



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

PRESS INFORMATION

Date: 27th December 2009

Contact: Steve Chapple, GCR events organiser
Tel: 07515598328

Contact: Mark Allatt, The AI Steam Locomotive Trust
Tel: 07710 878979

STORM WARNING!

CELEBRITY STEAM LOCOMOTIVE TORNADO SET FOR RETURN TO LEICESTERSHIRE IN MARCH 2010

DON'T MISS YOUR CHANCE TO DRIVE OR RIDE BEHIND THIS NEW STEAM LEGEND

The Great Central Railway is delighted to confirm a return visit by Britain's brand new steam locomotive, Peppercorn class A1 pacific No. 60163 *Tornado*.

The locomotive will arrive in Leicestershire towards the end of March 2010 for a three week stay, including an appearance at a major gala event over the weekend 26th- 28th March 2010.

The railway has teamed up with The AI Steam Locomotive Trust who built the locomotive to offer a handful of chances to drive it over the eight miles between Loughborough and Leicester North.

Great Central Railway events co-ordinator Steven Chapple said, **"As a supporter of the Trust who built the locomotive as well as working for the Great Central I'm personally pleased we can welcome *Tornado* back. She first appeared here right at the start of her operational career. Indeed I was the volunteer guard on the first ever train she hauled. Since then the locomotive has been painted and become something of a media celebrity including an appearance on 'Top Gear'. Our visitors will be able to get up close to *Tornado* and there will be chances to ride behind her, ride on her footplate, or even drive her!"**

BRITAIN'S ONLY DOUBLE TRACK, MAIN LINE HERITAGE RAILWAY
Great Central Railway, Great Central Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 1RW
Tel: (01509) 230726 Fax: (01509) 239791



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

PRESS INFORMATION

Tornado first steamed in 2008 at the culmination of an 18 year dream to build a brand new Peppercorn class A1 pacific from scratch. She visited the Great Central Railway in late 2008 for running in trials bringing record crowds to the line. Since then she has featured on television, hauled the Royal Train on the national network and appeared at many heritage railways.

Mark Allatt, chairman of The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust, commented, "After a busy first year of main line operations it will be good to take *Tornado* back to the Great Central Railway where she pulled her first trains in 2008. *Tornado* is performing very well and the Trust is working hard to pay off the remaining £600,000 of the loans taken out to complete the locomotive. Please visit our website at www.a1steam.com to find out how you can help to keep this remarkable locomotive on the main line where she belongs."

The Great Central Railway expects to confirm details of an exclusive first class dining train hauled by *Tornado* on 2nd of April shortly. There will be 24 footplate passes available to enjoy a single trip between Loughborough and Leicester North during *Tornado's* stay for £150 each. Finally, a handful of the strictly limited driver experience package involving *Tornado* at the GCR are now on sale for £2250. Anyone wishing to book a driver experience package should contact Steve Chapple on 07515 598328 or the Great Central Loughborough booking office on 01509 230726.

Steve concluded, "The locomotive's visit will be brief, encompassing the weeks either side of Easter. As well as events for enthusiasts we plan some family days to give everyone the chance to get close to *Tornado* in action on our heritage main line. It's part of a very exciting locomotive line up in 2010."

ENDS

WORDS 524

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

BRITAIN'S ONLY DOUBLE TRACK, MAIN LINE HERITAGE RAILWAY
Great Central Railway, Great Central Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 1RW
Tel: (01509) 230726 Fax: (01509) 239791



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

PRESS INFORMATION

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.

Photographs of *Tornado* are available on request

The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust, a registered charity, built Peppercorn class A1 Pacific 60163 *Tornado* at its Darlington Locomotive Works to haul charter trains operating on Network Rail. Fitted with additional water capacity and the latest railway safety electronics, *Tornado* is fully equipped for today's main line railway. The class A1s were designed by Arthur H Peppercorn for the London & North Eastern Railway and 49 were built in 1948/49 by British Railways. However, following the dieselisation of the railways, all were scrapped by 1966. The project to build a new Peppercorn class A1 was launched in 1990 and after 18 years of planning, construction and fundraising the £3 million locomotive was completed in August 2008. Following tests and trials, first on the Great Central Railway, Loughborough and latterly on the Network Rail main line based out of the National Railway Museum, York, *Tornado* hauled her first main line passenger train on 31st January 2009. *Tornado* was named by TRH The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall at York station on 19th February 2009. Funds to build *Tornado* have been raised through deeds of covenant, commercial sponsorship (principal sponsor William Cook Cast Products Limited), commercial loans and through a bond issue. The Trust is still seeking to raise funds to repay the £600,000 borrowed to complete her construction. For details of how to help or where to travel behind *Tornado* visit www.a1steam.com or email enquiries@a1steam.com.