



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

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Great Central Railway

Record Breaking Gala

**'GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY'S SPECTACULAR WINTER GALA
DREW IN OVER 4000 VISITORS WHO MADE NEARLY 16,000
JOURNEYS!'**

28TH, 29TH, 30TH JANUARY 2011

The gala (28th – 30th January) saw 8 steam locomotives in action and established the Railway as the UK's leading venue for the sheer number of locos which could be seen actively at work throughout the day. **At Loughborough Central station there were over 60 departures and arrivals, over an 8 hour period, each day!**

Bill Ford, President of the Great Central Railway, said **"The number of visitors exceeded even our expectations, which is tremendous given everyone's concerns surrounding the economy. The line up and the number of trains running throughout each day clearly offered our visitors a real treat and exceptional value.**

We have really set records with this gala – we've never had such a fantastic event, the crowds had to be seen to be believed!"

'City of Truro' topped the bill – the first locomotive reputed to have run in excess of 100 mph. There were demonstration mail drops and the chance to ride in a vintage autocoach dating back some 70 years.

The ex Great Western autocoach, which was hauled by 4575 class no. 5526 and 1400 class no. 1450 on the Saturday and Sunday respectively, proved to be a major draw.

2800 class no. 3850 appeared in its new ex BR black livery and worked several turns hauling GCR's windcutter set – another truly authentic sight on GCR's double track mainline.



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ENDS

WORDS 246

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

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 celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2009, 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 111 year history. Around 100,000 visitors a year come to the railway from all over the world.

Trains run every weekend of the year, bank holidays and daily in the summer. In addition, First Class Restaurant Car Services provide famous dining experiences course, whilst passengers travel between Loughborough and Leicester. Childhood engine driver dreams can come true with a Drive a Train Experience. We also run a number of family events, including 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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