

LEICESTER NORTH

NEWSLETTER

SEPT. 2011

No. 44

This Newsletter is an independent publication, and whilst every attempt is made to ensure accuracy of information, any discrepancies are not the responsibility of Great Central Railway

(ALMOST) AUTUMN ALREADY!

It looks as though it is going to be another one of those issues where, having no idea at all in my head, and staring at a completely blank page, I will have to hope that something will suggest itself as I go along.

With regard to this station, we sometimes hit what only can be described as the "Doldrums", and, although there is activity at various places along the line, they don't always filter down to us.

However, the usual week-by-week maintenance work continues behind the scenes, some not visible but others, plain to see.

One such is the addition of a new platform seat that has been positioned further north, and does seem to be appreciated by both passengers and train staff.

The erection of a notice, pointing out that the area within the barrier on the approach slope is for railway visitors only, and will be closed and locked fifteen minutes after the last train has departed, has (we hope) lessened the possibility of visitors to the shortly to be occupied "Green Acres" site adjacent to us from taking unfair advantage and therefore reducing the area available for our visitors to park.

Time alone will tell whether it does the job or not.

An uncertainty regarding how much of the approach slope does actually belong to us has been investigated, with the result that it has been ascertained that we do control access almost as far as the main road, so this should prove to be a weapon against any who try to insist on intruding into our car park.

It will also be noticed by those of you who are "regulars" that at long last the repairs have been made to our roof, which has meant that the waiting room ceiling has received some much needed TLC.

Karolyn Jean Knoll, and her boy friend David Morris, who offered their services as volunteers, back in April, have now departed back to their home in the USA.

We thank them for their help, both on the platform (David) and in the booking office (Karolyn), both, having passed their tests. taking as souvenirs a certificate of their achievements.

Which brings me once again to the need for more volunteers, if anyone is interested.

These are needed in all departments, so please ask the station master on duty for details.

own, when, eventually, our railway links up physically with our northern colleagues situated in Ruddington, on the outskirts of Nottingham.

PEPPA PIG EVENT!

October 1st-2nd

This is the third time that Peppa and George have come to the railway and they loved it so much they're coming again.

As well as various attractions at the other three stations, here at Leicester North there will be the usual colouring competition and the opportunity to watch the engines, as they uncouple and run around the train to re couple, prior to their return journey to Loughborough.

Tentative investigations are underway to, hopefully, increase the variety of fare available in our buffet.

Possible investment in new equipment for our small kitchen is being considered with a view to making hot snacks a possibility in the near future.

So, with winter already on the horizon it may encourage more of our visitors to linger a while in the warmth of our coal fire heated waiting room before boarding the train.

If anyone has ideas as to what sort of food would be acceptable (within reason, please) let us know, and we will investigate the feasibility of it.

Join us at the second
LEICESTER BUS RUNNING DAY
In conjunction with the ABBEY PUMPING STATION MUSEUM
the NATIONAL SPACE CENTRE and the GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY
Sunday 11th September 2011
FROM 11 AM to 5 PM
ALSO INCORPORATING
MARON to CREAM
50th Anniversary of Leicester City Transport 1961 every day

Highlights will include

- Two frequently operated 20-minute circular tours.
- A longer route to the Great Central Railway station at Quorn.
- Occasional hour long "Leicester Tour" journeys.
- All journeys will be free of charge and will be operated by an assortment of former Leicester City Transport buses from the 1950s to the 1970s plus other visiting vehicles.

The bus running day services will operate from the Abbey Pumping Station Museum and there will be street car parking at the adjacent National Space Centre on Exeter Drive, LE4 6NS

Running Day organised by the Leicester Transport Heritage Trust
For full and up to date information visit www.ltht.org.uk

Supporting partners: First, Probus, BPX, RUGLON, A. ASPECTS Engineering, ARRIVA

The above attraction is within walking distance of this station, and for those who are visiting us for the first time will reveal what a wealth of interesting places are easily accessible locally.

We are a part of the "Heritage Corridor" that will really come into its

RE-CREATING THE EXPERIENCE

NEWSLETTER!
This newsletter is now available "online".
Please go to: www.gcrailway.co.uk
Click on "About Us", scroll down to "Press Releases" and you will see it.

Leicester North Newsletter

THE GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY (1899-1969)

With its continental loading gauge, slow curves and lack of grades steeper than 1 in 76, the great Central was years ahead of its rival's routes into the capital. Add to the aforementioned the plan to continue under London, and then. After travelling south, to traverse the English Channel via a Channel Tunnel, one can see that it would have been a wonderful asset to the nation.

Who knows how much further it would have developed by the present day?

The Great Central Railway (London Extension) was the brainchild of the Victorian Industrialist Edward Watkin, who envisioned a rapid rail link to the continent that would have been far superior to those of his rivals.

Unfortunately, by the 1950's the national network was under acute threat from road transport, which was reaping the benefits of the new motorways that were being constructed, and which was also suffering from a serious lack of investment by the government of the day.

This, coupled with the fact that many of the areas served by the GCR were also covered by other lines, which had always resented the GCR (considering it to be an interloper) made it inevitable that it would be the first to go, under the "Rail Rationalisation Plan", the now infamous "Beeching Plan".

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GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY
LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

LEICESTER NORTH STATION

The original station that used to stand on this site was known as BELGRAVE & BIRSTALL, but by the time that the present heritage railway had reached this far south the buildings were in such a sorry state, owing to vandalism, that the decision was taken to re-build. To have re-built to its original specification would have been prohibitively expensive, so the present station is something of a compromise, (plans are, however, in the pipeline to make many improvements) so, if you feel that you would like to help to speed up these proposals by making a donation, please use the Donation Box that can be found in the waiting room.



If you are wondering how the original station used to look, see the above photo. It was a typical GCR station with the usual "Island" platform, accessed via a flight of stairs from the bridge. If you look at the bridge you will see where the staircase descended to the platform (the aperture has been bricked up)

The present station is sited a little further south than the original.

The two intermediate stations ROTHLEY, AND QUORN & WOODHOUSE, still being intact will give you a better idea, although there is a photo of the original station on the wall of our waiting room.



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Pre-Beeching the railway continued south, the next station being Leicester Central, from there continuing on to Whetstone, Ashby Magna, Lutterworth, Rugby Central, Charwelton, Woodford & Hinton, Brackley Central, and then, travelling on GC/ Metropolitan metals finally terminating at London St. Marylebone.

Please remember to sign our Visitor's Book, which will be found in the Waiting Room.

Forthcoming Attractions on the GCR

Diesel Gala and Bus Running Day

Friday 09 September 2011 to Sunday 11 September 2011

Murder Mystery, "Full Stop Murder"

Friday 16 September 2011

Vintage Festival, and Veterans Day

Saturday 17 September 2011 to Sunday 18 September 2011

Beer Festival

Friday 23 September 2011 to Sunday 25 September 2011

Murder Mystery "Signal to Murder"

Friday 30 September 2011

Train Times At This Station (2011, WEEKENDS, 2 APRIL to 29 OCTOBER)

"Special" timetables apply on Gala Days, "Ivor the Engine", and other events. Please check on actual day of event	ARRIVALS	10.12 10.45 11.45 12.45 1.30 2.07 2.45 3.48 4.30 5.13	Leaflets advertising "Drive a Train Experiences", Dining Trains, etc are available in waiting room
	DEPARTURES	10.15 11.00 12.00 1.00 1.45 2.20 3.00 4.00 4.45 5.25	