



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY
LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

PRESS INFORMATION

Date: 23rd May 2010

Contact: Kate Tilley, Great Central Railway
Tel: 07515 596835

MEDIA CALL: 27th MAY 2010, 10.30am
LOUGHBOROUGH CENTRAL STATION, GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY,
GREAT CENTRAL ROAD, LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICS, LE11 1RW
Full details at the end of the press release

**SCHOOL CHILDREN GO COMMUTING
VICTORIAN STYLE!**

Famous 'Rocket' & 'Planet'* with open carriages visit Great Central Railway giving passengers the taste of travel as it was 150 years ago!

Grand 'Golden Oldies' gala event (Spring Bank Holiday 27th-30th May) sees seven of the oldest locomotives in action - combined age, almost 1000!

What was it like to be one of the very first railway passengers? Some lucky Loughborough school children are experiencing living history on a special visit to the Great Central Railway on the 27th of May. They'll ride behind famous 'Planet' in open carriages to find out how the Victorians used to travel.

The grand day out is part of the railway's four day 'Golden Oldies' gala which will bring together vintage steam engines from all over the country. Seven engines will be in steam, including two which have never visited the railway before. If the replicas are counted as their counterparts real ages, the combined ages of the locomotives running at the event is almost 1000!

This unique gala concept was created in 2010 and visitors thrilled to the spectacle of Planet (a design from 1829) and Rocket (also from 1829) passing on the double track - a scene not witnessed since the 1830s! Passengers can delight at this again on the Saturday, Sunday and Monday of the gala.



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“I’m really pleased we can offer a living educational experience to our young visitors on Friday morning said the GCR’s president Bill Ford. It must have been thrilling to be an early railway passenger if not a little frightening! Travellers during the gala will be able to find out how and why the Victorians fell in love with trains.”

The seven locomotives appearing showcase an extraordinary century of evolving design from the 1820s to the 1920s. The line up includes:

- **Furness Railway number 20**, built in 1863 and now the oldest working steam locomotive in Britain. It’s visiting the Great Central Railway for the second time.
- **Bellerophon**, one of the oldest steam locomotives to be seen in action anywhere in the world. The loco offers one of the best surviving insights into the development of early purpose-built powerful industrial engines. Bellerophon was built in 1874!
- **662 Martello**, built in 1875 is expected to be the star of the show. She is the first 'Terrier' to visit the GCR and will be seen for the first time in the preservation era in BR black livery.
- The replica of **‘Planet’**, an engine built in 1830 by Robert Stephenson visiting from the Manchester Museum of Science and Industry.
- The famous replica of **Rocket**, (owned by the National Railway Museum) the 1829 built winner of the Rainhill trials, designed for the Liverpool and Manchester Railway.
- **GNR class N2** designed by Sir Nigel Gresley and built in 1921.
- **LMS 3F 47406 ‘Jinty’**, one of 422 shunting engines built between 1924 and 1931. The 'Jinties' represent the ultimate development of the Midland Railway's six-coupled tank engines

“We wanted something special for families and enthusiasts” continued Bill Ford,

GCR’s General Manager **“We have created a fascinating four day event not to be forgotten with visitors being treated to a true Victorian commuting experience”**



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Kate Tilley, Marketing Manager for the Great Central Railway added “**This is an incredible event with a one off line up of vintage motive power. Look out for Rocket and Planet passing on the double track – just like the early days of the railways. With Planet and Rocket coming with their open carriages, visitors can experience the GCR’s double track in a very different way.**”

There will also be a beer tent at Loughborough, vintage traction engines and classic cars at Quorn and costumed re-enactors reciting Victorian poetry on Saturday, Sunday & Monday.

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PRESS CALL:

Members of the press and media are invited to Loughborough Central Station at 10.30am on Friday 28th May. A group of approximately 30 schoolchildren will travel on the 10.45am train from Loughborough to Quorn, with ‘Furness number 20’ (the oldest working standard gauge locomotive in the country) & the ‘Terrier 662 Martello’ (seen for the first time at GCR and in BR black livery) ‘top and tailing’.

At Quorn they will change to meet ‘Planet’ and its train of distinctive open carriages. There will be time for photographs and interviews before the train departs at 11.20. The children will arrive back at Loughborough at 11.30am. The children and school staff will be available for interview, as will Great Central Railway.

Please confirm you wish to attend the press call by calling Kate Tilley on Tel: 07515 596835

** Planet and Rocket are replicas of the original locos*