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ASLEF

MARCH 2007

Journal

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the ASLEF Journal

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Same lies told in a different language



ALL MY anger at the way our railways were privatised came back to me last month when I was interviewed about the 'British experience' by a German TV station. I was forcibly reminded that the public weren't just deprived of a national, coordinated and accountable rail network – they were duped and deceived as well.

The interview began when I was told that those pushing for full privatisation of the German network were justifying it on three main counts: it would cut down bureaucracy, introduce competition and 'ensure a railway more responsive to customer needs'.

I exploded rather than responded – because these are exactly the same blatant untruths that the British public were told by the Tories.

Less bureaucracy! It is a claim that almost takes your breath away.

We used to have one board, one finance office and one operations department. Since privatisation we have 26 boards, 26 finance offices and 26 operations departments. We used to have a single shareholder – the British public. Now we have shareholders across the entire globe – with all the attendant bureaucracy that involves. We used to have a single pensions scheme – now we have 103, and each has its own boards of trustees, actuaries and professional advisors.

Cutting down on bureaucracy? I think not!

Even less true is the allegation that privatisation creates competition – 'the rivalry offered

by a competitor'. It simply does not exist. If you are standing at Liverpool station wanting to go by train to London, the choice is simple. You go by Virgin, or you don't go at all. If there was competition you could say, 'I won't go by Virgin, I'll travel with another company.' But you can't – for the simple reason that there isn't one!

For every journey in the UK, privatisation has merely removed a state monopoly and put in place a private monopoly.

This in turn gives the lie to the final 'justification' for selling a public rail service: that private companies are 'more responsive to customer needs'.

Private companies exist to make money. Employed on relatively short-term franchises, they will provide as little as they can for the maximum possible price. That's how the system works.

Private companies are responsive to shareholders first, customers second – and it shows in the constant stream of reduced services.

I told the German interviewer that when UK rail was privatised we had all these arguments to hand – but they have more.

In addition to the arguments, they have solid, visible and overwhelming evidence of a rail privatisation experience that has failed. We only had the theory. They have the evidence as well.

● I would like to congratulate all the reps, activists and members at South East Trains in Manchester who ensured that ASLEF reps have been re-elected to their company councils. Well done – and thank you!



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ASLEF and RMT will settle their differences

FOLLOWING a meeting at the TUC, the two unions' general secretaries, Keith Norman and Bob Crow, have put their names to the following statement:

'ASLEF and RMT are committed to building positive inter-union relations and fully accept their responsibilities as set out in Principle One of the TUC's Disputes Principles and Procedures.

'Both unions recognise the value of positive inter-union relations and working together



on behalf of people working in the rail industry. Both unions therefore agree to immediately refrain from publishing any recruitment, publicity or other material which may be perceived as hostile or derogatory towards the other union. Further, both

unions will take speedy and effective action to ensure that union officials and representatives at all levels also refrain from publishing such material.

'Both unions have nominated senior officials who will liaise as a matter of priority to ensure that the spirit and intention of this agreement is maintained. Both unions are also committed to publicising this agreement widely through their unions, including through the union journal and branch mailings.'

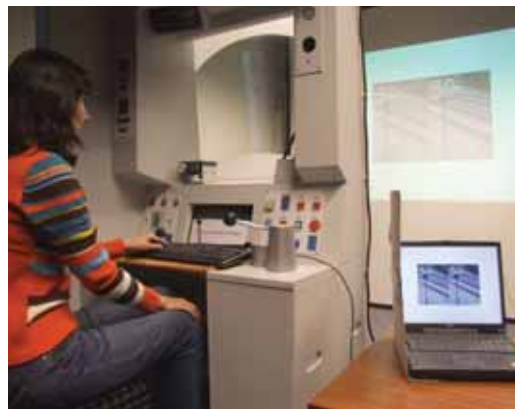
University wants help from train drivers

A PhD student at the University of Nottingham is appealing for train drivers to take part in developing a 'virtual reality' train simulator. The experience of driving reproduced by computer is not new to ASLEF members who use simulators for part of their training and refresher sessions. But the one being developed by Thomas Yates is different in that it is being developed for research purposes.

Thomas' virtual reality train simulator will be used to test out any infrastructure problems and changes - like signal design and sites - for Network Rail. 'Any changes ultimately affect the train driver,' he says. 'So Network Rail needs a tool to determine the effects of changes as regards driveability and route safety. Hopefully, this is it.'

The new £1 million simulator will back up current systems. Thomas' role is to define and specify exactly what it can - and should - do.

'In part this work stems from the recommendation of the Hatfield crash investigation calling for the use of more simulation in the industry. Hopefully, this research will enable us to create



environments that will promote intuitive and safe behaviour. We will be concerned with things like cab layouts, effect of fatigue, train driver workload assessments and the effects of alarms.'

Thomas particularly wants help from train drivers with deciding what quality is needed for the 'virtual environment'. 'They are the experts,' he says.

● If you would like more information please contact Thomas on 0115 951 4040 or e-mail him at eaxtky@nottingham.ac.uk

So - was Jason the youngest train driver?

IN LAST month's 'Key Worker' feature, David Norman said that qualifying as a driver at 21 years and one month 'probably' made him the youngest to do so. But, we added that we were sure Journal readers would let us know if this wasn't the case.

You didn't let us down!

Simon Weller from the EC was 21 years and 7 weeks when he qualified - and he points out that the MP12 - the old BR training and exams - was about six months in duration and the youngest you could go up was at 20 and a half. He says one Brighton driver had to wait for his 21st birthday to take his practical handling exam as they'd sent him on the course too early!

But surely the last word goes to Jason Pountney from the Lincoln branch. Jason says, 'I passed out at Saltley aged 20 years and 6 months. I wonder if this makes me an under-age driver?'

● The RSSB has reviewed the minimum age for driving to see if it could offend against the new age discrimination regulations - and its lawyers have concluded that it can be justified because its primary aim is safety. However, a new EU directive is likely to set a minimum age of 20 for driving international trains, which may have implications for the UK rail network. LU's minimum driving age is 18, but their trains and signals have 'train stop' systems and lower top speeds.



QUIET PERIODS FOR HORNS? The rail industry Train Horns Steering Group - which includes representatives from the Office of Rail Regulation - is recommending that the industry considers introducing a night time quiet period from 2300 to 0700, except when drivers see people on the track or other emergencies

The union view is that, although we recognise the inconvenience to people living near railway whistle boards, nothing must be done to lower safety standards.

Keith Norman says that if the union's track to train surveillance proposals were implemented, it would eliminate the need for further bureaucratic regulations.

RSSB REPORTS IMPROVED SAFETY BUT INCREASES TO TRESPASS

The Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB) reports that statistics up to June last year show improvements in workforce safety compared with the downturn of 2004, with the exception of track workers who account for more than half of all major workforce injuries.

There were no workforce fatalities in the first six months of 2006, but in July a shunter and a driver died at work.

There had been no on-board fatalities in train accidents for the previous 18 months, and there was an improvement in the safety of passengers boarding and alighting trains.

However, it did report a rise in the numbers of trespasser fatalities and suicides in the first half of the year.

More details can be obtained from the RSSB website. (<http://www.rssb.co.uk/>) **RED ALERT!** Issue 28 of 'Red Alert' is now out and should be available from your company. Items include an update on the revised 2006 braking instructions. Southeastern, SWT and Southern all had major improvements. Overall, SPADS remained at 10, but station overruns dropped from 332 to 183.

Latest proposal for overcrowded trains: 'GO TO WORK IN THE AFTERNOON'

IN LAST November's edition, the Journal made fun of SWT's solution to overcrowding on trains: it was not more trains, more carriages or longer platforms – but taking seats out so that more passengers could be squeezed aboard. We honestly believed that the 'railway experts' couldn't come up with anything more ludicrous or confrontational to the public. Well, we were wrong.

It now seems that the government endorses the SWT position – while the Rail Safety and Standards Board says that standing is a virtue – claiming that it can be safer to stand than sit down! The reaction of passengers has been predictable with thousands of commuters staging a 'fare strike' on trains between Bath and Bristol.

Dr Mike Mitchell, director general of rail at the Department for Transport, told MPs, 'If you are travelling a relatively short distance, I do not think that it is unacceptable to expect to stand.' Dr Mike Mitchell, who gets free first-class travel with his Department of Transport job, even suggested staff go to work at 'quiet times' to avoid overcrowding. The £150,000-a-year director said it would cost too much to put on extra trains or carriages and commuters would just have to put up with standing on journeys.

In London a survey of 950 passengers showed growing concern at the lack of seats on peak-time trains – and revealed that almost three-quarters of commuters are forced to stand every day. The Evening Standard has launched a campaign for every commuter to have a seat on a train. Keith Norman says he admires the paper's optimism and wishes them well. 'But I don't think they're going to get anywhere.'

Meanwhile the Rail Safety and Standards Board has been conducting a survey on overcrowding which suggested in part that overcrowding can be a safety plus, because if there is an abrupt stop, your fall is cushioned! But to be fair to the RSSB, it was not seeking to solve the root causes of overcrowding, but to investigate any health and safety issues that may arise as a result of it.



But it has concluded that although over-crowding was found to be a factor in a number of hazards, the risks are actually quite small. It says rather that the public perception of risk is higher than the reality. There is, it says, a false perception among the public and rail users. Other than some cases of fainting, there is very little direct evidence of any health effects. It is, the RSSB concludes 'an urban myth', but it at least has the decency to conclude that, 'This is not to say that there are not good reasons (performance, customer satisfaction, reputational) for trying to match supply and demand, especially at peak times, but that's for government and the industry to work out.'

A final novel piece of public relations came when commuter Tony Richards complained to Great Western about a packed train he had been on from Reading to Penzance he was told by the company's 'customer care' department that 'If a passenger boards an already crowded services, they are in effect saying that they agree to travel in those conditions.' So – if you don't like it, you can get off!

The original excuse for privatising the rail network was, you may recall, to produce a more customer-focussed service to the public. ASLEF says – it hasn't worked. Let's take rail back into public hands.



FGW COMPANY COUNCIL ELECTIONS Bro I Finn, Reading Branch is elected to the position of First Great Western Company Council (Former FGW Link) Constituency 2. (Oxford, Reading)

Bro S Davies, Westbury Branch is elected to the position of First Great Western Company Council (Former Wessex) Constituency 1. (Bristol, Gloucester, Fratton (Portsmouth) Westbury)

FIRST CAPITAL CONNECT - REST DAY WORKING ASLEF is

prepared to sanction Rest Day Working until 28th April 2007 subject to continued monitoring by our representatives.

SILVERLINK - REST DAY WORKING ASLEF is prepared to sanction Rest Day Working until 10th November 2007 subject to continued monitoring by our representatives and to the provision of satisfactory reports relating to the transfer of our members to the West Midlands franchise and Transport for London.

C2C - REST DAY WORKING ASLEF is prepared to sanction Rest Day Working until 31st July 2007 subject to continued monitoring by representatives and monthly written reports.

FREIGHTLINER INTERMODAL - REST DAY WORKING ASLEF is prepared to sanction Rest

Day Working until 17th March 2007 subject to continued monitoring by representatives.

MIDLAND MAINLINE - REST DAY WORKING ASLEF is prepared to sanction Rest Day Working until 10th November 2007 subject to continued monitoring by our local and company council representatives and the provision of readouts from the rostering system on a weekly basis, and to the provision of satisfactory reports relating to the transfer of our members to the East Midlands Franchise.

FIRST SCOTRAIL - REST DAY WORKING ASLEF is prepared to sanction Rest Day Working until 17th March 2007 subject to continued monitoring by our local and company council representatives.

Union backs Scots women drivers

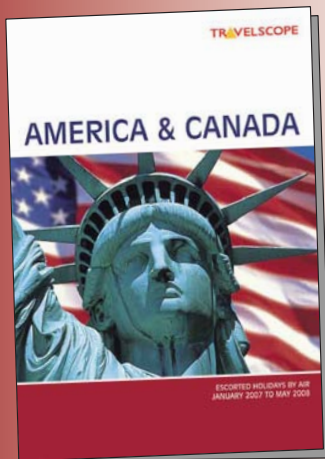
ASLEF is working with First ScotRail to encourage women to apply to be train drivers. 879 of the firm's 900 drivers are men. District organiser Kevin Lindsay says the union will work with the company as it seeks to recruit more women and members of ethnic minorities.

Car drivers waste 11 days in congestion

A survey conducted by the RAC Foundation last month showed that 20% of company car drivers spend more than 11 days a year sitting in congestion. It found that most drivers waste between one or two hours per week in traffic jams.

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Debate with a mate! visit ASLEF's on-line discussion forum!

The union's web editor, Sarah Francis (sfrancis@aslef.org.uk) explains why and how you should get online...

Have you signed up to ASLEF's 'virtual community'? Contributed to a popular on-line debate? Or even helped out a fellow-member by answering their niggling workplace question?

No?

Then what are you waiting for!

Website discussion forums are the modern way of exchanging experiences, offering advice and debating ideas. They date back from 1995 – and 12 years later they are THE place to hold discussions, debates or just have a general chit-chat about what's going on in the world.

The union's new website sees the return of a discussion forum provided exclusively for, and written only by, ASLEF members. Recent hot topics that have been debated include how the new smoking regulations will affect your workplace, training courses for union representatives and rest day working.

You don't have to be a 'website wizard' to use the forum. There is a user guide on the website with easy instructions on how to get involved.

The forum is broken up into 7 manageable sections to help you to organise your discussions. These are Campaigns, Education, Equalities, Health and Safety, Political, TOCs/FOCs and a General section.

So join the internet revolution and start posting your comments today!

Where is the forum?

➤ Go to the ASLEF website at www.aslef.org.uk

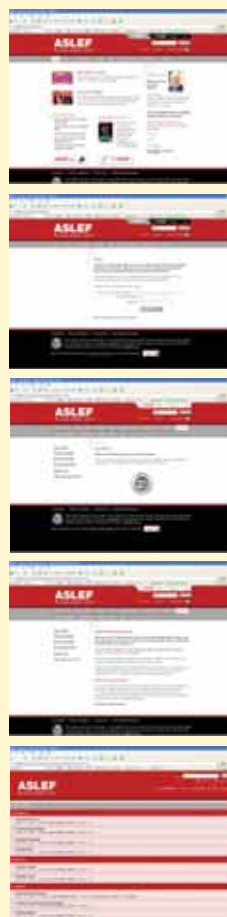
➤ Go to the top right hand corner of the homepage and click on 'Login' (you may need to register first if you haven't done so already)

➤ Enter your membership number and password and click on the grey 'click to login' box

➤ You are now in the members only area of the website

➤ Click on the 'ASLEF discussion forum' text which is on the left hand side of the page

➤ You will now be on the page which confirms the code of conduct for the forum and instructions on how to use the forum. Once you have read this click on the 'Click here to enter the forum' text at the bottom of the page.



ASLEF TO MARK SAFETY DAY WITH SQUASH CAMPAIGN

ASLEF will be supporting the International Transport Workers Federation's 'Safety Day' initiative on 13 March with an event aimed at highlighting train drivers' cab conditions - and drawing attention to the impact on safety that this can have on the travelling public.

The union will be leafleting the public first at Paddington station (between 0900 and 1000) before moving on to Marylebone Station. We will be making arrangements to ensure that we are noticed!

As part of this initiative, two leaflets have been produced to publicise the Squash campaign - one aimed at the public and another to make sure all our members are behind the campaign.

The ones for the public (with the purple front) conclude by asking concerned commuters to contact the Secretary of State for Transport asking him to tell the companies he employs on a franchise basis that poor cab conditions put the safety of the travelling public at risk - and demanding that he puts pressure onto them to ensure that cab conditions are 'Squashed'! It makes the point that, 'A driver struggling to keep warm or who is desperately over-heated, who is bent over to reach the controls, who has to wriggle on a broken seat and is subjected to ludicrous noise levels - can't possibly be alert and responsive to hazards on the line'.

Those for our own members (with the orange front) are intended to keep up the pressure on management by reminding drivers to

- Raise cab conditions whenever they can
- Report every single incident of poor conditions and seek a written response



- Keep union reps informed so we have up-to-date information for negotiations; and

- To contact MPs to ask them to sign Early Day Motion 247 which calls on train companies to install temperate control devices as a matter of urgency.

We have also distributed 'Squash' stickers which we hope drivers will wear to keep our campaign as visible as possible.

If reps would like further copies of the leaflets or stickers, the person to contact at headquarters is Youssef Cockbaine (ycockbaine@aslef.org.uk)

We are also collating pictures of the worst cab conditions for publicity purposes. If you have any photos that would be useful, please post your picture to Chris Proctor at Arkwright Road, or send it by email to journal@aslef.org.uk.

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE!



Here are two recent pictures of Class 66s. One of them is bound for delivery to Poland - and the other is for use within the UK. On one of them (the one bound for Freightliner Poland) you can clearly see vents on the cab roof. What are they for? Air conditioning, of course. The other is the UK spec Freightliner Heavy Haul 66 (in Bardon Aggregates livery). This one doesn't have vents - so it doesn't have air conditioning. Of course.

What exactly does this tell you about how UK rail companies treat their staff?

Our train driver photographer adds, 'If you hired a car from a company and it had leaking windows, broken seats, bad vibration and extreme noise you'd take it back to the manufacturer - or refuse to hire it.' Exactly.

Networker - heat and seat problems persist

DAVE PIGGOTT's Gillingham branch - who have previously commented on the dubious 508 stock - say the Networker also has major problems with heating and seating.

'They have been fitted with a 'new and improved' heating system designed to prolong their lives and minimise technical problems - rather than take drivers into consideration!

'For a start, when you turn the heater on it can take time for the heat to come out - and in the meantime you are blasted with cold air. When you are warm enough to switch it off, you have to roast for three minutes before it begins operating.

'The noise emitted by these - and the so-called 'cab cooling equipment' - is excessive, so that it can drown warnings from AWS or DSD safety equipment. It doesn't help that Networker cabs are also prone to water leaks and draughts.

'Seats are too often broken and unadjustable with shallow padding and dirty covers.

'We don't believe managers would sit in the environment we have to - and, as professional train drivers, we don't see why we should put up with it any longer.'

MAYOR BLAMES ASLEF AS HE PUTS BLOCK ON LATE TUBES ASLEF general



secretary Keith Norman says Ken Livingstone is being 'disingenuous' by seeking to blame

ASLEF for preventing later running of London's weekend tubes. The Mayor of London said the proposal would not go ahead because of a lack of progress on pay talks with the union.

'I am astonished that Ken is pointing the finger at ASLEF,' Keith says. 'The problem is not London's tube drivers. It is London Underground Limited's negotiators. They need to learn that negotiation is not seeking concessions without offering anything in return.'

The union says the Mayor has increased black cab fares for night running; that staff in bars and clubs are recompensed for longer opening; and that the police are paid for unsociable working. 'We are simply looking for a similar arrangement,' Keith says. **PROTESTS AT MURDER OF UNION LEADER** The



International Transport Federation (ITF) has expressed outrage over the murder of Guatemalan trade unionist, Pedro Zamora, General Secretary of the Dockers' union STPEQ. Zamora was attacked in Puerto Quetzal, Guatemala, while driving his two children from the port hospital.

His car was hit by over 100 bullets and the murderers went to his car to shoot him in the face - a perversity called the 'tiro de gracia' used by many paramilitary murderers.

IFT leader David Cockroft said, 'I strongly condemn this cowardly attack and call upon the government of Guatemala to bring those responsible to justice immediately.'

ONE IN FOUR RAILWAY PASSENGERS ARE CHINESE China saw its railway transportation volume account for a quarter of the world's total last year - even though its track accounts for only 6 percent of global operational railway mileage. It only has 76,600 kilometers of railways in operation, making the density of its railway transportation the largest in the world.



Executive back McDonnell for Labour leader

THE union's executive committee has unanimously decided to recommend John McDonnell to be Leader of the Labour Party when Tony Blair leaves office in the summer.

All ASLEF members who pay the political levy will be invited to vote on who they want to succeed Tony and the union will pledge all its votes to the winner – but the executive is adamant that the union's best interests would be served if John McDonnell were Leader.

We will be inviting John to explain his policies in a forthcoming edition of the ASLEF Journal.

Join Labour and select next PM!

IN 2007 the Labour Party will elect a new Leader and his Deputy. The Leader of the Party will be Britain's next Prime Minister – so why not join the Party and participate in that election?

Anyone who joins the Labour Party before the election process begins will get a personal vote in the leadership election (in addition to being part of the collective ASLEF vote if you pay the political levy). ASLEF members can join the Labour Party for a special reduced rate of £1 per month, or you can pay a one-off payment of £12 for the year.

In joining, you will also play a part in deciding the outcome of the May elections for the Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly & local government across the UK.

You can join on line at www.labour.org.uk/joinus or by calling 08705 900 200.

Join up and build a future.

Make sure of your postal vote...

EVEN if you are already registered to vote by post – and everyone can have a postal vote if they wish - you now need to re-apply and include your date of birth and your signature.

This will apply to all future elections – including those in May for the Welsh Assembly and local government elections in England and Wales.

Those who already have a postal vote will be asked for the additional information in a letter from their local council. After 21 days you will be reminded about it and if you do not reply within a further 21 days you will be removed from the postal vote list - although you will still be able to vote in person at a polling station.

The changes have been made to help make our voting system as secure as possible. Our democracy depends on elections and we need to ensure access, integrity and participation in the process. The new measures are aimed at preventing postal vote fraud and ensuring that everyone has confidence in the electoral system.

If you don't have a postal vote but would like one, you just need to contact your local council and ask them to send you a postal vote



registration form. Alternatively, you can visit www.aboutmyvote.co.uk where you can download a postal vote application form. This website also provides details of the electoral services department of your local council, in case you need help with filling out the form.

This union was formed to improve the lives of our members, and of working people in general, but we can only succeed in this task if our members use their vote at election time.

Whether you vote in person or use a postal vote, we urge you to vote in May.

TULO: the union link to the Labour Party

TULO is the Trade Union and Labour Party Liaison Organisation which was set up at the party conference in 1994 to ensure Labour governments didn't run into problems like those in the 1970s with its affiliated unions. Between elections it has a communication role, and at election time it co-ordinates trade union support for Labour candidates.

TULO is a separate body from both the Party and the trade unions although its National Office is located in Labour Party Head Office, and its funding is derived from the £3 fee per member that unions pay to affiliate to the Party.

The organisation operates at local, regional and national levels, believing that effective liaison between the Party and the unions at every level is essential if the link is to be beneficial to all concerned.

The National TULO Committee is made up of the general secretaries of Labour-affiliated unions, plus senior

representatives of the Party and government. Its nature as a forum for communication and dialogue means that the views of the unions' leaders on a range of issues can be made clear to key figures in the Party.

It acts in addition to the many other ways in which the unions input into the Party's structures and proceedings. For example, unions send delegates to the Labour Party's Annual Conference; have seats on the National Executive Committee and National Policy Forum; and make up an important part of the Electoral College that elects the Party's Leader and Deputy Leader.

TULO operates in each of the 9 English regions, and in Scotland and Wales, in much the same way as it does nationally. Each region has its own TULO Committee mirroring the structure of National TULO, with each comprising senior regional officials of the affiliated unions and the Regional Directors and General



GET ORGANISED: Join your local TULO and make a difference

Secretaries of Labour Parties.

It stresses that the union-party link is crucial at a local level – because it is here that relationships can be built that can deliver a real voice for trade unionists within the Party, as well as the trade union support that makes a difference at election time. These relationships rely on local activists in the Party and the unions to put time and effort into developing them.

● For more information on how to help build the links between your union and the Labour Party please visit www.unionstogether.org.uk.

GIVE OUR BANNERS AN AIRING ON MAY DAY...!

WE received two invitations following our article 'Where have all the banners gone?' in the November issue. The first was to visit Cannon Street to see an ASLEF banner which is 'part of our history' and the second was from the People's History Museum in Manchester.

The banner at Cannon Street belongs to the Joint South Eastern London branches which six individual branches produced to commemorate the union's 100th year. The London South Eastern Trains Drivers' Company Council has invited any member or rep who would like to see the original to call them to arrange a visit to their office in Room 9 at Cannon Street. Bros

Calvert, Rowland and Holmes say it is worth the trip because, 'The banner is part of our history in this region.'

We also had a letter from Jim Garretts, who is the Keeper at the People's History Museum in Manchester. Jim points out that the museum (whose galleries are at The Pump House, Bridge Street, Manchester M3 3ER) holds the database of the National Banner Survey.

'We have records of almost 2,500 trade union banners,' Jim says. 'It makes us one of the leaders in their conservation and interpretation. If you have branches who are concerned about the state of their banners, we can tell them what to do to preserve them. They can give us a ring on

0161 228 7212 or visit our website which is www.phm.org.uk. We have a specialist textile conservation studio as part of the museum, so I'm sure we'll be able to help.'

Although the People's History Museum doesn't hold ASLEF banners in its collections, it does have a pair of ASLEF pennants, which are illustrated on this page.

There are three ASLEF-related banners recorded in the Survey; two NUR & ASLEF Joint Orphan Fund banners held by Nuneaton Museum and Art Gallery and one ASLEF - March Branch banner which is held by March and District Museum in Cambridgeshire.

Jim says researchers are very welcome to

contact the museum with enquiries or visit the museum to interrogate the database themselves. 'Alternatively, there are over four hundred illustrated banner records that can be viewed on the People's History Museum's collections website that can be accessed from the museum's home page,' he says. 'Just select 'Search Our Collections' from the options list on the left-hand side and click on the 'Banners in our Collection' Quick Browse button. You will be able to view most of our banners, together

with some of the 'choice' banners held in other institutions.

If you'd like to contact him direct, either write to him at the People's History Museum's Head Office at 103 Princess Street, Manchester M1 6DD, ring 0161 228 7212 or use his email jim.garretts@phm.org.uk.

And finally – we hope we'll see a good selection of our modern ASLEF banners at this year's May Day celebration events. We'll let you know of events taking place on May Day in the next edition of the Journal or on the union's web-site.



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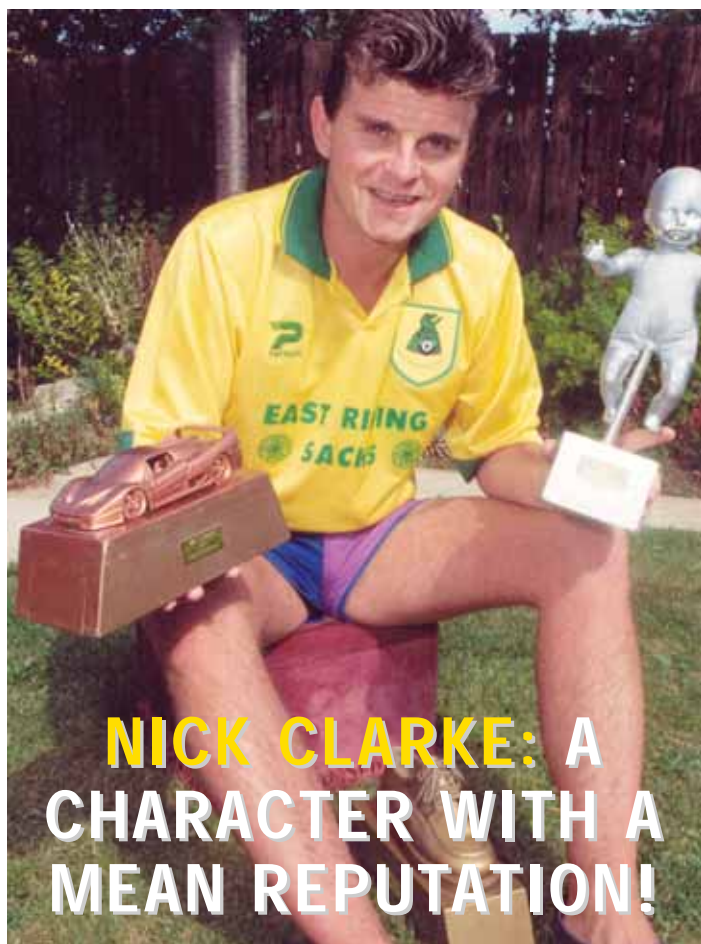
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FREIGHTLINER driver Nick Clarke – ‘Nobby’ as he’s known – talks like a Browning machine gun

with a Yorkshire accent. ‘My wife says I never stop,’ he says. But on the other hand, he’s got plenty to talk about – and when he says that railway ‘characters’ aren’t what they used to be, he seems oblivious to the fact that he’s one himself!

He’s got a wonderfully positive attitude to life, firmly believing that you might as well enjoy it – and he does. ‘I love my job,’ he says. ‘I’ve done passenger work at Leeds, but I prefer freight. I like the variety – you never know what you’ll be doing next. There’s always something that can be improved at work, but I’ve always wanted to drive trains. When I told the careers person this at school, he told me to grow up!’

On one level, it was sound advice – because at the age of 16 Nobby was still just four foot eleven – and to work on the railways you had to be five foot two. ‘I went three times for interviews, and finally the company doctor said I was ‘close enough’ to five-two. I think he knew I’d just keep coming back!’

Nobby joined the railway 26 years ago as a driver’s assistant – a ‘second man’ – and passed out as a driver in August ‘86. ‘Because they’d let so many drivers leave early, they had a shortage, so 40 of us were made up on the same day – including Mick Rix, who went on to become ASLEF’s general secretary.’

So what makes Nobby a character? Well, he’s a football fanatic – a member of the ‘92 Club’, reserved for people who have visited every football league ground. He was also at the Mexico World Cup. He’s amazingly well-travelled – Kenya, Australia, the States, Egypt, Tunisia, Thailand as



well as Europe. And although he’s a family man – he and wife Diane have two children, Adam and Rebecca – he’s The Meanest Man in Britain.

Well, that’s the label. But to be honest, it’s a bit of an exaggeration. A Yorkshireman born in Doncaster, he’s more careful than tight.

He won his dubious title when, 10 years ago, he got set up by his wife and a mate. He arrived at a (free!) recording of ‘Confessions’ at the ITV studios on London’s South Bank thinking he was just watching it. Gradually it dawned on him that he was the subject of the show! ‘They started giving dubious awards,’ he says. ‘Finally I was declared the ‘meanest man in Britain!’

As a result of this programme he featured in the Daily Star, Gloria Hunniford’s ‘Open House’ programme, the ‘News of the World’, local radio - and was even followed to Lanzarote by a BBC TV documentary team!

But the nice thing about Nobby is that he laughs at himself more than others do. He just doesn’t like spending more than he has to.

‘We have everything we want – I just don’t like paying over the odds. I’d sooner get stuff from Netto than Sainsbury’s. I’d sooner get something fixed than buy a new one. I hate debt and I loathe waste.’

So he works on the turnstile at his beloved Doncaster Rovers rather than pay for a ticket - but he wouldn’t think of not going. In fact - and it’s not

good for the ‘Meanest Man’ image – he coughed up £90 to see the last match his team played at their old stadium of Belle Vue last year. On the other hand, Nobby would sooner walk a couple miles than pay to park his car – and when his children were young he’s been known to recycle nappies, using masking tape to keep them up if necessary! And he’ll turn off the radio in tunnels and stitch the uppers of his trainers if there’s still wear in the soles. He also takes pleasure in pointing out to fellow air-passengers that his ticket cost half theirs!

‘But’, he says, ‘I don’t mind spending money if I think it’s worthwhile.’

He has, however, a very different attitude towards debt. ‘If you haven’t got it, you can’t afford it,’ he says. ‘I tell them at work they are ‘Yesterday’s Society’. They want everything yesterday. They’ve spent their ‘Happy Cheque’ before it’s arrived.’

But one thing Nobby doesn’t mind paying for is his union membership. ‘But I do object to paying for the so-and-so’s who aren’t members and get the benefits,’ he says. ‘I’m in favour of the closed shop. Everyone should be in a union or should pay into a charity.’



Nobby with Fern Britton



... with Gloria Hunniford



... with Lorraine Kelly

Would you be prepared to be featured in future editions of this column, or know someone who would be a good subject? If you do, please let us know at the ASLEF Journal, 9 Arkwright Road, London NW3 6AB or journal@aslef.org.uk



Celebrate International Women's Day in Brum!

ASLEF will join other activists at Birmingham's New Street Station on 8 March to raise awareness about – and celebrate – International Women's Day. We will also be focusing attention on our union's campaign to make International Women's Day a Bank Holiday in the UK.

International Women's Day has been celebrated by women around the world since the turn of the last century, and this will be the third year that ASLEF's Women's Consultative Committee (WCC) has organised an event to allow people to remember the essential roles that women play at home, at work and in society. They have invited other transport unions and the West Midlands Regional TUC to join them at the event.

The WCC, along with National Organiser Andy Reed and District Organiser

Mick Whelan, will be leafletting commuters at the station, calling attention to the significance of International Women's Day, highlighting the Bank Holiday campaign – and seeking support for a petition deploring the level of women's state pensions. In particular we will highlight the facts that

- 1 in 4 single women pensioners live in poverty
- Twice as many women as men rely on means-tested benefits in retirement
- For every £1 a man receives from a pension, a woman receives only 32p
- Women's average retirement income is £92 a week, 57% of men's.

This appalling situation – despite 30 years of equal pay legislation – is the result of a number of factors, which include

- Women still earn 75% of male earnings – and in part-time work the disparity is even greater
- Women were encouraged to pay a reduced stamp or no stamp whilst they were at home raising their children – they were not told this would affect their state pensions
- During the 40s, 50s and 60's it was common practice for women to be asked to leave work once they got married
- The 'glass ceiling' has long prevented women from accessing higher paid jobs

ASLEF has worked closely with the National Pensions Convention who are organising a day-long conference for trade unionists on 26 March at UCU in central London. If you would like to register for this conference, email Gary Fabian (gfabian@aslef.org.uk.)

If you would like a copy of the ASLEF Women's Pension petition call the union's equalities advisor Sharon Allen on 020 7317 8600.

NEW APPROACH FOR EDUCATION The executive committee has agreed recommendations put forward by National Organiser Andy Reed to radically revise the union's education services. 'We have a duty to provide our union with top-class professional training for our representatives. The executive has allocated the funds and we have a clear strategy for the future,' Andy says.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS Central to the new policy are two national schools – in London and Preston – enabling training for up to 40 branch secretaries. All branches will be asked for nominations and the executive will put forward five branch secretaries from each district.

The courses will be tailor-made for ASLEF by Dunstable College in Bedfordshire, who have worked on TUC projects for many years. They will be

working with the union to develop, facilitate and coordinate a syllabus for a challenging, and accredited, course.

Because this is seen as a priority issue, it is hoped that both courses can be provided before the summer.

PENSIONS The union is considering a seminar specifically on pensions. The aim is to ensure our representatives are aware of the up-to-date position and are armed with arguments to support our position. This is vital if we are to play a full part in the recently-formed rail pensions commission.

DISTRICT EDUCATION Responsibility for training for local and company council reps is being transferred to the union's District Organisers. The aim is to work on a national template defining the issues to be covered and the methods of teaching. This is so that all

ASLEF reps will have access to a consistent and recognisable programme.

The Organisers' budgets will be increased to enable them to take over responsibility for selecting providers and making arrangements for courses.

HEALTH AND SAFETY Head Office has recently begun health and safety courses concerned with cab ergonomics. Reactions so far have been positive and we therefore intend to consider other courses that can add to our expertise in this area. Because of the specialised nature of health and safety training, it will continue to be provided from headquarters.

● This list is not intended to be definitive and the executive will continue to examine scope for funding opportunities and seek views on other specialised courses that will benefit our activists.

JUST 12 MONTHS AFTER BEING REJECTED ...

ROAD TRAINS ARE BACK ON

ASLEF General Secretary Keith Norman has dismissed a new Department for Transport (DfT) study into 'roadtrains' is less than 12 months since Stephen Ladyman announced the department's decision not to allow these monsters. The issue has to be dragged up again is beyond me. 'Keith said it was 'a prime example of un-joined up government'. About its concerns about excessive road use and its intention to introduce charging – and at the same time it is re-introducing these dangerous and destructive lorries onto our roads. And how on earth can this help the government's stated aim of reducing road congestion? Keith's message was clear: 'ASLEF will oppose any proposals to introduce any vehicle over the current maximum weight limit. The union stressed that the union has no shortage of supporters for its campaign.

AN UNNECESSARY STUDY

The union could hardly believe that just over a year after a written Parliamentary answer from then Transport minister Steven Ladyman had refused to allow 60-tonne and 80-tonne lorries onto our roads it has authorised a fresh study into the use of these road-trains in the UK.

'We don't need a study about this. We need a government that will stand by the decision it has made,' Keith says. 'Alternatively, I can save them a lot of time and effort. The first thing they are to consider is 'Whether there is a fundamental need for longer and heavier goods vehicles in the UK'. The answer's 'No.'

Keith went on to say, 'The 60 tonners would be the length of a competition swimming pool and are totally unsuitable for UK roads. Their weight destroys road surfaces and their length makes them dangerous to overtake and adds to congestion. The 84 tonners don't even bear thinking about.'

Keith points to a union survey last year which showed 67% of the public were opposed to larger lorries. ASLEF's campaign against them was joined by environmental groups opposed to the plans on pollution grounds and other companies – such as BT which is concerned about lorry heights hitting its cabling and bridges.

67% SAY NO

The last opinion poll on the subject of longer and heavier vehicles (LHVs) was commissioned by ASLEF in August 2005. The survey pointed out that the government is considering legislation that

would allow 60 tonne lorries (which are more than one third longer and heavier than the present legal limit on our roads) and we asked two questions:

Would you be likely to support this or not?

67% said no, 23% were in favour and 10% were undecided. In short, less than a quarter of the population want this change. So, given that we live in a democracy, why is the government pursuing it?

An alternative would be for the government to encourage more freight to go by rail. Would you support this alternative?

86% said yes, 9% said no and 5% were undecided.

The public spoke – but it seems that the government continues to have hearing difficulties.

THE ASLEF CASE AGAINST ROAD TRAINS

The union case against LHVs is based on a number of objections and observations. These include:

The FACT that rail provides a cleaner option than road transport – especially when there is uncertainty about energy sources, road reliability is worsening and rail freight provides a low carbon option.

The FACT that the Department for Transport (DfT) has the authority – under current EU legislation - to ban LHVs from our roads

The FACT that existing lorry bans are poorly enforced – such as height limits that lead to 'bridge bashing' or speed restrictions. When 40 tonne and then 44 tonne trucks were given the go-head, the haulage industry promised that the largest

lorries would be restricted to motorways and dual carriageways. In practice, this has not happened – and it has not been enforced.

The FACT that there are serious safety and social implications if we allow LHVs onto non motorway or dual carriageway roads so that they can access transhipment depots.

The FACT that accidents involving heavy vehicles tend to be more serious. If weight limits are increased it seems a logical assumption that accident severity will rise in proportion.

The FACT that 67% of people rejected LHVs in a National Opinion Poll survey.

The FACT that there are real social costs and 'quality of life' issues for

UNDER CONSIDERATION ALTERNATIVE FOR



Currently the maximum allowed length is 18.75 metres for drawbar combination vehicles and 18.75 metres for drawbar combination vehicles. The DfT study is considering an alternative A-train which is 31 metres long and weighs 100 tonnes which is up to 25.25 metres long

INS IN THE AGENDA

'as 'unnecessary and irritating'. 'It s on UK roads,' Keith says. 'Why the . 'On one hand the government talks surrecting the debate about allowing im of assisting rail freight?' And n of 40 tonnes,' he said – and he

individuals and communities. These include increased perceived and real danger, community severance, visual intrusion, damage to buildings and increased noise and vibration.

The FACT that there will undoubtedly be a negative effect on rail freight – because if a firm invest in a monster road train, it is going to have to keep it on the road 24x7 for it to turn in a profit.

HOW WILL THE STUDY WORK?

The DfT has asked the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) and Herriot Watt University in Edinburgh to carry out research on its behalf. They have been

asked to respond in two stages – firstly to undertake technical evaluation of the different combinations including impact on the road network, safety etc – and secondly to consider the overall national impact including modal shift issues.

TRL, which is based in Crowthorne, was originally a government facility, but was privatised in 1996.

The first part of the report is due at the DfT in the summer. This means there is little time to lose.

WHAT WE WILL DO

We have agreement in principle to mount a joint campaign involving, in addition to ASLEF, the RMT, Transport 2000 and the Freight on Rail organisation. In view of the timetable, any activity will have to be mounted as a matter of urgency.

We must make sure that the decision makers – principally ministers Stephen Ladyman and Tom Harris, TRL and Herriot Watt University – are aware of the union's objections and the reasons behind our thinking.

We are considering a number of initiatives including a further opinion poll, a media campaign and research input, political activity, contacting local and regional activity and approaching environmental groups.

Whatever tactics are decided, if we are to be successful we must be able to rely on your support. Please make yourself aware of the campaign arguments – and don't be shy about telling others about them!



ASK YOUR MP TO SIGN RAIL FREIGHT EDM

Keith Norman has urged MPs to sign up to Early Day Motion 730 which opposes the authorisation of 'road train' lorries in the UK. The Motion has been tabled by Kelvin Hopkins, MP for Luton North.

The EDM reads:

'That this House notes the environmental benefits of rail freight over other transport modes; recognises that an average aggregate freight train can remove up to 120 HGV lorries from the road network; supports Government steps to encourage modal shift from road to rail; and is therefore opposed to the introduction of longer and heavier goods vehicles that could weigh up to 60 tonnes and be as long as 25.25 metres onto the UK road network.'

Keith says that 'it would require a peculiar kind of mind' to believe that longer, wider and taller lorries have anything to contribute to relieving road congestion or improving the environment. 'Let's not forget that a single freight train can remove up to 120 HGV lorries from UK roads.'

ASLEF members can write to their MPs asking them to support EDM 730 at House of Commons

Westminster SW1 0AA

Or email them using www.WriteToThem.com

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Kings Lynn celebrates its century!

ON 18 November the Kings Lynn Branch met to celebrate its centenary. We were very pleased to welcome, for the first time in the branch's 100-year history, the General Secretary, Keith Norman and National Organiser Andy Reed, with their wives, to an official branch function. They joined our Executive Committee members Nigel Gibson, Company Councillor Peter Baines and their wives – and – most importantly – well over 100 railway employees, some with service dating back to the 1940s.

The railways in and around Lynn used to employ hundreds of people, with lines running to every point on the compass from both Kings Lynn and the Midland and Great Northern Depot at South Lynn. Many of those in attendance on Saturday evening had worked at both depots – with some having started in the 1940s. Many had not seen each other for over 30 years and two colleagues met for the first time since they were both engine cleaners 50 years ago!

A number of colleagues brought along many photographs and other mementos, which prompted many tales of happy times long since past on our Local Branch Lines. As branch



Kings Lynn centenary - the class of 2006



Kings Lynn mutual - The Mutual Improvement Class in 1949

secretary I have spent many hours researching archive material, and with the help of a number of my branch colleagues, we covered the walls of the hall with historical documents, photographs, minutes, seniority lists and rosters which documented many significant events in 100 years of local railway history.

Our General Secretary Keith Norman in his address to the gathering, paid tribute to this historic milestone, where in an area of the country not renowned for large/heavy industry, and therefore not a natural seat for trade unionism, not only had the local branch survived to celebrate its centenary – it has flourished.

In recognition of this Keith presented two limited edition porcelain plates depicting ASLEF's history. One was

accepted by our branch chairman Tony Watson on behalf of the branch, and I was presented with the other – as I have been branch secretary since 1983, a period which almost matches a quarter of our branch history.

Two previous branch secretaries were also at the celebrations – Jack Reynolds (who, at 85 was the oldest retired driver present) and John Donaldson, who was secretary before Jack.

We were also pleased to see our former District Organiser Andy Cotogno and his wife enjoying the evening and, on the branch's behalf, I was delighted to present Andy with a sought-after local railway history book. It was in recognition of his contribution to the union, and his support for our branch, during his time in office.

The evening passed by too quickly and was hailed as an enjoyable and successful event. Out thanks go to our hosts at 'Presnells' Millfleet Club for their hospitality, which included a superb buffet. I must also thank all those colleagues who helped me in the organisation of the event, especially Helen, wife of branch chairman, Tony Watson and Susannah, my wife, for their tireless fundraising efforts during the evening.

Mark Steele Secretary – Kings Lynn branch

Ripple reunion

AFTER the success of last year's reunion, it has been decided to hold another Ripple Lane Social Reunion Evening on Saturday 7 April at the L T Club Hornchurch. The event costs £6 per person (including buffet and raffle). Please make every effort to support this event and make it a memorable evening for all who attend. Anyone associated with Ripple Lane is more than welcome.

For details or bookings please contact John Smith on 01375 676516 or Steve Wilson on 01708 445000

Also, a reminder that Ripple Lane Pathfinders still meet on the first Friday of the month from 1300 at the Hornchurch L T Club.

Stratford Secs seen in Switzerland!

A TRIO of former ASLEF activists from Stratford-upon-Avon met up in January in Stachelberg Switzerland. Elliott Stone, Richard Hopkins and Marc Jones spent a long weekend reminiscing.

Marc was Branch Secretary before Richard, who was the last secretary the branch ever had. Elliott served on the LLC before Stratford-upon-Avon closed in 1993. Marc has left the railway and now lives in Switzerland with his Australian girl friend Diane.

They own and run The Alpenhof, a forty-bed hostel in the Lauterbrunnen valley which is ideal for skiers or walkers. Anyone wishing to contact Marc can do so via his web site

www.alpenhof-stachelberg.ch

Richard Hopkins former secretary – Stratford-upon-Avon



Alan is Taylor made for medal!



ALAN TAYLOR of Norwood Junction branch received his 50 year medallion from District Organiser Graham Morris last month. Alan retires after many decades of loyal and selfless service as a local representative, chair of the Council of District and a member of the Appeals Committee.

These years of dedication and experience were recognised by his colleagues at the 2002 Annual Assembly

of Delegates, when they elected him to chair the conference.

The members of the Southern Joint branches wish him a long and happy retirement and years of activity within the retired members section.

Colchester: two men, 95 years

A Retirement Presentation Evening is being arranged for Peter Lyes and John Boulden at The Arena in Colchester at 1900 on Friday 23 March – to which all are invited.

Bro Peter 'Vicious' Lyes will be retiring after nearly 50 years service (albeit short by 19 days). Most of us will never achieve half of his outstanding achievements or show his remarkable dedication.

Peter started his railway career at Colchester in April '57 as Loco Stores boy and later that year was made up to Passed Cleaner. He was made redundant in '59 and became a Fireman at Froddingham. A year later Peter moved to Clacton depot - where he was once again made redundant. He returned to Froddingham for 10 months before going to Parkeston on a redundant move. In 1968 Peter became a Passed Fireman (acting-driver then driver). He transferred to Colchester in 1978, where he has become part of the fixtures and fittings - until his retirement next month. He will be missed around the depot. Also, John Boulden ('J.B.' to those who know him) will be retiring after 45 years service. J.B. has passed through the railway industry as Second man, Driver, Train Crew Supervisor (one of the good ones!) to Driver Manager. His is another face we will miss around the depot.

We all wish Peter and John a very long and happy retirement with their families – and hope you will be able to get along to the Presentation Evening on 23 March.

Andy Smith Reporter – Colchester Branch

Eastleigh reunion

THIS will take place on 10 March from noon until 1600 at the old BRSA Club in Eastleigh. All are welcome - drivers, guards, shunters or fitters. A buffet will be laid on.



THE characters in the 'line-up' (that looks a little like a police identity parade!) are Eric Harris (RMS Ashford) Peter Rowland (ASLEF CC Tonbridge) Ron Taylor (ASLEF CC Orpington) Tony West (RMS National Secretary) Ray Cooper (RMS Hither Green) Perry Calvert (ASLEF CC Ashford) Brian Long (RMS Ashford) and John Holmes (RMS Grove Park)

Ashford reunites despite weather!

DAVE WEDDLE invited Tony West and myself from the ASLEF Retired Members Section to the Reunion of Southern Rail Staff at Ashford BRSA on 18 January. We were only too glad to attend.

Once again it was a pleasure to see so many retired colleagues enjoying themselves. To be honest we were surprised to see how many had made the journey, considering the appalling weather, with a blanket speed

of 50 mph placed on all trains on the region. In fact, the organisers were even able to welcome some people making a first visit to one of these functions.

Three Company Council members - Perry Calvert (Ashford), Peter Rowland (Tonbridge) and Ron Taylor (Orpington) turned up to fly the ASLEF flag and they stayed to circulate, reaffirming the union's concern for its retired members. Meanwhile,

Tony, Dave and I were able to generate interest in some of those present in joining the Retired Members Section.

I would like to express a vote of thanks to the organisers on behalf of everyone who attended, and to the staff who did a grand job in ensuring we were well fed and watered, ensuring we had a great day out. So – here's to the next time - at Ramsgate on 5 April.

Peter Smith Reporter - RMS

Worksop celebrates 461 years

AT OUR depot's recent Christmas and annual Retirement Function we said, 'Farewell' to a grand total of 461 years of footplate experience.

We had the pleasure of welcoming four special guests from ASLEF to help with the presentation evening: Bro A. Reed (National Organiser) Bro 'Tosh' McDonald (District 4 EC member) Bro Nicky Whitehead (District 4 Organiser) and Bro Nigel Roebuck (Company Councillor for our area).

Retiring this year were brothers Brian Talbot, Ivan Summers, 'Baz' Smith, Les Lound, 'Billy' Ward, Barry Geeson, Jimmy Jacob and Alan Cox.

Also retiring this year were



Brothers Geoff Griffiths - who was local level rep at Worksop and who received a framed appreciation certificate - and Bro George Pickord who received a 50 years membership medallion from Andy.

Both were also presented with model coal trains from a grateful branch with thanks

for their steadfast loyalty to the Society. A thoroughly entertaining evening ended and was enjoyed by everyone who attended. Many thanks also go to the Worksop Depot Welfare Committee for helping make the evening the success it was.

K Gillett Secretary – Worksop Branch

KEEPING TRACK *WHAT THE UNION WAS DOING 100 AND 50 YEARS AGO*

As we look through the pages of ASLEF's Locomotive Journal 100 and 50 years ago, we see that discussions of our relations with other rail unions has never been easy – and that disenchantment with our elected representatives is nothing new

100 YEARS AGO

In March 1907 a reader sent a letter to the Journal that expresses the complexities behind the old adage that 'unity is strength' ...!

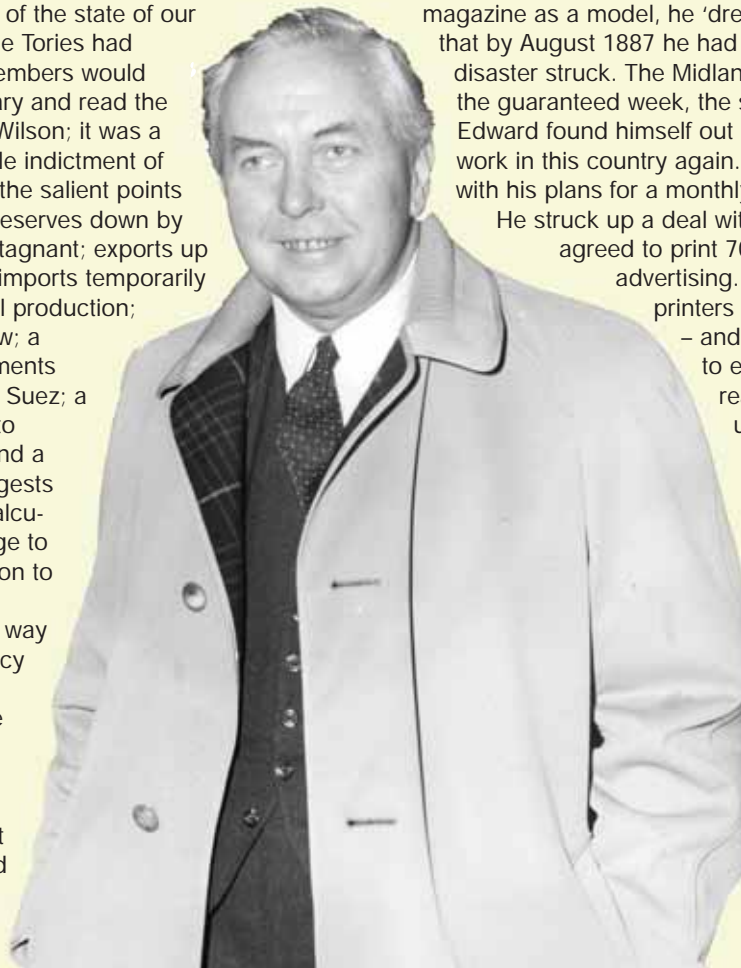
"Sir – A few days ago a friend and colleague of mine handed me a cutting from the R.R, signed by A.A.Nokes, Bristol, and headed "Sectionalism v. Amalgamation," which I perused, even to the touching lines with which he completed his contribution, and I can, I think, fairly well imagine with an amount of satisfaction and avidity such an article would be seized, if only to still widen the breach and emphasize the point – not Federation but Amalgamation – vide various conferences, and the preface that adorns the said article. It is a hopeless puzzle of imagination to me to conceive what state of mind one must be in to be amused and disgusted at one and the same time upon such a matter, which the writer commences his article, and I give it up hopelessly and unconditionally, which perhaps is the cause of my inability to realize month by month the childish twaddle and piffle complained about..... G.E."

50 YEARS AGO ...

In March 1957 Percy Collick, MP, the union's Assistant General Secretary, rages against the 'Eton boys' who dominate government circles and has kind words only for the future Prime Minister Harold Wilson

"Last week the Opposition tabled a motion of censure of the Government because of the state of our economic affairs to which the Tories had brought us. I wish all our members would get Hansard for 12th February and read the opening speech by Harold Wilson; it was a masterly survey and a terrible indictment of Government policy. Among the salient points he made were these: Gold reserves down by over one third; production stagnant; exports up less than our trading rivals; imports temporarily held at the price of industrial production; capital investment far too low; a prospective balance of payments surplus utterly destroyed by Suez; a golden opportunity missed to stabilise the cost of living; and a Budget prospect which suggests the most monumental miscalculation. He closed with an urge to the Government to take action to ease the lot of the old-age pensioners, and showed by way of contrast what Labour policy would be in the existing situation. The case he made was unanswerable..."

"People think we have a new Government. In fact we have not. In the main all that has happened is that the old boys of Eton have changed places in the Ministerial



offices. There is little hope for the ordinary people of Britain until we have cleared the whole lot out."

(Extracts selected and edited by Jane Pimlott)

FIRST ASLEF JOURNAL REMEMBERED AS EDGE HILL VISIT HQ

When the Edge Hill Branch visited union headquarters last month (see letters page) the General Secretary made an unexpected presentation to them. Keith has a great knowledge of the union's history and recalled that it was due to the efforts of a man named Edward Spenser from the Edge Hill area that the union began to produce a monthly Journal. He handed over a framed account of Mr Spenser's efforts.

Edward Spenser became one of the first members of 'the Society' in 1879, having been given some circulars about the proposed union by one Evan Evans. He called a meeting of 'the boys' on the M.S. and L. and M. Rly - which was held at the Brunswick (Cheshire Lines) engine shed. The meeting decided to form a branch, but were beaten to it by Sheffield and Midland drivers.

The branch saw the need for a publication which would inform members about the progress of the fledgling union and answer its critics. In 1886, when Edward was moved to Allerton C.L. Locomotive Shed and was living in Garston, he was visited by a friend from America – who was a member of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. He had brought with him a number of monthly journals his US union produced.

Edward was enthused with the idea of producing a similar magazine for the new union that was to become ASLEF. However, the General Secretary, Thomas Sunter, was, in Edward's words 'a wait-and-see man'.

By 1887, Edward's patience was growing thin. As Thomas Sunter 'showed no faith' in the proposal, Edward decided to try to run a monthly journal himself. Using the American magazine as a model, he 'drew up a cover and worded it' so that by August 1887 he had the first number ready – when disaster struck. The Midland Railway Company took away the guaranteed week, the subsequent strike failed and Edward found himself out of work, thinking he would never work in this country again. All the same, he ploughed on with his plans for a monthly Journal.

He struck up a deal with a printer in Kirkdale, who agreed to print 700 copies in exchange for the advertising. He took up offers of help from printers on the Liverpool Trades Council – and even of a minister, who agreed to edit the magazine. It was almost ready to go when Edward was unexpectedly reemployed by Midland as a passed fireman at Staveley, so he sent all the proofs to Mr Sunter at Leeds begging him to start the magazine.

With the enthusiastic support of a union organiser called Tom Ball, who became the first real editor, the first issue of the Journal was published in February 1888. Edward picked up some early issues from the printers in Leeds, and claims to have sold the first issues of the ASLEF Journal (2d a time) at Barrow Hill shed, Staveley.

ALAN 'WACCA' CARR – AN ENTERTAINER It is with deep regret that I have to 'Let Ya Kna' about the untimely passing of Alan 'Wacca' Carr. Alan started on the railway in 1979 at Gateshead and steadily progressed through the grades to become a Driver.

During his career he kept everyone entertained both with his antics at work and away from it.

On the social side Alan was a wit with a wicked sense of humour which kept everyone on their toes. He was never afraid to express an opinion – but equally was not too far above himself to receive one.

As a keen fisherman we still await the final verdict on how far his arms could stretch.

Unfortunately, Alan had to take early retirement due to ill-health, but as was his nature, he carried on regardless.

His passion for life, fishing and all things social remained until his untimely departure from our lives.

To Alan's family we express our deepest condolences. To those who knew 'Wacca' we acknowledge our loss.

Paul Keenan Secretary - Gateshead and Newcastle branch

JOHN MEDLAND – 'BIG IN STATURE, BIG IN HEART' 2007 started with a heavy cloud over the depot: John Medland, a staunch member of our fraternity, passed away in January after being diagnosed with a terminal brain tumour. John was only 41, and leaves behind him a gaping hole in both his 'families' – the railway and his own family.

His departure after such a short period of sickness leaves us all wondering, 'Why?' After some twenty-odd years with the railway his loss will be sadly felt and we all reflect on his time with us. He was a man big in stature and big in heart.

John leaves a wife and two teenage children. He started as a trainee driver with the then Network Southeast/Connex train companies and remained with

DAVID McCLEAN - FORMER ASLEF VICE-PRESIDENT

David McClean died a year ago - on 13 March 2006 - but sadly no obituary was published to record his passing at the time. Despite the delay we are running the obituary now to ensure that former friends and colleagues are aware of David's death.

David joined the railway at Corkerhill in 1947 as an engine cleaner with the Glasgow and South Western Railway. In 1948 he became a fireman and six years later qualified as a registered driver. In 1965 he was elected to ASLEF's executive committee representing Scotland and Ireland. In 1972 he served as the union's Vice President.

He left the railways the following year, beginning a new career as a publican in London. When he retired in 1991 he moved back to his native Scotland, settling in Strachur, Argyll with his wife Jean. Ten years later they moved to Boscombe in Dorset. On 25 October 2005 Jean died after a short battle with cancer and early in 2006 David was diagnosed as having brain cancer.

David's daughter May says, 'My dad was passionate about the very nature of trade unionism and gave a lot of time and effort over the years in supporting ASLEF and the working man.'

us at Brighton under the new 'Southern Trains' throughout his career.

Chris Newton Brighton

JOHN CRUMP – 50 YEARS ON THE FOOTPLATE It is with great regret that I have to report the passing of retired member Bro John Crump who died on 21 January at the age of 68. John had been diagnosed with cancer in December.

A career footplate man, he began his working life in 1954. He came into the industry straight from school at the age of 15 in his home town of Chester. John moved to Willesden/Stonebridge Park in 1960, before moving to his final home depot of Euston in the mid 1980s. He was one of the few Society members – unique in this day and age – who almost completed half a century working on the railway. His 50 year's membership medallion presentation came as he retired.

He attended every branch meeting he could and played an active part on our social and welfare club committee. His life was this industry, but his love was his family and his home.

Our sympathy and thoughts at this time are with John's wife Mary and his children and grandchildren.

Cliff Holloway Secretary – Euston Branch

NEIL COWPER – A TRAGIC ACCIDENT THAT TOUCHES US ALL It is with deep regret that I have to

inform you of the sudden and tragic death of our colleague and friend Bro Neil Cowper.

He died at the age of just 34 as the result of a road traffic accident when riding home from work on his motorcycle.

Neil was a real train driver's driver – pragmatic and conscientious. He embraced this job with a degree of professionalism many of us would find hard to equal, especially in one so young. He found his niche in life here at Euston.

A regular attendee at branch meetings, Neil took an interest in the Society's endeavours. He was charitable, considerate and a

genuinely kind man in all matters. Men of such calibre do not walk through our ranks that often: his passing has touched us all, sisters and brothers. A mark of the esteem in which he was held was demonstrated in the huge attendance at his funeral.

At the forefront of all he did in life was his family.

I feel I speak for all of us when I say that our sympathy and thoughts are with his partner Claire, his sons Harry aged 3 and James 8 months, his parents Tom and Elsie and his sister Nicola.

Cliff Holloway Secretary – Euston Branch

New ASLEF Regalia for 2007!

ASLEF thermal mugs
These well-made thermal flasks are practical and smart and show where your loyalties lie. Just your cup of tea at £5



ASLEF woolly hat
Get ahead with the new Woolly Hat sporting the 'More than Just a Union' slogan – just a fiver.
USB flash drive
These attractive memory sticks have a capacity of 128MB. They come with a USB cable, a key ring attachment and a lanyard at a cost of £10



BUY ALL THREE FOR £17 – A DISCOUNT OF £1 PER ITEM!

LETTERS to the EDITOR



YOU TELL US

These are the pages where you talk to us. We welcome your letters, either by mail to the Journal at 9

Arkwright Road London NW3 6AB or by email to journal@aslef.org.uk

Because of our space constraints, please try to keep your contributions as short as you can.

This month we continue our STAR LETTER feature. The immensely lucky winner will pocket a rich range of ASLEF regalia!

Safety training boost

I WOULD like to express my gratitude to Nick Whitehead (District Secretary 4) for his commitment to Health & Safety. He supports all Local Level Reps and has always been available to give me advice on a 24/7 basis.

In October 2005 Nick negotiated with Northern Rail to arrange my release to attend the TUC Certificate in Occupational Health & Safety Course (level 3) in Newcastle.

The company agreed to release me for 36 Wednesdays over a 12-month period. Without this it would have been impossible for me to get this level of training.

I was honoured to have represented this trade union on such a prestigious course. I also feel very privileged not only to have reached ASLEF's aspirations of attaining level 3 - but to have become one of the first ASLEF Safety Reps on Northern Rail to obtain it. I'd also like to thank all the ASLEF drivers at Newcastle for their help and support whilst I was at college and especially by taking part in the surveys and questionnaires that were part of my

course.

On a final note I would urge all ASLEF Safety Reps who might not have been on any of the TUC courses to consider them. The standard of learning and the facilities are excellent. If you have problems with release - contact your District Secretary!

Rob Porter ASLEF Health & Safety Rep - Gateshead & Newcastle Branch

Greeting from the edge

I AM writing to say how much I enjoyed our branch visit on Thursday 11 January.

We were made to feel very welcome and received a fascinating insight into the Society and its headquarters.

I'm already looking forward to visiting you again in the not too distant future!

Once again, thank you for a truly memorable day!

Ian McAdam Edge Hill branch

Banner fund marches on

MAY I, through the Journal, thank all those branches that made donations to the restoration of the March banner. The total amount raised was £590 which will, I am sure, be very useful for the restoration and displaying of this very important piece of March Railway history.

Once again, thank you very much for the donations.

B.J. Howlett Retired - former Secretary, March branch

Stick to retirement at 60

WHAT has happened to ASLEF's policy of getting early retirement down from 65 years for train drivers to 60 years? I ask this bearing in mind that the present government seems intent on raising the retirement age to 68 - and because of all the extra pressure train drivers are experiencing since privatisation.

I noticed in the last few years before I retired that an increasing number of drivers complained about being mis-routed by signal box staff. In many cases the driver spots the mistake and when he contacts the signal box gets told, 'Sorry, mate. I forgot!' It's a good job train drivers are on top of their job!

Do we want train drivers working past 60? I hope not. I hope we stick to our policy of calling for longer retirements on safety grounds.

P. Begley Bedford

Thanks for your kindness ...

I WOULD like to thank everybody up and down the country who donated money for my family after the tragic

death of my husband six months ago.

Patrick Idle was a driver for nearly 15 years and loved his job. We have been overwhelmed by all the support and generosity shown by his 'home' station - Fratton, Portsmouth - and the entire network. Thank you all again, so much.

Mandy Idle (Mrs)

... and again!

I WANT to thank all my fellow train crew who showed such warmth towards me and my family during my hardship appeal. I did 30 years on the railway 'man and boy' and enjoyed every moment of it. I am still missing it a lot (with the possible exception of shift work!) A year - and six different jobs in six months - I'm still finding it difficult to find work that is right for me. I hope 2007 will change my fortunes - but in the meantime many many thanks for your support and for the great memories no one can take away.

Alan Drinkwater formerly of Eastleigh Branch

We appreciate your support

THE Southeastern Drivers Company Council would like to express our appreciation to

(Continued on page 20)

AFTER reading through the pages of the January Journal, there is no doubt that an urgent debate is required on the state of transport in this country, especially Rail Transport.

The question I am being asked most frequently is, 'Why aren't the railways returned to public ownership?' I have to admit I don't know the answer to this question. How do you unravel this Tory Privatisation? Are you going to compensate the 25 TOCs 100-plus leasing companies and various contractors and fill the pockets of the likes of Branson and Co?

People who I talk to seem to think that it should be returned without compensation. This is a view I doubt can be achieved legally.

I have to admit I am sceptical as to what can be achieved by denationalisation. What I remember of BR was an industry suffering from under-investment, cut backs, redundancies and turmoil. I can't remember the Halcyon days of BR that people yearn for.

The fact is that had we been having the levels of investment now being enjoyed by the private companies we could have had a system fit for the 21st century.

JOHN G. DAVIES (retired)



LETTERS to the EDITOR

all the Drivers who supported and voted for us in the DCC election.

The literature that was supplied by ASLEF head office was of a high professional standard and made the impact that it was designed to amongst the trade union voters in the ballot for the Drivers Company Council representatives.

The Drivers Company Council would also like to express our gratitude for the valuable assistance we received from Simon Weller, Andy Reed and Graham Morris during this election. Their hands-on approach was an enormous help in defeating the RMT by such a majority and once again put the RMT in the position they deserve - last place, where negotiating for Drivers is concerned!

Perry Calvert, Peter Rowland and Joe Holmes –
Southeastern Drivers Company
Council

The continuing magic of steam

I AM writing to say what a good article Dave Calfe wrote about the Open Access operators in the January issue of the Journal. I have to confess that I've been considering joining the growing number of our members who drive for more than one company – and I feel I must explain my reasons why.

I am a driver for EWS at Didcot and, having started as a guard at Saltley, my rail career now spans 32 years. I have been involved with steam loco operation since I was 16 and - you may think it sad – I still spend my spare time working on steam at the Didcot GWR Society.

It was an ambition fulfilled when I passed out as an EWS fireman some six years ago. Sadly since then EWS policy seems to be to get rid of any involvement in heritage and charter train work. The company prefers to have us vegetating on ballast train

sites for 11 or 12 hours. A more boring turn is hard to imagine, and it is only made worse by being on one of the awful, noisy 66 Class.

Nearly all steam operations on Network Rail are now manned by West Coast Railway Co crews – using mostly retired EWS drivers! Their firemen usually come from preservation societies and are not railwaymen – let alone ASLEF members. How do they get away with this? How long until 'off the street' men are allowed to drive, too?

There are around 50 EWS steam men but we hardly ever get the chance to use our rare skills now. We all enjoy the challenge of giving a good performance with a piece of kit from another age.

I am convinced it is this kind of frustration and even boredom with 'mainstream' company work that makes drivers seek out the open access fraternity.

I was lucky to be at Saltley at the end of its heyday when just about any type of traction or train could turn up at Landor Street - and we worked them all. Those days seem so very long ago. The modern monotony of single traction type depots has a lot to answer for

I suspect that I am not alone in my opinion that any shift that doesn't involve a Class 66 is something to look forward to!

G. Ward Driver - Didcot

No renationalisation under New Labour

I WHOLEHEARTEDLY agree with Keith Norman's column in the January journal: the renationalisation of the railways is in the public interest. But New Labour has no intention of doing it – either in '2007: the year of the train' or any other time in the foreseeable future.

Keith rightly points out that continuing Tory privatisation policies has rendered the Department for Transport impotent. These same policies, however, have lined

the pockets of those who through massive, declared (or undeclared), 'donations' now effectively direct New Labour policies to suit their own interests. We union members who have given New Labour over £100million since it came to power, have little or no say in the party we established for our representation.

New Labour no longer needs the unions and does not care for what we think. Just look to their recent party conference in Manchester where they refused entry to ASLEF delegates! Look to the endless diet of war, cuts in services and privatisation that we have been rewarded with for our support. And now New Labour intends to spend over £75billion of OUR money replacing the Trident nuclear weapons system!

Trade unionists need to stop bickering – and falling for the 'divide and rule' trick – and get organised so we can force the government to make the vital changes we desperately need – including the re-nationalisation of the railways.

Two final points – maybe we should support a party like Respect which includes this in its policies and maybe we will have to consider our industrial muscle as a way of bringing about change.

Tony Whitehead Kirkdale

Back at work – thanks to ASLEF

I AM writing to thank ASLEF for its great support after I was summarily dismissed in November, three months after a SPAD at Moorgate last August.

After this shocking decision I was shown great support by all the executive committee and my advocate Mick Turrell who worked tirelessly to win my job back on appeal. I would also like to thank Finn Brennan, C. Hicks and all the other reps from Morden/Golders Green for their great work. They showed that ASLEF is not an expensive union – but a union

that will fight for its members as hard and long as it takes.

I would also like to thank all the Northern Line train operators for their great support in standing by my side throughout this period.

R.J. Guy London
Underground

Bogus big debate?

IT seems that Tony Blair's 'Big Debate' will comprise of selected people being invited to Downing Street to meet Blair and other Blairite ministers and for selected people to have internet 'debates' with him and the same Blairite ministers!

In doing this he hopes to persuade these selected people to ignore Labour Party policies, to ignore the Labour Party, and to ignore the majority of Labour MPs. This is not democracy - it is the strategy of a bunch of control freaks. Unless he is controlled he will inevitably lead to numerous irreconcilable splits in the entire Labour and Trade Union Movement. It is possible that that is his intention.

Bill Ronksley Sheffield -
RMS

BNP under the hammer

I am amazed this trade union allowed the publishing of such right wing rubbish as the letter in February's Journal by Steve Sunley of Leeds. It appals me that members of this trade union would ever consider the BNP as a political party that any self respecting train driver would want to be associated with.

He mentions that the BNP have policies that would benefit this country, like what? Denying the holocaust? Repatriation of non - whites? Banning of trade unions? Sunley is clearly a deluded fool who has joined this trade union to act as fifth columnist for his unelectable bunch of right wing fanatics.

ASLEF's relationship with the Labour party is not one of

Wake up to Obstructive Sleep Apnoea (OSA)



IN MY brief career as a driver I have been involved in a few incidents including two SPADs and some safety of the line occurrences. Everyone – including me! - thought my days as a driver were numbered, until I discovered that I may have Obstructive Sleep Apnoea. This condition means that when I am asleep at night, I stop breathing. This interrupts my sleep, sometimes leaving me gasping for air when I awake. The result was that I was tired throughout the day – even after a full night in bed. My ability to concentrate had gone, I fell asleep in the afternoon watching TV and nodded off reading books.

My GP referred me to a specialist in respiratory conditions. With the aid of a small electronic gadget that I used for one night, we discovered that I stopped breathing an average of over 50 times an hour.

On my birthday - 18 Jan 2006 – my specialist told me I had severe OSA and need to stop driving - both trains and cars - until the condition was controlled.

I had to wait three months before I was given a machine which blows air through my nose to keep my airway open so I don't stop breathing while I'm asleep. I've used it every night since and the results are remarkable. I feel wide awake and refreshed after a night's sleep – in fact, the first time I used it I slept through my alarm and was late getting my daughter to school! I am now accustomed to using the machine each night – and a happy side effect is that it stops

the user snoring!

The day after I saw the specialist I went with ASLEF District Organiser Nicky Whitehead to a meeting with management. Although I had a hand-written note from the specialist diagnosing me as suffering from OSA, the DTM removed me from the grade of driver pending an appeal.

Almost a year later, armed with all my medical reports, I went to another hearing with Nicky. I was told that after some retraining I will be allowed back driving.

All this might have come out earlier as I filled out a questionnaire ASLEF sent to drivers on behalf of a sleep clinic. This clinic rang me at home to ask if I was willing to attend their centre for two days to undergo tests. I said I would be happy to, but would need permission from my employer to be released. That was the last I heard from them.

My point in all this is to urge you that if you have the slightest suspicions that you may be suffering from Obstructive Sleep Apnoea, get yourself to your GP and have yourself checked out. Unfortunately there is no cure for DTMs who think they are professional medics!

In conclusion I would like to thank executive member Tosh McDonald, district organiser Nicky Whitehead, Paul Brazel and Howard Bridgman from the LLC at Skipton and all my colleagues at the depot who offered me such invaluable support over the last couple of years.

A. LUNN Skipton

master and servant but we are, as we have always been, a firm but critical friend. There are many policies of Mr Blair which are not acceptable to us in the trade union movement however we must be within the party to change policies and not snipe from the side. The alternatives are not the far right or the Conservative party. This country could not survive another protracted period of a Conservative government. We must never forget who privatised all the utility services and the rail industry

as well as destroying thousands of steel and mining communities.

Kevin Lindsay Edinbrough No.2

BNP are no friends of democracy

I SAW the letter from a BNP sympathiser in the last edition of the ASLEF Journal and congratulate you for publishing it – since the act of publication demonstrates that the union is committed to open debate. But you ought to know that the BNP is not

When anti-racist leafletters were handing out leaflets in Morley's town centre in my constituency, they were physically attacked by BNP members. This also happened to door-to-door leafletters. It is one of the many reason we are fighting the BNP here – their brand of

hate cannot be allowed to become embedded behind a false show of respectability.

I would like to place on record my thanks to ASLEF for its support in our campaign.

Colin Challen Member of Parliament for Morley, Middletown and Rothwell

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

To advertise in the ASLEF Journal please contact Sarah Francis on 020 7317 8600 or sfrancis@aslef.org.uk

NEW! ASLEF LGBT Badges are now available for sale. If you wish to purchase one send a cheque made payable to ASLEF for £5.00 (this includes postage and packaging) to the Equalities Adviser at ASLEF Head Office.

COLLECTOR requires ASLEF-Coalville NUM 1984/5 strike badge. Will pay £200. Also ASLEF 1982 strike badges, centenary and closure badges. Also NUR badges. Desperate for Bedford 1982 strike badge in chrome or gilt; Portsmouth 1982 strike and Doncaster 1982 gilt strike badge. Contact Barry Jones on 01709 588648 or at 25 Windermere Close, Mexborough, South Yorkshire. S64 0PT.

BOURNEMOUTH LOYALTY BADGE: The Bournemouth branch is offering a limited number of loyalty badges, struck following the 2006 dispute with SWT. For more information on this rare collector's item please contact Driver 'Hans' Kristian Jendesen, Flat 42, Burlington Mansions East, Bournemouth BH5 1AT. First badge donated to head office, others on first come, first served basis. Price £5 including p&p. Cheques made out to Mr. K. Jendesen

TRAIN DRIVER requires all ASLEF badges, strike, depot closure & centenary. Also interested in other British Railway badges, small signs & small railway items. Prices negotiable. Please call 0208-569-7381 or 07930-419850

ORLANDO VILLA FOR RENT details: www.thehavenvilla-florida.co.uk or TEL : 0208 441 8526.

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What's behind union badges?

Keri Myers explains their history, popularity and significance . . .

WHETHER to show union membership or to voice an opinion, trade union badges are an important part of the trade union movement. They have been in existence since the early years of the unions themselves and these little gems are a great way to explore and learn more about our movement.

Unions produce badges to commemorate and celebrate their role, as well as to mark anniversaries and length of service, to commemorate victories, strikes, lock-outs and even political persuasions. Not surprisingly there is a thriving and enthusiastic group of badge collectors in the UK and around the world who take collecting very seriously. The union badge is a piece of union history which, like so much of our history, is often overlooked for the role it has played.

In their early days, union badges were used for many reasons; to identify a shop steward on the job or, in some unions, to prove a member had paid their subs when attending meetings. One early reason for creating a union badge was to simply declare the union's existence. In some instances the badge is all that is left to prove a union ever existed.

These symbols of union recognition are usually designed with part of the union's emblem or a symbol of the craft or trade so as to illustrate what the union stands for. Many badges also incorporate the date the union

was established along with its motto.

ASLEF use the popular image of a clasped handshake along with two people working on a locomotive engine on their badges. One reason why ASLEF produces them is to celebrate its members' years of service. It honours them by awarding competition of service badges every five years through to 45 years.

A sign of pride

According to General Secretary Keith Norman, a main reason why his members choose to wear their union badges is to show they are committed trade unionists and proud to be a professional train driver. 'It's a nice way to send a message to the public that they are proud of their union heritage and proud of their chosen profession.' Every member of ASLEF receives a badge upon joining the union from the national office and also receives specialised branch badges that reflect the background of a particular area.

Many badges have been just thrown out and lost to history, although luckily there is a group of collectors who play an important role in preserving union history through their collections. Brian Brock, a union badge collector from Yorkshire, has been collecting for 15 years. He started when, on holiday in Malta, he was presented with a badge from their general workers' union, and it snowballed from there. He now boasts over 3000 badges from UK unions and around the world.

Brian is just one member of the Trade Union Badge



Members can find badges at ASLEF's conferences

Collectors' Society, which is a group of serious collectors from across the UK that has an interest in badge and trade union memorabilia. This group meets twice a year to collate their findings in union badge guides that include badges from all unions.

Badges on eBay

Brian explained that the rarer the badge the more valuable it becomes. This has created a serious market on the auction website, eBay. Most badges on eBay sell between £3 and £4 but some go for as much as £200 if they are really unique.

However, we shouldn't only think of badges as having a monetary value. They also have a huge value in telling the story of our unions. Badges are instrumental in tracking the mergers of unions. For example, badges still survive as a record from the many unions that went on to form the T&G, such as The Dock, Wharf, Riverside and

General Labourers' Union, as well as the Carters, Lorrymen and Motormen's Union.

Another vivid part of badge history is the story they tell during times of struggle. One of the most noteworthy examples of this is of the Miners' Strike of 1984-1985. For him they are important as you learn just how many different pits and areas were devastated by this period of trade union history. Just as in the General Strike almost 60 years before, they were a major source of revenue for the strike fund, with badges at the time being sold for £2-£3 each. Now many of them are highly collectable and have increased in value both monetarily and as an historical record of the strike.

Next time you get a badge from ASLEF remember it's not just a piece of enamel but an important piece of your union's rich history. Wear it with pride as it is a symbol of our movement that has been worn by men and women throughout the years.



ASLEF'S legal services - your rights for their wrongs!

FREE LEGAL ADVICE ASLEF also provides first class free legal advice - both for members and for their dependents. In the first six months of this year we have secured £1,442,360 in compensation claims! Call the helpline on 0808 100 8009

EMERGENCIES If you are an ASLEF member who is arrested or being interviewed by the police and need legal assistance – day or night – you can call the members' Emergency Hotline on 07980 996159.

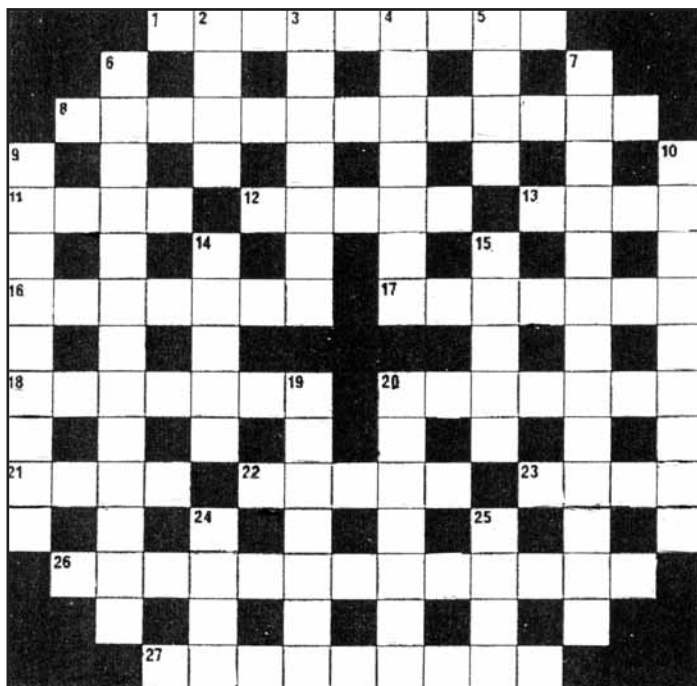
SACKINGS OR OTHER PROBLEMS AT WORK Harassment, discrimination or bullying? If your local, branch or district representative is unavailable, call the Industrial Relations department at union headquarters (020 7317 8600) or email info@aslef.org.uk

ASLEF *more than just a union*



Prize Crossword No. 11

set by TLC



Clues Across

- 1 Communications vehicle (4,5)
- 8 Setting off for two weeks by the sea (7,6)
- 11 Encounter (4)
- 12 An edition of this Journal (5)
- 13 Girl's name (4)
- 16 Make secure (7)
- 17 Helps the children to learn (7)
- 18 Left work after many years (7)
- 20 Healthy vegetable (7)
- 21 Man's name (4)
- 22 My dad's brother (5)
- 23 A long way off (4)
- 26 Person in charge of sending goods out to customers (8,5)
- 27 London station (3,6)

- 4 Get back in the saddle ((7)
- 5 Coloured liquids used in drawing or writing (4)
- 6 A passport is needed for this (7,6)
- 7 It played a major part in the first World War (6,7)
- 9 Capital of the Netherlands (9)
- 10 Having equal proportions (4,5)
- 14 Set off (5)
- 15 Herb (5)
- 19 Gives to charity (7)
- 20 American butterfly with yellow wings (7)
- 24 Coloured stone (4)
- 25 Run away (4)

Clues Down

- 2 Very dry (4)
- 3 Close cooperation between people and organisations (7)



The winner of this month's crossword will receive Marks & Spencer vouchers to the value of £25

MARKS & SPENCER

Solution to Crossword No 10 which appeared in the February edition of the ASLEF Journal. Congratulations to **Kerry Holton** from Alton, Hants.

ACROSS 3 Main line 8 Soda 9 Night Train 10 Wind 11 Afar 13 Scent 17 Office 18 Muesli 19 Mines 22 Lamp 24 Flee 25 Time for tea 26 Reed 27 Reserved **DOWN** 1 Bogie 2 Vandalise 4 Asher 5 Notes 6 Inane 7 Einstein 12 Area 14 Cheap fare 15 Commuter 16 Emma 20 Names 21 Safer 22 Large 23 Level

Thanks for all your responses to the tenth ASLEF crossword in the February edition. If you complete this month's crossword please send the solution to the Editor, ASLEF Journal, 9 Arkwright Road, London NW3 6AB by the end of the month.

Name.....

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.....

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Fixed APR	Loan Value		84 months		60 months		36 months	
			With Protection	Without Protection	With Protection	Without Protection	With Protection	Without Protection
6.9% APR (Typical)	£15,000	Monthly	£284.80	£225.23	£354.96	£296.18	£527.02	£462.99
		Total	£23,922.94	£18,918.99	£21,297.69	£17,770.45	£18,972.75	£16,667.35
	£10,000	Monthly	£189.87	£150.15	£236.66	£197.45	£351.36	£308.66
		Total	£15,949.10	£12,612.70	£14,199.17	£11,846.97	£12,648.86	£11,111.57
	£5,000	Monthly	£94.93	£75.08	£118.33	£98.73	£175.67	£154.33
		Total	£7,973.86	£6,306.23	£7,099.57	£5,923.42	£6,323.85	£5,555.77
	£3,000	Monthly	£56.97	£45.05	£71.00	£59.20	£105.41	£92.48
		Total	£4,784.98	£3,783.88	£4,259.43	£3,551.79	£3,794.52	£3,329.00

Rates range from 6.9% APR to 24.9% APR

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6.9%

APR (Typical)

current
accounts

savings &
investments

mortgages

loans

credit cards

protection
& insurance

ethics

Terms and conditions apply to optional payment protection plan. Loan applicants must be UK residents, aged between 23 and 69 and are subject to status. The Bank reserves the right to decline any application or offer a rate that differs from those advertised. Rates correct at time of going to press 02/07
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