



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

PRESS INFORMATION

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FIRST TRAIN TO RUN ALONG GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY'S BRANCH LINE SINCE 1959!

**History was made on Monday as the first train ran along the
branch line since the track lifting train in 1959**

The volunteer managed project to restore the branch line towards Mountsorrel has completed its first phase and 300m of track is now in place. And, on Monday, the first locomotive was driven over its metals in 50 years (see photo attached).

The GCR is now the only double track heritage main line in the UK with a branch line connection. The extended length of the branch will allow demonstration industrial trains to run with the three restored replica Mountsorrel Granite Company wagons, showing how a main line would have interfaced with an industrial railway in the days of steam. This will provide the possibility of added attractions at future GCR galas.

The GCR will be dropping top ballast along the branch this week, so it shouldn't be long before the new line is able to take demonstration trains.

Of course, this is only the beginning. The completed branch line will open up huge opportunities for GCR and its visitors.

The project focus now turns to fund raising for the next phase of track laying. Enough rail to lay a further 450m of track is available to the project but we need to raise £16,000 to fund sleepers and other fittings to go with it.

Donations can be made to the project's appeal fund please send cheques made payable to "DCRT" (David Clarke Railway Trust) with "Mountsorrel Railway" written on the back to: 112 Balmoral Road, Mountsorrel, Loughborough, LE12 7EW.

A series of diary reports with photos detailing the track laying are being updated to the project website <http://www.mountsorrelrailway.org.uk> Please take a look.

ENDS

Words 295



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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
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.