



## **GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY**

LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

### **PRESS INFORMATION**

*Celebrating 40 years of preservation in 2009*

**Date: 17th July 2009**

## **GREAT CENTRAL ANNOUNCES 'HEAVY METAL' LINE UP FOR OCTOBER STEAM RAILWAY GALA**

**Two visitors on the way:  
9F, WD, Cromwell and Fairburn top the bill**



**It's a heavy metal theme for the Great Central Railway's Steam Railway gala in October. The three day event (9th, 10th, 11th October) will see two guest engines arrive, Cromwell return and the Fairburn Tank in action for an exciting weekend of action.**

9F no 92203, "Black Prince" is the first visiting engine. Owned by internationally renowned artist David Shepherd, it will appear on the lines famous 'windcutter' mineral wagon train recreating a very familiar GCR 60s scene.

Making its first visit to another heritage line is WD 90733. This engine will also feature on freight services, complementing two 'home fleet' engines, GCR O4 no 63601 and 8F no 48305.

The line up doesn't end there. Returning from main line duties, National Railway Museum flagship engine, BR standard 7, Britannia Class no 70013 "Oliver Cromwell" will be joined for the first time in preservation by another end of steam survivor LMS Fairburn Tank no 42085 on very rare visit away from its home base, the Lakeside and Haverthwaite Railway.

A seventh engine is likely to take part rounding off the heavy metal theme. The timetable will make full use of the double track featuring freight trains, passenger trains and non stop postal drops.



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**"It's certainly an exciting line up" said GCR president Bill Ford. "We've extended the event to three days and on Saturday night we'll have our usual twilight steam show. We made a number of improvements to the railways infrastructure this year including a canopy at Leicester North and a new lift and wheeled access toilet at Loughborough. If you haven't visited for a few years this will be the perfect chance for a long weekend in Leicestershire. Naturally we're delighted to be continuing our partnership with Steam Railway magazine. We look forward to a great event."**

Plans are in hand to arrange tours of the newly ballasted Mountsorrel branch line which is currently being restored. Visitors will be able to take a bus shuttle to the branch and take a guided tour on foot with project volunteers.

While the 9F is at the railway, a number of other events are being organised to showcase it and celebrate the work of David Shepherd and his Wildlife fund.

Further details including fares and timetables will be released on the Great Central website at [www.gcrailway.co.uk](http://www.gcrailway.co.uk)

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### **FURTHER INFORMATION:**

Details on the above and all forthcoming events can be found on the Great Central Railway's extensive website: [www.gcrailway.co.uk](http://www.gcrailway.co.uk)

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

### **NOTES**

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 36 years, and is manned by around 700 volunteers and a small team of permanent staff. Preservation of this section of the Great Central Railway began in 1969. The route was originally part of 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 10 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.

**BRITAIN'S ONLY DOUBLE TRACK, MAIN LINE HERITAGE RAILWAY**

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