



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY
LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

PRESS INFORMATION

Winner "Best Tourism Experience - East Midlands" 2007

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**BRITAIN'S BRAND NEW STEAM ENGINE ON ITS
WAY TO LEICESTERSHIRE**

**"Tornado" ready to create a storm at the
Great Cental Railway**

It's as 'fresh out of the box' as steam engines get. A brand new main line steam locomotive which has taken 20 years to build. Now it's heading to the Great Central Railway in Leicestershire for 'running in'.

The GCR is delighted to announce the imminent arrival of A1 Class no 60163 "Tornado" for a two month stay.

"This is a terrific honour for the GCR," said railway president Bill Ford. "Tornado has been the talk of the enthusiast community for years, but now it's finally ready to run, the whole world is taking notice. After testing it will pull its first trains right here in Leicestershire. We're expecting to be very busy indeed!"

The engine has been built by the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust, an independent group of railway enthusiasts based in Darlington. The A1 Class of Pacific locomotives was designed by Arthur H Peppercorn for the London and North Eastern Railway and built in 1948/49. They were the last of the East Coast Main Line's series of thoroughbred express passenger steam locomotives. Examples of many other Darlington and

BRITAIN'S ONLY DOUBLE TRACK, MAIN LINE HERITAGE RAILWAY

Great Central Railway, Great Central Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 1RW

Tel: (01509) 230726 Fax: (01509) 239791



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Doncaster built locomotives have been saved for preservation, but not the Peppercorn A1s which were scrapped. It has cost £3 million to build.

The engine is expected to arrive in mid August and spend two months at the Great Central. The first month will be taken up with testing. The engine will run by itself and then with empty carriages. In late September Tornado will pull its first passenger trains, initially for the thousands of people who have helped sponsor the build. Then the trains will be open for everyone, for three weekends until the middle of October.

Mark Allatt, Chairman of the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust said "The GCR offers us all the right facilities for testing our new locomotive. Naturally, being in the middle of the country we hope as many people as possible will share in the chance to see Britain's first brand new main line steam engine since 1960. After our stay at the GCR we're heading off for service on the national network, though we still need to raise £66,000 to finish the job."

"This really is a genuine first" concluded Bill, "and people who visit the Great Central Railway will enjoy being part of railway history."

Meanwhile the GCR is making headlines elsewhere this week. Oliver Cromwell, an engine restored over four years at Loughborough is running on the main line for the first time in forty years. The engine pulled Britain's last ever national network steam service back in 1968. Four decades later, thanks to the efforts of staff and volunteers at the GCR it is recreating the spectacle.

ENDS

WORDS: 467

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Details on the above and all forthcoming events can be found on the Great Central Railway's extensive website: www.greatcentralrailway.com

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Additional information can also be obtained from the Booking Office, Loughborough Central Station, (Daily 9.00 - 5.30) on 01509 230726

NOTES

ABOUT THE GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

Voted number 12 on the list of the 50 greatest railway journeys in the world the Great Central Railway is the UK's only double track, main line heritage railway. It's the only place in the world where full size steam engines can be seen passing each other – just as it was when steam ruled the rails. The preserved railway has been operating for over 30 years, and is manned by around 700 volunteers and a small team of permanent staff. Originally a main line from Sheffield to London, the 8 mile preserved section between Loughborough and Leicester is fully operational and the 4 stations reflect a different period of the railways 109 year history.

Trains run every weekend of the year, bank holidays and daily in the summer. In addition, First Class Restaurant Car Services provide 4 or 6 course meals, whilst travelling between Loughborough and Leicester or childhood dreams can come true with a Drive a Train Experience. We also run a number of family events, including "Days Out with Thomas the Tank Engine", Bonfire Night and Santa Specials.

The railway has won a number of awards including "independent railway of the year", and a gold award for the East Midlands best visitor experience and is a quality assured visitor attraction as designated by Enjoy England.

ABOUT THE A1 STEAM LOCOMOTIVE

The A1 Class of Pacific locomotives was designed by Arthur H Peppercorn for the London and North Eastern Railway and built in 1948/49. They were the last of the East Coast Main Line's series of thoroughbred express passenger steam locomotives. Examples of many other Darlington and Doncaster built locomotives have been saved for preservation, but not the Peppercorn A1s which were scrapped, following dieselisation of the railways, with the last going in 1966. The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust has built a new locomotive, 60163 *Tornado*, at the new Darlington Locomotive Works (DLW) with the money being raised by public subscription through Deeds of Covenant, at a cost of only the price of a pint of beer per week, a £500,000, 4% unsecured bearer bonds issue and sponsorship agreements. The total cost of the locomotive will be £3 million, of which over £2.9m has already been raised or pledged. Our principle sponsor is William Cook Cast Products Limited and other great British organisations supporting the project include Corus, I.D. Howitt, M. H. Spencer Limited and Darlington Borough Council. DLW is open to the general public from 11am to 4pm on the 2nd Saturday of every month. Access to DLW is via Head of Steam (Darlington Railway Museum) for which a ticket should be purchased. Parties are welcome at the works at other times by prior arrangement.

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For details of how to help telephone 01325 4 60163, visit www.a1steam.com or email enquiries@a1steam.com

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