



# ASLEF *Journal*

Published by the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen DECEMBER 2007



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## Let's end the 'Punch and Judy' ownership debate



**W**HEN I was at a meeting with rail minister Ruth Kelly last month, I sensed a reluctance from the various 'advisors' to my raising the question of rail ownership and franchising with her. It was almost as if it would be 'bad form' to mention a subject on which the minister and the union might have opposing views.

Personally, I can't see the point in going to a meeting and not saying what we want. I may as well not turn up. And if ministers are somehow 'protected' from a view the government might find distasteful - they are entirely justified in doing nothing about it.

ASLEF does have a major difference with the government on the question of franchising. In a nutshell this government is intrinsically attracted to the 'free market', to private capital and to liberalisation. It is a fact that one of its core values and regular mantras is 'private enterprise is vibrant, public services are inefficient'. It's what they believe.

I think this is nonsense. I think the process of franchising is a disaster for everyone except bloated investors who wouldn't be seen dead on a common railway. I see the vast sums of money that slide into the pockets of lawyers and accountants every time a franchise is up for offer. I see the pointless duplication of work caused by having 103 pension schemes in a single industry. I see money tossed away on new corporate identities for these five years fly-boys. I see a lack of vision for the railways as a whole: the perfect example being the state of the art former Eurostar station at Waterloo standing empty, mothballed at a cost of £500,000 a year – while the rest of the Waterloo stations are overcrowded.

At the moment, however, the rail ownership debate is conducted in the style of a Punch and Judy show or an early Christmas pantomime. We do not have the objective evidence on which to base a genuine discussion.

That is why we have proposed that the government keeps one franchise in public hands, allocating it exactly the same amount of money that it would have given to a private concern. If the government is not prepared to concede this, it is for one reason only: it is convinced that it is wrong.

● As I was writing this, I happened upon various glorious statements of intent from Andrew Haines, the new Chief Operating Officer of Great Western which operates in my old patch when I was a district organiser. New franchises, new promises! I wish the company well, of course – but perhaps the Man from Merthyr – and franchised companies in general – should bear in mind the optimistic noises from Steve McClaren just 18 months ago. And if it doesn't turn out as well as advertised, like Mr McClaren, I hope he doesn't try to blame the players!

# 'Back Bombardier' say rail unions

UK rail unions last month urged the government to give firm guarantees on the future of the single remaining UK train building site – Bombardier in Derby. It has stood alone since Alstom, the French multinational, closed its site at Washwood Heath in Birmingham.

The unions want to help preserve what remains of British manufacturing industry by seeing Bombardier win contracts for the Intercity Express Programme. They will be awarded in 2008 to replace the High Speed Train fleet and will include a 'hybrid' electric/diesel train.

Keith Norman says it would be a disaster for Derby if the city lost its traditional train building industry and said the union 'had to

be concerned at the prospect of a national economy without any manufacturing base'.

Most UK government vehicle contracts go abroad, including

- 74% of fire and ambulance vehicles
- 92% of vehicles used by the ambulance service and
- 85% of police vehicles.

Keith says other European countries favour their own producers when they award public contracts. 'That's not an accusation,' Keith says. 'It's a perfectly understandable fact. All we are saying is that the UK should adopt a similar attitude.'

Less than 3 million people are now employed in UK manufacturing. Ten years ago this figure was in 4.2 million.



## New Eurostar service receives early Valentine

VALENTINE HUGHES took the second train out of St Pancras International – the first to Brussels on 14 November - as the guest of Eurostar. This was to mark the fact that he was on the footplate of the first diesel electric train to pull in to St Pancras back in 1955.

Valentine, now 85, grew up in the railway cottages next to Derby station and always wanted to be a train driver. But steam doesn't have the same romance for him as for many others. 'I couldn't believe how clean and fast the diesel electrics were!' he says.

ASLEF's Graham Morris (pictured with Valentine) saw him off at St Pancras and thanked John Chilton, Eurostar's Ops Director, for being so helpful in making the arrangements.

'I got up at quarter to four this morning for this,' Valentine said. 'It's going to be a wonderful day.'

### ASLEF EDUCATION CALL

ALL activists should have received a survey 'Getting the most from ASLEF Education' which gives them the opportunity to identify ideas for future courses. If you are an activist and haven't received one please contact Julie Weekes by email ([juliew@aslef.org.uk](mailto:juliew@aslef.org.uk)) or on the union headquarters number (020 317 8600)

### CONVICTED BOSSES OUT AND ABOUT

JUST 10 company directors have been banned for health and safety breaches in the past 20 years. This is despite a total of 111 bosses being prosecuted – of whom 86 were convicted between 1994 and 2004. Professor Alan Neal who led the study from Warwick University said, 'Convicted directors can go straight back into the boardroom.'



### EUROSTAR COMPANY COUNCIL

**REPRESENTATIVES** Bro B McCrohan and Bro S McNally, Waterloo International Traincrew Branch have been elected to the positions of Eurostar Company Council Representatives.

### FIRST GREAT WESTERN – REST DAY WORKING

ASLEF is prepared to sanction Rest Day Working until 29th December 2007 subject to continued monitoring by our representatives.

### GB RAILFREIGHT – REST DAY

**WORKING** ASLEF is prepared to sanction Rest Day Working until 31 March 2008 subject to continued monitoring by our representatives.

### FIRST GREAT WESTERN (FORMER

**WESSEX)** Bro A F Chase, Exeter Branch has been elected as First Great Western (Former Wessex) Company Council Representative, Constituency 2.

### C2C – REST DAY WORKING

ASLEF is prepared to sanction Rest Day Working until 29 December 2007 subject to continued monitoring by our representatives.

### EWS COMPANY COUNCIL

**REPRESENTATIVES** Bro. R. Hickman, Bescot Branch has been elected as EWS Company Council representative – West Midlands. Bro. R. Hurst, Toton Branch has been elected as EWS Company Council representative – East Midlands & Anglia. Bro. N. Roebuck, Sheffield No.1 Branch has been elected as EWS Company Council representative - Yorkshire & Humber. Bro. I. Scott, Carlisle Branch has been elected as EWS Company Council representative – North West.

### FREIGHTLINER HEAVY HAUL

**LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES** Bro. R.S. Bryant, Carlisle Branch has been elected as Heavy Haul local representative – Scottish & Borders constituency. Bro. A. Cooke, Crewe Branch has been elected as Heavy Haul local representative – Western constituency.

### EAST MIDLANDS TRAINS – REST DAY WORKING

ASLEF is prepared to sanction Rest Day Working on East Midlands Trains from the commencement of the franchise on 11 November 2007 until 31st January 2008, subject to continued monitoring by our representatives.

### MERSEYRAIL – REST DAY

**WORKING** ASLEF is prepared to sanction Rest Day Working on Merseyrail until 31st December 2008

### DRS WORKS COUNCIL (SOUTH)

Bro R Ashcroft, Crewe Branch, has been elected to the DRS Works Council (South)

**ALAN SIMPSON MP, who convenes ASLEF's Parliamentary Group, met the EC last month to help to establish more efficient contact between ASLEF and parliamentarians.**

**He spoke about the effectiveness of Early Day Motions, pointing out that the EDM calling for promotion of rail freight instead of 'roadtrains' has over 100 MP supporters. He also proposed ways that MPs can help to highlight issues like the Trade Union Freedom Bill, the Squash Campaign, expansion of rail freight and environment issues. 'ASLEF has the skills and ability to lead on the climate change debate,' he said.**





**ASLEF**  
THE TRAIN DRIVERS UNION

**MIDLAND MAINLINE**  
**WHY WE'RE TAKING ACTION**  
Train drivers working for Midland Mainline have a genuine grievance about their pensions...

Management are unhelpful and disinterested - perhaps because the end of the shift, franchise is in sight.

**SO ASLEF MEMBERS HAVE A SIMPLE CHOICE:**  
Accept that their pensions are reduced or  
Take strike action to try to preserve their income in retirement.

**WHAT WOULD YOU DO?**  
Whether we get a pay rise, our pensions are increased proportionately. Occasionally extra details from this, apply for non-pensionable bonus to increase the money on the table. But this is highly unusual - and subject to a special agreement.

which pay rises will be pensionable, without troubling themselves to inform the union. Train drivers could lose thousands of pounds from their pensions.

**WHAT WOULD YOU DO?**  
When the train has got to a halt, over 80% of our members voted to take industrial action. We printed this strength of feeling out to Midland Mainline management - but they chose to ignore it. Even with all of your staff for this agreement, wouldn't you take it seriously and try to resolve the issue? MML didn't budge.

**WHAT WOULD YOU DO?**  
**WE WANT TO DRIVE YOUR TRAINS AND PROVIDE YOU WITH A SERVICE BUT WE CAN'T ACCEPT THAT OUR PENSIONS ARE CUT AS WE DO IT.**

**DON'T BLAME THE DRIVER**  
**THE COMPANY IS AT FAULT**

# Strikes lead to sanity in pensions dispute

ASLEF drivers took part in two weeks of industrial action in the old franchises of Silverlink and Midland Mainline (MML) last month. After witnessing two highly effective days of action spread over a fortnight, the new companies taking over this work sought urgent discussions over the problem that had caused the dispute – and the union called off the action to allow talks to proceed in a positive fashion.

The Silverlink franchise has been taken over by London Overground (Lorol) and London Midland, while the old Midland Mainline franchise has been awarded to East Midland Trains.

The issue that led to the action is pensions – or rather, management’s attempts to lower them by underhand measures. When ASLEF negotiates a pay rise there is a natural assumption – because it is common practice and established procedure – that pensions will increase proportionately. The understanding has always been that pay and allowances are pensionable unless some other one-off arrangement is agreed. At times unions deviate from this – sometimes opting for non-pensionable bonuses to increase the money on the table. But this happens only very occasionally – and when it does, it is made clear that there has been a major variation.

**NO ‘PICK AND MIX’ INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS** Recently, however, ASLEF discovered that both these companies – both owned by National Express - had been treating some wage increases as non-pensionable on some bizarre ‘pick and mix’ basis.

‘If we had done nothing, members could have lost up to £60 a week in retirement – just when they need the money most,’ said general secretary Keith Norman. He accused Silverlink and MML of ‘seeking to pick and choose which agreements they would honour, and which they would ignore’.

The action – MML on Thursdays and Silverlink on Fridays – was supported 100%

by ASLEF members and the general secretary said, “I would like to congratulate every member of our union in these companies for the outstanding support they gave over the period. Without their solidarity and determination, we would never have reached the point where serious discussions were back on the agenda.’

**ON THE LINE** During the dispute, pickets handed out leaflets to the public explaining the background – and in many cases received remarkable sympathetic responses. Sally Keebles, the MP for Northampton North, visited the picket-line and listened carefully to our explanation of the reasons behind the action. One notable exception was drug addict pop singer Pete Doherty, who showered foul abuse on our pickets at St Pancras station – but his ill temper was perhaps because he was on his way to court – where unfortunately, he was let off!

The union said responsibility for the dispute lay fair and square with the employers. ‘It is astonishing that companies can refuse to react to a clear message from the overwhelming majority of its staff,’ Keith says. ‘In Silverlink over 90% voted for industrial action – and in MML this figure was 87%. Yet both companies decided to do nothing.

‘ASLEF had to react. And when we made that call, the response was what we have come to expect of our members. The strikes were absolutely solid.’

**WHERE WE GO NOW** Talks with the new franchises - London Overground (Lorol), London Midland and East Midland Trains – will begin as soon as they can be arranged, but the union is heartened by the positive noises made by the employers.

Mick Whelan, the regional office who will head up the talks, said, ‘I am utterly confident in the union’s case. It is just a shame that we needed to take action before we found a management prepared to come to the negotiating table with open minds.’

‘We never sought a strike– but we cannot



Members handed out leaflets at Watford



The EC joined members at St Pancras



and will not accept underhand cuts to our pensions.’

**DISPUTE TECHNOLOGY** One feature of the dispute was the increased use by the union of SMS – text messaging from the union’s website. It enables news of developments in the strike to be conveyed quickly to members who have signed up to receive text messages on important issues from union headquarters (for more information on this see page 9).

Thanks to sterling work by Dave Calfe and all the company council and local reps, we were able to text 160 MML and 240 Silverlink members in record time with immediate and important information.

The website was perhaps equally important, keeping members, the media and the public aware of ASLEF’s attitude towards the dispute.



# SWEET HARMONY



Nigel Gibson, the EC member for district 5, puts forward his views about the importance of getting harmonisation right ... now ...

IN THE last few years we have seen the re-mapping of the railway franchises which has in general terms brought together and reduced the number of franchises. First we witnessed the formation of Transpennine Express, First Capital Connect, Northern Rail, First Great Western. Then, more recently, we have seen the creation of the London Overground, East Midlands Trains and London Midland.

This process faces the trade union with a major challenge. We have a right, under TUPE - the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) regulations - to transfer our terms, conditions and rates of

pay into the new company - but this is not a solution. Why? Consider these points:

- How long can we allow our members to work within the same company doing the same job - yet with differing conditions of service?
- Is it right that a company runs a service from A to B using two drivers - with one paid less than the other?
- Is it right that new entrants to the industry can join a company - but their pensions will be dependent on which depot the management allocates them?
- What about equality in the workplace amongst workers? The trouble is that we have no

legal challenge on the issue of equality because we are party to the collective agreements reached on behalf of our members - and we would obviously oppose any changes made without our agreement.

The company operating in the name of 'one' is in the fourth year of its franchise - yet our members still do not have common terms and conditions. Naturally as a trade union we are making strenuous efforts to address this anomaly - yet I hear cries of, 'We're happy and we don't want what they've got.'

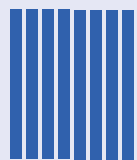
That is interesting, not least because this time last year the Executive Committee had given 'one' railway six dates for strike action to take place and we came within days of walking out because of the failure of the company to provide an acceptable pay increase. The underlying cause, I'm sure, ran far deeper. It was the result of genuine frustration at the company for its continuous attempts to 'harmonise'

conditions without recognition; its attitude towards industrial relations; and its approach towards discipline and sickness. These elements arise, in my view, as a result of treating people differently when they are doing exactly the same job.

As with any intense negotiations there comes a level of fear and scepticism about what the future holds. This is understandable. There will always be a level of protectionism, but I have to say I find it ironic to hear train drivers say they are 'happy'. We've never been happy as a grade! - and we've always tried to improve our lot for the future.

We will use branch meetings, open forums and the ASLEF website ([www.aslef.org.uk](http://www.aslef.org.uk)) to keep the membership informed and involved.

Rather than doing management's bidding, let's work constructively and supportively with our elected representatives to deliver improvements in the driving grade.



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**Tel: 020 7405 4022**

**Email: [mchambers@rollingsons.co.uk](mailto:mchambers@rollingsons.co.uk)**

# Soham Memorial re-dedicated

ON 10 November I attended a re-dedication of a memorial to Bro James Nightall GC in Littleport, writes Steve Clark of the St Pancras branch. On 2 June 1944 Bro Nightall, a fireman on the LNER, helped save the town of Soham from a disaster which would have destroyed the town.

Bro. Nightall and Driver Benjamin Gimbert were working an ammunitions train from Whitemoor Yard to White Colne in Essex. The train had 250 and 500 pound bombs totalling over 400 tons of high explosive. After Ely a fire was spotted in the first wagon next to the engine. Driver Gimbert stopped the train and Fireman James Nightall got down and uncoupled the first wagon from the rest of the train. Guard Herbert Clarke was at the rear.

With the wagon still burning, Driver Gimbert and Fireman Nightall took the loco and wagon away from the rest of the train into open country. The train slowed as it went through Soham station 140 yards on and the driver spoke to the signalman, Frank Bridges, to ask to stop any other trains coming



the other way.

Before any action could be taken, the wagon, with 44 bombs totalling 5.14 tons exploded killing Fireman James Nightall outright and blasted Driver Gimbert over two hundred yards away. The rest of the train remained intact saving Soham and over 5000 inhabitants. For their heroic and courageous actions Driver Gimbert and Fireman James Nightall were awarded the George Cross & the London & North Eastern Railway Company's Silver Medal for Courage and Resource. The re-dedication of the Memorial to James Nightall GC was attended by the Royal British Legion, Women's Institute, The Littleport Society and the Rev Rosemary Maskell.

'either self-delusion or deliberate disinformation'.

## COMPENSATION BLOW FOR RAILWAY WORKERS

A House of Lords ruling on workers with asbestos-related pleural plaques could have implications for ex-ASLEF members who came into contact with asbestos either in steam boilers or on brake linings. The Lords ruled that these cases are not eligible for compensation.

The judgement will be a blow to thousands of people who have developed pleural plaques, a scarring of the lungs which can result in serious illness. Pleural plaques can cause mesothelioma, which is known locally as the Swindon Disease due to the number of cases occurring in former railwaymen.

## TELEGRAPH GETS IT WRONG OVER EUROSTAR

Reports in the Telegraph last month said that British train drivers would be used by Eurostar as 'strike busters' during the recent strikes by French rail unions. 'The Telegraph report is nonsense,' said ASLEF general secretary Keith Norman. 'ASLEF has a proud record of assisting any group of workers engaged in legitimate industrial action.'

'Eurostar drivers come from the UK, Belgium and France. The Belgians and ourselves will work normally on our own trains this week while the French take action to defend their hard-won pension arrangements.'

Keith dismissed Telegraph reports that Eurostar 'often uses British and Belgian staff to beat French industrial action' as



ASLEF supports the NPC Charter at Westminster lobby

## Union supports Pensioner Rally

The union's retired members section (RMS) were represented at the National Pensioners Convention Rally at Westminster on 24 October. The event was so successful that some people who turned up to listen to speakers at Central Hall had to wait for the places vacated by others who left to lobby their MPs. Please remember the NPC's fight is your fight - and your children's fight - to ensure a decent standard of living and care. Don't wait till you retire - because if you do, it may not be there when you do. (P.J. Smith)

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First Great Western



Derby tutor: Bill Whitehead spots himself in a picture of a Poll Tax demonstration!  
INSET: Ted and Ken – visual aids!: Heads down for history

## BASIC SKILLS IS 'ONE SMALL PART' OF RAIL UNION LEARNING



When you hear the words 'Rail Union Learning' – what impressions are conjured up? An evening tapping keys in front of a computer? An hour or so engaged in basic reading and maths exercises? Well – Chris Proctor went to Derby last week to find out how wrong this could be – and how right one of the courses on offer could be for you ...

THERE'S a group of train drivers meeting at the Midland Mainline's Customer Service Academy at the back of Derby station in Hudson Way. They've been attracted there by Rail Union Learning (RUL) – because on offer is a course that interests them on a subject they'd like to know more about. Tonight they are concentrating on Derby's radical tradition – but if it'd come on a different night, it could have been anything from a practical skill to a foreign language.

Chris Wells is, rather to his surprise, a regular. 'I first went to an RUL course when I wanted to apply for a Driver/Instructor post,' he says. 'I found out that my English and Maths were – well, rusty! So I went along to RUL and then discovered the range of subjects on offer. I started with English and ended up doing German, and then photography.'

'I've learned a lot – and enjoyed myself at the same time.'

Jim Canning and Kevin Thompson had never been to an RUL course before – but they were both interested in finding out about Derby's history and so they signed up. Kevin ('Lord knows why!' he says) is interested in the Second World War – and he was so impressed with the course that after the second week he started bringing his wife along! Jim says he's always felt that 'history isn't about kings and queens and important people. It's about real, working class people – and their history is just as valid (and much more interesting) than studying the upper classes.'

They all agree that it has been fascinating to find out about their town. 'You look around now and see a completely different city,' Kevin says. 'I notice all kinds of plaques and monuments that I used to walk past without thinking.'

It's a good symbol of the RUL project.

Teaching methods have also changed a lot since most of us left school. Tutor Bill Whitehead likes to incorporate music, images and taped aural histories in his classes – and today's 'visual aids' include former ASLEF vice-president Ted Cartwright and ex-LDC man Ken Clements! The pair gave a first-hand account of union support for Kiverton Park pit, which the branch adopted during the 1984 strikes.

Bill Whitehead says he enjoys RUL events – and thinks you would too! 'It's an interesting few hours in friendly company picking up ideas that can brighten and enrich your life,' he says.

● For more information about RUL contact your local learning representative or Shirley McClory at [shirleymccrory@rul.org.uk](mailto:shirleymccrory@rul.org.uk)

## 57 VARIETIES: CHRIS NUTTY EXPLAINS THE COURSE OF LOCAL HISTORY...!

WHEN Bill Whitehead, who lectures at the city's university, delivered the photography course for RUL, it went down so well that I asked him if there were any other sessions he could do for us. He proposed a course based on one of his great interests – studying local radical history. It's been a real eye-opener.

I've realised how little I knew about the rich working class history of my home town – but since spending 2 hours a week on this 10-week course I've got an understanding of the Pentrich Rebellion, the Derby Silk Mill Lock Out, Chartist activity, the Luddites, the Peartree Poisoner, the Syndicalist Movement, and the General Strike. Finally we moved on to local strikes in both world wars and we'll end with the 1984 miners' strike and the revolt against the Poll Tax.

As trade unionists we sometimes forget the struggles and sacrifices of our predecessors, so this course was a useful reminder that all the rights we have today were fought for. Have you ever wondered about the radical history of the place where you live?. How local people in the past made social change happen? Or how unfolding national and international events affected your area?

How hard was the course? Well – 'not' actually! Each of the 2-hour sessions was self-contained and all the background information was uploaded to the web. That way, if you missed a week, you could catch up on the website. It seems to have worked well.

So ... what do I find out about next? There's an endless variety.

■ If there is a subject that interests you enough to want a course on it – get in touch with your Union Learning Rep. If he or she can find enough others with a similar interest, a series of sessions will be put together at a convenient time.

If you don't ask – you don't get!

**Chris Nutty is the Lead Learning Rep at Midland Mainline**



Kevin – brings the family along!

# GET ONLINE!

Take a look at the ASLEF website and you're either going to think 'World Wide flippin' What??' - or you'll say, 'This could be one hell of a communication tool!' ASLEF's web editor Sarah Francis says why it should be the latter ...

IN December 2006 the union launched its upgraded website - which we hoped was going to offer members and visitors an easy-to-use, clean-cut and fresh-looking site. One of its new features was a 'members only' area, accessible only to ASLEF members. This was to allow us a confidential part of the site where we could house sensitive or private union information.

During the last year we've been able to provide new features to the site including

- A Research area - which is growing all the time. Its aim is to provide background briefings and research articles which members can use to write speeches or swot up on a particular subject

- A Local Events page - to list local branch reunions or other events that are happening in your area

- An Elections page - so you can easily find out what elections are taking place and read candidates' election addresses

- A What's New section (on the homepage) so you can see a couple of the most recent additions to the site

## WHAT ELSE DOES THE WEBSITE PROVIDE?

Each month we have an opinion poll on the homepage which is a useful way of gauging how members and visitors to the site feel

about current issues. All previous polls can be viewed - and you may be surprised by some of the results!

Another element we've introduced is a discussion forum, which is housed in the 'members only' area. At the moment it is underused - but it probably has more potential than any area of the site. It's easy to use (easier the more you use it) - and there have already been interesting debates on issues like the Squash campaign and employment conditions.

The idea is that members can ask questions or raise issues that they may not feel comfortable raising in their workplace. Why don't you log on and help out your fellow ASLEF members with your wisdom and knowledge?

There's also a record of the union's publications on the site - including back issues of the ASLEF Journal, Freight Journal and equality publications like 'Sisters on the Move' and 'Fresh Tracks'.

## SIGN UP TO OUR SERVICES

You can use the website to register to receive circulars by email or sign up for the ASLEF text messaging service to ensure you are up to date with everything the union is doing. The text messaging (SMS) service has proved to be a great communication tool in recent strikes as we have been able to contact members straight away with ballot results. Just let us have your mobile phone number and when there is urgent news we'll send it to you as it happens.

Active members especially will be able to refer to the section of the 'members only' area that houses all the minutes of the Executive Committee, District Councils, equalities committees and annual conferences (AADs) of the past 3 years.

We have also posted several booklets on the site which relate to ASLEF policy, advice on 'best practice' and issues that affect members. All these booklets can be read online, printed - or saved on your computer to read later.

The website contains an enormous amount of information - but there is room for much more! News, events, reports and election addresses are just some of the things that members can provide - helping



us to build a site that is beneficial and useful to each and every member.

## CRYSTAL BALL TIME

Looking to the future, if the website continues to grow in popularity we can expand the site and offer innovations like online ballots and voting, web casting events like the annual assembly of delegates (AAD) or an on-line regalia shop.

If you would like to get onto the Internet Superhighway to check out the ASLEF website but you're new to this whole website malarkey, the BBC website has a great online course to help you learn how to use the internet. The web address for this is

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/course/>

Don't forget, if you haven't used the site before you will need to REGISTER first. This is done from the homepage, in the top right hand corner. If you find you're having problems logging on, give me a call on 020 7317 8600.

And finally, if you have an item you think could be posted on the site, or you'd like to make suggestions about how we can improve anything about it, please let us know. The email to use is [info@aslef.org.uk](mailto:info@aslef.org.uk)

I look forward to hearing from you!

# AIDS SUFFERERS DESERVE OUR SUPPORT, NOT OUR SUSPICION



The first day of December is World AIDS Day, when we are asked to think about the estimated 40 million people around the planet who are living with HIV. One of the problems sufferers face is ignorance about the condition. Here Equalities Adviser **Sharon Allen** answers some common questions ...



## WHAT IS HIV?

HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus. HIV infects and gradually destroys an infected person's immune system, reducing their protection against infection and cancers.

Initially, someone living with HIV may show no symptoms of HIV infection as their immune system manages to control it. However, in most cases their immune system will need help from anti-HIV drugs to keep the HIV infection under control. These drugs do not completely rid the body of HIV infection.

## WHAT IS AIDS?

AIDS is short for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. AIDS is not a single disease or condition. Instead, it is a term that describes the point when a person's immune system can no longer cope because of the damage caused by HIV and they start to get one or more specific illnesses.

## DO PEOPLE DIE FROM AIDS?

People don't actually die from AIDS; they die from the cancers, pneumonia or other conditions that may take hold when their immune system has been weakened by HIV.

In fact, the term AIDS is now very rarely used. It is more usual to talk of 'late-stage' or 'advanced' HIV infection. People can fight off the illness - and then they return to being referred to as 'HIV

positive'.

In the UK the only people routinely screened for HIV infection are pregnant women, so it is impossible to measure realistically how many people in the UK are infected.

## HOW IS IT TRANSMITTED?

Transmission of the virus is increasingly a problem for heterosexual people engaging in unsafe sex, and the rise of HIV infection is likely to be as high as it is for other sexually transmitted diseases - all of which are on the increase. It is a myth that this is exclusively a disease that is a gay problem.

## WHAT IS THE SITUATION IN THE UK?

In the first six months of 2007, 2050 new diagnoses of HIV infection were reported.

88,627 diagnoses have been reported since records began in 1982.

In this same period, 23,147 individuals have been diagnosed with AIDS. 17,597 of them have died.

About one-third of people living with HIV in the UK do not know their HIV status.

About 70,000 people live with HIV in the UK. This is almost 1 person in 1,000.

Since 1999, the number of HIV infections diagnosed in heterosexual men and women has exceeded those in gay men

Most new diagnoses are made in London.

All regions have seen increases in diagnoses each year since 1999 including areas that previously saw relatively few HIV cases, such as the North East, Yorkshire and Humberside, Eastern England, and Wales. In each of these regions (and Wales) new diagnoses more than doubled between 1999 and 2002.

## WHAT IS THE EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM WORLDWIDE?

1 person in 150 people is infected with HIV.

In some countries - including Botswana and Swaziland - between 30% and 50% of the population are infected with HIV.

Most people in developing countries don't have access to anti-retroviral therapy.

Although being HIV positive (HIV+) is not the automatic death sentence that it once was thought to be, it is still a virus for which there is no known cure - although a vaccine, similar to the 'morning-after pill', is being produced to defeat the virus.

## IN THE WORKPLACE

There are profound implications for being HIV+ at work - largely because of the massive ignorance and prejudice surrounding the illness.

Keeping silent about their HIV+ status is not an option for ASLEF members because they are subject to random drug and alcohol tests which will reveal if they are taking anti-retroviral drugs even if they are fit and well.

Once an employee has disclosed to their employers that they are HIV+ they should be covered under the confidentiality clauses in the Disability Discrimination Act. However, many employers and middle management will be ignorant of the letter of the law and the employee could face profound ostracism from work colleagues.

ASLEF's view is that HIV should be seen as asthma, diabetes or any other long-term chronic illness - and members should be supported appropriately.

■ ASLEF's BEMCC and LGBTCC are producing a short guide to HIV / AIDS with guidelines for employers, members and reps similar to the Domestic Violence Policy produced by the WCC. This should be available in the next few months.

■ If you are worried about HIV or AIDS and would like to talk in confidence to someone call Sharon Allen, the Equalities Adviser on 0207 317 8600

■ Useful web links are

Terence Higgins Trust [www.tht.org.uk](http://www.tht.org.uk)  
National AIDS Trust [www.nat.org.uk](http://www.nat.org.uk)



**N**O matter how bad your last shift was – it could have been worse. You might have been driving a train on Iraq's railways where dodging bullets, seeing track sabotaged and having inadequate signalling is all part of a day's work.

Restoring the nation's railways has been low on the list of priorities since the country's devastation in the wake of the invasion on 20 March 2003. It would, however, be a major breakthrough in bringing some form of normality to one of the most dangerous places in the world if scheduled rail services were resumed.

Iraq's capital, Baghdad, was once the centre of a railways system that stretched 1,260 miles from Basra to Mosul – and once it had connections to stations in Syria and Turkey.

The capital's railway station was built in 1953 but gradually disintegrated as a result of the United Nations economic sanctions which were imposed in the 1990s. Its condition was not helped when, during the invasion, it was heavily looted. Most of the station's furniture, lighting fixtures and even its bathroom plumbing went missing.

Yet 10 years ago Baghdad Central Railway Station teemed with passengers headed to Basra, Syria or Istanbul. It was a perfectly normal station with its well-dressed businessmen in suits and families going on holiday. Today it has been renovated – and so it gives the appearance of normality. It is a false impression because it remains practically unused.

#### **AFRAID OF THE TRAIN**

'People are too afraid to travel by rail,' says Mohammed Ali Hashim, a manager at the station. 'It's not surprising. The insurgents who are fighting the occupation have never ceased to disrupt our efforts to return the station - and the network - to normality.'

A good example of this is the line from Mosul to Aleppo in Syria. Shortly after the 2003 invasion it was re-opened, but it came under such regular and persistent attack that it was closed 12 months later.

Another favourite target for insurgents is a bridge that spans a narrow irrigation ditch in the city of Latifiyah to the south of Baghdad. This has been repeatedly blown up and this has led to the closing of the line from Baghdad to Basra. Three years ago the railways' director general, Aladdin Sadiq al-Khanak, was ambushed by gunmen, shot in both legs and nearly killed.

#### **TIES WITH THE COALITION**

Latest reports show that the Baghdad-Basra line, which was discontinued last year, remains closed. It is also understood that only about 10 people a day board the 10-hour trip from the

# A LONG WAY TO GO FOR IRAQ'S RAILWAYS ...

capital to Mosul – and that nearly all of them are railway employees.

Outside the capital things do not seem to be very different. The idea of a full service is an almost forgotten dream. There are various outposts which manage to run limited local trains, but it is in the face of terrorist threats and criminal gangs. The remote railhead in the desert at al-Qaim runs infrequent and unreliable services, but blames its difficulty to re-launch the railways on its ties to the coalition forces – but there are problems even with these soldiers.

Last year it was arranged that a train would have a test-run inside a military base. The procedure was that it had to halt at a Marine guard post, and then be inspected with sniffer dogs before proceeding. Unfortunately the driver misunderstood a signal for him to stop – and found himself being fired at with explosive shells. Understandably, the driver panicked - and derailed the vehicle, putting the track used to haul materials to cement factories out of use.

#### **BACKGROUND FACTS**

Iraqi Republic Railways Company (IRR) is the country's national railway operator. It is composed of 1905 route-km of standard gauge.

IRR lost in excess of £1 billion in war and looting damage from 1980 to 2007.

The IRR uses Soviet-style SA3 automatic couplers. In order to allow interchange with CFS and TCDD (the Syrian and Turkish railways, respectively), which both use screw couplings, IRR locomotives and most wagons are equipped with screw couplings and buffers.

Iraq's railway dates back to the Ottoman Empire when Kaiser Wilhelm II solidified ties with Constantinople by connecting the capital with the Arabian Peninsula. Parts of its network were sabotaged by Lawrence of Arabia during the Arab revolt.



*It might be a struggle - and safety standards may not be top notch – but one day this train – and this country – will run again.*



*These may be dark days for rail, but it's still 'thumbs up' from Iraq's railway workers.*

# CAB CONDITIONS – A UPDATE ON SQUASH

**T**HE SQUASH campaign - for Safe, Quiet, User-friendly, Air-Conditioned, Specially seated and Healthy driving cabs - began in earnest after this year's Annual Assembly of Delegates (annual conference).

The evidence of poor cab conditions sent by members to the Journal was quite overwhelming and encouraged the ASLEF National Consultative Committee on Cab Ergonomics (NCCCE) to send out a survey on cab conditions to all branches, reps and health and safety reps. This highlighted the fact that members faced inadequate conditions in both freight and passenger trains – and emphasised that this caused genuine health and safety issues.

It came as no surprise that our members made the outright winner of the 'Ghastly Cab' competition - the Class 66 freight locomotive. Coming up as a close second was old bus-bodied 142 'Pacers' – the ride quality of which are so bad that the issue was even raised in the House of Lords! In third place are the Sprinter-type – cramped and draughty cabs with no air con/air cooling.

Given the extent of poor cab conditions it was always going to be difficult to improve conditions in the short term in all the various cabs our members drive. But the union remains committed to putting a stop to our members needing to endure working conditions more akin to the 19th century than the 21st. We have had some successes with improvements in the worst cabs already taking place; in other cases companies have agreed to implement changes in the near future.

## FREIGHT TRAINS

**CLASS 66 LOCOS** All the FOCs - apart from EWS - are working together to try and resolve the vast problems in the Class 66 cabs. Although solutions have not been found to all the problems, the union is pleased to be able to report that a variety of trials are taking place to address all the outstanding issues.

Firstly, cab cooling. The timetable on this issue has slipped back: this is because there are more than 1 type of Class 66 loco and we need to ensure that any new kit fits – and actually works. However, a test loco is being fitted and trials will soon commence on both Intermodal and Heavy Haul.



This year saw the union mount its high-profile and active SQUASH campaign which was intended to remedy one of the major draw-backs of train driving as far as our members are concerned - the appalling conditions in many of our driving cabs.

In this feature we outline what has been achieved so far. We have made in-roads, but no one is more aware than the executive committee that there is a great deal still to be done ....

Equipment tried so far on the Loco 66708 has had poor feedback, but the manufacturers have been called in to address its shortfalls. Meanwhile GBRF is looking at a revised unit being fitted to a DRS Loco. In the interim, to help drivers deal with high temperatures in cabs, Freightliner Group have taken the practical step of issuing new lightweight uniforms.

Trial cab seats have been fitted for several weeks. Although there have been some minor problems, the vast majority of drivers see them as a significant improvement. The new seats will be fitted to all cabs in the very near future.

Cab blinds are currently being fitted as locos go through their maintenance periods. At GB Railfreight all but 3 locos have been fitted with blinds. This is to prevent cabs from overheating because of sun-light.

Finally, DRS are trialling a noise reduction system which could reduce levels by up to 6 decibels.

**EWS** The main problem with EWS is that the company has recently been bought by German company Deutsche Bahn (DB) – and this has led to something of a hiatus. Because DB is state-owned company,

their purchase of EWS was referred to the EU. The position appears to have been sorted out now, but the effect has been to slow down any progress with the company. Before we were assured of its future, there was little the union could do to pressurise them.

Nevertheless, despite these hugely unfavourable circumstances, we have secured a commitment from EWS that they will seek to improve cab conditions in a number of ways.

Firstly, EWS is investigating the possibility of bringing into the cab a feed of cooled air from the air-blowers cooling the engine. For the time being fans will be fitted in all cabs.

Secondly work is being carried out on sound technology for the cab to limit noise levels. The technology is based around methods and materials used in recording studios. Also under examination is the possibility of a wing type headrest on the driving seat to protect drivers' ears.

EWS has agreed to trial and, if successful, fit Gamma seats in all cabs. These seats have water suspension and can mitigate the effects of vibration.

To underpin these proposals, it has



been agreed that a policy will be introduced based on the guidelines for heat in the driving cab produced by the HMRI (Her Majesty's Railway Inspectorate). As part of this policy, lightweight cotton based uniforms will be issued and cooled water will be made available at every agreed Personal Needs Break (PNB) point.

## PASSENGER TRAINS

The union has been greatly indebted to the work carried out by ASLEF member Rob Porter on Northern Rail. His body-mapping survey - reported in last month's Journal - resulted in his TOC committing itself to spend £100,000 on upgrading 1,400 cab seats.

Another important development - also reported last month - was the victory in the courts of driver David Eaglen. A court ruling convicted Arriva of being in breach of duty for retaining seats with a risk of injury after the introduction, in 1998, of PUWER (Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations). They were also found to have infringed these regulations by failing to select suitable work equipment when the cabs were overhauled - and it was also pointed out that they had replaced the previous design of seating with something

completely identical!

It is too soon to analyse

what the knock-on effects of this case will be, but it will undoubtedly have wide reaching implications. Indeed, TOCs using similar cabs will in all likelihood start changing their seats as soon as possible to avoid a similar costly court case and negative press.

## SQUASH IN THE COMPANIES

Here are some other items of good from the TOCs...

**ARRIVA TRAINS WALES** They are trialling air conditioning in a 158 cab. These cabs badly need it, as the survey highlighted that the heating was not adequate on the secondman's side - and heats only the driver's legs!

**ONE** Cab concerns have been progressed via the Joint Safety Committee (JSC) and air cooling equipment is going to be fitted to all 315s.

**GOVIA** Further to the company winning the West Midlands Franchise, it is understood that the Class 150s will be replaced with the adequate 'Turbostar' units.

**FIRST CAPITAL CONNECT** Air con trials are taking place in 319 cabs and a budget has been put aside to refit all cabs by 2009.

**SOUTH WEST TRAINS** The company is engaged in testing the Peltier air cooling system. This heats up a ceramic unit on one side, which then reacts by cooling the other side.

**SOUTHERN** Southern has set up a working party to look at cab conditions, including seating - and drivers and representatives have ensured that progress has been made on a programme to replace seats. Also, they have been in discussions with Bombardier to discuss the costs of various options.

**NATIONAL CONSULTATION** Lastly, the National Consultative Committee for Cab Ergonomics (NCCCE) has recommended that all company council reps should negotiate the introduction of a Joint Working Party to include a Health and Safety representative to consider cab issues. The aim is to conduct a full ergonomic study of all traction types operated by each TOC. Company Council secretaries will report on progress before the end of the year.

**LONDON UNDERGROUND - LUL** Beginning next year, new trains are set to be rolled out on every line, bar the Central Line.

The Metropolitan, District and East London lines will have new stock introduced between 2009 and 2016, but the Bakerloo line will have no new trains until 2019. A major point of contention is that members haven't been allowed to partake in discussions around the design of the new stock.

There is some progress to report, however on the GEC Battery loco - 'transplant' engineering trains. These have very small cramped cabs with bench seats - and yet ASLEF members are driving them on 12 hour night turns. LUL district officials are able, however, to report some progress on improving them with work being undertaken in 2 phases.

Phase 1 is a 'facelift' of Loco L22 which will be completed by the end of 2007. ASLEF reps will be invited to comment on the changes, and if it meets their approval, the intention is to implement the changes to the rest of the fleet.

Phase 2 will develop a prototype where a slimmer battery will be used, enabling some further work to allow more space in the cabs.

## WHICH WAY NOW?

The improvements that have already happened, or are in the pipeline, will make a real difference to all our working lives. It is important that we all, at every level of the union, continue to pressurise management to ensure that adequate cab conditions are a priority for them, just as much as they are for us. The message for all levels of the union - company councils, national representatives and local reps - is the same: 'Keep on Squashing!'



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# ASLEF's unity of purpose secures ScotRail success

I THINK it's only appropriate to share another ASLEF victory with the whole of the membership. The union has successfully concluded a dispute with First Scotrail that underlines how a united membership can make a huge difference to peoples' working lives.

Unlike the vast majority of industrial struggles, the dispute was not about money – it was about the treatment of drivers. It began when First Scotrail attempted to remove drivers from the footplate with back-door disciplining of drivers by using the SMD policy.

The membership in District 2 stood strong against a newly-listed FTSE 100 company - First Group – and its attempts to undermine this union and attack individuals and reps. The membership endured the abrogation of a number of local and company agreements - but stood firm. It was this backing which allowed Keith Norman, General Secretary, Hugh Bradley, EC member district No.2 and myself the necessary tools to achieve a 10 point settlement which will ensure that drivers are treated fairly

and evenly across the country. The company underestimated the feelings of drivers - and even questioned the union's ability to win a ballot.

When our critics carp about the union being 'an expensive diary' and moan that 'the union does nothing for them' – it's clearly time we made efforts to publicise our many victories. Too often we fail to do this. ASLEF has made great headway in recent years on salaries and achieving an agreed 35 hour week. We have campaigned against Railtrack - and can be proud that we helped drive privateers out of our industry. Our campaigns on SQUASH and travel facilities must be continued until they are won.

We must ensure that the 46% of our members who never worked for the nationalised railway are fully aware of our history - and the struggles and sacrifices others have made to secure the pay and conditions we have today. Privateers are in this industry to make money. They do not share our vision of the railways as a public service or our belief that we should serve communities - not shareholders.

This is why I am concerned by the new Nationalist Scottish Government's attitude towards rail. It has so far opposed and stopped the new rail link to Edinburgh airport, which would have opened the airport up to all main line stations in Scotland. It has opposed the introduction of trams into Edinburgh – while scrapping bridge tolls on the crossings on the Forth and Tay rivers. It plans a road expansion programme by making the A9 to Inverness into dual carriageway (the railway line is single line most of the way north) and it intends to extend the M8 motorway. If we are to tackle road congestion and climate change we must invest in affordable public transport – not more roads.

In this modern age of travel the UK lags far behind our European counterparts. It is absurd that you can get a train to Paris or Brussels from London in less than 3 hours while it take 5 hours to get to the North of England or Scotland. The government needs to deliver a transport network which meets the needs of the United Kingdom.

Report from **Kevin Lindsay**,  
Organiser of district 2

## DISTRICT 8 UPDATE

### No loss for applicants

UNTIL recently if drivers went for promotion or other career development, they lost their rostered position. If they failed training or decided the position they were training for wasn't what they wanted, they had to join the waiting list and work their way back to their own depot, losing seniority and sinking to the bottom of the pool.

The Trains Council has now agreed that until a new contract is signed, drivers keep their rostered position which is covered by the senior pool operator. Thus until you sign a new contract, your position at your depot is safe.

### New grade for Jubilee

INSTRUCTOR Operators on the Jubilee Line have been asked to work outside their remit – without any union consultation. After an emergency meeting with management the work was halted. In further discussions it has been agreed that a new grade is needed to carry out upgrade work on all lines. Discussions have begun on job title and description, shift patterns and booking on procedures for the new grade.

We reported in the October Journal that we were opposed to temporary Instructor Operators on the Jubilee Line. I am pleased to say that we have secured an agreement that all 17 Temporary Instructor Operators will now be made Permanent.

**Dave Feldwick**





### FAVERSHAM HONOURS DON

THE Faversham branch was honoured to welcome retired former branch secretary Don Huntley to its October meeting. As part of the branch's centenary celebrations Don was presented with badge number 100 and an ASLEF plate by another retired former branch secretary – Joe Sears. It was in recognition of his strong and principled work for the branch in particular, and ASLEF in general, over many years.

**Steve Gurdler** Secretary – Faversham branch

### ONE FOR THE DIARY ...

THE Stratford Depot Reunion 2008 will be held on Saturday 26 January 2008. It will start at 1900 and go on until late! The venue is the Railway Tavern, Angel Lane, Stratford. Discounted accommodation is available at the Tavern. For details contact Jan or Tom on 020 8534 3123 and quote 'Railway Re-union' or email [barry.moore360@ntlworld.com](mailto:barry.moore360@ntlworld.com).



*Stan Moran presents the Society Plate & Tankard to Idwal Jones*



*Former District Organiser Ross Goff presenting Idwal Jones his gift from the retired section.*

### MIKE MCCARTHY STEPS DOWN

I HOPE this is an appropriate place to thank Mike McCarthy for his tremendous contribution to ASLEF over many years. Mike recently left the industry after many years as a driver and ASLEF activist.

Mike was known in The Valleys as 'Red Mac' for his progressive political views, but was renowned for a calm, analytical approach in negotiations with management. He fought particularly hard to protect the victims of harsh disciplinary practices, and his experience and knowledge were recognised by both management and reps.

He left Radyr depot to take up promotion to driver and became secretary of South East London Branch. Mike helped to organise picket lines during the national ASLEF 'flexible roster strike' in 1982 – and was active in raising money for striking Kent miners during the 84/85 dispute.

Rather than drive trains on his days off Mike helped to set up and run a Credit Union to provide low interest loans to those who could not afford the banks' extortionate interest rates.

Mike was a delegate to both Wales and National Labour Party Conferences and in 2005 was a close third in the election for Organiser in District 7. This was quite an achievement considering Rhymney is one of the smallest depots in the District and showed how highly members thought of him.

I'm sure we all wish Mike and his family all the best for the future.

**Bryan Davies**

EC member – District 7

### WESTBURY REUNION SUCCESS

On the 28 September Westbury Branch held another successful retired members reunion at the Labour Club Westbury. We welcomed our guests Stan Moran and Ross Goff along with 53 retired and active ASLEF members who enjoyed an excellent three course meal. After the dinner Stan presented a Society Plate and Tankard to Idwal Jones, our branch secretary for 5 years, for his services to ASLEF.

Ross Goff also gave a small gift from the retired members as a thank-you for the many years Idwal – who is retiring from EWS after 46 years - has organised the Annual Reunion & Dinner.

The evening finished with much reminiscing around the bar between retired and active members, some who had travelled from deepest Devon and Cornwall to attend the dinner. It was good to see them. Thanks to the people who work behind the scenes organising the reunion – without them the event could not take place. Finally thanks to our guests – and we'll see you all again next year!

**Ray Gooding** Branch Reporter - Westbury



## Eastleigh bids farewell to driver Denton

LAST month the Eastleigh branch bid a fond farewell to Brian Denton, who started on the footplate here in 1971. Brian who is from a railway family with strong union activist connections, joined the branch committee in 1976 before moving to Redhill for his driving appointment. Four years later he transferred to Coulsdon North. Returning to work after the '82 strike as LDC chairman, Brian found rosters imposed as a pilot for 'flexible rostering'. He didn't agree any new roster for a year! Coulsdon North was closed in 1983.

After a short stint at Farnham he moved to Basingstoke in 1983, serving as branch chair and LDC stand-in for 5 years. Ray Buckton presented him with a Society pen set which he still cherishes.

In 1989 Brian returned to Eastleigh where, in 1991, he was elected to the LDC – just in time for the BR split-up.

After 2 more depot splits we arrived at Mainline Freight. During this period Eastleigh drivers returned from the station to the shed – where Brian's uncle, Ray, had been LDC secretary for 13 years.

Brian and Wayne Thompson were involved the first DRI and Crewplan implications in EWS – and Brian continued as LLC secretary until leaving the footplate in 2002. For personal and health reasons he became a Trainmaster – and soon a local rep for the Level 1 manager grades.

He made redundant and transferred to Hither Green in 2004. After several spells of long term ill-health Brian retired at 55 years. He then became a part-time charter train guard, mainly based on the VSOE/British Pullman from Stewarts Lane. This leaves Brian time to pursue his other interests.

Eastleigh branch members wish Brian and Anna, his wife, all the best for the future.

**Dave Darcy** Eastleigh EWS LLC

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

**Evidence from 1907 shows an early example of a proud ASLEF tradition – that of differing in our opinions, but remaining cordial and comradely in our debates. Fifty years ago an ASLEF organiser insisted that Macmillan's 'claim – 'You've never had it so good' - emerged from the 'realms of fantasy' ....**

### 100 YEARS AGO

**Organising Secretary H. Parfitt reports on industrial unrest in Yorkshire ...**

"A few days spent at Leeds led to my attendance at the ordinary meeting of the Normanton Branch on Sunday, November 3rd. Of course I went there to explain past events from our point of view, to all of which our friends apparently agreed, but what they wanted to know was - What about the future? What is the E.C. going to do? What are we to do? To which I had to explain that the E.C. as yet had no mandate beyond that of going on with our National Programme, and was therefore waiting the pleasure of the members on other matters. Eventually a resolution was passed for a ballot on the "Recognition" question, but it was evident that the belief in a strike had actually got on their nerves. A vote of thanks was proposed for my address. I certainly did not expect it, as I knew I had been making unpalatable statements, and the truth is not always pleasant, but when I cannot get along with the truth I shall throw the job up, as it shall never be said that I led men astray in such a serious matter as a strike."

### 50 YEARS AGO

**A.Patterson takes a measured and partisan swipe at the Tory government of the time ...**

"While all but the most biased of persons follow with admiration the progress of the Sputniks in space, and await with keen anticipation for further examples of achievement by the Russian people, our Tory Government talks about – wage freezes and slumps! The Chancellor's recent pronouncements, if they have done nothing else, have stripped the pretence from the Tory policy. The 7 per cent, Bank Rate, the cuts in investment – mainly, it should be noted, in the nationalised industries – are just a slight foretaste of more drastic things. Their anti-inflation measures are simply – No wage increases; and this at a time when their Rents Act is beginning to make its pay-off to the rentier class. Where now is the Prime Minister's flight into the realms of fantasy that "we never had it so good." No stone should be left unturned to make this gang redundant at the earliest possible moment."

*Extracts selected and edited by Jane Pimlott*

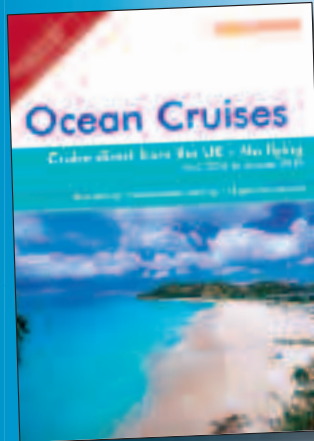


*The space age began in 1957, when the Soviets launched Sputnik*

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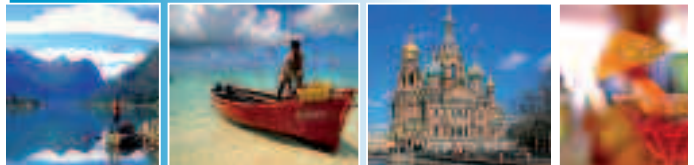
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## DAVIE CHAMPION – AN INSPIRATION TO HIS COLLEAGUES

OUR colleague Dave Champion passed peacefully away in the early hours of Thursday 4 October 2007 aged 39 years.

'Champs' started his rail career on 29 May 1984 as a Junior Railman at Woking Station, making such a good impression that it was a popular decision when he was appointed to Traction Trainee early in 1985. Shortly after, he qualified as a Secondman.

Dave spent 3 ½ years learning his craft in this grade. He was highly regarded by all the Woking train crews of all grades. His ability and knowledge of the job and sense of humour made him stand out. Dave passed for Driving in 1988.

He remained at Woking where he made no secret of his passion for trains and the railways. His favourite work was the 'loco' duty on Freight, Departmental and Ballast trains. Most big weekend ballast jobs required crews to collect additional locos from Eastleigh or Stewarts Lane and Dave relished these duties too - even the arduous task of changing over the '350' for the Yard!

As the work became separated with privatisation in 1996, Dave decided to try his hand at other things. He became an Acting 'Panel' Train Crew Supervisor and latterly a Driver Instructor and Assessor. His knowledge, experience and sense of fun helped him excel and soon he was well known and respected by staff at other depots, TCSs and Control – as well as Woking. Dave was an officer on our Branch Committee and very active on our Social Committee. He was the link between past and present generations of Woking Drivers.

Dave was diagnosed with Lymphoma early this year and it became clear that, despite intensive treatment, his condition was not improving. Dave made the most of the time he had left. He married his partner Vanessa and took her and his sons around the country to share with him all the places he wanted to see and things he wanted to do. His colleagues weren't forgotten - we were invited to spend an evening with him and his family at Woking Railway Club in celebration of his life. Over 250 people attended a truly memorable evening. Dave's courage and determination left most of us in awe and his story was featured in the local press and at least one national newspaper. Around 300 people attended Dave's funeral service, something he had planned with his family a few weeks beforehand.

We wish to pass on our condolences and sympathy to Dave's wife Vanessa, his two sons James and Marc and the rest of the family.

Everyone at Woking considers it a privilege to have known and worked with Dave. He left us with too many happy memories for him to be forgotten.

MICK BERG - Woking Branch

favourite pastimes of a 'flutter' on the horses, and fishing. Our heartfelt condolences go to his wife and family.

**D. A. Doherty** Reporter –  
Immingham Branch

## JACKIE CUMMINGS – FORMER AYR BRANCH SECRETARY

IT IS with deep sadness that I write to report the death of Jackie Cummings, the Former Ayr LDC and Branch Secretary. Jackie was 77 years old and he was a proud ASLEF member for many many years. Jackie was buried on 2 October 2007.

'It is possible to provide security against other ills, but as far as death is concerned, we men live in a city without walls.'  
(Epicurus)

**Wullie Simpson** Secretary –  
Ayr Branch

## DIPPY' DA SILVA – NOT A BAD BONE IN HIS BODY

IT IS sad to report the passing of John ('Dippy') De Silva at the age of 51. Although John died over three months ago, he was only laid to rest on Wednesday 17 October. This was due to problems trying to trace his next of kin – none of whom have, to date, been found.

John started his career at 30A (Stratford) and then moved on to become a 'Ripple Lane Pathfinder'. His final move was to LT& S/c2c when Ripple Lane closed.

John was diagnosed terminally ill earlier this year, and given a year to live. Sadly he managed only a few months.

John was a likeable bloke who didn't have a bad bone in his body. He'll always be remembered for his catchphrase, 'What do you reckon?'

There was a good turn out from John's work colleagues, neighbours and management at his funeral and he will be sorely missed.

Thanks to everybody who worked behind the scenes to bring this sad event to a conclusion.

**Cliff Blackwell** Reporter -  
Tilbury Branch

## COLIN PALMER - LAST AREA MANAGER OF HUMBERSIDE

BROTHER Colin Palmer, an honorary ASLEF member, has died aged 72. He started his long railway career at Langwith Junction in the Robin Hood country as a cleaner, fireman and relief fireman at Shirebrook before transferring to Rotherwood to take up his promotion to 'Running Foreman'.

He then took up the same position at Immingham before moving up the ladder to higher management. He retired at Immingham as the last BR Area Manager of Humberside. I remember him once telling me that he was the last area manager to have passed out on steam.

Although he achieved so much, Colin never forgot his working class roots. Railwaymen made up many of

his friends – and golf partners, a sport he also shared with his two sons.

After retirement Colin served on the Museum Committee, historically based on the dock and railway. His popularity was demonstrated at the turnout at his funeral, and many of us feel privileged to have known him.

Sincere condolences go to his wife, June, their sons Phil and Andy and their families.

**D.A. Doherty** Reporter –  
Immingham Branch

## TONBRIDGE LOSE TWO DRIVERS

I AM writing to report the passing of two Tonbridge Drivers.

Fred Evans was a very friendly driver, always willing to help you out. Apart from being a wicked card player he was a great traveller. He took holidays abroad long before anyone else I can remember. Fred was a

loyal ASLEF man and will be sadly missed.

Our other loss is Ivan Derek, better known as Ivan Bill. He was quite a character – and always liked the ladies! Sadly he had to retire though ill health. Always loyal to the union, he too will be greatly missed at Tonbridge.

**Dave Weddle** RMS –  
Reporter - Tonbridge

## ARTHUR HEELAS DIES AGED 80

BROTHER Arthur Heelas sadly passed away at the age of 80 after a short illness. He started on the railway as a Firewatcher in 1941 at the age of 14. He transferred to nearby Grimsby driving DMUs until that depot closed in the 1980s. After returning to Immingham he suffered a heart-attack and finished – after 50 years service - on the 'Town Pilot' at Grimsby. He could then enjoy his

# TED HICKLING'S THREE WISHES

IT'S difficult to believe it if you meet him, but former driver Edward – Ted – Hickling is 90 years old this month. He is a short, slim man with a quiet and reserved air – but his energy and contentment with his life are evident from the honest Yorkshire welcome he offers the moment I step across his Sheffield door-step.

Ted tells me he only made three wishes in his life. He wanted to marry a farmer's daughter; he wanted to cross the Rocky mountains on the footplate – and he wanted to drive the Flying Scotsman.

When he met Dora, his now sadly missed wife, she told him she was a nurse – but kept from him the secret of her father's occupation. And yes, he was a farmer!

Then in 1979 Ted went to Canada to visit his youngest daughter, Evelyn. During the visit Ted met a loco driver and was invited onto the footplate to make the journey across the Rockies from Lake Louise to a place called Field. Ted was thrilled at the experience – and almost as pleased that the Canadians still called the cab 'the footplate'!

A decade before this, in September 1968, he was booked to work a railway enthusiast train from Chesterfield to Peterborough. He drove steam engine 4472 – 'The Flying Scotsman', owned at that time by a Mr Pegler.

'I stopped making wishes then,' Ted says. 'I thought that was enough!'

He says he got great satisfaction from his work – 'a great blessing in life'. Rather strangely he says 'mills' helped

him appreciate driving trains. 'I worked in a mill for three and a half years when I was a boy,' he says. 'I remember it as 40 wasted months.'

Ted's youth was spent in Settle where his father was foreman of the gasworks – but for his first rail job he had to move to Sheffield, lodging with a family – the Harpers – with whom he never lost touch.

Ted followed the well-worn path to driving – cleaner, fireman, passed fireman and finally, in 1953, passed driver. He also endured the constant change of depot that was a feature of a railman's life in those days. He worked at Millhouses, Grimesthorpe, Darnall, Rotherham, Broughton Lane ... you need a map of Yorkshire to follow his career. And a map of northern France would help as well, because at the start of the War, Ted volunteered to become a ROC – joining the Royal Engineers, 190th Railways Operating Company.

Ted was based near Rennes, but within months of his arrival the Germans began an unstoppable advance across France. Ted returned to Weymouth from St Malo in an old – and highly unreliable – coal barge after a 14 hour journey.

In a remarkable coincidence, just 60 years after this event Ted was spending time at the railway convalescent home at Dawlish when one of the nurses told him there was someone she was sure he'd like to meet. Intrigued, he followed her and soon found himself shaking hands with a stranger.

'So why did you suggest we

meet?' he asked.

'I've spoken to you both quite a lot,' she said. 'And you've both told me the same story!'

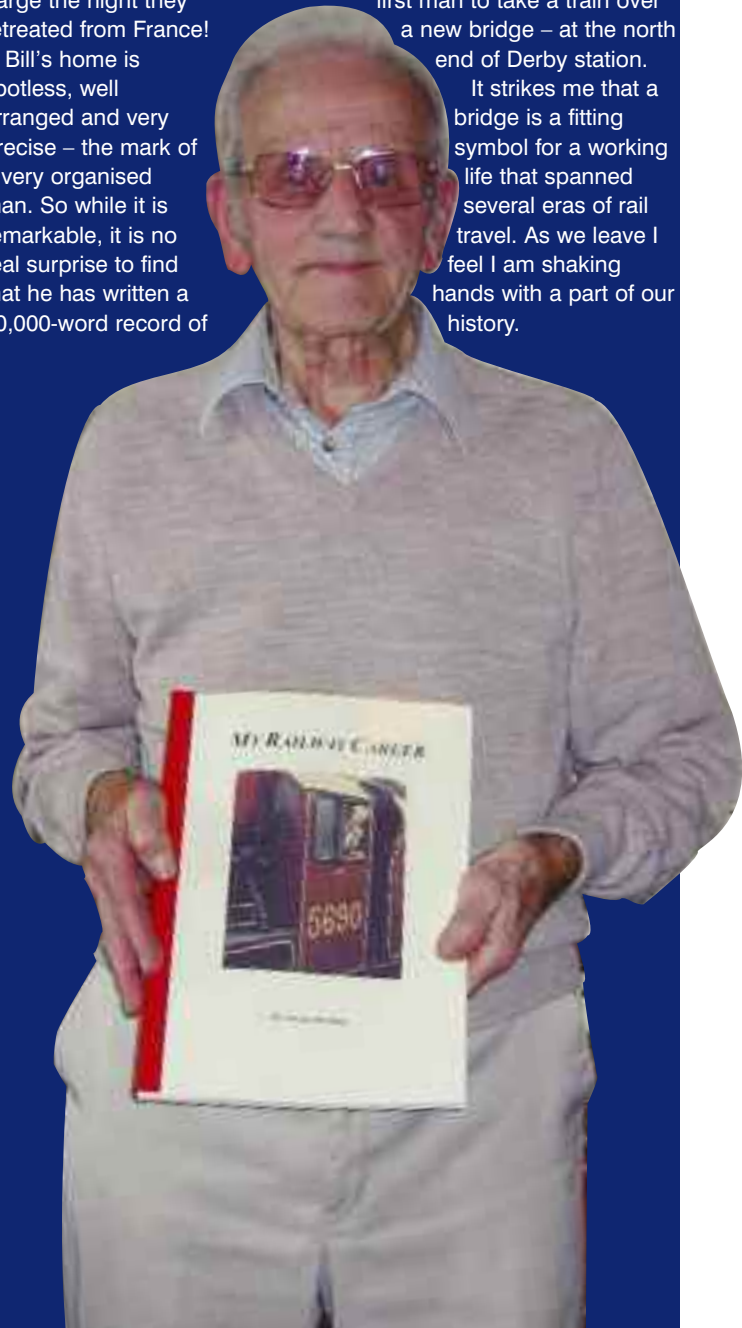
When the pair swapped notes it emerged that they had both shared that same coal barge the night they retreated from France!

Bill's home is spotless, well arranged and very precise – the mark of a very organised man. So while it is remarkable, it is no real surprise to find that he has written a 30,000-word record of

his time on the tracks. He says it was to keep himself busy in retirement – something else to keep him bright as well as his sketching and gardening.

Ted's 45 years service provided him with a fund of railway experiences. He's stood on the roof of St Pancras Station ('easier going up than coming down', he says); his train has been trapped in six foot of snow for the night by Cowburn Tunnel on the way to Edale; and he's had a stone hurled through his window. He's been a 'union man', serving for a year on the Loco Departmental Committee – and he's been the first man to take a train over a new bridge – at the north end of Derby station.

It strikes me that a bridge is a fitting symbol for a working life that spanned several eras of rail travel. As we leave I feel I am shaking hands with a part of our history.





## 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](mailto: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!

## Regular updates stop gossip

I'D like to comment on the letter in the October Journal 'Our problem is keeping a 4 day week'. I regularly attend the Newton Heath branch and to a degree I share Andy Parr's view about a lack of information provided by the union concerning harmonisation in Northern.

However, Andy says ASLEF is the main culprit in seeking to concede such conditions as our fixed rest day patterns and making Sunday overtime as part of a possible harmonisation deal.

I've attended 2 meetings where our regional organiser – Colin Smith – and the union president, Alan Donnelly, have assured us they are well aware of the reluctance of ex-FNW drivers to have their rostering agreements or conditions of service – and especially our fixed rest day pattern - used as a bargaining tool in harmonisation.

I've seen no documentation or other evidence that ASLEF officials are seeking to sacrifice ex-FNW drivers' fixed rest day pattern or 4 day week or

incorporating Sunday within the week in these talks.

I would also remind Northern drivers that before any package is implemented, it requires a 'yes' vote by the ASLEF members affected. However, I do feel the union needs to provide more regular updates even if there is little to report. At least this would stop the rumour mill, cut back the gossip and ease many of our members' concerns.

**Steven Hill** Manchester  
Victoria

## Difficulties of negotiating harmonisation

THE difficult procedure of trying to put 3 separate companies back as one has reached a critical stage in First Great Western. The imminent referendum may not secure a positive result, perhaps because of self-interest, elitism or fear of change – but the saddest thing for me is the lack of trust in the Drivers' Divisional Council's negotiating team.

I have felt the highs and lows of the responsibilities of trying to negotiate this big step (which is not full harmonisation, but is, I believe, a major step towards it) – and I'd like to record my respect to each member of the harmonisation negotiating team. They worked as a team and responded under pressure with professionalism and the conviction that – with a combined driver grade of around 1,000, they will be able to push forward an agenda that will fulfil expectations.

I'd also like to thank most of the local staff reps who responded professionally at joint meetings where the Drivers Divisional council tried to answer questions on the proposals. Sadly at one meeting three local reps walked out. It disappointed me greatly to see this – whether or not they liked the offer. It undermined my own position with management, built up over many years, which was based on their understanding that my depot was unified in its support of me and its reps. That has been seen not to be so.

I hope by putting my

frustration on paper all reps will realise their responsibilities and will show full unity when in front of management teams.

This is a difficult and painful process but it could put us on the road to a brighter future. If you haven't voted yet, please try to see the bigger picture. With 1,000 unified drivers – who knows what we can achieve?

**Robert Morse** DDC rep –  
First Great Western

## Rob Porter is a model!

I'D like to pay tribute to Rob Porter, our health and safety rep at Newcastle. He has gone well beyond the call of duty in his efforts to secure better conditions for everyone working on Northern Rail. I'd also like to thank his family for 'sharing' Rob with us in his efforts to make our working environment safer.

He is one of those people who really make a difference.

I've always been proud of ASLEF's traditions and regret our Journal sometimes being a forum for sniping at other rail unions, especially the RMT. In our democratic society we have the right to vote and join unions – and must be careful not to destroy ourselves from within. We need greater cohesion with all trade unions because their union members give us strength. Without this the work of people like Rob would be in vain.

I wish all union members – ASLEF and RMT – the best of health!

**I. Palmer** Driver –  
Gateshead and Newcastle

## Praise for Low Hall RMS

JUST a note of my sincere thanks to Sharon and all at ASLEF for organising the RMS Annual Forum at Low Hall last month. I enjoyed every last minute of the whole time.

The event was ably chaired by Ray Jackson with the assistance of Tony West. All the speakers were brilliant. I thought I knew something about the Spanish Civil War – but now I know ten more thanks to Bill Ronksley.

The banter in the bar was well worth listening to as well! It all made me very proud to be union!

**John Nivison** – retired member – South Norwood  
Thanks to ASLEF, the RMS Committee and HQ staff for an enjoyable and interesting weekend at Low Hall.

**Terry Higgins** retired member - Crewe

## Badge for 1982 strike?

DO YOU know anything about the rumour I keep hearing about ASLEF striking a 25-year badge for members who came out on strike in 1982?

I was a young driver at Ilford Car Sheds at the time - and I can tell you it was a bloody struggle for all those with mortgages and a young family – so perhaps some recognition from ASLEF for all concerned with that strike would be a nice gesture. I'm sure all those who came out at the time are still strong union members who willingly pay their subs every month.

Also I've just read the letter from B P R Johnson concerning his painful experiences with the seating provided for traincrews. I've suffered three times with these same symptoms and I'd be interested to know how widespread this condition is. I suspect there are quite a few drivers who could relate these painful consequences of driving.

Thanks for your time - the magazine is always welcome. Best wishes.

**Dave Murphy** Wickford -  
Essex

## No concession for freight drivers

I read with interest the article about staff travel in the November edition. I work for EWS and I notice I wasn't included in the little box at the bottom (pointing out entitlements) at all! I don't get any concessionary travel either in the UK or abroad, discounted or non-discounted.

It's about time ASLEF and the freight companies sorted

out this outrageous discrepancy. Why should drivers who work for passenger companies get concessions when freight drivers don't? A friend of mine - a retired BR engineer - gets free First Class travel - and I have to pay for everything. How ridiculous is that?

Peter McGrady - EWS - Toton

## Not so perky

I was pleased to see staff travel highlighted in the November Journal. It's the only 'perk' that hasn't been destroyed since privatisation.

New starters should be entitled to free travel, but I seem to remember that under British Rail things were not fair either. I could be wrong - but didn't we need 10 years service before we got the full quota of free travel?

Gordon Young - EWS Driver - Warrington.

## ... And again

THANKS to all at ASLEF for enabling me to sue Boston Borough Council for an accident I had in January 2004. Without the union I could not have been able to do this, and I am truly grateful.

Rita Graham - wife of Driver S. Graham - Euston

## The union spirit

I WRITE this as ASLEF members in Midland Mainline face their third week of industrial action. At Neville Hill we are not directly affected by this dispute, but we are proud to stand shoulder to shoulder in

# PROUD TO BE ASLEF



**I WOULD like to convey the sincere gratitude of myself and my family for the union's professionalism and courage when I was recently removed from the grade of driver at Glasgow Queen Street.**

**I was subjected to draconian discipline by First Scotrail - losing my job for a minor safety of the line offence after driving for 23 years. While I was subjected to bullying and degradation by management, I received first-class support from district organiser Kevin Lindsay He kept in constant contact as he led a spirited campaign from the onset against a quite despicable management.**

**Thanks also to Ian Smith (Company Council, John Mcue (Branch Secretary) and Hugh Bradley (EC member) for the support they showed at every turn until I was re-instated into the driving grade.**

**And last - but by no means least - I'd like to thank every driver who stood strong and firm by my side. My family and I will never forget your courage and loyalty.**

**I am proud to be a member of one of the strongest trade unions left in this country.**

**JIM WALSH** Assistant Secretary - Glasgow branch

solidarity for our brothers and sisters elsewhere within the company. That is what trade unionists do. Others at the depot have succumbed to the 'I'm alright Jack' attitude and turned their backs on ASLEF.

How can these individuals hold their heads high as they cross an official picket line just because this strike isn't about them? Yes, we at Neville Hill are the lowest paid drivers within Midland Mainline - but it's not about money it's about unity and strength!

I proudly follow in the footsteps of my late father who was a member of ASLEF for 42 years at Leeds and Exeter - and I urge misguided individuals join with and stand by their colleagues. Next time it could be you!

**Darren Caslin** - Company Council - Neville Hill

## Thanks, ASLEF

ON behalf of my dad - also Chris Barrie - I'd like to thank Thompsons Scotland (Michael Sellars), ASLEF and its district

organiser Kevin Lindsay for their help and support after my dad's accident in 2004.

ASLEF's lawyers battled a very difficult case for 4 years before reaching an amicable settlement.

**Chris Barrie** Chairman - Edinburgh No 2 branch

## Sniper

I DIDN'T see the GS's article 'Outdated gun laws belong to another era' - but I saw the response from Chester driver

Brother Gavin in the November Journal.

If he enjoys being a 'sporting shooter' - without explaining what this means - why doesn't he join the army? Is it because he enjoys shooting at 'things' - but doesn't like the idea of being shot at?

And as regards, 'What have these issues to do with a railway union?' - well, any periodical that enlightens its readers is OK by me!

**George Brown** - Driver - Treherbert

## CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

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

Stratford Branch has produced a badge to commemorate the closure - after 167 years - of what was once the UK's biggest depot. All profits to branch social and welfare club. A limited amount of badges are still available at £6.00 each + £1.50 p&p. Contact Barry on his email barry.moore360@ntlworld.com or his mobile 07900-132-192

ASLEF train driver collects ASLEF/railway badges, signs, shed plates, signalling items, etc. Phone Mark on 01562 746537 or (mobile) 07789301551



**COLLECTOR** requires ASLEF-Coalville NUM 1984/5 strike badges. Will pay £125. Also selling chrome and gilt badges for Wath and Mexborough at £10 the pair. Contact Barry Jones on 01709 588648 or 25 Windermere Close, Mexborough, South Yorkshire S64 0PT.



**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.

**CLASS 90 locomotive Tie Slides, Cufflinks & Badges**, available in high quality gold & silver plate. Tie Slides £5, Badges £3.50, Cufflinks £9.00. Postage £1.00 per order. Contact Brian Aitkenhead on 07957403679 or at 19 Pine Close, Rendlesham, Woodbridge, Suffolk, IP12 2GD.



**FAVERSHAM CENTENARY BADGE:** the Faversham branch was 100 years old on 23 June and will be holding a celebration/presentation evening in September. The branch has struck a limited number of badges (numbered on the back) available at £10 each and plain ones at £5 each - plus £1 p&p. Badges are available from branch secretary Steve Gurdler (steve.gurdler@aslefonline.co.uk).

## Change of address form

Name.....

Address.....

.....Postcode.....

Phone.....

Branch.....

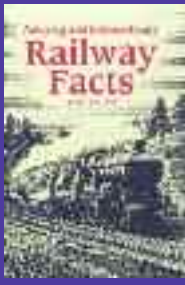
Membership No.....

Employer.....

# SOMETHING FOR THE STOCKING ...

READERS' OFFER

## Amazing and Extraordinary Railway Facts by Julian Holland



THIS little book bursts with exactly what it says on the title: strange facts about a great national institution – the railway. It's more to be dipped into at random than read like a book – and there's hardly a page goes by that doesn't have a treat waiting.

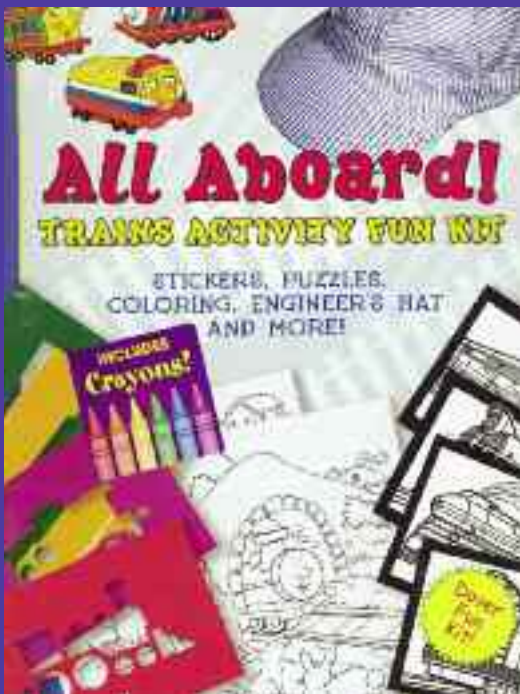
It's rigorously researched and very authoritative but it imparts its learning in a popular and easy way – and the range of subjects it covers is remarkable. If you want to know about famous engineers, funicular railways, the story of Bradshaw's railway timetable, BR shed codes, the Liverpool overhead railway or diesel-hydraulic transmission, you won't be disappointed. And who could resist chapter titles like 'A Quick Snog

in the Back Row' (about classic railway films) 'The Streakers' (streamlined steam locos) or 'Up in the Clouds' (about the Snowdon Mountain Railway)?

It's also a historical gem, with concise accounts of the creation of BR in 1948, the use of horses on the railways and the building of the Severn Tunnel. In fact, it's a minor miracle that such a store of stories, recounted with great enthusiasm, can fit into a small-sized book of 128 pages. CP

## All Aboard! Trains Activity Fun Kit

(A railway activity pack for children aged over 5 years)



GETTING this was fun. There is a train driver's hat and loads of things to do. There are stencils and loads of things to colour in. I specially liked the train tattoos which stayed on my arm for 4 days (they came off in the bath on Sunday). After playing with the sticker fun book, I used them on my wardrobe at home and they looked very pretty. There are lots of stickers – some you can stick and then pull off and on again. When I coloured in the stained glass trains my mom put them on my window, when the sun comes through they look really real. There are six crayons but some pencils or paints would have been nice. The big activity book has lots of games and quizzes which will take me a long time to finish. When my mom sees me with the hat on she sings 'Casey Jones, steaming and rolling'. She says Casey Jones was a train driver when she was a little girl. If I was given this as a present, I would be happy as there is lots in the box. I want to drive a train when I grow big.

(Review dictated by Eibheann McBride - aged 6)

■ Readers of the ASLEF Journal can order these items at reduced rates by calling 0870 9908222 or emailing [dcdirect@davidandcharles.co.uk](mailto:dcdirect@davidandcharles.co.uk)

■ The book is available at £8.99 (which includes a £1 discount and free p&p in the UK). Please quote code E0024

■ The fun kit costs £10.99 (which includes a £2 discount and free UK p&p). Please quote code E0025

■ Readers can order both items together for £17.99 (which includes a £5 discount and free UK p&p). Please quote E0026

## OTHER STORIES

### The passing of the Toton cat

ALTHOUGH some may not agree with me, I'd like to tell you and the readers of the Journal of the passing of 'the Toton Cat'.

He'd been living at the depot for, some say, 18 years or more and had done a fine job keeping the train crew building free from mice and rats (although he did sometimes bring in the odd rabbit body part!).

It's thought he joined Toton depot under BR sometime around 1989 and used to live in the old water tower. When it was pulled down he transferred into the new Train Crew building.

He was fed and watered by most Drivers and could often be found sleeping or eating in the BOP.

Unfortunately old age caught up with him and, as he was getting very thin and tired, the vet decided that the nicest thing for him would be to put him to sleep.

Some may not even know he's gone - but many others will miss him dearly. A sad loss for Toton depot.

**Craig Adamson** – Toton

■ Are there any more depot pets out there? If they're worth a story, please let us know at the Journal. Email [journal@aslef.org.uk](mailto:journal@aslef.org.uk) or call us on the headquarters number 020 7317 8600

### ORGAN DONOR PLEA



THE NHS has asked us to publicise its campaign to encourage people to sign up to the NHS Organ Donor Register. Joining

the register gives your agreement to your organs and tissue being used for transplantation to save or enhance the lives of others after your death.

This is of course a very personal decision but if you would like further details about organ donation, please ring 0845 6060 400 or visit [www.uktransplant.org.uk](http://www.uktransplant.org.uk)

# 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.

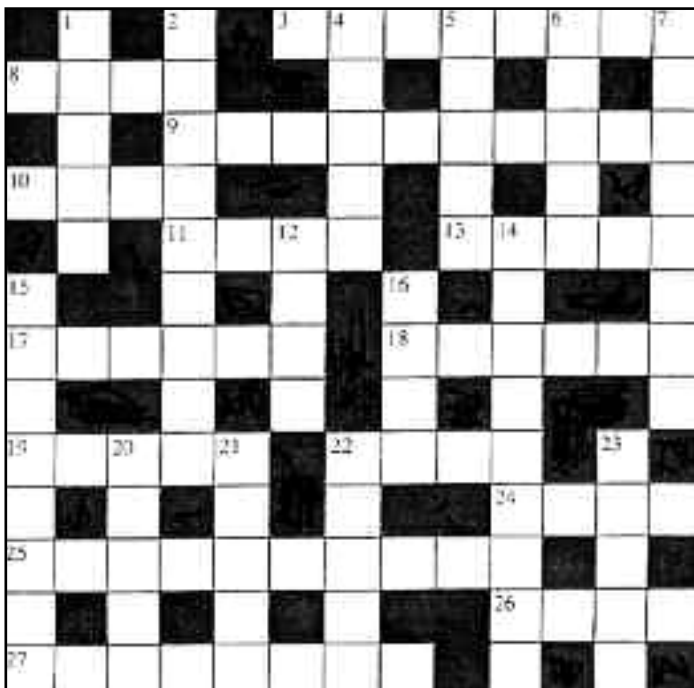
**SACKINGS OR OTHER PROBLEMS AT WORK** Harassment, discrimination or bullying? If your local, branch or district representative is unavailable, call the Industrial Relations department at union headquarters (020 7317 8600) or email [info@aslef.org.uk](mailto:info@aslef.org.uk)

**ASLEF** *more than just a union*



## Prize Crossword No. 20

set by TLC



Solution to Crossword No 19 which appeared in the November edition of the ASLEF Journal. Congratulations to **Mr D. A. Woodland** from **Tunbridge Wells in Kent**.

**ACROSS** 3 Rail Card 8 Taxi 9 Steam Train 10 Film 11 Aunt 13 Nomad 17 Instep 18 Happen 19 Trier 22 Amen 24 Earn 25 Railwaymen 26 Tyke 27 Admonish **DOWN** 1 Radio 2 Dismantle 4 Apart 5 Latin 6 Alarm 7 Ding-Dong 12 Naps 14 Opponents 15 Victoria 16 Chum 20 Idiom 21 Rowan 22 Abyss 23 Brake

Thanks for all your responses to the 19th ASLEF crossword in the November 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 14th of the issue month.

### CLUES ACROSS

- 3 Quick snack from the buffet (8)
- 8 Hire car (4)
- 9 This signal means 'go'! (5,5)
- 10 Antlered animal (4)
- 11 Concreted area (4)
- 13 Lord, Lady, etc (5)
- 17 Where the best cigars come from (6)
- 18 Very handy (6)
- 19 Green areas to relax in (5)
- 22 This means stop! (4)
- 24 A heavy metal (4)
- 25 London transport connection (10)
- 26 Blue flower (4)
- 27 London station (8)

- his pocket money (5,4)
- 4 Alter, change (5)
- 5 Type of fine pottery (5)
- 6 Gold bar (5)
- 7 There are available in the restaurant car (3,5)
- 12 Do this to while away a journey (4)
- 14 Police use this to show a likeness of a suspect (9)
- 15 Famous race-course (8)
- 16 Flaky fish (4)
- 20 Method of cooking beef (5)
- 21 Point in the right direction (5)
- 22 Greeting! (5)
- 23 Wheeled railway support vehicle (5)

### CLUES DOWN

- 1 Social gathering with drinks, food, etc (5)
- 2 Place where Junior keeps

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



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Address.....

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