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Climate change: Politics - not science - will stop warming

Union learning: Active part played in Adult Learning Week
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It’s nice to be popular!

No question about it, it’s nice to be popular. We’ve had two recent instances of old chums unexpectedly getting in touch. First, the Famous Five candidates for the Labour leadership all remembered where Arkwright Road was located and called in to see the executive.

It was heartening to hear some common themes. They all said they wanted the unions more involved in the Party. They all wanted to see more democracy and debate in the movement and at conference - and suddenly no one was afraid to use the ‘-word’: socialism. It was rather as if the last 13 years hadn’t happened!

I don’t want to be cynical about Labour, a party of which I’ve been a member most of my life. I sincerely hope that this does signal the re-birth of Labour as a modern, open, transparent party, focussed on what matters to working people. I hope we will see more ordinary working people becoming MPs. But hope’s not enough: we’ll have to fight to ensure it happens.

The executive will recommend that our members back Diane Abbott because she was the only candidate committed to a publicly run, publicly owned railway and who saw the need for a radical overhaul of trade union laws.

The other unexpected callers were the RMT. It seems their conference this year voted for a single union for the industry, despite a debate in which several of their delegates accused ASLEF of being ‘an elitist craft union’.

I can’t find it in me to apologise for our craft and our particular skills; nor for the industrial strength that comes from our pivotal role in the industry; nor for the unique sense of solidarity that comes from all our members sharing a common professional occupation.

So while I welcome the message that Labour can change, my reply to the RMT will be the same as last time: no thanks, comrades. Still, it’s nice to be popular!

Keith Norman
General Secretary
Union will not allow companies to ignore travel facility disparity

ASLEF is to notch up efforts to resolve the unfair disparity between travel facilities for ‘safeguarded’ and ‘unsafeguarded’, reports national organiser SIMON WELLER. We have written to every TOC and FOC insisting that they end the two tier workforce, expand travel facilities to non-safeguarded staff and seeking a response outlining their own views.

Predictably the responses we received were negative. Nearly all the TOCs wrote identical responses, particularly in relation to being unable to talk for other operators. They clearly had been talking to each other though!

They stated that it was not unusual for staff to have varying terms and conditions dependent on when they started a job and conclude that they have no plans to change staff travel arrangements.

There were only two responses that didn’t follow this pattern. Following pay talks with ASLEF where the issue had been raised, Northern canvassed the other TOCs to see if they were willing to enter into discussions on travel facilities for non-safeguarded staff.

Predictably none of them wanted to play ball. The only Freight Operating Company to respond was DRS who have tried to discuss the issue with ATOC who declined the request.

ASLEF, through the Company Councils will now be formally listing the matter of travel facilities within the Machinery of Negotiation of each Train and Freight operating company. The Union remains determined to ensure all our members get the facilities they deserve and to end the two tier workforce.

Progress in Heavy Haul

SOME important improvements have been secured in Freightliner Heavy Haul, thanks to firm and united support from the membership, negotiators, the executive and council reps reports lead organiser ANDY MORRISON.

The original 1991 terms and conditions have now been totally reviewed and re-written. The main improvement is that the old 28-day work-plan is now history, having been replaced by a proper rostering agreement which will ensure that our local representatives have the right to negotiate, and agree, such rosters.

It ends the days of management being able to impose unagreed rosters and threats of returning to the 28 day workplans. We have also secured a minimum of 119 rest days per driver per annum based on an average of two rest days a week plus three weeks of ‘blocked rest days’ per annum per driver – all coupled to the new rostering agreement will ensure that drivers have plenty of advance notice of rest days.

Other improvements include:

- The first formal Procedural Agreement with the company, which increases the number of North East local reps, improves release in the North West and formalises the rights of health and safety reps
- The introduction of a Mobility Agreement which confirms seniority as the deciding factor should we have to deal with any future redundancy issues
- A final draft of the new Competency Development Process that will replace the SMD which once implemented, I hope will reduce the number of FLHH discipline cases.

Throughout the negotiations we had to be mindful of the current problems facing freight and accept that to retain contracts FLHH require some flexibility from drivers that will differ in various locations. We have to ensure that none of our members are made redundant – and as part of this, following incidents at Eggborough Power Station where a contract was lost after two drivers took short cuts and breached power station regulations, I urge members pay due regard to working instructions in private sidings to prevent further losses of work.

Kent freight terminal

THE General Secretary has written to Eric Pickles MP, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government supporting the Kent International Gateway (KIG) Rail Freight Interchange proposal. Keith said ASLEF strongly believes that improving rail freight infrastructure is essential to ensuring a green and prosperous economic future for the United Kingdom and arguing that KIG ‘represents an important infrastructure improvement that will have two significant benefits in transferring freight to rail

- its ability to switch international cargo coming from western, central and southern Europe from HGVs to long distance rail services and
- strengthening rail flows by the introduction of a new range of domestic rail freight services between KIG and the Midlands and the North.

October Glasgow

Freight Forum

THE union is organising an Open Freight Forum at the Scottish Trades Union Congress at 333 Woodlands Road at 10.30 on 6 October to which all members are invited. Further details and speakers will be advised as they are confirmed.

SQUASHING INTO 319s First Capital Connect Company Council, along with Bedford health and safety reps, have been pleased with a new agreement which sees the company investing substantial amounts of their own money in cab improvements on 319s, reports TONY FARMER. Phase one will see improvements to the drivers desk and other cab switches. Phase two will at the earliest opportunity fit a COBRA seat to a test unit.

Consideration is also being given to grading windsreen wiper systems, AWS Sunflower and side window tints and we will examine DSD and Side window design.

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Franchising: more lunacy for the collection

THE taxpayer is to be presented with bills of £24 million – just because the award of two rail franchises has been delayed. Theresa Villiers admitted in Parliament last month that costs ‘arising from the delay to replacing franchises are estimated to be £6 million for Essex Tameside and £18 million for Greater Anglia’.

This led ASLEF’s general secretary Keith Norman to the conclusion that, ‘Rail franchising becomes more complex, vague – and expensive – by the day. In the bizarre world of franchising, the taxpayer even gets a bill for doing nothing.’

The explanation from Ms Villiers justifying the missing £24 million is a perfect example of ‘franchise speak’ – in that it is meandering, jargonistic and apparently meaningless. She ‘explained’ in an answer to Shadow rail minister Sadiq Khan, ‘The two franchise extensions will have a theoretical opportunity cost caused by foregoing the higher premium/lower subsidy expected if the franchises were re-competed instead of extended.’

And there’s another huge bill on the way because of delays in giving out the East Coast franchise. The actual amount of this, Ms Villiers says, will ‘depend on the final timescale for the competition, and reflect the extent to which the premium that would be paid by a private sector train operator might exceed that agreed with the current East Coast operator.’

‘This single exchange in Parliament conveys in a nutshell what’s wrong with rail franchising,’ Keith says. ‘It is incomprehensible, shadowy, covert – and wastes a lot of breath and money. We have to dump this wasteful system and take rail back into public control – which means ownership.’

ASLEF’s delegates at the Liverpool conference

TUC Black Workers Conference

ASLEF’s Floyd Doyle moved a motion about unlocking the potential of young black children. He argued that while members of the black and ethnic community have been successful in sport and music, this has not extended to areas like the media, politics, law and even trade unions. The union called on the TUC to highlight high-profile black and ethnic achievers in politics, the law, media and business to school children and students to show that opportunities do exist, and can be achieved.

Brother Pat Blake supported a motion on membership of political parties, explaining the reasoning for, and the hurdles ASLEF faced, to expel a member of the BNP from our union.

Floyd was re-elected to the TUC Race Relations Committee.

DRS get tanked up!

Direct Rail Services has begun operating a service conveying up to eight tanks of oils for DB Schenker on its overnight trunk service between Mossend and Inverness in Scotland. The company says this shows that ‘cooperation and common sense can exist between rival rail freight companies’. A novel idea!

News in brief

- **LABOUR REPRESENTATIVE COMMITTEE (LRC)**
  Mark Daniels and Andy Viner represented the union at a conference of the LRC in the aftermath of the General Election. The main themes were organising to oppose job cuts, especially in the public sector, and how to ensure Labour politicians deliver what Party members want rather than bending to the will of the ‘party machine’. There were also discussions on how the four major transport unions can cooperate better without losing their individual identities.

- **NEW HIGH SPEED TRAIN FOR SPAIN**
  The Spanish national operator RENFE has unveiled the new Class 112 high speed train, 30 of which will run along the Madrid-Valencia high speed line which is due to open later this year. ‘It really does put the UK to shame,’ says Keith Norman. ‘We talk about high speed rail. The rest of Europe introduces it.’

- **ACTION SUSPENDED IN HEAVY HAUL**
  ASLEF’s Executive Committee agreed to suspend the industrial action planned to begin on 8 July after lengthy negotiations concluded on the eve of the dispute with a proposed settlement.
Labour leadership candidates welcomed at head office

AST month the two most heavily-tipped candidates to become Labour’s next Leader came to ASLEF’s head office to speak to the executive committee. ‘I was pleased to see them both,’ said general secretary Keith Norman. ‘They are both obviously talented people and I wish them well as they strive to restore faith and confidence in our Party.’

Ed Miliband spoke about why Labour had lost, the role of unions and the future of transport. He felt Labour had lost because the government ‘had lost its way, becoming the establishment rather than the party that represents our values’ as he stressed that trade unions had an important role within the party. ‘Unions are a central part of Labour – not embarrassing relatives’ he said. He congratulated our union on its exposure of rail franchising through the ECML ‘bid’ and said he’d welcome ‘alternative, public’ bidders if he was Labour Leader. Ed also supported some changes in union laws, short of abolition, and said he called himself a socialist because ‘capitalism throws up injustices that need to be opposed’ whilst conceding that he had ‘no master plan’ for a new society he intended to ‘thrust upon an unsuspecting world’.

David Miliband said he had three cornerstones of his campaign to become Labour’s Leader. ‘They are honesty - we have to face the truth even when we don’t like it. Secondly, I want to grow and strengthen not the Labour Party, but the Labour movement. And thirdly, I want to see authenticity, not triangulation.’

Although this third plank was rather vague, he said Labour had ‘ceased to be the party of change’ with ministers becoming department administrators rather than politicians. ‘This had led people ‘to cease to believe we were on their side.’

He pledged some of the money he is raising to back his campaign will go to Labour to fund the next election and wants to spend money training 1,000 community organisers.

The other Leadership candidates – Dianne Abbott, Ed Balls and Andy Burnham - have also been invited to put forward their case and reports of those meetings will be reported in the next edition. The executive will then decide who to recommend to ASLEF members who are entitled to a vote in the election – all those who contribute to the political levy. Balloting takes place in September.

East Coast cuts London Glasgow train service

ALTHOUGH the currently government-owned East Coast has announced decisions to cut daily direct trains from Kings Cross to Glasgow from 13 to 2, ASLEF officer Nick Whitehead says the effect on our members, and services, is likely to be minimal.

‘We are talking to management this week about possible effects on drivers,’ Nick says. ‘We have concerns about work at Newcastle and Edinburgh but overall the proposed new timetable could mean up to a dozen additional driving jobs’.

The east coast route between London and Glasgow takes an hour longer than the west coast alternative and the new proposed timetable – to be introduced next May - would provide more intermediate stops. Called Eureka! it would offer 19 new services, faster journeys and additional seats.

Nick Whitehead says that despite the ‘headline’ announcement of service cuts, there is potential to introduce new journeys from Glasgow to West Yorkshire, the Midlands and other Scottish towns. ‘The changes will mean disruption to some of our members but if management approach the new situation in a positive way I am confident we can reach agreements that will be acceptable both to staff and passengers,’ he said.

East Coast announced plans to scrap the morning train from London to Glasgow earlier this year. The train, which was introduced after the opening of the east coast route in 2009, was a much-cherished part of the railway network. It helped to improve connectivity between the north and south of England, and offered passengers a direct route between London and Glasgow.

But despite successes, the train has faced challenges in recent years. It has faced competition from other rail operators, such as CrossCountry, which provide services to the Scottish Highlands. These operators have offered more frequent services and more convenient journey times, which has led to a decrease in demand for the East Coast service.

The introduction of the new timetable is part of the railway operator’s efforts to improve its services and attract more passengers. The company has also invested in new trains and improved facilities at stations along the route.

Nevertheless, the decision to reduce the number of services has raised concerns among passengers and trade unions. The ASLEF union, which represents train drivers, has expressed concerns about the impact of the changes on its members.

Worker Safety and Security

The ASLEF union has also raised concerns about the safety and security of its members. The union has called for an investigation into the cause of a recent train accident, which resulted in the death of a member of staff. The union has also urged for better training and resources for its members to ensure their safety on the job.

The railway operator has acknowledged the concerns of its union and the public. It has assured passengers that alternative services would be provided and has pledged to work with the ASLEF union to ensure the safety and security of its members.

Overall, the decision to cut services on the East Coast route has raised concerns among passengers, trade unions, and railway operators. It remains to be seen how the changes will affect the railway network and its passengers in the long term.

Trains on elephants!

EARLIER this year Londoners were surprised to find a few hundred decorated model elephants scattered around the capital.

Individually designed to represent all kinds of ideas, campaigns and markets, they were all auctioned last month and raised £4 million to help conserve the endangered Asian species.

Rail was inevitably one of the topics covered, with one model featuring Jeff Rowland’s ‘Lover’ showing passengers meeting or parting at a station, while ‘Izzy’ celebrated the work of Brunel and especially the Great Western Railway.

If you even wondered what a trunk line was ...!
The union’s life-long-learning arm – ASLEF Education – recently organised events across the country to mark Adult Learning Week. Here we catch up with a few of them ...

LEADING LIVERPOOL LEARNING

THE largest Learning at Work event in Merseyside – which was opened to the public - was held on 18 May at Liverpool’s magnificent St. George’s Hall. It was an all-union event with the GMB providing a fully equipped Learning Bus where Skills for Life assessments could be made.

Local historian Steve Binns MBE spoke about the local area and ‘Tugboat Cath’ gave an excellent rendition of one of Charles Dickens’ ‘penny readings’ which he often performed in the Hall.

Meanwhile we offered workshops in CV writing, Apprenticeships and Skills for Life for those not looking round the 30-odd stands from local colleges and healthcare providers.

I presided over the day as Master of Ceremonies – a task that included running mock trials and highlighting Dyslexia Awareness in the Civil Courtroom. We hope the event – which attracted over 200 people – will become an annual fixture.

Bournemouth goes continental

BOURNEMOUTH CROSS COUNTRY staff brushed up their language skills at a workplace Adult Learning Event. A tutor fluent in German, French and Spanish gave practical tips about picking up a foreign language and advice about how best to tailor tuition to suit the individual.

Local colleges that gave information, advice and guidance in other courses said there was particular interest in IT. As a result ASLEF is trying to set up a computer course for which we hope to be able to loan laptops to students.

The event took place a couple of weeks before the Arriva group (who own the XC franchise) was taken over by German State Railways. Dialogue is always important with new owners - we just never guessed it might be in German!

Liam Gerrard, ULR, Cross Country

NEW CROSS GATE is a new depot, and hence a prime location to engage with new members. At our promotional learning day we offered colleagues French and Spanish language ‘taster classes’ and had tutors and advisors from Birkbeck and Lewisham ready with specialist advice.

This was a first for me as well, and hopefully next year I can expand and improve the event. Adult Learners’ Week is a good opportunity to show-case all the opportunities that are available within the learning sector.

Matt Hill, ULR, Euston/New Cross Gate LOROL

LEARNING MATTERS
Philadelphia & New York Christmas Shopping Break
Departs 26th November 2010
6 Days from £649pp
- Room Only Hotel Raddison Plaza - Warwick Hotel
- Flights with British Airways
- Free Hop On - Hop Off tour valid for 24 hours to explore Philadelphia
- Free shopping discount vouchers on optional King Of Prussia shopping mall excursion
- Included Big Apple Tour
- No tax on clothes or shoes

New York Thanksgiving Sales
Departs 25th November 2010
5 Days from £749pp
- Room Only Hotel Travel Inn - located in Mid-Town Manhattan
- Flights with American Airlines
- Free time to explore New York
- Black Friday - the biggest and best shopping day of the year in USA.
- Optional Big Apple Tour

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Knock-on from public sector cuts will threaten rail

says National Organiser Simon Weller

YOU have to hand it to David Cameron. He’s implicated the Liberal Democrats in the ideological squeeze of public sector provision. Before polling day Nick Clegg posed as a new hope and a bright alternative. Now he’s simply a collaborator.

The real achievement of the Cameron project has been to completely shift the agenda away from the banking sector – whose unhinged pursuit of profit landed us in this toxic mess – onto ordinary working people. This ‘cuts agenda’ risks a return to recession which will drive down all our living standards. It will undermine access to public services; increase poverty and inequality; weaken workplace rights and hinder the economic measures needed to progress the environmental, housing and social justice agendas.

CUTS WILL DEPRESS THE ECONOMY

The Coalition government trots out the lie that the only way to deal with the deficit – which was caused by keeping the international banking system afloat to prevent our economic collapse - is to slash away. They ignore the fact that smashing the public sector will drive millions into unemployment, increase privatisation and saddle our grandchildren with huge debts. This is what happens if you treat the national economy like a family trip to Asda.

Even the International Monetary Fund (IMF) – traditional cheer-leaders for liberalisation, deregulation and privatisation - says ‘unwinding public intervention too early could jeopardise progress in securing a sustained economic recovery’ and ‘current conditions do not justify a significant rolling back of macroeconomic stimulus or financial policies in 2010’. For them to back Labour’s policy of investment-led growth is quite something!

REPERCUSSIONS FOR RAIL

The recession hasn’t hurt those of us in secure work too much – yet. But if economic growth contracts further and we are plunged into a second dip of recession, train operating companies will seek to cut services and reduce drivers’ earnings. The redundancy threats in freight could be mirrored in passenger companies. Employers, emboldened by Tory arguments that ‘anachronistic’ final-salary pensions must end, will already be examining ways to reduce overheads – including our wages and pensions.

The Coalition already has a potential fig leaf to excuse rail service cuts in Sir Roy McNulty’s ‘Rail Value for Money’ study. Commissioned prior to the election, I believe it began as a genuine attempt to examine the balance of rail funding - but may now be ripe for exploitation. There have been industry successes and an increase in pax-km but the graph above demonstrates the inefficiencies of the privatised railway when comparing revenue with levels of subsidy. Shamefully, the Tories won’t want to stop continued profiteering by the usual suspects. Rather they will cut off long-term investment and force down short-term costs.

The fight coming in the public sector will also become our fight. ASLEF is well organised with a solid financial base and very high membership density but we can’t be complacent and we’ll continue to improve our training, communication and recruitment. We need to be ready.

Don’t let your phone cost your job

warns Craig Theaker, H&S rep at Doncaster

AFTER reading an article in the May edition, I felt I needed to do something to make you all aware of the grim reality of using your phones, ipods or any other electronic device whilst driving.

I’m a driver with Northern Rail and I’ve recently seen one driver dismissed and others suspended with final warnings for using their mobiles whilst in the cabs. A Driver who was dismissed came very close to hitting a Network Rail Mobile Operations Manager (MOM) who was manning a defective level crossing on local control. The allegation was that the driver failed to travel at caution - due to the distraction of his mobile phone.

After the incident in the USA everyone now knows the dangers of this practice.

Along with a Driver Team Manager (DTM), I have recently done a small confidential survey of drivers. I have to say I’m absolutely amazed that individuals are still using or have their mobiles turned on/silent/vibrate.

The reason that I’m writing this is that I do not want another repeat of the job losses that the alcohol and drugs policy brought. This was the result of everyone thinking, ‘it’ll be all right. It doesn’t apply to me.’ The way things are going I can see mobiles having the same disciplinary effects that resulted from the introduction of the drink and drugs policy.

If you are issued with a mobile, what’s actually stopping you from turning it off while you’re driving - and turning it on when it’s safe to do so? Just turn it off – it doesn’t hurt!

The business these days sees the use of mobiles as a violation – and they are going to come down on individuals very hard. Not only that, should drivers be involved in incidents when a mobile phone has been in use, they are leaving themselves open to prosecution.

I’m also aware that bodies such as ORR are asking companies and unions what they are doing about this risk.

Please remember that by turning your mobile phones off you are not only protecting yourself and others on the railways. You’re also protecting your livelihood and your lifestyle. Could you really afford to lose a £40,000+ job in the current climate? If the answer is ‘No’ – and it is – just turn it off.
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Government review belittles health and safety

says Victoria Phillips Head of the Employment Rights at Thompsons Solicitors

Lord Young has been widely quoted pointing out the absurdity of the many stories that abound – from toothpicks being unavailable in restaurants to pancake racers having to walk in wet weather. We have taken Lord Young at face value and assume that rather than seeking to perpetuate the myths he is highlighting what are, in anyone's eyes, clearly misinterpretations of the law.

‘Elf and safety’ hasn’t ‘gone mad’. Myths are being exploited or indeed, on occasions, made up by the media to maintain a favourite theme. In the process they attribute to health and safety rules and powers that are completely false. It is a monster of their own making.

The Your Freedom website which invites the public to nominate laws to be repealed further encourages the hysteria about health and safety. People are hijacking it to nominate laws for repeal that simply don't exist.

In 2008 the Conservative shadow work and pensions minister Andrew Selous said that health and safety was ‘the bottom line’ and ‘traditionally had cross party support’ and The Health and Safety (Offences) Bill 2007 did indeed get all party support in order to become law.

LOW STANDING FOR SAFETY
So we have asked Lord Young what has changed. Why does the coalition think that health and safety laws are in 'low standing' when they weren't in 2007 and weren't in 2008?

Between April 2009 and March 2010, 151 workers were killed. Thousands were injured in work-related accidents. That is the reality for working people and statistics show that most then don't make a claim.

The key is adequate enforcement of health and safety legislation. We have too few inspectors and too few prosecutions of employers and that leads to thousands of people continuing to be injured and killed at work.

We have told Lord Young that if his review intends to look at real personal injury claims – ones that result in formal claims for compensation recorded by the Government’s Compensation Recovery Unit (as all claims must be) rather than the tabloid myths – then he will see that compensation claims for people injured at work and out of work are falling consistently.

The CRU's figures show that workplace accident and disease claims have dropped by 64% since 2000.

RIGHTS, NOT MYTHS
We suggest it isn’t acceptable to put emergency and other workers’ lives at risk through the watering down of health and safety legislation simply to deal with a false perception about the law.

Rather than dancing to a tabloid tune and reducing the protection that health and safety legislation provides, the government should initiate a public information campaign using the Health and Safety Executive’s ‘myth of the month’ – see http://www.hse.gov.uk/myth/index.htm

Instead of this pointless exercise, the government should be encouraging national and regional newspaper adverts, films on YouTube and social networking sites to

1. reassure the public that there is no compensation culture and no need to fear health and safety regulations.
2. explain what the regulations really say and how they protect people.
3. set out what people's rights to sue for compensation actually are.
Climate can help us change our world

OST problems in society are mainly social and political, even if at first glance they seem purely technical or scientific. For example, workplace technology can be developed to serve shareholders, customers or workers. It is the balance of power between these three that decides who will benefit.

Climate change is no exception. The solution will need a huge amount of new technology. But the problem isn’t just about technology – it is a social and political issue. That’s why unions need to develop their own climate change policies – because in the end, it is a question of what kind of society we want to live in.

FACING UP TO REALITY

Unions have hesitated when they’ve considered climate change. Often they have denied the seriousness of the problem and even opposed taking action because of (fully understandable) fears of job losses.

But we have to face reality. There is overwhelming proof that

- climate change is here
- human activities are crucial factors to it and
- it can be catastrophic.

The main reason for the problem is burning fossil fuel. So the success or failure of attempted solutions can be measured easily – by looking at whether it contributes to reducing burning fossil fuel.

And we must find solutions. Doing nothing will only make the consequences worse.

CONTROLLING MARKETS

The Stern Report to the UK government concluded that ‘climate change represents the biggest market failure in history.’ The on-going financial crisis represents another huge market failure. We cannot rely on failed market mechanisms to solve these crises. Both demand increased democratic control of the economy.

That is also exactly what the trade union movement needs. So the climate crisis actually opens possibilities and opportunities for the trade union movement. We should prioritise climate change policies that we can embed in a broader political context. This will involve overcoming the contradictions between specific workers’ immediate, sectoral interests – and the broader interests of workers as a whole. In other words, we are not only transport workers facing a change in work patterns. We are also human beings confronting a potentially catastrophic event.

REDISTRIBUTING WEALTH

Currently, workers and trade unions are on the defensive. There is a tendency to suggest that greenhouse-gas emissions are the responsibility of the individual. We all have to pay for the emissions we cause, it is said, even though those emissions result from how society is the way market forces are pushing. But it is nonsense to suggest we can leave climate change to individuals.

Economic restrictions are not the answer either. People will never accept that rich people can continue to pay their way and corporate interests are protected while the costs are put on workers, consumers and taxpayers. We need collective political solutions in which policies against climate change are combined with a radical social redistribution of wealth. Anything short of that will prevent any solution to the climate crisis.

NO NEED FOR SACRIFICES

Environmental organisations tell us we have to make sacrifices to save the climate and our
According to the Met Office …

- If emissions continue to grow at present rates, CO2 concentration in the atmosphere will reach twice pre-industrial levels by around 2050. Unless we limit emissions, global temperature could rise as much as 7°C by the end of the century and push many of the world’s great ecosystems (such as coral reefs and rainforests) to irreversible decline.
- Even if global temperatures rise by only 2°C, 20–30% of species could face extinction. We can expect to see serious effects on our environment and food and water supplies.
- Although there is natural variability in Earth’s climate, the current climate change is very unusual as it is not exclusively part of a natural cycle.
- Greenhouse gases are produced both naturally and commercially and both influence climate change. All the greenhouse gases combined make up less that half a percent of the atmosphere but it is proven that they trap heat keeping the planet 30°C warmer than it would be otherwise. All changes in the level of these gases have a significant effect on global temperature.
- The ten hottest years on record have all been since 1997. This is the result of human activities like burning coal, oil and gas – which have caused an ‘enhanced’ greenhouse effect and extra warming.

RAIL AND CLIMATE CHANGE

TRANSPORT worldwide is a growing source of carbon emissions. According to the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development), it accounts for a quarter of world emissions from fuel combustion. The International Energy Agency says unabated transport growth will result in an 80% increase in transport carbon emissions from current levels by 2030.

Rail is one of the most energy efficient modes of transport and is estimated to contribute just 1% of CO2 emissions from all transport sources. However, trends in transport activity show that rail’s share of passenger and freight transport has declined in favour of road in both industrialised and developing countries – and investment in infrastructure has also favoured roads.

Deregulation, liberalisation and privatisation have had their impact on all forms of transport. Geared towards economic growth and the competitive needs of multinational companies, I believe there has been an unsustainable growth of transport. Unions will have to consider the links between growing transport emissions to how we see transport being controlled and organised globally, and the impact this can have on workers and unions.

The environmental role played by railways must be related to how unions see rail’s wider economic and social role in society.

ISSUES FOR RAIL UNIONS

Millions of jobs have been lost on the railways across the globe over the last few decades. However, a report on green jobs produced for UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme), ILO and the ITUC (International Trade Union Confederation) argues that there is potential for creating employment. A shift to rail transport jobs would create jobs in railway services, construction and manufacturing, although this would vary from country to country.

For transport unions, decent, secure and healthy jobs are the priority in the context of new green employment opportunities. As part of this long-term campaign, we need to win improved conditions for existing jobs - and organise the growing numbers of informal workers in our industry.

Improved training is needed for existing and new railway jobs to ensure workers have the necessary skills. Rail unions also need to support demands for decent conditions for road transport workers. This not only because it benefits those fellow workers, but also because it helps to reduce the cost advantages which road has over rail.

Unions also need to assess the range of measures which are being considered to reduce emissions from railways and what impact these measures might have on workers. When we call for electrification, for example, we need to ask ourselves how the electricity is generated. This is critical as currently only 14% of EU electricity is produced using renewable energy sources. We should also be thinking of the use of biofuels. Then there are operational measures such as training drivers to drive more energy efficiently and reducing line haul speeds. We could also consider arguing for double-deck cars, longer trains, better traffic management systems and improved interoperability and cross-border coordination.

- Asbjørn Wahl is an official of Fagforbundet (the Norwegian union for municipal and health sector workers). He also chairs the ITF’s climate change working group. This is an edited version of an article he wrote for the ITF’s magazine, Transport International.

- Alana Dave coordinates climate change activities for the International Transport Federation (ITF). The ITF continues to collect and analyse information on climate change and transport and this month is holding a conference on climate change and transport conference in Mexico.

AUGUST 2010

Climate Change

According to the Met Office …

- If emissions continue to grow at present rates, CO2 concentration in the atmosphere will reach twice pre-industrial levels by around 2050. Unless we limit emissions, global temperature could rise as much as 7°C by the end of the century and push many of the world’s great ecosystems (such as coral reefs and rainforests) to irreversible decline.
- Even if global temperatures rise by only 2°C, 20–30% of species could face extinction. We can expect to see serious effects on our environment and food and water supplies.
- Although there is natural variability in Earth’s climate, the current climate change is very unusual as it is not exclusively part of a natural cycle.
- Greenhouse gases are produced both naturally and commercially and both influence climate change. All the greenhouse gases combined make up less that half a percent of the atmosphere but it is proven that they trap heat keeping the planet 30°C warmer than it would be otherwise. All changes in the level of these gases have a significant effect on global temperature.
- The ten hottest years on record have all been since 1997. This is the result of human activities like burning coal, oil and gas – which have caused an ‘enhanced’ greenhouse effect and extra warming.

RAIL AND CLIMATE CHANGE

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The Miller’s tale: Alison’s roundabout route to the footplate …

Alison Miller has been driving trains out of Glasgow Central for two and a half years now – and she’s the living proof that there’s no such a thing as an ‘ordinary train driver’. Her enthusiasm for life is contagious. She’s constantly interested in everything - which makes her splendidly entertaining and amusing company. Chris Proctor went to Scotland to talk to her about how she came to Scotrail ...

Alison is originally from Wishaw near Motherwell, but she was drawn to the big city – Glasgow in this case – like a magnet. Her first job was as a 14 year old where she worked on a clothing stall at Wishaw’s Saturday market. Since then she says that although she’s had a series of jobs, she’s never been unemployed.

After a spell as a waitress and barmaid, she took a job at the newly-opened Lloyd’s TSB call centre in Glasgow. ‘That’s where I got my first taste of union-type work as I became the rep for my shift. It was like the LLC role on the railways.’

At the time Alison’s husband, Howard, was working for a car stereo company and they needed someone to look after the accounts. Alison’s bubbling confidence led her to apply for the job, given her (part time, weekends only) experience in the banking business. ‘The firm had the unfortunate name of Beaver,’ she laughs. ‘You learn to develop the skin of a rhino if you’re a young woman with that written on your tee-shirt!’

When she began to look for other admin jobs she realised they all seemed to want a degree. So she went to night classes and eventually got enough qualifications to begin a Geography and Scottish Studies degree at Strathclyde University.

A DEGREE OF UNDERSTANDING

Scottish Studies surprised Alison because ‘although I have a sense of pride in Scotland, I realised how little I’d known about our culture and literature and history’. She even learned to speak Gaelic – but has very little chance to practice it in Glasgow. ‘I can’t see it ever being as important as Welsh is, but I think it’s a good innovation that it’s now being used to teach children in nursery and primary schools. It’s supposed to help children to learn quicker because they need to concentrate harder.’

In her last year at university Alison turned her energy to volunteering for the Samaritans. ‘We could only work four hour shifts, but that was often enough. It was rare to have people thinking of suicide on the line, but of course when you did it was very stressful. But mostly they needed someone to talk to. People needed someone outside their circle to speak to and get through their difficulties.’

It was also at this time that she became ‘Cat Woman’! Well, she started doing work for the Cat Protection League. ‘I found myself involved in the CPL after we took on the most obnoxious cat in the world. I did everything from seeking homes for strays, trapping ferals, answering phones, dropping off adopted cats - and handling their publicity. I ended up with a regular spot on Lanarkshire TV! I’d go in with a few cats and explain what we were doing. That was fun – especially the day one of them escaped and disrupted the whole studio for an hour or so.’

A BRUSH WITH CRIME

By this time Alison and her degree were ready to take on the world. She wanted a big organisation that could offer a career and would make her her first million by the age of fifty! Instead, she joined the police doing admin work. Before long she’d become a strategic analyst at Strathclyde police headquarters. ‘I was researching crime patterns, to see if it was possible to establish a particular time of day or day of the week they were committed, so that the police could best organise themselves to prevent them.

‘It sounds interesting, but after a couple of years I started to ask myself, ‘Do I really want to do this for the rest of my life?’ And the answer was no.’

To escape office work, Alison moved on to become a social work assistant. ‘It was making sure convicted people had support for

He’s a bit of a train enthusiast. I’m sure he just wants to be married to a train driver!

Although she says she arrived on the union’s women’s committee ‘by accident’ she plays an active part in their head office meetings. Here she is in the garden at Arkwright Road...
addiction or housing or finances that would help them turn their lives around. I visited most of the prisons in Scotland.’

But about this time, husband Howard suggested she apply to become a train driver.

**HOWARD SHOWS THE WAY!**

‘He’s a bit of a train enthusiast. He works in IT at Glasgow University, but he’s also involved with the Scottish Railway Preservation Society, doing things like working on restoring a Class 37 (025) in Bowness.

‘I’m sure he just wants to be married to a train driver! Anyway, I applied and – here I am.’

She started in December 2007 and although she’d applied to be in Motherwell, she ended up at Glasgow Central. ‘I’m pleased it worked out that way now,’ she says. ‘I can go shopping in my breaks – and worship at the House of Frazer! And if you don’t want to sit in the bothy (that’s the messroom to us Sassenachs) Glasgow is full of art galleries, libraries and all kinds of interesting places to visit. I always think – if it’s available – use it!’

She makes a point of using her travel facilities. ‘We’ve been all over Scotland and last summer we took trains to Poland,’ she says. ‘It’s a real bonus of the job. I don’t know why everyone doesn’t do it.’

Not surprisingly Alison didn’t feel out of place in a predominantly male occupation. ‘Train drivers weren’t too difficult to infiltrate,’ she says. ‘Basically when I heard them arranging to go to the pub I made sure I was invited too!’

She says there’s plenty to enjoy about the job. ‘Some of the places I go through in Ayrshire and Renfrewshire – and especially

**Largs – are just beautiful, and there’s a lot of variety in the job with both electrics and diesels.’**

**CLOSE TIES WITH WOMEN DRIVERS!**

‘Shifts can be a pain at times but even that has benefits – like long weekends – and we get good notice of when we’re rostered. Of course there’s always something you want improving – but there’s also a lot of things to enjoy about being a train driver.’

Alison is a member of the union’s national Women’s Representative Committee – by accident! ‘I thought I was standing for a local position in the Polmadie branch!’ she chuckles.

Alison’s active and open to everything – she draws and paints, gets out to gigs, walks her two dogs, ‘takes the occasional glass of alcohol!’ – and the day after I meet her she’s due to have her first motorbike lesson.

‘The secret is to make the most of whatever’s available,’ she says. ‘If you make the most of this job, it’s great.’

And that’s the voice of experience!
ASSOCIATED SOCIETY OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND FIREMEN
SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2009

Under the provisions of Section 32A of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 ASLEF is obliged to provide members with a statement summarising its financial affairs.

Income and expenditure

<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenditure</td>
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£4,547,059 of total income comprised payments in respect of membership.

Political Income and Expenditure

The figures above include £112,306 income and £152,964 expenditure in respect of the political fund.

Salaries and Benefits

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<th>Pension Contributions</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>11,460</td>
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<td>788</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS’ REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATED SOCIETY OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND FIREMEN

We have audited the financial statements of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen for the year ended 31 December 2009 which comprise the Consolidated Income and Expenditure Account, Balance Sheet, Cash Flow Statement and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention as modified by the revaluation of freehold property and the accounting policies set out therein.

Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. We also report to you, if in our opinion, the finance paragraph contained in the Annual Report is consistent with the financial statements, if the union has not kept proper accounting records or if we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes an examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the Executive Committee in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the union’s circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

IN OUR OPINION the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, of the state of the union’s affairs as at 31 December 2009 and of its results for the year then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 and the information given in the finance paragraph contained in the Annual Report is consistent with the financial statements.

HARD DOWDY
a trading style of:
Chantrey Vellacott DFK LLP
Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor
LONDON
12th April 2010

IRREGULARITY STATEMENT

Under Section 32A(6a) of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 we are obliged to publish the following statement. A member who is concerned that some irregularity may be occurring or has occurred in the conduct of the financial affairs of the union may take steps with a view to investigating further, obtaining clarification and if necessary securing regularisation of that conduct.

The member may raise any such concern with such one or more of the following as it seems appropriate to raise it with: the officials of the union, the trustees of the property of the union, the auditor or auditors of the union, the Certification Officer (who is an independent officer appointed by the Secretary of State) and the police.

Where a member believes that the financial affairs of the union have been or are being conducted in breach of the law or in breach of the rules of the union and contemplates bringing civil proceedings against the union or responsible officials or trustees, he should consider obtaining independent legal advice.
Richard Wyn Jones – a proud Welshman

RICHARD WYN JONES, who was born in Llaneker, Gwynedd on 5 February 1930, has passed away at the age of 80. At the ripe age of 16 he went to Llandudno Junction and became a Fireman on steam locomotives. At 20 Richard moved to Hereford for a Driving position, and his final move was to Cardiff Canton, where he retired after 47 years on the railway he loved. It was in Tredgar in 1954 that he met Celia, the girl who was to become his wife.

Only a few weeks before he died, Richard had been at the funeral of one of his close pals, Dick Hopkins. They would meet up with other old friends each week at their ‘Friday Club’. His daughter Anwyn took him to the bus station to go there and his granddaughter picked him up on the way home. He’d been at one of these reunions the day before he died. It was special because he had just become a great-grandfather for the first time. They toasted the baby’s head and that night, in his sleep, Richard suffered a heart attack and died. I personally believe if you are going to go - that’s the way to do it.

Sadly Richard leaves a wife and family who loved him dearly. I’d like to thank Anwyn, Celia and all the family for allowing us to celebrate Richard’s life with them. The body may have gone but may the fond memories help heal the pain.

Peter Smith, Reporter, Retired Members’ Section

Mike Miller Driver, Motorcyclist and Photographer

IT IS with great sadness that I report that Mike Miller of Bristol Barton Hill Depot passed away on 28 February following a heroic battle with cancer. He was 59 years of age.

Mike began his railway career in the parcels office at Bristol Temple Meads in 1978. Shortly after he was promoted to Guard at Bath Road where he worked until 1988. In 1988 he passed the selection process and was promoted to driver. Mike continued working as a driver at Bath Road through the 90’s and when the depot split in 1995-96 he elected to go to the RES Sector at Barton Hill, which eventually became EWS and then DB Schenker.

Mike was a proud railwayman who enjoyed his work. He worked the Royal train a number of times and also worked many Charter Trains featuring the heritage Class 52 locomotive. He was also a keen amateur photographer, taking photos of the railway to a professional standard. He managed to get many of his photos published in the railway press. He would often be seen half way up a lighting gantry at locations such as Kingsland Road in Bristol on a bright sunny day. The sunny day became his trademark. Mike was also a keen motorcyclist and was often seen riding large BMW machines. Mike owned a number of vintage bikes including a Ducati Darmah V Twin.

Mike was a very popular man - as witnessed by the huge turnout at his funeral at Haycombe, Bath.

Our thoughts and sympathies go out to Mike’s wife Diane, family, friends and workmates at Bristol Branch. He is already greatly missed.

Bernard Kennedy, Secretary Bristol Branch

Leonard Allpress A Character Mourned

MY father, Len Allpress, passed away peacefully at his home in Kent on 8 June at the age of 88.

He was based in Peterborough and started work for the London Midland and Scottish Railway (LMS) in January 1940 as a cleaner. He was paid 36 shillings a week – about £1.75 today! He ended his rail career as an Inspector 43 years later. After retirement he spent several happy years helping out on the Great Central Railway at Loughborough.

Len was a larger-than-life figure and left his mark over great swathes of the network. He lived and breathed railways until his dying day. His last train trip was on his 88th birthday when he travelled with my mum and myself on the High Speed Train from Ebbsfleet to St Pancras.

Brian Allpress, son
Fifty years for footplate family

DAI LLEWELLYN of Swansea branch has been awarded his 50-year ASLEF badge, and we’ve caught him celebrating with son Ted and son-in-law Chris – who are also train drivers and ASLEF members. This pair has a long way to go to match Dai’s career – Ted having been on the footplate for nine years and Chris for eight.

Dai started on the railways as a wagon cleaner in Port Talbot's Dyffryn Yard in 1960 and after moving to Neath where he was made Fireman, returned to Dyffryn Yard until it closed in 1964. He then went to Margam New Diesel Shed before moving to Barry in 1985. Two years later Dai was back at Margam before a final transfer to Swansea High Street in 1990. He retired in 2007.

Dai once had a poem penned for him by a freight driver at Margam. This is how it went:

Mainline or Valley, class six, eight or nine
'Slow Down Boys' let's make some 'Overtime'
When the rail is rusty, and the goings hard
He goes and pins the brakes down, for his Lazy Guard.
He boils water by the gallon, brews tea by the ton
Sniffs an ounce of snuff a turn, when he's on the Wyndham run.
His eyes are always open wide, just in case you see
He's needed for a special job, a quick emergency.
You'll never find him idle, on the Diesel Shed
But you'll see him on the Mainline, racing by instead
Supping tea, sniffing snuff, on an early morning turn
He knows every road that there is to know
He knows when he must go fast, and when he must go slow.
Freight liners, oil tankers, trains both large and small
Doing Ninety down the bank passed Pyle, he loves that most of all
From Llandarcy to the Tunnel, then he's at his best
From South to North, then East to West
Class six, express freight, now upon the running line
And sometimes if he's lucky - he'll make some 'Overtime'.

End of the line for Liverpool Street and for Reg!

THE Liverpool Street Welfare & Social Club hosted its ‘final reunion’ on 5 June at the Railway Tavern in Stratford. Sadly the club has had to close as we faced up to the reality of the times. Another victim of the recession?

Our farewell get together was well attended as usual, and a good time was had by all. We also celebrated the well-earned retirement of one of our Senior Conductor members, Reg Taylor. Reg had nearly 36 years service, spending the bulk of his career as a conductor at Liverpool Street working the InterCity service between London and Norwich. He’s also served as ASLEF’s conductor rep, as most of the grade at Liverpool Street are in our fraternity. It was also fitting to mark Reg’s retirement at our final reunion, as he was one of the founder members of the club over 20 years ago. We wish him a happy and healthy retirement!

We’d like to thank all past and present members for their tremendous support for the Club over the years.

Reg marks 36 years service

No sparring at Leamington!

LEAMINGTON SPA branch was pleased to be joined at its June meeting by Dave Calfe, the EC member for District 6. Dave spoke on a number of subjects, including changes within the freight industry, a strike ballot at Heavy Haul, negotiations with Eurostar, Croydon Tramlink and Tubelines, SERCO work transferring to DBS, Management for Attendance policies, the union bid for the East Coast Franchise, and the sale of the ASLEF head office.

Dave also presented long service badges to Steve Day (5 years), Brian Hancock, (10 years), and Rolf Schubert and Richard Cooke (both 20 years).

Thanks go to our Secretary Phil Spice who provided the appropriate and much-enjoyed Sunday morning refreshments of bacon and sausage sandwiches and to Dave Calfe for his latest visit. We look forward to welcoming him again in the future.

Nick Walker, Reporter, Leamington Spa branch

You can practically smell those bacon sandwiches! Dave Calfe (with tie) and members of the Spa.
Successful scouse safety seminar

At the beginning of June District Organiser Colin Smith and I arranged another safety seminar in Liverpool. We had 20 attendees which made for a great flow of information and hopefully helped to build the confidence and ability of the representatives who attended.

Colin Mitchinson and Steve Pugh from Northern Rail’s Safety and Standards Team gave the group an insight into the current Group Standards and the processes used following operating incidents before fielding questions. We then broke into workshops which discussed priorities for Safety Culture, Preventative Safety Measures and Training and Techniques. Hopefully the outcomes will be used as best practice by both Safety Representatives and Employers.

The first speaker after lunch was Sister Allyson Jones from Longsight Branch who spoke about health and safety issues from the viewpoint of the Women’s Consultative Committee. The final outside speaker was our friend John Bamford from the Manchester Hazards Centre.

I took a session on the rights of representatives and introduced the District 3 Safety Representatives network - an email database of enabling our Safety Representatives to collate best practice, distribute information and updates and seek advice. Finally Colin Smith spoke on the importance of the role of the Safety Representative and a number of other issues.

Thanks to all the reps who attended for making the seminar, the success it was.

Alan Moss, H&S rep, Longsight

30 years for Kings Cross John

The Kings Cross Branch had the pleasure of welcoming Nigel Gibson, EC member district 5, to its recent meeting. Most of the discussions centred around all line free travel for our members and Nigel said although all TOCs had been asked for their views, only two had even displayed an interest.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Nigel presented Driver John Ashby with his 30-year ASLEF membership badge. Peter Smith, Reporter, Retired Members’ Section

Northam Banner Ready For Tolpuddle

Over half our membership - 15 out of 29 members, plus one retired member, came to the May meeting of the Southampton Northam branch. After our normal branch business there followed a question and answer session with our district organiser Graham Morris. Graham opened our branch in July 2003 and has been a valued supporter ever since.

Long service presentations were awarded to branch secretary Alan Loughlin (25 years) and branch chairman Mick White (20 years). Our new branch banner was unveiled and we will be taking it to the Tolpuddle Festival in July. We look forward to seeing Graham there.

Dave Eagle, H&S rep, Northam

Retired Members’ Section Committee

The RMS Committee convened at Head Office in May to review previous minutes and set out an agenda for action. There were discussions about the recent General Election, reports from the National Pensioners Convention (NPC) and planning for the October lobby of Parliament and rally at Westminster Hall.

Committee members gave accounts of meetings they had attended at the TUC, District Councils, branches, reunions and rallies. It was decided to run a Retired Members’ weekend school at Sculby on 29 - 31 October, partly funded by the Prize Draw.

RMS Membership now stands at 1952.

Peter Smith, Reporter, RMS
All well at Motherwell
I WOULD like to thank the Motherwell branch for their kind donation and support at the recent race night for Motherwell Station Social Fund and, on a personal note, to thank ASLEF for all its help, advice and friendship over the past few years. ASLEF really means much more than just a union.

Robert Lang, Driver, Motherwell

When we're well off
OUR troubles at work were put into perspective when I read of Anita Gilbert’s brave fight against her brain tumour in the June Journal. The article brought a lump to my throat and made me think despite our moans and groans we don’t know when we are well off! I, like many other members, offer Anita and her family our very best wishes.

Paul Barber, H&S rep, Freightliner

Humbling but not surprising kindness
AT the recent AAD a collection was made and the sum of £1,500 was raised by the delegates and ASLEF for Lucy. I’d like to express my sincere heartfelt thanks. To say this is humbling does not reflect how much I appreciated this wonderful gesture. I owe ASLEF a huge ‘thank you’.

I’ve been a driver with FGW at Swansea for the past two years, having previously driven for EWS since October 1998, so I’ve been a proud ASLEF member for over 11 years. Thankfully I never had to call on my union for assistance in the past - but last November my daughter Lucy was diagnosed with Leukaemia.

She underwent various courses of Chemotherapy with a view to stabilising her condition so she could undergo a Bone Marrow Transplant. However, in March we were told the news we were dreading. Lucy’s ‘blast count’ (the measure of active leukaemia cells in her bone marrow) was too high, so a transplant would not be viable. This has obviously been a hugely distressing and disturbing time for our family.

Luckily my employers have been nothing but supportive and accommodating, and the support from both my LLC reps (Bro Steve Williams, and more recently Bro Brian Jones) and my District Organiser (Bro Stan Moran) have been a huge help, for which I really cannot thank them enough.

Finally there is some good news. Lucy’s consultant contacted us after Lucy had a check-up and said she was ‘looking too well’! After another bone marrow biopsy we found her Blast Count has inexplicably dropped from over 60% to between 6 - 8% and that anything below 20% would be considered for transplant. We’ve heard that the Bristol Children’s Hospital are willing to go ahead with the transplant and although this is a complex and risky procedure, at least we have hope again.

Thanks to you all.

Andrew Wiemers, Swansea

District 3 election
I WOULD like to thank members for their continued support and endorsement during the recent election for the Executive Committee member for District 3. I will continue to work with and support your company councils, LLCs and branch secretaries.

I look forward to our future challenges and remain committed to representing lay members at the highest level within ASLEF.

Alan Donnelly, EC members, District 3

Well done Alan
THANKS to the members and branches who supported me in the recent District 3 EC election and congratulations to Alan Donnelly.

I want a strong trade union that defends all its members. I will continue to campaign for all ASLEF members to have a safe and secure long-term future as train drivers.

Peter Cashman, Birkenhead branch

Simply the best
I NEVER fully recovered the use of my left arm after an horrific injury in Feb 2008 and was officially removed from driving duties in January this year.

As I get settled into a new position within Virgin, I can finally write to express my sincere gratitude to all the ASLEF members who supported and helped me during this very difficult last two years - not only the drivers and staff at Preston, but many drivers from other depots. Thanks too to management, some of whom have been

WAS IT SAFETY OVER PROFITS AT POTTERS BAR?

THERE should have been a full public enquiry into the Potters Bar crash. I was driving on the day of the accident, 10 May 2002, and I drove a train at high speed over this set of points only a few hours before the fatal derailment.

A warning had been given the previous night about a rough ride over this part of track, but no other action was taken. This put my life and those of my passengers in danger.

A public enquiry should investigate whether Jarvis, the maintenance contractor on the line, complied with the high safety standards needed and whether the firm had trained its staff properly. It should also establish whether the accident could have been prevented and if anyone was responsible for the failures that led to this loss of life. There should be a clear answer to the question ‘Were maintenance standards cut to boost profits?’

P. Begley, Retired member, Bedford

These are the pages where you talk to us. We welcome your letters, either by mail to the ASLEF Journal at 9 Arkwright Road London NW3 6AB or by email to journal@aslef.org.uk

Because of our space constraints, please try to keep your contributions as short as you can. This month we continue our STAR LETTER feature. The immensely lucky winner will pocket a rich range of ASLEF regalia!
fantastic in helping to secure my future with the company.

I’d especially like to thank Keith Sinfield and other LLC reps at Preston. He’s been an absolute ‘rock’ to my wife and myself.

Kevin Lindsay has also been an absolute star in resolving issues with the company.

If others, like me, find themselves in a position where your world has imploded – trust me, you are with the finest union in the country!

Tony Barrett, Ex-Driver, Preston

Thank Hugh

I’d like to thank all those branches that nominated me in my successful re-election to the Executive Committee for our District No 2.

I would also like to express my gratitude for the support that I’ve had from members, reps and our Officer and I look forward to continue to work together as we face the new and difficult challenges ahead.

H. Bradley, EC member, District 2

Well done Nick

I HAVE been a driver at Leeds Depot for many years and have had to retire early due to ill health. My wife and I would like to thank District Organiser Nicky Whitehead for his efforts in negotiating a settlement with Northern on my behalf.

You often do not appreciate your trade union until you need it and when anyone is absent from work on long term sick it is very easy to become isolated. I would like to thank all my friends and colleagues at the ASLEF Leeds branch for their visits and continued support to me during this period.

Frank Brining, ex-driver, Leeds

Lost but not down

I’d like to thank all the branches who supported me in my campaign to become a councillor in Thurrock.

Although I didn’t win this time I hope I may have encouraged other to stand in local elections in the future.

I increased the Labour vote and hopefully will help to bring Thurrock to a Labour majority in the future.

Cliff Holloway, Euston branch

Slow staff travel

ANOTHER AAD - and still nothing to report on the staff travel campaign. The absurd position now is that retired staff of European railways with a minimum of 11 years service continue to enjoy FIP concessions on our rail network while our own staff who joined after April 1996 do not retain any travel concessions into retirement.

Why can’t GB TOCs give retired staff with appropriate service the same as are afforded to European retired railways staff and end his discrimination?

J. Owen, Three Bridges

Inclusive ASLEF events

I WRITE in response to the letter from Rob Porter (July Journal) regarding the Women’s Committee Garden Party. In fact, it was open to all members, but I agree that the invitation did appear to exclude men. This was an oversight and we apologise.

The Women’s Representative Committees (WRC) exists to make the union more inclusive – so excluding any member, would obviously go against those principles.

Any social function hosted by the Women’s Committee is open to ALL members of the union regardless of gender, and we look forward to meeting more of you in the future.

Thanks Rob for bringing this to our attention.

Deborah Reay, Chair, WRC

DIY cleaning!

I VERY much agree with the campaign to get our cabs cleaned, especially the dirt ingrained into Class 66s. But I also feel we drivers have to help ourselves. If you take food wrappers/plastic bottles/newspapers into the cab then take it out when you finish with it! Don't leave it for the next driver/fitter to clear it up. It's just plain lazy!

Paul Barber, H&S rep, Freightliner Heavy Haul

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**CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS**

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

**Faversham Branch (077) has finally launched its 25th Anniversary ASLEF/NUM badge. They cost £10 each including P&P. A few Faversham Branch Centenary badges remain available at £5 each including P&P. To order please contact the Branch Secretary, Steve Gurdler, 18 Hunters Way West, Chatham, Kent ME5 7HL. steve.gurdler@aslefonline.co.uk or 07941 110473**

**BRIGHTON ASLEF DRIVERS BADGE. Limited Edition of 300. All profits to fund branch reunions. Available for £10 including P&P (cheques made payable to ‘ASLEF’ Brighton Branch No 35’) from Mark Johnson, 51 Drove Road, Portslade, Brighton BN41 2PA or phone 07783 847228.**

**WORLD CUP 2010 BADGE SET Limited edition (200) badge set, 8 badges in each set, one per group, individually numbered, beautifully presented. £20 plus £2 REGISTERED DELIVERY POST to ASLEF members. Cheques payable to M. Scott at 1 Tamerton Square, Woking, Surrey, GU22 7SZ.**

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**CITY OF LONDON BADGES, one 10-year and one depot badge. Depot badges are numbered 1-150. There are only 150 of each. Price £5 plus £1 P&P. All profits to City of London branch funds to acquire a branch banner. Further information or orders to Colin Dawson 01689 849 543 or 22 Hutchison Road, New Addington, Croydon, Surrey CR0 0BD.**

**KENT AREA NUM-MARYLEBONE ASLEF 25TH ANNIVERSARY (1984-2009) BADGES £5 each plus £1 p&p. Last ten available. All proceeds to Justice for Miners. Contact L. French at 55 Mill Road, Gillingham, Dent, ME7 1HW or phone 01634 576058 for details.**

**DRIVER COLLECTS BR33056 SERIES TRAINCREW / DRIVER MANUALS. Contact Lee on 07919127972 or e-mail lippydavies@blueyonder.co.uk**

**NXEA 2009 STRIKE BADGE commemorating solidarity of ASLEF members. Purchase (£3 plus p&p) from NXEA Branch Secretary or District Council 5 Secretary. Contact M Steele on 07788 153954. I Rosecroft, South Wootton, Kings Lynn Norfolk PE30 3XW. Proceeds to District Council 5 Education Fund and ASLEF Fighting Fund.**

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

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Llanelli will mark ‘horrors’ of first national rail strike

The town of Llanelli in Dyfed has particular reasons to remember the UK’s first national rail strike which took place 99 years ago this month. The local paper, the Mercury, reported that ‘never was such a concentration of horrors crowded into a short 12 hours’. During the dispute, troops were called to the town – and, near the town’s railway station, they shot dead two innocent 20-year-old men, Leonard Worsell and John John ...

A 1911 Rail Strike Committee has been formed in the town to ensure the events are commemorated next year, calling for a week of plays, music, poetry, and a rally. It also aims to find funding for a statue in the town centre, arguing that the current plaque on a bridge does not do the events justice.

TWO DEAD IN WALES

The strike began when negotiations broke down on Thursday 17 August. It was an extraordinary time for rail workers. ASLEF’s Norman McKillop wrote at the time, ‘Locomotivemen were asked to do something absolutely without precedent in their experience: to leave their job, to stable their engines and to walk out.’ Later he recalls the shock of realising ‘the whole country presented an aspect of civil war’ and specifically the moment, ‘We learned that 2 of our railwaymen colleagues had been shot dead in Wales.’

In fact Norman was wrong. The pair were not railwaymen. They were innocent bystanders.

TROOPS ARRIVE, MOOD CHANGES

When the strike was first called, some 4,000 people gathered in Station Road to ensure the gates were closed to rail traffic. Apparently the atmosphere was peaceful, even good natured. The mood changed the following day, however, when 127 soldiers of the Lancashire Regiment arrived to try to open the gates. When the crowd prevented this more soldiers arrived but were thwarted by the crowd. Towards evening more soldiers, from the Worcester Regiment, arrived. The gates were opened at bayonet-point and the crowd stoned passing trains.

Trouble flared on the Saturday afternoon when a train stopped at Union Bridge while the guard went ahead to open the Old Castle gates. The crowd immobilised the engine – and within minutes, 80 Worcester Regiment soldiers arrived. Onlookers quickly dispersed but after a brisk reading of the Riot Act, a firing squad was ordered to shoot at people sitting on the low wall of 6 High Street. John John and Leonard Worsell were killed.

The reaction, regardless of rights or wrongs, was predictable. Station windows were smashed, the goods shed was raided, loads of hay were set alight and coal trucks were burned. Shortly before midnight a tremendous explosion rocked the siding. A truck containing explosives had exploded, killing four people.

TERRIBLE IRONY AS AGREEMENT REACHED

Half and hour beforehand back-up troops from the Sussex Regiment had arrived – so that there were around 700 troops in the town. Bayonet charges cleared the sidings and running battles persisted throughout the night. It is a terrible irony that half an hour before the deaths of Leonard Worsell and John John, an agreement had been reached between the two sides in London. The strike was over. All that remained was the funeral of the two young men the following Tuesday, when most of the works were closed and the procession of mourners was a mile long.

In 1987 local historian John Edwards, now in his 80s, wrote a book about the events which will be reprinted this month. ‘I want to see justice finally done for these boys,’ he says. ‘At least I’d like to see an apology from the Home Office or the Ministry of Defence so we can finally lay to rest this period in Llanelli’s history.’

IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER

The new edition will include information about the inquest into the deaths and its verdict of justifiable homicide - which John calls a ‘stitch-up’. I also tell the story of a soldier called Harold Spears who was arrested for refusing to fire on the crowd - but escaped during the disturbances of the night. After a series of court martial, charged of desertion and refusing to fire were dropped in favour of accusations of being absent from duty after his escape. By then, the army wanted it over. They wanted to forget about it.

‘I think it’s important that we don’t.’

For information about buying or borrowing a copy of John Edwards’ ‘Remembrance of a Riot: the story of the Llanelli Railway Strike Riots of 1911’ please enquire at the town’s library in Vaughan Street or call them on 01554 773 538
Prize Crossword No. 52 set by TLC

Solution to Crossword No 51 which appeared in the July edition of the ASLEF Journal. Congratulations to David Gabbitas from Chichester

ACROSS 1 Thorne 5 Watchdog 9 Wild West 10 Lassie 11 Sprinter 12 Astern 13 Hormones 15 Isn’t 17 Ally 19 Plastics 20 Oliver 21 Agonised 22 Irises 23 Inimical 24 Eighteen 25 Lastly
DOWN 2 Hairpins 3 Red Light 4 Electoral 5 Waterloo Station 6 Chassis 7 Dishevel 8 Guernsey 14 Editorial 15 Immobile 16 Noticing 17 Aspirins 18 Live Rail 19 Present

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

Thanks for all your responses to the 51st ASLEF crossword in the July 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.

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. During 2009 ASLEF recovered £1,946,190.45 in damages for all types of cases. 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 0800 587 7530.

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

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