



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

PRESS INFORMATION

Celebrating 40 years of preservation in 2009

Date: 9th December 2009

LOSTOCK AND A FEW SMOKING BARRELS!

**GREAT CENTRAL ANNOUNCE MIDLAND HEAVY LINE UP
FOR THREE DAY WINTER GALA
29th, 30th and 31st January 2010**

**LONG TERM RESTORATION PROJECT
3F no. 47406 EXPECTED TO DEBUT**

A vision of Lostock Hall Shed in the late sixties, or a salute to the Midland Region? The Great Central Railway's three day Winter Gala brings together an exciting line up of motive power which could see LMS stand for Loughborough's Monster Steam up!

At least four guest engines will be in action at the gala which takes place on the 29th, 30th and 31st of January 2010. Black 5 no 45231 "The Sherwood Forester", Jubilee no 5960 "Leander", and Stanier Mogul no. 42968 will join home fleet engines Britannia Class no 70013 "Oliver Cromwell", 8F no 48305 (running as 48476 - the last Lostock Hall 8F) and the first steaming in preservation of 3F 47406. The 3F has been successfully steam tested and was rapidly being assembled in early December.

The fourth guest locomotive is set to be announced in late December.

In addition resident BR Standard 2 no 78019 will be rostered as 'hot spare' for the event and is likely to work at least one diagram, making an eight engine line up, the biggest gala roster on the GCR for many years.

Bill Ford, President of the Great Central Railway said, **"We have exciting plans for 2010 and this gala will kick off the year perfectly. I'm particularly excited at the preservation debut of the 'Jinty' which will hopefully return to steam at the culmination of a long restoration. With such a strong Midland line up I do hope enthusiasts will choose to join us."**

The Friday of the event will feature a forty five minute timetable with three locomotives in action.



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On Friday night it is planned to run a dining train with special fares for visitors who have a ticket for any of the three days of the gala.

The Saturday and Sunday will see all locomotives in action (subject to availability) with an intensive double track timetable involving passenger, freight and mail drop demonstration trains. Special guests have been invited on Saturday to take part in a short rededication ceremony for the 3F.

Saturday morning will start with a walk on first class breakfast service. On Saturday evening railway folk singer Dave Goulder will perform a special concert including a number of songs from his famous album 'Requiem for Steam'. (More details to follow).

Full details of fares and timetables will be available at the Great Central Railway website, www.gcrailway.co.uk

Day rover tickets will include a complimentary gala programme while stocks last.

**ENDS
WORDS 441**

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.

BRITAIN'S ONLY DOUBLE TRACK, MAIN LINE HERITAGE RAILWAY

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