project. As a major Leicestershire employer, we take pride in getting involved with the community. It just so happens the stone, which once was carried over the railway, will now go underneath it to help in the rebuild."

The branch line trackbed continues beyond the 900m section being restored, as far as Bond Lane on the outskirts of Mountsorrel. Lafarge Aggregates and the Great Central Railway are working in partnership to clear this further section of vegetation. The total length of the line is 1.8km (1.2 miles). Steve concluded, "Restoring this lost branch line has turned into a genuine cross community activity with local schools and the Rothley Youth Group, besides the GCR, RVP and the welcome support from Lafarge Aggregates. Tracklaying should begin later this year and will progress as volunteer support and re-sources permit. I'd be delighted to welcome any assistance. There are a number of jobs which can be done from home even if you can't spare the time to get involved with the physical reconstruction."



Class 47 292 at the Great Central (North) Diesel Gala [David Dawson](#)



The East Somerset Railway & Mendip Rail/Bardon Aggregates a special Quarry Gala Weekend on the 21/22nd June. This was to commemorate 150 Years since the opening of the East Somerset Railway between Witham and Shepton Mallet in 1858. The East Somerset Railway got together with neighbouring Mendip Rail (Merehead).

Top Left: Class 08 643 catches a little sun at Merehead. [Derek Elston](#) Top Right: Livery variations with Class 66 623, 66 731, 59 202 & 59 102. [Derek Elston](#)

Bottom Left: New liveried Class 60 040 "The Territorial Army Centerery" in DB Schenker livery. [Julian G](#)

Bottom Right: Class 37 901, 37 906 & 50 049 represent past traction seen at Merehead. [Derek Elston](#)





Left: EN57 - 1216 Departing Lazy Station with a Katowice to Częstochowa service on the 13th June . The unit is departing from a station spelt Lazy but pronounced Woozy. Polish is a strange language!.

Bottom Left: M62-1478 Stabled at Rail Polska's Oswiecim Depot. Note. The variation of EWS livery, Rail Polska is owned by Ed Burkhardt who used to own EWS, hence the similar livery.

Bottom Right: ST44-2016 and ST44-2020 waiting in Guchow Yard for the line to re open after engineering work. These ST44 loco's are Russian built broad gauge locos. They are used on the Russian built broad gauge line to transport Steel and Sulphur from the Ukraine to the City of Katowice. The line is single track with numerous passing places. The engineering work takes place during the day and the trains don't usually start running until 18.00.

All: Steve Madden





Above: 311D - 16
Approaching Trzebinia with
empty fuel tanks on
the 9th June.



Left: ST 44 - R010 and Tem
2 - 017 passes Naklo with a
loaded coal train from Pikary
Slaskie Yard on the 10th June.
Tem 2 - 017 was seen earlier
in the day with flames coming
from the engine's bonnet.

Both: Steve Madden



Above: In 1980, the Christmas / New Year Period saw many trains operating on British Rail - there was not the complete engineering work shut downs in those days, which happens today in our "privatised railway".

There was still plenty of variety for the enthusiasts and here I captured on camera, the low winter sun shining side-on to 47 063 as it powered the 10.59 Truro - Birmingham New Street (Additional) up the gradient at Ashley Hill north of Bristol on 27th December 1980.

David Mead

Left: On the 19th September 1970, D1037 Western Empress passes through on the centre up line at Newbury. Specials were and probably still are coded as "Z" trains and in those days the display codes were clearly visible on the front of the locomotives. Signal boxes were still manual and the large displays were vital for signalmen to check the service as it passed from section to section.

David Mead



Above: Raven 0-8-0 Q6 63455 is seen at Tyne Dock Shed on the 25th July 1967.

David Mead



Top Right: Another Raven Q6, this time it is 63407 seen at West Hartlepool also on the 25th July 1967.

David Mead

Bottom Right: Class 03 D2271 is seen at Minehead on the 5th June 2004.

Jon Jebb





Top Left : Hymek D7017 awaits departure from Minehead on the 5th June 2004.

Jon Jebb

Top Right: D1036 Western Emperor calls at Newbury on the 19th Sept 1970 with the 06.45 Plymouth - Paddington service. The majority of the passenger trains on the Great Western main lines during the 1970's were worked by Class 52's, providing unique power to the routes. The clear headcodes were a means of identifying the trains and were prominent of the Class 52's.

David Mead

Left: High Speed Trains still operate today between London Paddington and Penzance, and remain the fastest diesel powered unit trains in the world. Only the liveries of the trains have changed! Here 253.026 arrives Reading on 7th December 1980 with the 10.05 Paddington - Penzance in the BR corporate blue and grey which the trains were associated with during their British Rail reign.

David Mead



Summer has arrived, to the delight of the south west, with the annual influx of HST's in different liveries, working additional services for CrossCountry. [Liam](#)