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Railtalk Magazine



Y Gerallt Gymro - the One Wales Express

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Submissions

If you have every wanted to submit pictures to a magazine, here is your chance.
 Send us your news and pictures to email:
 entries@railtalk.net

When do we publish

Railtalk Magazine is published on the last Sunday of each month.

More information can be found by visiting Railtalk forums.
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From the editor....

Welcome to Issue 28 of Railtalk Magazine. Can I start this month by saying how delighted we are with this month's photo's sent. A very big thanks to every one of you, it really is appreciated that you send in so many good shots every month.

I am starting 2009 with a big rant, there is a huge great chip on my shoulder and it's name is Customer Service. This in many TOCs eyes doesn't exist. Here are three examples:

Firstly, a visit to Crewe and the Virgin staff who completely ignored some passengers, wandered off and into their office. This was not just one Virgin staff, but several of them.

Secondly, York Station where a National Express guard locked the train doors whilst they were trying to be opened. A couple had just run down the stairs to catch the train and the guard who saw them coming waited until the man's hand was a couple of inches from the handle and then locked it. This was pure badness by Nat Ex's staff. Mery Christmas to both those TOCs and there are probably more tales to be told. All these people will probably not travel by train again, why should they, with service like that would you.

Thirdly, is the obsession with Ticket Barriers, the latest station is at York and you can read about them here:
<http://york.greenparty.org.uk/news/90>

Another nail in the coffin for getting onto stations, but at least with barriers, the majority of station staff can bugger about as much as they like without being seen.

Rant over, hopefully if you enjoy reading the magazine as well as looking at the pictures then you will enjoy reading an article from our latest contributer. We wanted to have a view from an outsider, someone who is not an enthusiast, but can see trains for what they really are, a method of transportation. Have a read anyway, see what you think, and let us know your comments. <http://forums.railtalk.net>

As always thanks to everyone that has contributed to the magazine this month, in whatever way big or small. A big thank you to you!

Once again many thanks this month to:

Richard Hargreaves, Ian Furness, Carl Grocott, David Dawson, Jonathan McGurk, Dave Harris, Derek Elston, Peter Cheshire, David Mead, Brian Battersby, Steve Madden, Andrew Flusk, Steve Andrews, Gary S. Smith, John Coleman, David Hollowood, Yorkie, Julian Churchill, Jonathan Gill, JulianG, Craig Stretton, James Stoker, Steve Thompson, Paolo3, Tomas Kubovec, Conner Nolan, Petr Lux, Scott Turner and a big thanks to the Rail UK team for assisting in proof reading.

Andy Patten

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Front Cover: Class 57 315 stands at Chester on 8th December with one of the first runnings of "Y Gerallt Gymro - the One Wales Express".

Brian Battersby

Charter Scene

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This months round up of the British charter scene

Welcome to the December edition of Charter Scene, from Railtalk Magazine!

The aim of Charter Scene is to detail the monthly British charter scene, whether it be in the medium of pictures, reviews of railtours or of future notice of tours that are scheduled to take place. To contact us, please use the usual address to submit your railtour reviews, pictures and information of future tours. When submitting photos it would be appreciated if you could provide the location of the photos, the working and any relevant information regarding the charter in question.

charter.scene@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

What a brilliant month it has been for charters, there has been some nice sunny days and with plenty of Christmas specials, we have all really been spoilt for choice. Usual classes and a few rare turns this month, but we start with a shot from one of the UK's best photographers.



Left: Ex GWR 4-6-0 6024 'King Edward 1' seen here at Norton Fitzwarren as it storms away from Taunton with the outward Bristol to Kingswear 'Yuletide Torbay Express' on 6th December.
Jonathan Gill



Above: 5043 "Earl of Mount Edgecombe" is seen working 1274 Dorridge to Melton Mowbray passing Outwoods foot crossing, Hinkley, on 7th December. *Derek Elston*



Above: Another shot of the Earl, 5043 "Earl of Mount Edgecombe" storming at speed passed Frisby with 1274 Dorridge - Melton Mowbray on 7th December. *Derek Elston*



Above: Hastings DEMU no. 1001, formed as a 5-car train, stands at Folkestone Harbour station on 21st December, after arriving with a Christmas Tour from Hastings and London Victoria, organised by Hastings Diesels Limited and The Remembrance Line Association Limited. *Craig Stretton*



Above: Class 40 145 and 57 601 seen heading south through Winwick Junction on the 5th November, in preparation of their weekend railtour. *Dave Harris*

Below: Class 40 145 works 1Z40 Shrewsbury - Lincoln passed New Mills Jct. on 6th December, Class 57 601 is on the rear. *Carl Grocott*



Above: The star of the show, Class 40 145 arriving on the appropriately headcoded 1Z40 from Shrewsbury. *Steve Thompson*

Below: Upon arrival at Lincoln, the Class 40 was dragged back through the station so the whole train could be turned for the return journey. *Richard Hargreaves*





Above: Unsung hero of many tours, Class 57 601, just gets on with the work, tour after tour. Seen here hauling the empty stock of the Class 40 charter through Lincoln on the 6th December. *Richard Hargreaves*

Below: Class 67 005 on the rear of 5Z27 negotiates the realigned Pelham Street Junction, Lincoln, en route to Barnetby, where the train was stabled and made ready for the return. *Steve Thompson*



Above: On the weekend of the Lincoln Christmas Market, East Midlands Trains provided additional services in the form of HSTs. This is 43 061, the former "City Of Lincoln" leading 1T47 from Nottingham into Lincoln. On the other end was 43 045. *Richard Hargreaves*

Below: Class 67 006 arriving at Lincoln with 1Z27 from Ealing Broadway. *Steve Thompson*





Left: Class 67 005
'Queens Messenger' seen on
the 5th December at Bedford St
Johns working 1Z78 Euston to
Lincoln, for the Christmas
Market. *Steve Madden*



Right: On 13th December, "The
Chester Yuletide Express" ran
from Mill Hill Broadway -
Chester. The train was worked
to Chester by Steam 45407.
Class 67 021 waits with the
ECS and will work the
return journey.
Richard Hargreaves



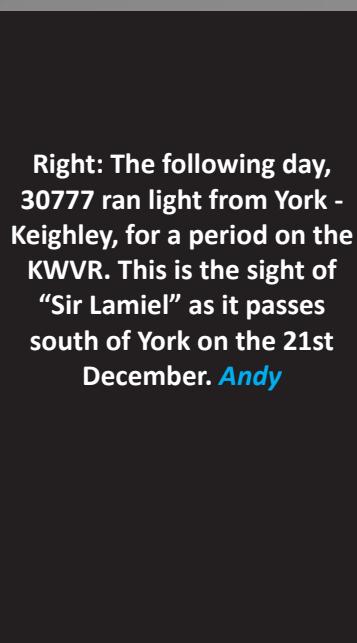
Left: Here is a very rare shot of
the Royal Train on the
Midland Mainline.
It was used to take the Queen to
Leicester for a Royal visit,
and is seen here at Bromham
running ECS back to Wolverton
on 4th December.
Steve Madden



Above: "The Christmas Heart of Midlothian" tour on the 20th December ran from Huddersfield to Edinburgh and featured a Class 47, Class 37 and Steam loco 30777. This is Class 47 760 working the return leg from Edinburgh - Huddersfield. [Andy](#)



Above: "The Christmas Heart of Midlothian" had Class 37 706 dit on the rear. This is the sight of the loco on the rear as it passed through Leeds. [Class47](#)





Above: On two consecutive Sundays in December, The Railway Touring Company ran a "York Yuletide Express" from Liverpool to York and return featuring Stanier Black Five class locomotive, No 45407 "Lancashire Fusilier."

This picture was on the first Sunday, 14th December, as the train passes Copmanthorpe. [Andy](#)



Above: On the rear of the service on both weekends was a West Coast Class 47. [Class47](#)

Below: This was the sight on the second Sunday, 21st December, as the train was just north of Church Fenton station. [Andy](#)





Left: A4 Class no. 60007 "Sir Nigel Gresley" arrives at Redhill working a London Victoria - Oxford Cathedrals Express on 11th December.

Craig Stretten



Left: Battle of Britain class no. 34067 "Tangmere" takes on water at Folkestone West while working a London Victoria - London Victoria Steam Dreams Luncheon Circular, routed via Tonbridge, Canterbury West and Dover on 22nd December.

Craig Stretten



Above: Class 60 004, waits for the road away from Parbold, before returning with the return working of 'The Lancs Links', 13th December. *David Dawson*

Top Left: Class 60 004 took the train 1Z43 back to Crewe Basford Hall, missing out Gresty Curve, which it was booked to take. It is seen here backing onto the train for the departure, late in the afternoon of December 13th. *David Hollowood*

Bottom Left: Class 66 957 worked into Southport with the Ealing Broadway to Southport 1Z33 Pathfinders tour. It is seen here at the stops. *David Hollowood*



Above: The final Compass tour of 2008 was on 6th December and saw Class 47 815 and 47 805 work 1Z76 Shrewsbury to Carlisle and return.

The train is pictured at Shrewsbury on the morning of departure.

Carl Grocott



Above: 1Z37 Pathfinder Tours Derby - Carlisle with Class 56 312 "Artemis" leading class 67 020, as it roars through the S&C countryside near Garsdale on the 29th December. [Andy](#)



Above: Another shot of 1Z37, this time 56 312 is just emerging from Shotlock Tunnel. [Class47](#)

Below: Class 56 312 1Z38 Carlisle - Derby pauses at Wellington on the evening of 29th December. [Richard Hargreaves](#)





Above: Western D1015 "Western Champion" stands at Great Yarmouth, after arriving with Pathfinder Railtours' "The Great Eastern Western Railtour" from Swindon and London Liverpool Street on 20th December. *Craig Stretton*

GC pricing policies

Grand Central (GC) used to make a big deal of the fact that they did not sell Advance Purchase (AP) tickets and that the fare paid on board was always the cheapest fare, but over time that claim has been quietly dropped. GC calls their AP fares 'E-Tickets' and they are only available from the Grand Central Mobitix website, operated on behalf of GC by the trainline. Occasionally there will be special offers, but the rest of the time the price for a single AP journey is half the applicable walk-on return fare. So, for a passenger going out and back at peak time, the fare is identical to the fare paid on board; likewise if both journeys are made off-peak. In these cases it seems rather pointless. The only passengers who benefit are those mixing peak and off peak singles or travelling one way, but the discount is small (York - London saving £4.50 off peak; £9.50 peak). For such small savings, I'd rather buy on board than commit to an AP fare in advance. National Express East Coast (NXEC) simply has no competition from GC when it comes to AP fares.

I also noticed an error whereby the peak AP fare (£46.50) was being charged for the morning train to London and evening train from London during the Christmas period and also on Saturdays. Why would anyone pay £46.50 for an AP ticket, when they can pay £34 on board? GC say the error should be fixed by the time you read this.

Such mistakes are understandable but I do wonder if the management check their website regularly and, ultimately, it's a management decision not to fit in with the other Train Operating Companies (TOCs) and sell genuine AP fares that make the Mobitix tickets poor value.

GC and NXEC have completely different ideas over when 'peak' time applies. NXEC set the inter-available fares, which of course are valid on GC. An Off Peak ticket routed 'Any Permitted' cannot officially be used on the 08:04 GC departure from London (whether or not it is accepted is another matter!). But the (much cheaper) Off Peak ticket routed 'Grand Ctrl only' is valid on the 08:04. Meanwhile, the opposite applies into London. The 10:32 GC arrival into London is valid on Off Peak tickets but GC's own Off Peak tickets are not valid on that service.

ATOCA claims 'The new fare names describe when you can buy or use your ticket, making it easier for you to decide what ticket suits your journey.' Yeah, right!

FCC disjointed fares

A reader asked for advice on a journey from Peterborough to Brighton for a day return on a Saturday. We looked into this, and it appears First Capital Connect (FCC) have not 'connected' the Great Northern and Thameslink routes when it comes to ticketing! The only fares available are set by NXEC, the cheapest fare being £56.50. But splitting at St Pancras gives you a lower fare, by combining FCC only tickets, of £40. But, at only £3 more to get the flexibility of being able to use NXEC from Peterborough to London and that would seem better value for a shorter journey, giving a total of £43.

Splitting at Huntington is cheapest at £39 (cheaper still for Network card holders, of course!). FCC appear to be treating the routes as separate entities, but they've had over a year to get their act together now, and Southern have already integrated their fares with the Gatwick Express in less time than that (as detailed last issue).

Customers want to be able to turn up at their origin, state their destination and be given a good value ticket for the through journey. They don't expect to have to look into splitting tickets to get best value, and it seems especially daft that they have to do so for journeys where it is possible to use trains operated by one TOC for the entire route.

XC cause misery for Chiltern route passengers

Back in the July issue, we revealed how CrossCountry (XC) – now operated by the notorious bus company Arriva (shhh!!!) – were introducing draconian evening peak restrictions on Cheap Day Returns, now called Off Peak Day Returns, and morning peak restrictions on Off Peak returns. We also revealed how Richard from Banbury, when travelling to University, was incorrectly told by a member of XC staff that his ticket was not valid, when it was in fact perfectly valid as Chiltern set the fare.

XC threw a tantrum over this issue and demanded ATOCA hand the flow from Chiltern to them. Disappointingly, ATOCA's Schemes Committee agreed to this demand. XC applied their usual policies by both increasing these fares higher than inflation and set their draconian restrictions to this flow. For Richard from Banbury, his fare has increased from £9.20 (valid for return within a month) to a shocking £15.70 (returning same day), or potentially up to £26.20 to return at a later day.

Worryingly, XC could be on the warpath to win more flows from

other TOCs. Many flows are set by TOCs that operate out of London yet XC is the main carrier. If XC throws any more toys out the pram, and the spineless ATOCA cave in to their demands, these increases could become more widespread at the next fares change.

Railcard anomalies and easements

Bob from Christchurch wanted to travel to Winsford for the day with a Senior Railcard. Due to poor connections via XC, he purchased an Off peak ticket routed via London. As Christchurch is within the London and South East area, and Winsford is outside this area, the ticket is unrestricted between Christchurch and London. This presents an anomaly because a Senior Railcard cannot be used for travel wholly in the London and South East (LSE) area in the morning peak, so a ticket from Christchurch to London is a whopping £78.40! The Winsford ticket, which gives him 160 more miles travel, is only £60.55 with Senior discount. This is because a Senior Railcard can be used inside the LSE area if the journey extends beyond that area. If Bob ever wants to travel just to London at peak time, Ipswich would do the trick at only £43.45 and the 'main' portion of the ticket could be discarded. Bizarre, but true! On further investigation, Virgin publicly state that any railcard holder can use any Virgin train, yet some internal railway manuals claim that it is only "where Virgin Trains price the flow." I don't see how that is enforceable if it only appears in internal documents and the public are not made aware of it. Certainly, the online booking sites do not make any such distinction! Even if they did publicise this bizarre rule – which they wouldn't, for fear of receiving negative press for confusing people – it would be nigh on impossible for customers to check who sets the fare, and actually enforcing it on trains would be utterly impractical. Can you imagine guards checking who sets the fare for each ticket they come across on their Avantix machines? I certainly can't! And what about a journey such as Milton Keynes to London for a Senior railcard holder? Are they barred due to being wholly in the LSE area or are they welcomed by Virgin thanks to Virgin's railcard holders are always valid rule? It isn't made clear which rule trumps the other, but the trainline allows Y-P railcard holders (who don't have the LSE area rule) to use an Off Peak ticket on the 09:19 from Milton Keynes, but does not allow Senior railcard holders, which suggests that the more restrictive rule applies.

Vintage Trains Class 86 tour to Hatfield

This was actually a mini tour, the main tour was from Birmingham to Manchester. However when it was suggested that an add-on tour could be achieved using lay over time at Longsight, it was taken advantage of.

This was one of those pay on the day, and take a chance if you get a seat or not. Had the weather been more favourable then I'm sure that we would have not done this tour but gone lineside for a photo instead.



I have to say that I'm a big fan of the Class 86's and although the runs behind 259 when it was in Virgin livery must be numerous, it is still an 86!

Class 86 259 pulled the tour into Manchester Piccadilly, with Class 47 773, also from the Vintage Trains stable, ontime. From there everyone unloaded and I'm sure that many went into Manchester to do some Christmas shopping. The Class 47 took the stock for a brief visit to Longsight, where both locos were swapped round so that the 47 would now be on the back, against the blocks, and the Class 86 would be leading to Hatfield.



Upon arrival back at Piccadilly we boarded for the mini tour, travelling in a basic Mk2 TSO, we were amazed to see that the queue of people wanting to travel seemed never ending. The journey itself to Hatfield and return was a bit of a stagger, obviously plenty of recovery time had been built in.

To our amazement, even for the really bad weather, the number of people that were stood out at Hatfield waiting for us was large. Once the Class 86 had shut down in Hatfield station, the Class 47 was fired up for the return journey, again a bit of a stagger and we waited for ages just outside Guide Bridge for a TPE service to pass.



On the return journey to Manchester, Les Ross came round the train wishing us a Merry Christmas and thanking us for travelling with them. This man (in the shot above), certainly knows how to treat people on railtours.

So if you ever get chance to go on a "Vintage Trains" charter then do so, you won't regret it. Especially if it is one hauled by Class 86 259 "Les Ross".

Photos : Richard Hargreaves & Class47





Construction work has finally gone underway for the Shields T.M.D. extension which is part of the G.A.R.L. (Glasgow Airport Rail Link) Project.

The depot is needing to be extended and facilities modernised in time for the Glasgow Airport Rail Link opening itself and for the new Siemens Class 380 Desiro EMUs which are currently being built over in Germany at the Siemens train complex.

The extension includes a new maintenance shed, a new stabling yard area for the Class 380s and other rolling stock (but mainly for the Class 380s) and a train crew building. The extension also includes a brand new wheel lathe shed and new wheel lathe shed facilities which will not be built anywhere that can be seen in this photograph. The current wheel lathe shed will be demolished next year and the new wheel lathe shed will be built further up the depot (nearer Dumbrek station area of the depot) where a new wheel lathe will be in use as well as new wheel lathe facilities.

As you can see the O.H.L. masts and old track have been removed and new ballast has been laid in order to lay down the new tracks for the new stabling yard area.



Partick station is looking more modern day by day as the days go on. With the Interchange Project being over two and a half years late it should be fully complete by early 2009. This photograph was taken from the top of the new platform 1 waiting area looking down to the new station concourse and also looking down to the Glasgow Subway escalators. As you can see work is still taking place within the concourse area which should hopefully be complete by the start of next year.



DR 98906 and a classmate are seen sitting stabled inside the Shettleston C.E. Workshops stabling area while having a rest from R.H.T.T. (Rail Head Treatment Train) duties. The end of the R.H.T.T. working for the Argyle Line and North Clyde Electric Lines was on Wednesday 10th December 2008.



A general view of the old and disused Airdrie station signal box which is due to be demolished next year and replaced with a brand new platform and the foilage below, replaced with new track as part of the Airdrie - Bathgate (A - B) Project.

A look at the new Donnington Rail Terminal.

Richard Hargreaves



Above: In this first shot, you can see the reception road and storage sidings looking West with the Wrekin in the distance.



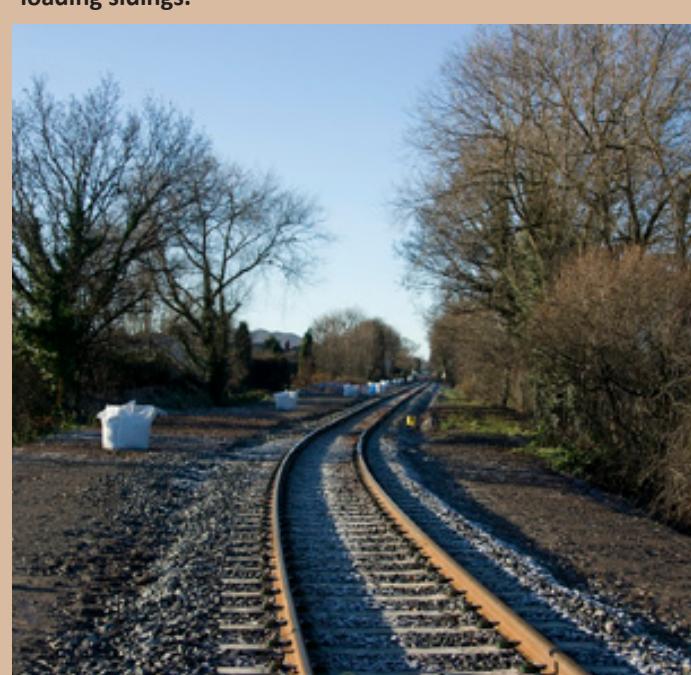
Above: Looking East with Lilleshall hill in the distance. The old MOD 2 road engine shed is also visible. These are the new loading sidings.



Above: This is the new fuelling point.



Above: This is the entrance to the complex as viewed from the foot crossing.



Above: This is the view out of the complex, down the mainline looking towards Wellington.



Above: Opposite side of the footbridge from where the first shot was taken. With the Wrekin still in the distance, it should be easy to follow.



Following the failure of 5029 "Nunney Castle" whilst working a steam charter the previous weekend, Tyseley dispatched Class 47 580 and 47 773 to drag the errant loco back home. This is the ensemble running as 5Z62 Shrewsbury Abbey Foregate - Tyseley passing Cosford on 4th December. *Carl Grocott*



Above: An attractive livery is that of Malcolm Rail Class 66 412, seen here passing through Crewe on the 29th December with a southbound service.
Richard Hargreaves



Left: Class 57 008 is seen running light engine passing through Carlisle station having come from the Carlisle Kingmoor D.R.S. depot. The locomotive's destination to myself was unknown but wherever it ended up hopefully there was a train wash to give the locomotive a good wash down. If you look closely you can see the train's identification on the leading end has been made from the dirt the train is covered in.
Jonathan McGurk



Christmas outing on Merseyrail

Three photos of Merseyrail's Christmas train, organised to take kids on an outing round the network and a visit to Santa included.

Class 507 019 and 507 008 were the units decorated out for this occasion.

The journey started at Rock Ferry, and continued to Hooton, where after a stopover, it returned to Rock Ferry.

Well done to Merseyrail for this event, and obviously taking the trouble when other TOC's wouldn't even bother.

All: Brian Battersby





Above: Diverted from its normal route via the Lickey incline, Class 66 141 approaches Shifnal station, Shropshire, on 6th December with the 6M60 Tavistock Junction - Bescot. Behind the loco were two Murco tanks.

Gary S. Smith

Top Right: A Virgin Voyager heads south, it is pictured here on 4th December just north of Penrith with a very snowy northern Lake District in the background.

David Hollowood

Bottom Right: Colas in Staffordshire: Class 47 727 passes Colton, north of Rugeley Trent Valley, on 22nd December with a 6Z47 Rugby OLE - Stafford Salop Sidings on-track plant move.

Gary S. Smith







Above: Class 66 126 hauls the 6O60 Mossend - Dollands Moor empty china clay silver bullet tanks and a failed 92034 at the rear of the train, through Winwick Quay on 3rd December. *Dave Harris*

Top Right: Class 60 044 passes Barnetby on empty Iron Ore from Santon to Immingham, 6th December.

Steven Thompson

Bottom Right: Class 57 008 on a move from MOD Bicester to Crewe with a nuclear flask two flat wagons and two converted MK2's which are used for carrying armed guards. This formation is used for a once a year working conveying Nuclear submarine waste.

This was the ECS move on 11th December.

Scott Turner





Left: Class 73 209 and 73 205 pass Sompting, near Worthing, West Sussex, working 6G30 Eastleigh Yard - Lovers Walk on 8th December, in connection with the demolition of the Pullman Shed at Preston Park, Brighton.

Craig Stretten

Above: Class 334 023 and Class 318 266 are both seen passing one another at night at Dalmarnock station. Also if you look at the signal visible in the photograph you can see that it changed from a red aspect to a green aspect. Class 334 023 is working the 21.01 Dalmuir - Larkhall service and Class 318 is working the the 21.07 Larkhall - Dalmuir service on 3rd December.

Jonathan McGurk



Above: A side view of Class 170 458 in First ScotRail branding whilst at platform 1, Glasgow Queen Street High Level, getting prepared to work a Sunday service to Cumbernauld. Class 170 460 is seen passing going into the tunnel while working a Sunday service to Alloa, on 7th December. *Jonathan McGurk*

Top Right: Class 66 085 works 6K99 Mount Sorrell - Crewe ballast at Lockington on 10th December. *Derek Elston*

Bottom Right: A side view of Class 320 303 in the snow at Airdrie station. The unit is getting ready to work the 14.27 2E59 Airdrie - Balloch service on 2nd December.
Jonathan McGurk





Above: Now it is possible that someone is having a laugh in the EMT planning department. The old timetable used to provide a 2 car Class 158 which regularly got to full and standing. However this modern single car Class 153 in new shiny vinyl can cope really well we are told.
This is 153 310 departing for Derby on the 29th December.

Brian Battersby

Top Left: D1748 "Great Western" framed by the under bridges at Warrington Arpley on 5th December.
Dave Harris

Bottom Left: Straight from front line service on the Dawlish sea wall, Class 142 028 has returned to the North West and was seen, along with other class mates at Manchester Piccadilly on the 20th December.
Class47





Top Left: The “One Wales” express has certainly filled our postbag this month. This first shot is of Class 57 315 (with 57 316 on the rear) working 1W91 Cardiff - Holyhead paused at Shrewsbury on 18th December. *Carl Grocott*

Top Right: Class 57 314 pauses at Chester on 8th December whilst working 1W91 to Holyhead.
Brian Battersby

Right: On the 29th December
Class 57 316 in unbranded plain blue livery
is seen at Chester on the rear of the same train.
Brian Battersby





Top Left: On 28th November, Class 57 305 passes through Shrewsbury with a driver training run in preparation for the start of services.

Richard Hargreaves

Bottom Left: Shrewsbury on 17th December and Class 57 316 was on the 16:17 Cardiff Central to Holyhead service. 57315 was leading.

Carl Grocott

Below: Still carrying its "Y Gerallt Gymro" (The Gerald of Wales) headboard, 57 315 leads 57 314 double-heading a 5V31 Llandudno Junction to Cardiff ECS on the curve near Condrover, north of Dorrington, Shropshire on 16th December. That morning's 1V31 Holyhead - Cardiff express, a service that is subsidised by the Welsh Assembly Government and had commenced the day before, was cancelled because of a derailed road-railer vehicle at Abergale.

Gary S. Smith





Top Left:

On a cold winters evening Class 507 006 pauses
at Capenhurst station whilst working a service to Chester.

Brian Battersby

Above:

The new Class 350/2's seem to be integrating well with the rest of
the fleet. This is 350 238 at Crewe working a service to Liverpool.

At the moment the new ones are recognisable by the
fact that the gangway doors are only half yellow.

Brian Battersby

Bottom Left:

Class 170 434 is seen sitting inside platform 7 in the new Transport
Scotland blue and white Saltire livery (the only unit in the new
livery) waiting to work the 18.42 1A87 Glasgow Queen Street High
Level - Aberdeen service on 6th December. *Jonathan McGurk*



Top Left: During December, several West Coast Voyagers were diverted between Crewe and Warrington, to run via Chester. This is 221 103 on the 13th December, at Chester, with a service to Birmingham New St. *Richard Hargreaves*

Top Right: EMT Class 222 001 and 222 011 stand in sunny Nottingham on 6th December.
Richard Hargreaves

Left: Class 508 141 waits to depart Chester on the 13th December. *Class47*

Below: Class 507 006 and 507 016 await their next duties at Southport station on the afternoon of December 13th. *David Hollowood*





Top Left: The impressive hump that gives this picture a different look is just north of Doncaster on the East Coast main line. This shot is of Class 37 069 and 37 605 on a Derby to Newcastle Serco working. [Class47](#)

Top Right: Network Rail MPV DR98909 approaches Shifnal, Shropshire on 6th December with the rail treatment train to Shrewsbury, unusually in daylight. [Gary S. Smith](#)

Bottom Right: Additional mail services ran during December, this is Class 325 008 leading a 12 coach service past Chorlton on the 11th December. [Brian Battersby](#)







Above: DRS Class 57 008 is pictured bringing a pair of Class 86's and some RHTT rakes from Crewe to York on 19th December. [Andy](#)



Top Right: The "cans" are not only back, but working!! East Coast Icebreaker Class 86 901 passes Copmanthorpe on the 29th December with a test run from York to Doncaster and return. [Class47](#)

Bottom Right: On the final Saturday of the 2008 RHTT calendar Class 66 007 is seen on the rear of a RHTT service working through Lincoln. [Richard Hargreaves](#)



Top Left: Class 37 069 works one of the final 3J97 Holyhead - Crewe RHTT passed Bagillt on 6th December. *Carl Grocott*

Top Right: Class 37 218 and 37 038 stand at Dungeness, Kent, prior to working the weekly 6M95 nuclear flask train to Willesden Brent on 17th December.
Craig Stretten

Bottom Left: Class 20 314 leads the returnee's from the Stowmarket RHTT season passed Colton Jct. on the 16th December. *Class47*

Bottom Right: As if Class 57 008 hasn't popped up everywhere this month, on the 13th December it was working a Crewe - Valley flask service. *Class47*





Class 60 No 60093 with the 6F80 Liverpool Bulk Terminal - Fiddlers Ferry power station passes Monks Crossing on the freight only line between Warrington Arpley and Fiddlers Ferry, on a rather sunny December 11th. *Dave Harris*



Top Left: In low winter sunlight, Class 66 053 passes under the new signalling gantries of Lincoln Central, with a train of coal empties bound for Immingham.

Richard Hargreaves

Top Right: Class 66 157 storms through Crewe on the 29th December with a coal train for Liverpool.

Brian Battersby

Bottom Left: Class 66 515 leaves Shifnal, Shropshire with the 6M55 Portbury - Rugeley Power Station on 6th December.

Gary S. Smith



Above: This shot was taken at Sutton Bonington, which was near journeys end for these 2 HST power cars. 43110 and 43051 are 2 of the remaining 4 National Express East Coast Valenta engined power cars. They were working from Neville Hill to Brush, Loughborough on 10th December. Ratcliffe Power Station is in the background. *Steve Madden*

Top and Bottom Right: On 28th November, Class 31 285 is at Glasgow Queen Street High Level station with DBSO 9701 at the rear while working a very late running 1Q21 Network Rail Test train. The train shortly departed the station heading towards Hyndland Loop where the train waited inside the loop for an hour. *Jonathan McGurk*





Top Left: Welcome back to “Sussex’s Porkers” at Victoria
Class 442 405 and 442 413 prepare to leave Victoria with
1600 to Gatwick on the 15th December.

Julian G

Top Right: Class 442 414 and 442 412 are about to leave
Victoria with 1615 to Haywards Heath, also on the
15th December.

These really are classy units and it is good to see them
back in service again.

Julian G

Botton Left: Class 66 163 is seen passing Lockington
working 6M28 Ipswich to Burton on Trent Intermodel
service on 10th December.

Steve Madden



Above: Early on a frosty 10th December, Class 67 025 with four cargo vans makes heavy work of 6N42 Warrington to Blackburn (Gilbraiths). Seen here at Pleasington
David Hollowood

Top Left: Class 91 126 and Class 37 605 both wait at Doncaster to see who will get the road north first.
Class47

Bottom Left: If Arriva have to be given credit for something since they took over XC, then it must be this. Long distance services run with trains built for such.
If only they had kept the buffet counters.
Class47



Top Left: Freightliners Class 66 559 rounds the curve at Shrewsbury on 28th November. This excellent view being taken from on the castle walls.

Richard Hargreaves

Top Right: Class 66 574 appears through the fog approaching Stafford with 4M45 Felixstowe - Basford Hall liner on 29th November.

Derek Elston

Bottom Left: This is the first refurbished FGW Class 143, seen here working 2K19, the 1154 Severn Beach - Bristol Temple Meads service on 22nd December.

Conner Nolan



On the 29th November Blackpool Tram 679 ran a farewell tour.

679's has said farewell to Blackpool for now, it is going to be rebuilt in to its original guise (as series 2 railcoach 279) in 2010.

Here we have 3 shots from a foggy seafront, both 679 and 304 operated between Tower and Thornton Gate for much of the day before 679 operated a full system tour. 304 was supposed to join 679 on this final tour but broke down near Bispham on the last run.

Richard Hargreaves

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. It can also be about whilst you are on a railtour or sampling the delights of on train catering.

This months highly recommended place is:



The Station Buffet Bolton Abbey Station

Always a warm welcome in this place, in winter a roaring fire will keep you warm and serves a wide range of drinks and snacks at very reasonable prices.

It can get busy at times of departure, but if you get there early enough and spend the day on the line, you can call in on a quieter moment after one of the trains has departed.

With Tea starting at just 80p a cup, don't miss this little gem of the Yorkshire Dales.

Thanks for this report to the editor and his assistant, I think that they like it!!

I hope that you have all had a Happy New Year and that we are all on the look out for some new "nosh" places.

There must be loads out there, so don't be shy, send them in!

Remember you can email me at :

steve.roberts@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

Stephen W Roberts

View from the Outside

Trains, trains, trains...a form of transport from A to B? Or honest, simple fun? Andy and his family took me to Embassy and Bolton Abbey railway this month, which is the second time this year (or should I say last year since it's now 2009)!

Yet again I loved it! Trains are not only a great way to get to different places, (when you can afford the unbelievable price of train fare that is!) but they are also a lot of fun especially the old fashioned steam trains at Bolton Abbey. Not only does Bolton Abbey have amazing steam trains for families to ride up and down on all day, but the stations also have all of the authentic bits and pieces that would have been there back in the olden days.

Old fashioned ticket booths, doors, fireplaces, signs, even Victorian style toilets! For anyone interested in history, trains and photography, this is an excellent place to visit.

Me, personally, have never really thought about photography too much...(apart from when I was little and wanted to be everything possibly imaginable when I got older of course...) however, this was a great spot for a train photographer like Andy, and a great way to add a little history to the pictures. I must admit that I don't have much of an idea of how to work Andy's professional camera, but he really inspired me by taking all of the pictures, and I actually ended up taking a few pictures of my own...whether they were good or not might be a different matter though. Taking pictures at Bolton Abbey thanks to a free entry ticket....priceless. Having £900 worth of camera equipment in my hand that a clumsy person

Megan Thomason

like me could have dropped however, this wasn't priceless.

The Inside of the steam train is, in my opinion just as picturesque as the outside and it was really interesting taking pictures of the steam heat inside of the train that was keeping the coaches warm, Andy and I could barely see as we walked through the train. It looked so smoky. I actually tripped over a corridor connection at one point as I couldn't see a thing, unfortunately for Andy, he didn't manage to catch it on camera, unlike the smashing picture of a class 31....which do you reckon would have been more appreciated? Or should I not say that since you all like trains so much? I shall rephrase the question by saying, which would have been more amusing? So, any people out there who want a good train day, mixed with fun for the family, Bolton Abbey is the place to go. Just don't fall over like I did....

TRAINS RUNNING THROUGH BRADWAY TUNNEL AGAIN

Rail services are once again running through Bradway tunnel after Network Rail completed an £11m improvement works on time and on budget.

The work, which was carried out in two phases, meant that the line between Sheffield and Chesterfield was partially closed from 8 September and re-opened early Sunday 14th December morning.

Kevin Preece, area general manager for Network Rail, said: "Our engineers have worked tirelessly to not only renew and improve the lining of the tunnel but also to completely replace the track. Combining the works like this means that passengers will have a safe and reliable railway for many years to come. It will reduce the need for intrusive maintenance and the track works should provide passengers with a smoother ride."

"The alternative travel arrangements which were in place have worked well and I would like to thank passengers for their patience during these essential rail improvement works."

Bradway tunnel was built between 1865 and 1868 and needed to be repaired and relined with concrete in several parts. When engineers began planning the work on the structure they discovered that the track was due for renewal in 2011/12 which would also require a closure of the tunnel. Following consultation with local groups and train operators, this was brought forward to coincide with the tunnel work, minimising overall disruption and keeping down costs.



David Young, South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive's Head of Passenger Integration, said: "It is great news for all passengers that this historic tunnel is now back in top condition and returning to service - just in time for the launch of new services from Nottingham to Sheffield, Barnsley and Leeds this week."

"Network Rail is to be congratulated for the first-rate job they have done in getting the work done on time. This will allow even more people to use the route soon."

CrossCountry wins rail award

'Silver Spanner' for award-winning train operator.

CrossCountry has won a prestigious rail industry award in recognition of the rail operator's trains being one of the most improved and reliable across the rail network.

CrossCountry, who operate a fleet of 29 Turbostar trains from Cardiff to Stansted Airport via Birmingham, Nottingham, Derby, Leicester, Peterborough and Cambridge, was awarded the coveted 'Silver Spanner' award at last week's annual 'Golden Spanner' ceremony organised by industry magazine, Modern Railways, which is an awards scheme aimed at promoting excellence in train maintenance within Britain.

Sarah Kendall, Production Director at CrossCountry said: "Since the start of our franchise in November 2007 the team at CrossCountry has worked with London Midland, our maintainer to take specific steps to improve reliability of our Turbostar trains. We are delighted to receive this nationally recognised award that acknowledges this improvement in performance."

"We are developing a programme of further modifications and changes to maintenance procedures to continue this improvement. Train reliability is vital for our customers and therefore of the highest priority for us."

As well as improved reliability, the Turbostar fleet has also benefited from a refurbishment to provide more seating and luggage space. There will be an overall increase of 500 seats across the Turbostar fleet.

The interiors are now brighter and more comfortable with re-upholstered seats, and new carpets and at-seat power sockets. There is also a new First Class area. The Turbostars were refurbished at the Clacton-on-Sea workshops of firm Transys Projects.

NATIONAL EXPRESS MARKS FIRST BIRTHDAY ON EAST COAST ROUTE

National Express East Coast marked its first birthday in December, with help from lucky competition winners and radio personalities at four of its stations on the East Coast Main Line.

Competition winners from four local radio stations helped commemorate the first anniversary of National Express winning the East Coast franchise at stations in Leeds, York, Newcastle and Edinburgh.

National Express East Coast ran the competitions to coincide with a bargain £5 standard advance fare offer to mark its first birthday. A minimum of 100,000 tickets were made available at this special price for one-way travel on selected dates in January and February, between key destinations served directly by its trains.

The winners, who had to answer a simple question relating to National Express East Coast's first birthday, took part in a photo shoot with staff and a specially made National Express train shaped cake at the stations on the route.

At Edinburgh, Forth 1 and 2 listener Marie Morton won First Class return travel for a family of four with National Express East Coast.

National Express East Coast deputy managing director Susan Goldsmith said: "We wanted to mark our first birthday by saying thank you to our customers, offering them a very special low-price fare.

"In our first year of operation, we have achieved so much and have delivered what we said we would to customers and stakeholders alike. There's always more to do but we are happy with the start we have made"

"Passenger numbers have also increased towards the 18 million mark and hopefully this offer may also encourage those who haven't travelled before with us to give us a try, leaving their car at home or taking the train instead of the 'plane."

The £5 promotional fares were available exclusively online via a dedicated web address, www.nationalexpress.com/birthday and went on sale on Friday, 5 December, until Monday, 15 December.

Customers taking advantage of the offer will also be able to use a special voucher to claim a £1 discount when buying a sandwich and a bottled soft drink or tea or coffee together on board the train.

Travel on the discounted tickets is available from January 5, 2009 until February 27, 2009. All discounted tickets are subject to availability.

PICTURE SHOWS: HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US .. Forth 1 and 2 competition winner Marie Morton with Edinburgh station staff Stevie Rudland and Andy Beveridge with a cake made specially to mark National Express East Coast's first birthday.



THE GATWICK EXPRESS COMES TO BRIGHTON!

On Sunday 14 December 2008, the ambition of the Department for Transport's Brighton Main Line Route Utilisation Strategy was realised, resulting in major changes to the Southern timetable across the network. Southern's detailed work to deliver the strategy will provide additional capacity on the busy Brighton Main Line by using the existing infrastructure and trains to maximum effect, to increase capacity for passengers. The overall result from December will be an increase in seats into London during weekday morning peak periods of almost 11 per cent.

The majority of these extra seats will be achieved through the extension of Gatwick Express services which will run from and to Brighton from Monday 15 December during the weekday morning and evening peak periods. Southern will be adding a new style of train to its fleet to provide the extension service – Class 442s.

Southern has now taken delivery of the first lot of these reconditioned trains that will be used. The interiors of the Class 442 trains have been redesigned with both commuters and airport passengers in mind. The trains offer generous luggage space, together with comfortable seating, and dedicated wheelchair spaces, while the new First Class accommodation conveys a sense of Inter City luxury. To begin with, two of the six extended services will have the reconditioned trains, and, shortly after, the remaining three reconditioned trains will be phased in as they become available.

Southern's managing director, Chris Burchell said: "This timetable change is the most comprehensive we've had to make over the past seven years of this franchise. It will deliver more seats for our customers and where they are needed most – into and out of London in the busy peak periods. I am sure our customers will appreciate all the planning and hard work that has gone into delivering more capacity across the network."

RECYCLING ON NATIONAL EXPRESS EAST COAST TRAINS WILL HELP CUT WASTE BY HALF

CUSTOMERS are to be encouraged to recycle on board National Express East Coast trains to help the company cut the amount of waste it generates by half. The train operator will trial recycling trolleys on selected services during February and March.

If the trial proves a success, recycling trolleys will be introduced across all services to help National Express East Coast meet its ambitious target of reducing the waste it generates by 50 per cent by early 2010.

During the trial, a mobile trolley will travel the length of the train and staff will be on hand to separate waste into colour coded bags.

Customers will also be encouraged to separate waste, such as newspapers, aluminium cans and plastic and glass bottles, and place items into different coloured bags in a static trolley, which will be located in standard class.

Carolyn Bell, Environment Manager for National Express East Coast, said: "On board staff will separate the waste on the mobile trolley, but we will also encourage customers to help us to recycle as much waste as possible by using the static trolley themselves.

"People recycle in their own homes so I'm convinced they will respond positively. The trolleys will be on different trains at different times of the day to get a comprehensive picture of how much recycling we can collect, and to gauge how customers have responded.

"We need to find out what works well before we can hopefully start full recycling operations on all of our trains in the second half of 2009."

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

"The aim is to work with local recycling partners to reduce carbon emissions from the pick-up and delivery of recycled products," added Carolyn.

Meanwhile, National Express East Coast is considering how it can re-use as much waste as possible.

"In the long run the idea is that, wherever possible, we will have our waste recycled into products which we can use in our business," said Carolyn.

"Waste paper, for example, could be recycled into paper carrier bags, hand towels or perhaps paper napkins.

"Plastic bottles and aluminium cans will be recycled and given a new life and we will be talking with our catering staff about using products on board that use recycled materials in their packaging."

From the New Year passengers can visit more destinations with East Midlands Trains for a crazy credit crunching price of just £1!

Thousands of megatrain.com tickets, priced from just £1 (plus 50p booking fee), are already available for travel to London, from Sheffield, Chesterfield, Derby, Nottingham, Loughborough and Leicester. And from 5 January passengers will be able to use megatrain.com tickets to travel with East Midlands Trains from Sheffield, Chesterfield and Nottingham to Peterborough and Norwich too.

Another benefit is that passengers buying a ticket from megatrain.com travel using either an e-ticket or m-ticket (an m ticket is a booking reference issued by text directly to your mobile phone, an e ticket is a booking reference e mailed directly to your e mail account). This method of 'no paper ticketing' is kinder to the environment and helps to keep administration costs down. East Midlands Trains Commercial Director, David Horne, says:

"We started selling bargain rail tickets for travel on our route to London earlier this year and they have proved incredibly popular. Over 75,000 passengers have travelled with us using these tickets. With prices starting at just £1, the concept now extended to include even more destinations and with the current economic climate, I can only see this trend continuing.



Delay to new Class 139 Parry People Mover service

The new Class 139 light rail vehicle planned to run on the Stourbridge Town-Stourbridge Junction branch line, has been delayed.

The new vehicle, which will replace the Class 153 diesel train which currently operates on this line, was due to go into service with effect from Sunday, 14 December, when the new London Midland timetable starts. London Midland Managing Director Steve Banaghan says the delay is disappointing, but that everything that can be done to ensure the success of the vehicle is being done, "London Midland, Porterbrook and Network Rail have been working hard with the Parry organisation over the last year to bring the vision of this new technology to reality. Everything is very close to completion, but in order to ensure that the vehicle can complete the final stages of testing and training fully, it has been decided to defer the date of its introduction.

"As with all new innovations, the Parry People Mover has meant that every organisation involved in the project has had to adapt and develop new approaches compared to traditional rail fleet introductions. With the countdown now on for our new timetable, we wanted to be sure that there was enough time for the Parry organisation to complete the vehicle testing and pre service operations. This has taken longer than anticipated and so the decision to delay the start has been made."

The single carriage train used on the service at the moment is due to be redeployed on other routes operated by London Midland, and this will still go ahead from 14 December. The Stourbridge branch services will be operated by a bus until the Parry People Mover is ready to go into service.

Britain leads Europe with most frequent long-distance inter-city service

The new Virgin Trains' timetable from 14 December represents "the most frequent long-distance inter-city service in Europe", according to Brendan Fox, Editor of Thomas Cook's European Timetable.

More trains and faster journey times are the key ingredients of the new timetable, details of which were announced today.

Train services overall will increase by 30 percent following a £9bn upgrade of the key West Coast Main Line that links London with some of Britain's most important cities - Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, and Glasgow - as well as important tourist destinations such as North Wales and the Lake District.

The routes from Manchester and Birmingham to London Euston see train frequencies increased to every 20 minutes, comparable with many local commuter routes, and average journey times in the case of Manchester slashed to as little as 2h 05. The number of direct trains from London to Glasgow increases from nine to 13 per day while from 26 January Chester will be linked to the Capital by a train each hour. Liverpool receives extra peak period trains to and from Euston.

Tony Collins, Virgin Rail Group's CEO said: "The new West Coast timetable represents a huge opportunity for the industry following the £9bn upgrade by Network Rail. More seats and dramatically reduced journey times are huge wins for passengers but quite rightly we will all be judged on how well this railway will perform. The successful running of Europe's busiest main line railway is going to be a huge challenge for the train operators and Network Rail and, during the first few months as the timetable beds in, passengers' expectations may not always be fulfilled. I believe however that within six months we shall have a railway of which the nation can truly be proud."

Passengers travelling at weekends and previously used to slow schedules will see some of the biggest changes as the weekday improvements will be carried over into Saturdays and Sunday afternoons. Those travelling after weekend breaks will, for example, enjoy 20 minute interval services between London and Birmingham through to mid-evening on Sundays.

Long trains keep passengers moving as Virgin beats engineering blockade

Virgin Trains operated the longest domestic daytime trains on December 27 and 28 as it kept passengers moving, despite the closure of the West Coast Main Line south of Coventry for key engineering work.

Months of detailed planning saw Virgin Trains operate 15-coach Super Voyager trains on some of the hourly services running between London Euston and Coventry/Birmingham International via Acton Wells Junction, Ealing Broadway, Greenford, Banbury and Leamington. The 15-coach trains, formed of three Class 221 Super Voyager diesel trains, were the longest trains in the UK, apart from some overnight Sleeper services and Eurostar trains.

Unlike the previous shuttle operation through the summer months, major junction renewal work at West London Junction meant that only one track, out of the four, was open with single line working and a 20mph speed restriction in operation. As a result trains had to travel north from West London Junction to Wembley to reverse in order to run into London Euston. Northbound services also had to run via Wembley. The need to reverse at Wembley meant that passengers on both sides of the train had a superb view of Wembley stadium within the same half hour!

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

The shuttle service connected at Birmingham International with Pendolino services to the North. Virgin Trains provided large teams of additional staff at both Birmingham International and London Euston to assist passengers.

Alstom and Bombardier supported the operation, which required all of the Super Voyager trains to operate south of Birmingham. The Pendolino fleet was used north of Birmingham and specifically on the normally Super Voyager services from Birmingham to Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Virgin Trains Chief Operating Officer Chris Gibb said: "The shuttle operation went well and many passengers I spoke to were content with the extended journey time adding they were pleased there was a direct train service. The smooth operation was a credit to key industry players including Network Rail, EWS, Alstom and Bombardier who actively supported Virgin Trains in providing the replacement train service". After the last shuttles had operated on 28 December the Super Voyager and Pendolino train fleets had to be moved to the right locations for the start of service the following day.



Four in a row for Salisbury Traincare Depot!

The engineering team at our Salisbury Traincare depot has scooped a national rail industry award for the quality of maintenance of its diesel trains – for the fourth year running!

The Golden Spanner Awards are an industry award given to the best performing fleets across the UK. Salisbury depot won in the 'BR era DMU (Diesel Multiple Unit)' category for the most reliable fleet in its class.

The depot maintains Class 158 and Class 159 diesel trains which run on the Exeter St David's – Salisbury – London Waterloo route.

Managing Director Stewart Palmer said: "This is the fourth year in a row that Salisbury depot has won this award - they are doing a fantastic job. "This is an incredible achievement - very well done to the whole Salisbury team. This award really does show the difference that great teamwork can make."

One year countdown to high speed

MINISTER HERALDS ADVENT OF NEW HIGH-SPEED TRAINS

Transport Minister Andrew Adonis has launched a one year countdown to the introduction of high speed passenger services by Southeastern.

Purpose-built Class 395 trains - 29 six-car units each capable of 140mph when running on High Speed 1 (HS1) - will dramatically slash journey times in and out of the capital and to and from many Kent destinations.

Their advent is one of the most significant milestones in the history of Britain's railways, and it is expected they will play a key role in regenerating the south-east region and development of the Thames Gateway.

On Friday 12 December, Andrew Adonis, discovered for himself the smooth power of the new trains when he travelled from Ashford International to London St Pancras International aboard a Class 395 to herald an early Christmas present for many rail passengers one year hence.

Travelling entirely on HS1 via Ebbsfleet and Stratford, the train more than halved the average Ashford-London journey time - currently 83 minutes - to just 37 minutes.

From December 13 next year, when the trains become fully operational, they will be capable of running on other tracks at existing line speeds, yet still bring valuable savings in journey times for travellers who choose to use them.

Folkestone, for instance, an average 98 minutes away from London by train, will see that time cut to 63 minutes. Canterbury, currently 102 minutes distant, will have access to the capital in just over the hour. Ramsgate, almost a two-hour journey away today, will be reachable in 84 minutes, and Gravesend to London will take just 24 minutes instead of 42.

Charles Horton, Southeastern's managing director, said: "This is a huge step forward and gives thousands of our passengers a whole new range of choices about where they live, how they travel to work and how they link up with rail connections to other parts of the country and the Continent. We're proud to be at the forefront of this most exciting adventure, yet remain determined to provide passengers on all our trains with a level of service that is consistently high."

Andrew Adonis said: "When these trains enter service next year they will transform the journeys of large numbers of rail passengers travelling between Kent and London - in some cases halving journey times.

"The Government is also helping to fund a new station at Stratford which will open up a new range of destinations to people using the service, such as the Olympic site from 2012."

NEW MENU TRIAL AT NATIONAL EXPRESS EAST ANGLIA

Three weeks ago National Express East Anglia confirmed it was planning to close its restaurant catering service on trains between London and Norwich.

Since then the company has listened to a wide range of views from customers and stakeholders. Trials of the proposed new catering service, available to all customers, will take place during the next two months. The current restaurant service will close as it normally does for the Christmas period at the end of Friday 19 December. From Monday 5 January, for the rest of January and throughout February, services will operate with a mix of the existing restaurant services together with trials of the new offer to gather customer feedback.

The new offer will include a range of products to be delivered at seat in First Class by a dedicated host and a range of options available over the counter from the café bar for standard ticket holders.

Consequently, there will be an enhanced catering service available to everybody on board, not just those who dine in the restaurant car. Trials of the breakfast offer are already underway and are proving popular with customers and staff. The company will begin trials of the evening offer within the next month. Core products will change seasonally and will be sourced locally wherever possible.

Andrew Chivers, Managing Director, National Express East Anglia said, "We have listened to and taken account of the wide range of views that have been expressed about the proposed change in our catering services. These trials will help decide the best mix of new products to meet our customers' changing needs."

Subject to consultation with the Trades Unions it is proposed that the new offer will be fully implemented by early March.

ARRIVA TRAINS WALES ANNOUNCES PLANS FOR DIRECT ABERYSTWYTH - LONDON SERVICES

Arriva Trains Wales has issued its consultation on a proposed new direct train service between Aberystwyth and London Marylebone. This service is being planned in conjunction with a request by Ieuan Wyn Jones, the Deputy First Minister and Minister for Economy and Transport at the Welsh Assembly Government to examine options for an hourly service on the Cambrian Main Line.

The proposals for London services include two daily direct services to and from Aberystwyth, restoring a link to Britain's capital withdrawn by British Rail in 1991. Through services would also be provided between London and the Cambrian coastal route to Pwllheli on summer Saturdays.

Mike Bagshaw, Commercial Director for Arriva Trains Wales said: "Following the successful introduction of a new more reliable Cambrian timetable on 14th December, we are delighted to announce exciting further plans for the route." "Market research and our own knowledge of the local market, has shown that there is a strong customer demand for a comfortable and reasonably priced direct service between mid Wales and London, avoiding the need to change trains in Birmingham. The restoration of this through link will bring significant benefits to both the local economy and tourism."

More rail services for Scotland

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

The positive move is a result of the increasing popularity of the services and a timetable change which comes into effect on Sunday 14th December.

The improvements will see an extra two services in each direction between Manchester and Edinburgh. On Saturdays there will be an additional service in each direction between Manchester Airport and Edinburgh. An additional two services will also run between Glasgow and Manchester/Manchester Airport.

Journey times for several services linking Glasgow and Edinburgh with Manchester will be cut by up to 20 minutes.

Vernon Barker, managing director of First TransPennine Express, said: "We are introducing more services with a better range of departure times throughout the day and cutting journey times. This is particularly good news for business travellers as we are introducing an extra early morning and evening service."

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

Iain Duff, chief economist and policy manager at the Scottish Council for Development and Industry, says: "The new services will be especially useful to Scottish business as they will allow a good day's work in Manchester while still being able to return home to Scotland afterwards.

"Increased connectivity to Manchester Airport is also extremely helpful. The provision of more high quality services to important destinations such as Manchester and its Airport are crucial in helping Scottish business to compete effectively and improve our productivity, particularly given the current economic circumstances.

"The existing First TransPennine Express services are proving to be extremely popular and these additions to the timetable will, I'm sure, also go down very well with the Scottish business passenger."

NEW TIMETABLE MEANS NEW SERVICES FOR RUGBY

The completion of one of Europe's biggest civil engineering projects means new opportunities for millions of rail passengers, including to and from Rugby. The last piece of work on Network Rail's £9bn upgrade of the London-Scotland West Coast main line has been completed, heralding a step-change in the frequency and speed of train services.

The achievement is massive and the result will be a quantum leap in services. As of December 14 over 1,100 extra trains every week will run and journey times slashed by up to 30%. Freight users will enjoy a 70% increase in capacity while weekend passengers travelling to places such as Manchester, Liverpool and Birmingham will also benefit with shorter journey times and more services.

Rugby can expect excellent benefits with an hourly Virgin service to Coventry, Birmingham International and Birmingham New Street, as well as London Euston. London Midland's operation in the Rugby area will see significant improvement with three trains per hour to Northampton, two to Birmingham and a new hourly London Midland Trent Valley local service: this will serve Rugby, Nuneaton, Tamworth, Lichfield (and other Trent Valley local stations), then continue to Stafford, Stone, Stoke, Kidsgrove, Alsager and Crewe.

Rugby will also enjoy a significantly improved weekend service with weekday services operating all day on Saturdays and from 1200 on Sundays.

Iain Couther, Network Rail's chief executive said: "It has been a long road to this day, but Network Rail has delivered West Coast on the day we said we would. I would like to thank everyone in the industry who has worked hard to make this possible and rail users for their patience.

Mr Couther continued: "This has been an extraordinarily complex project to rebuild Europe's busiest mixed-use railway. Now it is complete passengers and freight operators will reap the benefits. Network Rail has made good on decades of underinvestment, and will continue to invest in the route in the years ahead as demand continues to grow."

The scale of the job:

- Changes to all 13 major junctions on the route, including a significant bottleneck at Rugby, enabling trains to travel at up to 125mph
- Laying more than 36 kilometres of new track through the Trent Valley, meaning that four tracks now run nearly all the way from London to Crewe
- 174 new or altered bridges
- 53 new or extended platforms at places like Milton Keynes and Manchester Airport
- Replacing over 800 points (the bits of track that move trains from one line to another)
- Line speed improvements across the whole line, including between Preston, Carlisle and Motherwell and between London Euston and Wembley
- Putting up over 11,000 structures
- Over three million yards of rail, ballast and sleepers have been laid



Pictures with a Different View





Top Left: It always rains at Crewe, and will they ever fix the roof. Probably not.
Class47

Bottom Left: Northern's Class 156 461 now advertises the Ravenglass railway on its bodyside. Such a great idea, and with the abundance of preserved lines in Northern's operating area. Can we expect to see more?. *Dave Harris*

Below: Liverpool South Parkway station on the 30th November. One of the famous Lambana's sculpture now resides in the ticket hall. *Dave Harris*





Top Left: A view looking into Dalmarnock station tunnel looking towards Bridgeton station which can be seen at the end of the tunnel. Also the signal visible in the photograph inside the tunnel light up the bottom left of the photograph with a reflection of red. *Jonathan McGurk*

Bottom Left: Ok, so who gave a Christmas present of two dozen cans assorted colours of spray paint!. If I was National Express I would be pretty p@@@ed off at coming back to this after a couple of days off. Sadly in todays society, we seem to let people off all too easy and if CCTV is everywhere on depots as we are told, how come they are never caught. Try entering Neville Hill with a camera, then you'll get stopped. *Class47*

Below: EWS staff preparing to change a wheel set on a VTC wagon at Warrington Arpley on 5th December. *Dave Harris*





On what might've been the last day of public trains on the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway in Kent, Bagnall 0-6-2T Triumph stands at Kemsley Down station awaiting departure for Sittingbourne Viaduct on 26th December. *Craig Stretton*



During a visit to the excellent Embassy and Bolton Abbey Railway.

Top Left: Looking excellent, especially now that the “ex-works shine” has gone from it, is Class 08 054.

Andy

Bottom Left: Class 31 119 in Railfreight Livery is pictured in the headshunt at Bolton Abbey station.

Andy

Below: Exhaust ports covered over, Class 47 D1524 looks to be ready for the winter storage period. It won't be too long before the spring though.

Class47





Tornado unveiled in glorious apple green livery



Tornado, the first new main line steam locomotive to be built in Britain for almost 50 years, was unveiled in her glorious apple green livery at the National Railway Museum (NRM), York, on Saturday 13th December 2008 in front of 500 people who funded the construction of the locomotive. Apple green was the original colour carried by the first 30 of the 49 Peppercorn class A1s.

The unveiling was undertaken by Mrs Dorothy Mather, widow of Arthur Peppercorn, the last Chief Mechanical Engineer of the London & North Eastern Railway (LNER) who designed the class A1 in the late 1940s.

The Peppercorn class A1s were built in 1948/49 by British Railways and all were scrapped by 1966. Costing £3m, Tornado is the 50th class A1 and was mechanically completed in August 2008. Since then she has been undergoing tests and trials, first on the Great Central Railway at Loughborough and latterly on the Network Rail main line.

Speaking about Tornado's unveiling, Mark Allatt, chairman of The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust said: "It is another historic day for Tornado. All of the original Darlington-built Peppercorn class A1s were turned out in apple green livery and so it is entirely appropriate that Tornado should follow suit – just as Arthur Peppercorn's widow Dorothy first remembers them. Over the duration of her first boiler certificate Tornado will carry all of the A1's historic liveries of LNER apple green with 'British Railways' on the tender, BR blue and BR Brunswick green, with both crest and emblem."

Since her final test run on night of 18th/19th November, Tornado has been in the NRM's paint shop where she had her now familiar test livery of photographic works grey replaced with apple green. The locomotive will be based at the NRM, York, until at least February 2009.

Director of the NRM, Andrew Scott explains: "Not only was York the final home of the Peppercorn class A1s but the original drawings used to recreate this extinct class of steam locomotive are preserved in the NRM's archive centre Search Engine. Without the Museum's involvement in hosting the locomotive during her main line trials and providing painting facilities this fantastic project would not have been possible. We're very excited to see Tornado make an appearance in the NRM's Great Hall - we are certain she will attract many visitors to the Museum and it's a credit to everyone involved."

Mark Allatt, chairman of The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust added: "Tornado's unveiling in apple green is the end of another chapter in the story of a project that many said could never be completed. In 1990 a group was formed with a vision and the determination to make it succeed – to build and operate a Peppercorn class A1 Pacific steam locomotive for main line and preserved railway use. 18 years later, and thanks to that shared vision and determination, Tornado turned her wheels in anger for the first time on 1st August 2008 in front of the world's press. It is thanks to our more than 2,000 regular monthly and other donors, our sponsors led by William Cook Cast Products Limited and the hard work of our volunteers and contractors that the project has achieved so much. The Trust is now looking to the great British public to help us get Tornado into main line passenger service by making a donation, sponsoring a component, taking part in our covenant scheme and/or our £500,000 bond issue. There are now only 8 weeks until Tornado's main line passenger début."

Phil Speight, managing director, Craftmaster, who donated the apple green paint, said: "We were very pleased that the Trust chose Craftmaster products initially and since all of us here have been involved in heritage one way or another for most of our lives, we thought it most appropriate to provide Tornado's final livery paint as a donation to the project."

The painting of Tornado at York in apple green livery has been undertaken by the father and son duo of Ian and Dan Matthews of M Machine (who had previously applied the grey livery at Darlington) with Tony Filby, the NRM's painter applying the lettering and Mike "Tomo" Tompson the lining.



Gloucester and Warwickshire's Post Christmas bash...

Above: Class 31 162 passes Dixon on the 27th December. *Ian Furness*

Below: Class 47 701 is seen passing Far Stanley on the 27th December. *Ian Furness*



C58LG

CLASS 58
LOCOMOTIVE
GROUP

The Class 58 Locomotive Group was formed in 2001 with the aim of one day preserving a Class 58 locomotive and we invite you to join us!

For more information on the C58LG, please see our website www.c58lg.co.uk, e-mail info@c58lg.co.uk or you can write via 'snail mail' to: C58LG, 107 Woolaston Avenue, Cardiff, CF23 6EW.



See our website for information on our new fund raising initiative: "£58 for a 58" – sponsor a part of a 58!



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

LOUGBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

GCR DIESEL RUNNING EVENT Saturday 10th and Sunday 11th January 2009

Mobile steam heat van in action alongside newly arrived Type 2 D5401

The Great Central Railway has added a diesel event into the early part of 2009 for the first time. A type two, and two type three locos will be in action providing an intensive timetable of departures with newly arrived Class 27 D5401 leading the line up. There are also three return steam hauled trips during the day.

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

Andy Carter, a GCR volunteer who has written the timetable for the event, "We hope traction enthusiasts will support this event in what can be regarded as a quiet part of the year for diesel fans. The steam heat van should also help make some of the trains more hospitable!"

Class 33 D6535 and Class 37 37314 are also expected to feature. The class 101 DMU is due to make a return trip along the whole line at the start of each day. On Saturday night a 7pm beer and food train has been timetabled, featuring the Class 27 and the Class 37. To encourage visitors the railway is keeping fares at the standard weekend prices.

GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY WINTER GALA Jan 30th, Jan 31st and Feb 1st 2009

Three day event with an end of steam flavour, Cromwell and LNER Q6 set to star

A three day feast of steam with a distinctly 1968 twist. That's the promise at the Great Central Railway's first major steam gala for 2009. End of steam survivor BR Standard 7, 'Britannia Class', no 70013 "Oliver Cromwell" tops the bill, joined by a visiting guest making a GCR debut. LNER Q6 owned by the North Eastern Locomotive Preservation Group (running as no. 69395) and will make a perfectly prototypical sight at the head of the GCR's Windcutter Wagon train.

Up to five other engines will appear including LMS 8F no 48305 renumbered as a classmate running railtours in 1968, GCR O4 no. 63601 (now entering the last year of a ten year boiler ticket) and Southern Railways star, King Arthur class no. 30777 "Sir Lamiel". The event has been extended to three days, starting on January the 30th with three engines working a forty five minute timetable, stepping up to the full intensive gala roster for the Saturday and Sunday (Jan 31st / Feb 1st). On the evening of Friday the 30th there will be a photographers night shoot around the shed front at Loughborough with engines being prepared. Bill Ford, president of the Great Central Railway said, "This is set to be an excellent show. The line up of engines will undoubtedly give a strong "end of steam" flavour. We'll put a few freights into the mix over the weekend giving the Q6 and the O4 plenty of authentic action. We've raised the bar with the recent October Gala so we'll be seeking to match that event!" Oliver Cromwell is also set to make a debut on the Travelling Post Office non stop drop train over the weekend. Railway Vehicle Preservation Ltd. are gradually assembling a mark one TPO set and two out of their four vehicles are now operational.

Overhaul work is progressing steadily on visiting Fairburn Tank no. 42085. It's not possible to say yet if this engine will make the 'starting line up' for the event.

Full fares and timetables will be available shortly on the Great Central Railway website.

FRIENDS of the GREAT CENTRAL MAIN LINE NOW WITH THREE AND A HALF THOUSAND MEMBERS!

The Great Central Railway's official supporters club has continued to grow in 2008 with membership breaking the three and a half thousand barrier.

It's a staggering eight hundred members up from just two and a half years ago when the club was set up. FOGCML was formed by bringing together the membership parts of previous GCR supporting groups.

Robert Stephens, Chairman of the Friends of the Great Central Main Line said, "2008 was an exciting year at the GCR. The visit of Tornado certainly brought new visitors to the line and new members to the supporters club. I am sure membership will continue to grow, while we offer great benefits at a good price and fully support the railway. In these uncertain times, letting go of a club membership would be an easy thing to do, so that's another reason to be heartened by our growth."

A full adult year long membership for the Friends of the Great Central Main Line costs £20. The senior rate is £15.

A decision has been made to hold this rate for as long as possible, not only bring in new members but also retain members who might be facing financial hardship in the next year.

Members receive up to four editions of the award winning "Main Line" magazine, up to four news sheets, generous train ticket discounts including most special events and other exclusive offers. More information and a downloadable application form can be found at www.gcrl.co.uk

Great Central Railway RECOVERS SIGNALLING EQUIPMENT

The Great Central Railway is recovering 12 redundant mechanical and colour light signals from a Network Rail route.

The line between Thoresby Colliery and High Marnam in North Nottinghamshire is set to be reopened with a different signalling equipment, rendering the original equipment redundant.

With the kind support of Network Rail, Morgan EST and TST, the GCR S&T Department have already removed some equipment from site and the remaining signal posts are in the process of being recovered.

Morgan Est are providing nearly £500,000 worth of Road Rail equipment to assist the GCR to recover these signal structures in a safe manner, without charge to the GCR.

"This signalling equipment will be put to good use on the GCR in future projects," commented the preserved line's president Bill Ford.

"We're very grateful to everyone who has made the recovery work possible, particularly Morgan EST, Network Rail and TST."

Photo: Allison Railways Ltd



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY STATION WINS NATIONAL AWARD More than 30 years of hard work for volunteers recognised

It's been described as the Great Central Railway's best kept station and now it has a national award to go with it. At this week's National Railway Heritage Award, Rothley station on the Leicestershire heritage line won a top prize.

The team who have spent more than thirty years carefully restoring this fine example of an Edwardian country station were recognised with the National Express Volunteers award – given to projects which restore railway buildings using a considerable input from volunteers.

The station was given £1500 towards preservation funds and will receive a plaque to be displayed.

Colin Dean, stationmaster at Rothley said "It's wonderful to receive national recognition for the dedicated volunteers that have worked tirelessly for so long to create what you see today. The team covers volunteers of all ages and backgrounds but they work together to keep the station maintained and running in a very professional manner and achieve our aim of recreating a gas-lit Edwardian country station.

Hopefully the award will encourage even more people to join in!"

The prize, presented by Paul Atterbury of the Antiques Roadshow was won jointly between Rothley and the Churnet Valley Railway. In the last twelve months, the Great Central station has had more than £100,000 invested in it. The money has been used to restore and reopen the elegant stairway arcade which connects the road with the platform and also to create Ellis's tea room in a former goods store.

The judges didn't include Ellis's in their visit – and it's now hoped to enter it for an award next year!

Bill Ford, president of the Great Central Railway said, "This is wonderful news and a real vindication for everyone who volunteers at Rothley, but also to everyone who donates time and invests money to keep it looking so special."

It's a double celebration at the moment for the railway. It's recent restoration of BR Standard 7, Britannia Class, no 70013 "Oliver Cromwell" has been recognised with a Heritage Railway Association award.

This prize was won jointly with the National Railway Museum who were part of the Oliver Cromwell restoration programme along with many volunteers and groups at Loughborough.



Bombardier/Alstom Consortium Awarded order from the Belgian National Railways

The consortium Bombardier Transportation and Alstom Transport have signed a contract for 72 M6 double-deck cars with the Belgian National Railways (SNCB). The total contract value is approximately 128 million euros (\$176 million US) with shares of around 50% for each partner. Deliveries are scheduled to take place from April 2010 until March 2011.

The M6 double-deck cars are mostly used on the main lines of the Belgian railways network and operate at maximum speeds of 160 kph. Bombardier transportation's site in Bruges (Belgium), relying on its long standing engineering



and production experience, will be responsible for the complete production of the four cab cars as well as the final assembly of the 68 intermediate (trailer) cars. The bogies will be manufactured at Bombardier's bogies centre of excellence in Crespin (France). The design is based on the well-recognized success of Bombardier's I-11 vehicles in terms of comfort, as well as the expectations and needs expressed by passengers. In its role as Alstom's worldwide centre of excellence for auxiliary converters and national and ETCS/ERTMS signalling solutions, Alstom Transport's Belgian site in Charleroi will supply the auxiliary converters for all cars and the ATLAS solution compatible with ERTMS for the four cab cars. The Alstom Transport sites of Valenciennes and Villeurbanne (France) will respectively deliver the semi-finished trailer cars and the train control devices for the four cab cars.

TRAXX Locomotive Contract for Bombardier

The transport and logistics branch of the French Railways, Société Nationale des Chemins de Fer Français (SNCF) has confirmed a contract with Bombardier Transportation to supply 80 interoperable diesel electric BOMBARDIER TRAXX F140 DE locomotives, with an initial firm order of 45 locomotives.

The value of this firm order is estimated at approximately 160 million euros (\$203 million US). The first delivery is scheduled for May 2010.

The TRAXX locomotive product family is designed for efficient and sustainable operation and is characterized by its modular concept. The locomotives are used to transport goods as well as passengers on national and international routes and are suitable for all networks.

Since their introduction, more than 1,300 TRAXX locomotives have already been sold.

Photo: Diesel electric BOMBARDIER TRAXX F140 DE locomotives for the SNCF



Bombardier is to deliver an additional 34 Double - deck Coaches to German State of Lower Saxony

Bombardier Transportation is to build 34 additional double-deck coaches for the Landesnahverkehrsgesellschaft Niedersachsen GmbH (LNVG). The order is worth approximately 46 million euros (\$66 million US) and will enhance the LNNG's current fleet of 186 Bombardier double-deck coaches, in use since 2003.

The vehicles currently on order are double-deck intermediate, high-floor entry coaches with comfortable 2nd class areas in the upper and lower decks. They will have the same functions as the fleet which is already in operation and will be fully compatible with it.

Dr Wolf Gorka, Managing Director of LNNG, said: "The double-deck coaches have really proven themselves and are well accepted by our passengers. We plan to operate the new trains on the lines south of Hamburg in particular. With them, we are reacting to increasing demand and strengthening our current set of coaches."

Stephan Krenz, Managing Director and Head of Business Unit Germany & Scandinavia Bombardier Transportation, said: "This follow-up order proves our global expertise in the field of modern double-deck coaches. High levels of reliability, flexibility and comfort as well as fast delivery times make our trains stand out and lead to greater acceptance by operators and passengers."

All the vehicles will be manufactured at the Bombardier site in Görlitz. Over 2,000 double-deck coaches of a comparable type have already been supplied from this site over the last 19 years for use in Germany. The Bombardier double-deck coaches also operate internationally in suburban and regional transport, for example The Netherlands, Denmark, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Poland, and Israel.

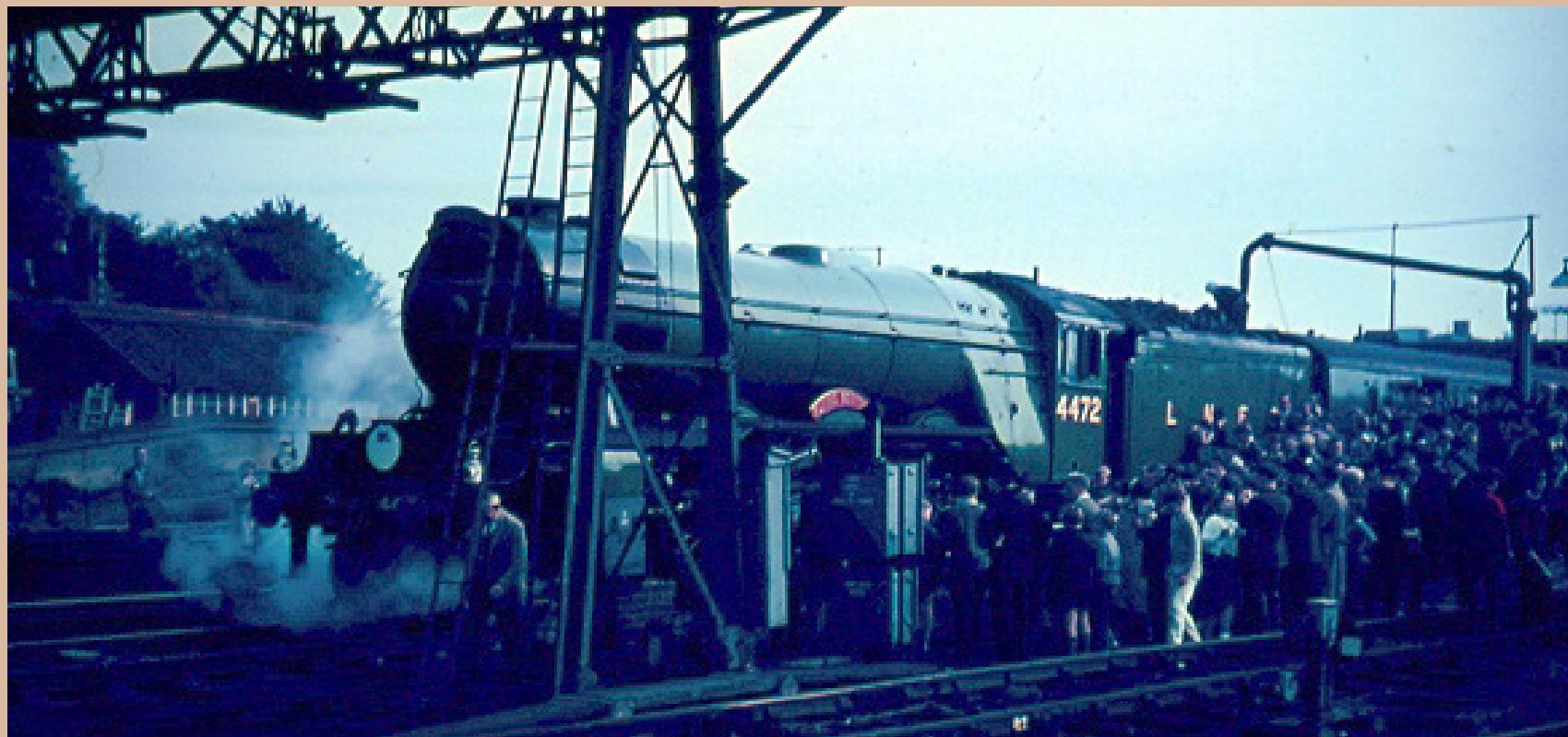


Above: In the splendour of Austria, OBB 1216 235-0 is pictured working a service from Ardning to Selzthal. *Tomáš Kubovec*

Right: Autumn scene in the Czech Republic as Regio Nova unit 814 214 is seen passing Tanvald on the 20th October.
Paolo3



From the Archives



Top Left: In 1965, the preserved A3 Pacific - 4472 Flying Scotsman was a crowd-puller, especially on a first visit to Southampton Central with a railtour from Lincolnshire to Weymouth on 12th September 1965, where it stopped to take water for 8 minutes! Water stops were still an everyday scene in 1965 as services on the main line were still steam hauled. Although, a policeman, seen in the picture was on duty to keep some sort of control, his "blind eye" allowed me and many others to wander off the platform edge to obtain our record shots. There was no third rail, no bright orange jackets - everyone was safe and everyone was able to enjoy the occasion.

David Mead



Bottom Left: On 3rd June 1967, during the closing days of steam traction being allowed over the "third rail" on the Southern Region, the preserved A4 Pacific - 4498 Sir Nigel Gresley powered a railtour through the then named Lyndhurst Road (now Ashurst New Forest) Station en-route for Weymouth. When steam departed for good on the SR a month later, there was a total ban on steam traction and it was many years to come when we were able to witness scenes such as this again.

David Mead



Above: Class 37 506 pauses at Llandeilo in May 1986 with a short freight train. *Pete Cheshire*

Top Right: Class 47 299 is seen passing through Salisbury station on the 1st August 1991 with a Speedlink working. Also in the station is Class 155 303 (yes it was still a two car unit in this year) and a Class 47/7 working a Waterloo - Exeter service. *Richard Hargreaves*

Bottom Right: An impressive Class 37 712 is seen departing on the 20th April 2002. I have to say that in this current age of carbon footprint reduction then this loco has since learnt to only internally combust! *Clag37*





Above: Class 50 D400 passes Eastdon on the 28th July 1991 with a London bound service. *Richard Hargreaves*

Below: The old Cobra railfreight service is seen here passing through Derby station hauled by Class 37 102 on the 4th September 1982. *Jon Jebb*







A long final last journey for Class 37 417, seen here standing in Warrington Yard on 6X12 Carlisle-Eastleigh. The 37 had failed in spectacular style a few days previous on the Inverness snowplow duty. It is on its way to Eastleigh where it will be stored unserviceable. With the current economic climate and the severity of the failure this loco suffered, it is probable that it has worked its last train with EWS. *Mike Byrne*