



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

PRESS INFORMATION

Date: 18th September 2010

RETURN OF THE DUKE 71000 GOES BACK TO THE GCR FOR AUTUMN STEAM GALA

**8th - 10th OCTOBER 2010 EVENT NOW FEATURES FOUR
VISITORS AND EIGHT LOCOS IN STEAM.**

DISPLAY OF TRACTION ENGINES NOW CONFIRMED FOR QUORN

The Duke of Gloucester is coming back to the Great Central Railway. It's the first time the Unique 8P locomotive will have run at the GCR since it left the line in 1987 following its initial return to steam.

No. 71000, 'Duke Of Gloucester' joins three other visiting locomotives for a three day steam gala. It's the jewel in the crown of a sensational line up of motive power. Up to eight locomotives will be in steam for the weekend of the event.

The anticipated line up in addition to Duke Of Gloucester is as follows. Sole surviving 'shire' class LNER No. 246 'Morayshire' joins two other unique locomotives; K4 No. 61994 'The Great Marquess and J72 No. 69023 'Joem'.

From the home fleet GCR O4 No. 63601 and GNR N2 No. 1744 paint the rest of an Eastern Region theme. BR Standard 2 No. 78019 will be wearing the number of a long scrapped Scottish counterpart 78054 for the weekend.

It's hoped Black 5 No. 45305 will also be returning to action at the event, its boiler having recently undergone an 'out of the frames' steam test. Recently restored LMS 'Jinty' 3F No. 47406 is the 'first reserve engine' should any of the rostered cast list prove to be unavailable.

"This is a very exciting announcement," said Bill Ford, the GCR President. "The Duke returns after 23 years, and it comes back to a transformed railway. When it left there was no double track and just one signalbox. It will really be at home on our mainline and we are honoured to add it to our gala line up"



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The Duke is expected to stay for three weeks and should participate in a corporate hospitality event the railway is staging immediately after the gala.

There are some exciting additional attractions being lined up for the gala include the famous narrated twilight steam show at Quorn on Saturday evening, a beer tent at Quorn, guided tours of the new GCR HQ building 'Lovatt House', travelling post office demonstration runs with the guest engines and even a Scottish Pipe Band.

“I am also very excited to confirm a display of vintage traction engines and lorries at Quorn over the weekend”, continued Bill. **“This is likely to make the yard area busier than normal, so we’d urge to people to arrive at Quorn by train. We’re arranging parking at the station to be in a neighbouring field.”**

There is also an enthusiasts dining train on Friday night with special rates for gala visitors. Full details and fares are now available on the GCR website.

The event is presented in conjunction with Steam Railway Magazine.

ENDS

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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

BRITAIN'S ONLY DOUBLE TRACK, MAIN LINE HERITAGE RAILWAY

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Enjoy England.