



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

PRESS INFORMATION

Date: 15th March 2010

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WEDNESDAY: TORNADO TOUCHDOWN!

World famous steam engine in Leicestershire for a 3 week stay

**Due to arrive at Great Central Railway
on Wednesday 17th March**

**Press call: 2.30pm Wednesday 17th March
Quorn and Woodhouse station on the Great Central Railway,
Woodhouse Road, Leicestershire. LE12 8AL
For further details see end of the release.**

The world famous steam engine, Tornado touches down in Leicestershire this week. The celebrity “Peppercorn A1 pacific” which has got everybody talking following a starring appearance on BBC’s Top Gear programme is visiting the Great Central Railway for three weeks.

Great Central Railway President Bill Ford said, **“We are honoured to have *Tornado* visiting our line. The locomotive was trialled and tested here back in 2008. Now it has been painted and become a star of steam excursions on the national network and hauled the Royal Train. It is very much in demand and draws a crowd wherever it goes. We’re sure it will be bringing people to Leicestershire while it is with us.”**

Tornado is running on three weekends at the GCR.

- March 20th and 21st, during an ‘All steam weekend’
- March 26th, 27th and 28th, with a starring role in the GCR’s 1960s gala
- April 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th, through the Easter holiday weekend.

Such was the demand for tickets, a special dining train hauled by the engine sold out



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weeks before it arrived. However, another *Tornado* hauled dining train has been added to the schedule, running on Sunday 21st of March. The train departs at 7.30pm and a four course meal will be served in the comfort of the GCRs first class dining carriages. Tickets cost £47 per person

The railway has teamed up with the AI Steam Locomotive trust, (who built *Tornado* from scratch over a period of eighteen years) to offer a limited number of chances to drive *Tornado* while it is at the Great Central Railway.

EMERALD PACKAGE: Drive *Tornado* light engine for a single eight mile trip along the line. Ride on the footplate in the other direction. One slot remaining on FRIDAY 2nd APRIL. £450 per person.

SILVER PACKAGE: Drive *Tornado* for a full line return (16 miles) with carriages. Then ride another return trip on the footplate (32 miles in total). £750 per person. Two slots remaining.

Mark Allatt, chairman of The AI 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.aisteam.com to find out how you can help to keep this remarkable locomotive on the main line where she belongs.**”

To book a ticket for the *Tornado* dining train or to find out more about your chance to drive *Tornado*, please call 01509 230726.

ENDS. WORDS 499

MEDIA CALL

You are welcome to ‘meet’ *Tornado* after it has arrived on Wednesday. The engine is being transported to the GCR on a low loader (as the railway does not have a main line connection) and will arrive at Quorn and Woodhouse station.

It is possible the time of arrival will change. **Please telephone Kate Tilley on 07515 596835 or Steven Chapple on 07515 598328 to confirm.**

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



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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.

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.

BRITAIN'S ONLY DOUBLE TRACK, MAIN LINE HERITAGE RAILWAY

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