



## GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

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GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

April 2 2014



*The visiting Deltic makes a good impression of a steam loco as it passes the spring countryside with the TPO during last weekend's diesel gala. **Inspiring Images***

### **From the General Manager**

Last weekend saw our first Diesel event of the year in some fine Spring weather. This was especially well attended, doubtless attracted by Deltic D9016, and a very intensive timetable.

The Saturday was, I'm afraid, trying for staff and visitors alike, with one of the locos failing early and followed by later problems with the Deltic. All this was compounded by first of all a signal failure which, although attended to within the hour by our S&T Department, resulted in further delays; in addition another train had to be held for some while until a Paramedic crew arrived to attend to a visitor who fell ill. As always, the vast majority of our visitors were very understanding and patient which is exemplified in the following Facebook entry by Andrew Moore (thank you!):

Excellent Diesel Gala today, despite the problems you encountered.... Overall, I was pretty impressed with the whole day....

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RE-CREATING THE EXPERIENCE

Totally impressed with the whole railway. Stations in great shape, good vantage points from embankments and lineside with lack of vegetation. Open access to the loco shed was great too. My only complaint would be that the shops and tea rooms shut a bit early.

Sunday was far more uneventful, at least to the relief of our staff – as always my thanks to everyone involved across the weekend.

Finally, if you're looking for a treat on Easter Day, why not think about booking on our Easter Sunday Luncheon Train. There's a special menu, including roasted rack of lamb, and the cost is £45 per adult; do please remember that our dining tickets include unlimited travel on GCR trains on the day and, for Easter, admission to all the attractions of our Easter Vintage Festival. To book, please call 01509 632323.

**Richard Patching**

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### **Work starts on MML bridge refurbishment**

The reunification of the two halves of the Great Central Railway reached another milestone in late March. Contractors have begun to refurbish the two bridge decks which will be used to span the Midland Main Line.

The one million pound appeal to pay for the bridge to be installed, launched last June has now raised £405,000.

Network Rail are partners with the Great Central on the project to deliver one of the most eagerly anticipated infrastructure projects on any heritage railway. A signal sighting survey along the Midland route has recently been completed. Design work for the new abutments, based on the results from the drilling of trial bore holes is at an advanced stage. The next major development, expected very shortly, is an application for planning permission.

The two bridge decks were recovered during the re-modeling of Reading station in 2011. The refurbishment work will be carried out in two stages. Contractors are currently removing the old waterproof course and will thoroughly inspect the structures ahead of any necessary repair work scheduled for later in the year.

Alan Kemp of the Great Central Nottingham said, "The rate that donations are still coming into the appeal show the wider enthusiast fraternity really has faith in the project. Naturally we are very grateful to have received every penny generously given. To have raised £405,000 not only takes us across another important psychological milestone but also puts us on course for the halfway point! We're urging people now to consider making donations through a standing order. £10 a month, for the next year would be a remarkable contribution particularly if you are eligible to make the gift aid declaration too."

### **HOW TO DONATE:**

Donations can be made with a cheque made payable to 'The David Clark Railway Trust' and sent to the GCR HQ at 'Bridge Appeal', Lovatt House, 3 Wharnccliffe Road,

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Loughborough, Leics, LE11 1SL. Using an appeal form (downloadable from [www.gcrailway.co.uk/unfy](http://www.gcrailway.co.uk/unfy)) standing orders can easily set up.

Alternatively donations can be made online at [www.gcrailway.co.uk](http://www.gcrailway.co.uk) - click on the 'donate now' button or the Bridge to the Future appeal link.

Copies of the Swithland Gala 2013 DVD are still available at £25 each. All proceeds go to the Bridge to the Future appeal. Send an email to [tom.ingall@gcrailway.co.uk](mailto:tom.ingall@gcrailway.co.uk) for details.

Finally, tickets for the Friends of the Great Central Main Line raffle (with a first prize of a Chiltern Trains cab ride) are on sale now from the draw promoter Andy Fillingham via Spinney Close, Main Street, Kibworth Harcourt, Leicester, LE8 0NQ.

**Tom Ingall**



*Left: Bill Ford of the GCR and Alan Kemp of the GCRN shake hands on the bridge deck as refurbishment work commences. Right: Contractors examine the decks at Loughborough in preparation for the work. **GCR***

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### **Boscastle Shed Tours**

Tours normally take place on the second week-end of each month, and the next ones will be on 12 and 13 April.

In view of the numbers expected to attend the Swithland gala, and the fact that some of our guides will be away that week-end, we cannot offer tours as such on 9, 10 and 11 May. However, knowledgeable members of the team will be standing by the engine ready to answer questions.

The aim of the tours is to give an idea of the processes involved in overhauling locomotives, at the level of an interested member of the public without a particular background in railways. The objective is that with this knowledge the visitor might feel motivated to contribute in some way towards the overhaul costs of *Boscastle* – all the more so as the boiler is now back at Loughborough and calling on scarce available funds.

A Souvenir Guidebook is available from the guides for a small fee, filling in what is not possible to communicate in a half-hour tour – including the historical background to the

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heritage GCR, and a means by which steam locomotives can be easily identified. It is quite surprising how many of our visitors do not recognise a 2-8-0 when they see one, and to whom classifications such as 'N2' and 'O4' are a complete mystery.

I believe this publication to be unique to *Boscastle* and the Great Central Railway.

**James Tawse**

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***Easter Bunny Express – don't miss GCR's great Easter holiday sale. Just £25 for a family of 5! Tues 15th, Wed 16th, Thurs 17th & Tues 22nd, Wed 23rd, Thurs 24th & Fri 25th April***

Meet the Easter bunny down at the GCR and ride on the train between stations, all day for just £25 for a family of 5! There's free sweets from the Easter Bunny, a mini craft market, a fun fair at Rothley, face painting and an Easter egg hunt. Book on line and find out more:

Book on line: <http://bit.ly/1dxy4h4>

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***Easter Vintage Festival – Fri 18th to Mon 21st April***

Step back in time at our Vintage Festival. It's an all steam show with the feel of a country fair. There's gallopers and a big wheel, traction engines including *Renown & Repulse*, fairground organs, Edwardian farming demonstrations, vintage cars, commercials and machinery. There's also trade & craft stalls, a real ale tent and live music.

Book on line: <http://bit.ly/1qzibcY>

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***Easter Sunday Luncheon – 20th April***

Your four-course lunch is served aboard our First Class Restaurant Cars as a steam locomotive takes you on a leisurely journey through the Charnwood's glorious countryside. Your meal is served during the journey and there will normally be a pause on Swithland viaduct with its magnificent views across the reservoir to Charnwood Forest. The price includes the full cost of the train ticket and it allows all day travel at our Easter Vintage Festival on the day.

Find out more: <http://bit.ly/1pzKpRC>

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***Quorn Bus & Rail Spring Event***

Great Central Railway alongside Leicester Transport Heritage Trust are staging a one day event to celebrate heritage rail & bus travel. The event is open from 10am – 5pm, there'll be:

- \* two free heritage bus routes from Quorn & Woodhouse station
  - \* display of buses and commercial vehicles at Quorn
  - \* stalls in the station yard at Quorn
  - \* opportunity to combine a number of heritage bus and rail trips in one day
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There'll be more details on line soon: <http://bit.ly/1o3KUrN>

Vintage Vehicle Club – Got a vintage vehicle?

Why not become a member of our club? There's no fees, no subscriptions and we hold regular events and rallies. To find out more email [marketing@gcrailway.co.uk](mailto:marketing@gcrailway.co.uk) or call 01509 632315 / 07710 934788

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### **Easter Vintage Fayre at Greenacres – Saturday 19th, Sunday 20th & Monday 21st April**

Plans for the Easter Vintage Fayre at Greenacres is now well under way, with Laura Jane Vintage singing on the Saturday and Monday and Velvet Divine providing the entertainment on the Sunday. There will be lots of Vintage and Craft stalls along with activities for the children including bouncy castle and face painting, plus the café will be open all weekend providing some good old fashioned home-made food.

For stall availability and further information please contact Lesley on 077785 12275.

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### **Emporium Book Sale Ends**

Our thanks to all our customers (particularly to those who visited us last weekend) who bought books or indeed any item during our extended sale period of three weeks. Last weekend, nearly £1,000 was taken and the sale produced £1,900 in three weeks, This has meant not only that our March total this year is better than the previous one, but that we are now slightly ahead of the total for two months taken during the record beating last year when we finally raised £34,500 for the GCR.

We now have space to display some of our new stock and as promised, the GCR books mentioned last week are now on display in our cabinet and a selection of books concerned with other lines are in the appropriate places on the main shelves. One request, if you look at a book and decide you don't want to buy it, please either replace it on the shelf you found it or, if that is difficult because of tight packing, bring it to our desk so that we can keep displaying books in the correct place.

Two final points, we will continue to offer all video cassettes at 50p each, framed pictures under the value of £30 and cups, mugs, plates and dishes priced under £10 at half price until in these areas too, enough space is released.

We also ask that for this month, before bringing any new stock for the Emporium other than current (2014) magazines, you contact either Chris via [chris.shilliam@btinternet.com](mailto:chris.shilliam@btinternet.com) or myself via [peterman54@yahoo.com](mailto:peterman54@yahoo.com) as storage and display space is still limited.

However, we always have gaps in our stock so if you think your donation might help here, please contact us to check before delivery.

**Peter Scott**

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### **Shed News**

Stan the railway cat has recently been inviting his mate, Piddler Pete, into the Engineers Mess room, to the detriment of the atmospheric conditions. The greatest engineering brains concluded that modern technology, in the form of a cat flap released by a magnet attached to Stan's collar, was the solution. Alas, every cure has a resulting downside, and now Stan struggles to get through the flap with miscellaneous bits of 90lb per yard rail and so on attached to the magnet, but animal lovers can rest assured that he is learning to deal with it.

As to loco progress, the wheels of 6990 are being painted, and shortly the whole thing will start to go together. Some nifty new plate-work is being fitted to the cab area. The project has been starved of labour for the last couple of weeks whilst *Cromwell's* piston and valve exam was under way, but that is now complete, and I have finished the repairs to the combustion chamber lap joints. In fact on Monday 70013 was wheeled out for a boiler washout, I look forward with some trepidation to the hot test of the repairs, then we can enjoy a few home outings to bed it all down.

The Ivatt 2 is currently out of action with a most unusual failure, the drive mechanism of the regulator comprising a cast iron cylinder of some three inches diameter has fractured right through at the dome, which could have been nasty. Luckily it was becoming increasingly stiff, so the failure finally occurred during the stripping process. As an old mentor of mine, who looked after a squadron of Spitfires in the war used to say 'it is trying to tell you something, David'. The country is currently being scoured for a spare which looks likely to be forthcoming, otherwise it would be months, not days to repair it. Hopefully it will be ready to go to the South Devon railway where it is to operate from April 18th through to June, having only recently come back from Butterley. In fact we have several playing away at the moment, with the Black 5 at Keithley and the 'N2' at North Norfolk (I think), also the 3F 'Jinty' is due at the North York Moors end April early May, by which time *Cromwell* should be off on the main line.

All this leaves a reduced choice for the coming weekend my money would go on the Red 8 and the Standard 2, but *Lamiel* could possibly feature, or less likely the Ivatt or 70013 could be finished.

**David Mathews**

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### **Diesel roster**

Saturday 5th – DMU (09:40) and D5401 (11:00 & 13:00).

Sunday 6th – DMU (09:40) and D5401 (11:00 & 13:00).

The times in brackets are the Loughborough departure times.

**Neil Burden**

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*If you have any news or photos you'd like included in the weekly newsletter, please forward to [martin.ward@gcrailway.co.uk](mailto:martin.ward@gcrailway.co.uk) by 10.30am Wednesday.*

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