Going Underground – summer of discontent over TfL’s Night Tube

SADIQ KHAN: My plans for Transport in London
FINN BRENnan: Remembering the heroes of 7/7 ten years on
TERRY WILKINSON: ASLEF’s Tubeway army

Knocking on doors for Jo in Cardiff Central
Dr Johnson and the Tories’ way with words
The train drivers’ union since 1880

ASLEF JOURNAL
The ASSOCIATED SOCIETY of LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS & FIREMEN
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It seems we live in interesting times

We are entering an interesting time, both industrially and politically. Malicious attacks on our communities, and on the futures of our families, continue unabated by this Conservative government, with a further £12 billion of cuts born more of dogma and social engineering than from any genuine wish to secure our country's economic future.

The debate over the general election continues and, as the Labour Party goes through a period of change, we had to decide who to support in the Labour leadership, deputy leadership, Mayor of London and Scottish leadership elections. The executive committee discussed this at length and ASLEF is endorsing Jeremy Corbyn for leader, Tom Watson for deputy, Sadiq Khan for London Mayor and, in Scotland, Alex Rowley for deputy leader. The party cannot drift back to the centre; the biggest complaint amongst voters was that there was no real difference between the main political parties. I disagree, and the manifesto clearly was different, but we need to make those policies real, and improve on them, not move away from them.

Industrially, the mad decision by the Tories to tax coal by the ton from April has led to more coal being stockpiled than during the miners’ dispute and to a driver surplus that we are dealing with on a company by company basis. The failure of TfL to make a decent pay offer, allied to insulting our members over the night Tube, resulted in a massive 97% in favour of industrial action. Maybe this poor employer will get the message and talk properly.

Elsewhere, we had significant mandates on pay and abuse of CDP processes that make a nonsense of the Tories’ proposed thresholds for strike action and reinforce the solidarity and unity of our membership – which never fails to enthuse me as much as it must worry the employers.

Thanks to all of you who turned out in Glasgow and London for the anti-austerity marches. We will have to do more together!

Yours fraternally
Mick Whelan, general secretary
**Tube strike set to bring capital to a halt**

ASLEF members on London Underground voted overwhelmingly for strike action in a long-running dispute over the company’s decision to try to force through, without negotiation, new rosters which would mean Tube drivers would have to work an unlimited number of weekend and night shifts for no extra pay. In a ballot conducted by Electoral Reform Services members were asked two questions. Are you prepared to take part in a strike? Yes: 1,771 (97.6%). No: 44 (2.4%). Are you prepared to take part in industrial action short of a strike? Yes: 1,786 (98.7%). No: 24 (1.3%). Turnout was 81.3%.

The ballot was triggered when management ended direct talks with the unions and started the process to impose new rosters. Underground staff have been told that unless they agree to those rosters then no pay offer will be made this year. ASLEF’s executive committee announced a 24 hour strike from 21.30 on 8 July which will shut down the entire Tube network in the capital. More strikes will be announced later.

Finn Brennan, District 8 Organiser, said:

‘There is a window of opportunity for London Underground managers to avoid a summer of disruption by seriously engaging with us to find a solution. They need to withdraw the threat to impose new rosters and make a realistic offer on pay and conditions.

‘We are always prepared to talk, but they have to start listening to this very clear message from their staff. Our members are entitled to a family life and to some sort of work/life balance. We aren’t opposed to all night services but we want them introduced in a fair and sensible way which rewards staff for their hard work and the contribution they make to the success of the London Underground.’

The other trade unions on London Underground (the RMT, TSSA and Unite) are also ballotting for industrial action with results declared on 30 June.

Val Shawcross, London Assembly Member for Lambeth & Southwark, who speaks on transport for Labour, said: ‘We’re completely behind the Night Tube, it’ll be a great asset to London, but the fact is the mayor should have consulted Tube staff about the changes a long time ago. I’ve little doubt that Londoners will sympathise with Tube staff who have been confronted with huge adjustments to their working hours, which could have a significant impact on their family life.

‘It’s clear negotiations are not proceeding well. Whilst Boris Johnson says he wants to ban strike action, there’s simply no substitute when you have an issue of contention on this level. The mayor needs to listen to the grievances of Tube staff and act fast to get this issue ironed out before the Night Tube arrives in September.’

**Public transport benefits the rich**

Government spending on public transport unfairly favours the better off, according to a report by the Equality Trust. It found that the richest 10% receive £978 million in travel subsidies – more than three times the £297 million that the poorest 10% receive. ‘Far less money is going to help those at the bottom – people who desperately need support to access decent jobs,’ says the Trust’s director Duncan Exley.

**FREIGHT IS GREAT**

Claire Perry, the Rail Minister, has talked up the benefits of putting more freight on rail. Speaking at a Railway Engineers Forum at the Institute of Civil Engineers in London, she said:

‘The benefits of rail freight are clear. It can help reduce road congestion; it is significantly safer and less polluting than road haulage; and it is highly reliable.’

**FAILING OLDER PEOPLE**

Britain’s public transport system is failing older people, according to a new study by the International Longevity Centre think tank and the charity Age UK. The most common complaint of those aged over 65 is that buses and trains ‘are not convenient and don’t go where we want to go.’

Trevor Southgate, who each year sells ASLEF badges to raise money for the Royal British Legion’s poppy appeal, has revealed this year’s design. Price £5 plus £1 p&p from Trevor at 56 Leggatt Drive, Bramford, Ipswich, IP8 4EX.

**WEEKEND AWAY**

District 7 has arranged an ASLEF weekend school at the Royal Grosvenor Hotel in Weston-super-Mare on Saturday 3 and Sunday 4 October. G5 Mick Whelan will be one of the guest speakers. Details from DO7 Brian Corbett.

**500 CLUB:** M Samways, with number 25, won the June draw, scooping the RMS prize money jackpot of £370.
Hey ho, let’s go

TOSH MCDONALD, ASLEF’s vice-president, and Bill Ronksley, a former president of this union, joined a National Union of Journalists protest in All Saints Square, Rotherham, against the sacking by the Rotherham Advertiser of Phil Turner, the newspaper’s father of Tommy and Dee Dee.

Push the boundaries

Collette Gibson, a driver with First Great Western, and member of our Women’s Representatives Committee, was featured in an article in The Guardian about women in the rail industry. She said: ‘There are no limits to the career path you could pursue. When I joined the industry, it never occurred to me I could become a train driver until I read an article by a female driver. I assumed it wasn’t the done thing – and it wasn’t really, only 5% of drivers are female – but from that moment on, becoming a train driver became my goal. Be brave and push the boundaries.’

CONFERENCES

The Matchwomen’s Festival is at Caravanserai, 110 Silvertown Way, Canning Town, London, E16 on Saturday 4 July. The Durham Miners’ Gala is on Saturday 11 July. The Tolpuddle Martyrs’ festival, near Dorchester, is from Friday 17 to Sunday 19 July. The Burston strike school rally is at Burston, near Diss, in Norfolk on Sunday 6 September. The Trades Union Congress is at the Brighton Centre from Sunday 13 to Wednesday 16 September and the Labour Party conference is at the Brighton Centre from Sunday 27 to Wednesday 30 September.

OFF THE RAILS

HOWARD KAYE, standing against Jeremy Hunt in South West Surrey, beat Andy Botham, up against Patrick McLoughlin in Derbyshire Dales, 4-3 in Kevin Maguire mentions during the general election campaign. It was an item in Kevin’s New Statesman diary that helped Howard across the line ahead of Roo. In his column in the Daily Mirror, Kevin attacked those who are attacking the BBC: ‘Right-wingers who claim that Auntie is a hotbed of lefties are either playing mind games or need to be sectioned under the Mental Health Act.’

VALPARAISO, the Latin American restaurant in Liverpool run by Julio Arellano, who fled from Chile after General Pinochet seized power in a bloody CIA-backed coup, closed its doors for the final time last month after Julio hung up his apron for good. Valparaiso – where poet Roger McGough, playwright Willy Russell, and Mark González, during his stint on the left-wing at Anfield, all enjoyed a dish – was a favourite haunt of socialists. DO3 Colin Smith was there to raise a glass in Remembrance of Things Past…

JK ROWLING has revealed why she chose King’s Cross as the departure point for the Hogwarts Express, on its run to Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry at Hogsmeade, in the Harry Potter books. ‘My parents met on a train to Scotland which departed from King’s Cross station. Not from platform 9¾, though.

GRAFFITI artists tend to be narcissistic – spray painting their monikers – or romantic. Rarely are they overtly political. But these four words, on a staircase at Southampton Central, shows that passengers have had enough of paying through the nose for privatisation.

THEOBALDS GROVE on the London Overground network was inadvertently renamed last month when a spelling error – spotted by a congress of eagle-eyed passengers – noticed that TfL had renamed the station as Theobolds Grove. As the intro to Star Trek, and the most famous split infinitive in television history, has it, passengers are about to boldly go to Theobolds Grove…

FIRST GREAT WESTERN, the train company known to disgruntled travellers as Worst Great Western, was condemned after passengers on a train from London to Plymouth were told: ‘Our delays are due to someone who couldn’t be bothered to live any more.’ The company later apologised for the ‘callous’ announcement.

ASLEF – the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers & Firemen – can get lost in transAtlantic translation. One US reporter changed it to the more politically correct ‘firefighters’ until we pointed out that firemen, on the footplate, in the days of steam, stoked the coal box to keep the lighted flame alive, rather than putting out the fire.
They went because their open eyes could see no other way

**MARZ COLOMBINI** reports from the International Brigades Memorial Trust event in Hamburg

IN THE 1930s the democratically-elected left-wing Republican government of Spain introduced social and economic reforms to improve the lives of millions of industrial workers and peasant farmers. Conservatives – the rich, the powerful and the Roman Catholic church – were outraged and, with the army, tried to overthrow the government by force. Thousands of Spaniards rallied to the Republican cause, the coup failed and the country was plunged into a bloody civil war from 1936-39. The Nationalist army, led by General Franco, was backed by Falange irregulars and troops and weapons from Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy in what Hitler and Mussolini saw as a dry run for the Second World War. On the Republican side, more than 35,000 men and women, from more than 50 countries, fought for the International Brigades in answer to Miró’s famous call to Aidez L’Espagne. A memorial in Jubilee Gardens on the South Bank in London honours the 526 volunteers from Britain and Ireland who were killed with the words: ‘They went because their open eyes could see no other way.’

At AAD in Nottingham in 2008 we adopted an item celebrating the British peoples’ proud history of fighting fascism and, in particular, those who fought in the Spanish Civil War. It mandated ASLEF’s affiliation to the IBMT and an ASLEF presence at the annual memorial event on the South Bank. Since then, ASLEF’s involvement with the IBMT has flourished with our G5 Mick Whelan being invited to take on the role of trustee. Interest in, and support for, the IBMT has been demonstrated by our members and branches right across the country. This relationship has been spearheaded by our attendance at the annual memorial event at which the Waterloo Nine Elms banner has become a focal point, and internationally through the work of District 3 Organiser Colin Smith who, through his anti-Fascist contacts in the north-west of England, and in Europe, has organised an ASLEF presence at educational and commemorative IBMT events overseas.

This year Colin’s efforts centred on the fifth Anti-Fascist Harbour Event in Hamburg, from 29 to 31 May, named after Wolf Hoffmann, the Austrian-born communist seaman who fought with the 11th Brigade. For nearly three years seafarers from various nations brought weapons and supplies to Spain and evacuated refugee children, women and the wounded.

The weekend’s hefty itinerary, which kicked off with a social event bringing together anti-Fascist campaigners and trade unionists from across Europe, included lectures, presentations and a film show covering all aspects of the seafarers’ contribution to the fight against Franco’s Fascists and honoured British and Soviet blockade runners.

Mick spoke on Sunday at a memorial ceremony at Ohlsdorf cemetery where floral tributes were laid in honour of Soviet POWs and British soldiers who gave their lives in the fight against Fascism. Mick said we can best commemorate the sacrifices made by the volunteers by continuing to counter the rise of the far-right in Europe.

The IBMT is a registered charity; number 1094928. Details of their work, including events they organise in the UK and overseas, can be found at www.international-brigades.org.uk

**MEMBERSHIP ON THE UP**

Frances O’Grady, general secretary of the TUC, has hailed the latest annual trade union membership statistics published by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. She said: ‘It’s good to see that trade union membership is as valued as ever, with the number of new members increasing in some sectors. Trade union membership in the private sector has risen for the fourth consecutive year and the TUC family has itself expanded, with the National Association of Headteachers joining the ranks and the Royal College of Midwives seeking affiliation. Trade unions are essential for protecting workers’ interests. With 6.4 million members, unions are best placed to speak on behalf of working people, to combat growing inequality and help ordinary families through the crisis in living standards.’

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**QUOTE…**

‘Jeremy Corbyn is a hard working, energetic MP for Islington North as well as a powerful speaker – like his hero Tony Benn – a decent, principled figure. Indeed, a Blairite member of the last Labour government told me she trusted Corbyn more than the moderate Chris Smith, Islington South’s MP, because the former was less slippery and opportunistic than the latter.’ – Leo McKinstry in the Daily Telegraph

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**ASLEF delegates from left: Paul Hart (Kirkdale), Dave Edwards (RMS), EC1 Marz Colombini, DO3 Colin Smith, EC6 Dave Calfe, Richie Cash (Chester), EC3 Andy Hourigan, GS Mick Whelan, Peter Cashman (Birkenhead), DO6 Dicky Fisher**
Mind the gender pay gap in UK

NICOLA SAPEY, District 4 WRC rep, reports on the TUC women’s conference at Congress House in London

EBBIE REAY, chair of ASLEF’s Women’s Representatives Committee; Wendy Hurst, WRC secretary; Julie Clegg, District 3 WRC rep; Collette Gibson, District 7 WRC rep; and I attended the TUC’s three-day women’s conference in the capital.

Frances O’Grady, the TUC’s general secretary, spoke about the Essex Fire & Rescue Service walk out in protest at new shift patterns which force staff to reduce hours or share jobs. She urged the fire brigade to consider alternatives proposed by the FBU to enable women to remain in decent employment.

QUOTE...
‘Poverty is as much a moral failure today as under the Tudors.’ – Alan Bennett at the Hay Festival

UNQUOTE

Julie spoke on a motion about the rise in railway suicides and women in sport as she has first-hand experience in that department, being a fanatical rugby player. Wendy made a fantastic speech about the rise of zero hours contracts – where you work only when needed, often at short notice, for very little money – which won rapturous applause. Debbie spoke on restoring services for women in the criminal justice system.

Harriet Harman talked about fair pay, poverty and the gender pay gap – a big worry which we need to eliminate before it gets worse. Collette spoke on a motion we were supporting about privatisation and public ownership and received massive applause. I talked about abuses of workers’ rights in Qatar.

STRUGGLE AGAINST INJUSTICE
The Merseyside Cuban Solidarity Campaign has thanked ASLEF, and District 3 Organiser Colin Smith, for our help. Penny Anderson, Merseyside CSC secretary, said: ‘We are fortunate to be in an area which has a long history of trade union activity and struggle against injustice. We have forged strong links with local unions who have fully embraced the campaign to free the Miami Five and been generous with their support. The unions who stand out are ASLEF, PCS, Unison and Unite.’

RECOGNISED FOR BRAVERY
Graham Slingsby, a driver with Southeastern, and Sgt Duncan Anderson of the Metropolitan Police, have been recognised for their bravery in tackling, unarmed, a man with a gun. Graham and Duncan were travelling by train, off duty, between Paddock Wood and Sevenoaks in Kent when the guard told them she feared a man had a firearm. They cleared the carriage and held him until he was arrested by armed officers at Tonbridge.

DOUBLE STABBING
Fears over the safety of DOO trains were raised again after a conductor and passenger were rushed to hospital after a double stabbing on board a train travelling from Largs to Glasgow Central. British Transport Police arrested two men and a woman at West Kibride.

Caroline set to light up Matchfest in London

Striking a light
The third Matchfest, which marks the matchwomen’s strike at the Bryant & May factory in the East End of London in 1888, and celebrates women past, present and future, is on Saturday 4 July in Canning Town. Speakers – the ‘best, bravest, most badass campaigners for women’ – include Siobhan Brown, Caroline Criado Perez, Scarlet Harris, Suzy Joinson, Shabaner Kauser, Sara Khan, Ruth Serwotka and Miranda Yardley. Singers include Maddy Carty, Thee Faction, and Steve White & the Protest Family. Tickets are £4 in advance or £5 on the door.

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People deserve a proper contract and decent wage

RONALD GORDON-HILL,
District 7 BEM rep, reports on the TUC’s black workers’ conference at Congress House in London

The main debate on the first day of this year’s conference, chaired by Freddie Brown of Prospect, was dominated by a motion calling for an end to zero hours contracts, submitted by ASLEF. It highlighted how millions of people are suffering at the hands of unscrupulous employers who are moving to these shabby contracts which offer workers no security and very little in the way of financial reward. It was a surprise to me that zero hours contracts are now being used in our schools. ASLEF delegates focused on ‘saying no to zero hours contracts’. Because people deserve a proper contract and a decent wage.

The main speaker on day two was TUC president Leslie Manasseh. He highlighted how millions of people are suffering at the hands of unscrupulous employers who are moving to these shabby contracts which offer workers no security and very little in the way of financial reward. It was a surprise to me that zero hours contracts are now being used in our schools. ASLEF delegates focused on ‘saying no to zero hours contracts’. Because people deserve a proper contract and a decent wage.

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ASSOCIATED SOCIETY OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND FIREMEN
SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2014

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

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<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
<td>5,724,200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total expenditure</td>
<td>6,908,895</td>
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<tr>
<td>£5,542,128 of total income comprised payments in respect of membership.</td>
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Political Income and Expenditure

The figures above include £136,562 income and £160,134 expenditure in respect of the political fund.

Salaries and Benefits

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<th>Employer's National Insurance contributions</th>
<th>Pension contributions</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
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Executive Committee

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<td>T Wilkinson</td>
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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF ASLEF

We have audited the financial statements of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF) for the year ended 31 December 2014 which comprise the income and expenditure account, the balance sheet and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

This report is made solely to the union’s members, as a body, in accordance with Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the union’s members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors’ report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the union and the union’s members as a body; for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND AUDITORS

As explained more fully in the Statement of the Executive Committee’s Responsibilities, ASLEF’s executive committee are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. Our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board’s Ethical Standards for Auditors.

SCOPE OF THE AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the union’s circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by ASLEF’s executive committee; and the overall presentation of the financial statements. In addition, we read all the financial and non-financial information in the General Secretary’s report to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements and to identify any information that is apparently materially incorrect based on, or materially inconsistent with, the knowledge acquired by us in the course of performing the audit. If we become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies we consider the implications for our report.

OPINION ON FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

In our opinion the financial statements:
- give a true and fair view of the state of ASLEF’s affairs as at 31 December 2014 and of its deficit for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

MATTERS ON WHICH WE ARE REQUIRED TO REPORT BY EXCEPTION

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:
- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the union has not maintained a satisfactory system of control over its transactions in accordance with the requirements of that section; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures within the form AR21 of Officers’ remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Chantry Vellacott DFK LLP,
Chartered Accountants, Statutory Auditor
LONDON, 10 March 2015

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.

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.
I woke up this morning to an empty sky

O ONE who was working for London Underground on 7 July 2005 will ever forget where they were at 8.50 that morning. What started as an unexceptional day became written into our collective consciousness when three suicide bombers exploded their devices on trains at Edgware Road and Aldgate and between King’s Cross and Russell Square. An hour later a fourth fanatic blew up a bus at Tavistock Square.

Fifty-two people were murdered that day and more than 770 were injured. A cross section of a typical morning’s travellers on London’s public transport system, of all religions and none, many born in this city, others who had come to make their lives here. Their dreams and hopes for their futures were brutally torn away from them by four terrible acts of cruelty and injustice.

There were many heroes that day, the emergency services, of course, and the members of the public who helped the injured and comforted the dying. Among those heroes were London Underground staff, women and men who had turned up that day for just another shift, keeping our capital city moving, and found themselves caught up in a horror they could never have imagined.

The drivers on the trains where the bombs went off, and those adjacent, did all that was humanly possible in circumstances that they never expected to have to face. Staff came running to help even before the emergency services arrived, risking their own safety, because it was the right thing to do.

Some of the heroes that day have been deservedly recognised, others probably never will be. Ten years on from that terrible day, we should take time to remember the dead and injured. And also to remember all those whose heroism made us proud of our colleagues and workmates.

The limits of weekend working

STEVE CROWLEY, secretary, LUL trains functional council, reports on key agreements ASLEF has concluded for drivers on London Underground

VER the past year or so the trains functional council has engaged with management to review or write a number of key agreements which are for the benefit of all drivers on London Underground.

The aptly named GOAL (Guidance on Annual Leave) agreement which, for the first time, gives minimum numbers of annual leave days to drivers.

The less aptly named SCAG (Syndicate Compliance and Guidance) agreement outlines how syndicates can be set up, and be monitored by local representatives, to enable the collective change of duties to assist drivers with their work/life balance.

The Train Operator Resourcing Agreement (TOPRA) has also been updated and now provides a mechanism for drivers, who have had multiple SPADs, frequently owing to domestic situations, to move to automatic lines which means they retain employment in their chosen grade rather than being redeployed.

Special Working Arrangements and Guidance (SWAG) has also been amended. This gives greater scope to seek volunteers to work Boxing Day (with an enhanced payment of £350), a fairer way to allocate annual leave on bank holidays, and includes an agreement that gives drivers the right to work bank and public holidays and not be forced to take annual leave.

FLAG (Fixed Links and Guidance) explains how depots can introduce specific links for the benefit of drivers who want to work at preferred times.

Going forward, the TFC is working on similar documents to address flexible working, job shares and reduced hours working (working two, three, or four days a week) as well as pool operator working.

Importantly, for drivers, the TFC has also told LU that drivers have reached their limit with respect to weekend working and this has to be addressed immediately because further increases will not be accepted. The ASLEF-controlled TFC team of six are not just content in continuing to defend drivers’ conditions but are also determined to improve on and add to them.
Now is the summer of our discontent

FINN BRENNAN, District 8 Organiser, and TERRY WILKINSON, executive committee member, reveal the truth behind Transport for London’s hapless management and their failure to negotiate over the introduction of the Night Tube in the capital

It was always clear that talks with London Underground on our pay and conditions claim this year were going to difficult. Senior managers have been complaining for a long time about the pressure caused by budget cuts at TfL, but no one could have expected management to handle negotiations in such a cack-handed way that they would unite all four of the trade unions – ASLEF, the RMT, the TSSA and Unite – in a dispute! But maybe we should not be surprised; it’s clear that Boris Johnson has long lost interest in his day job of running London while he focuses his limited attention span on his rekindled ambition to replace David Cameron as Conservative Party leader and Prime Minister of this country. The management of London Underground has become increasingly chaotic; we are now on our third Chief Operating Official since we submitted our pay and conditions claim! Long serving directors and senior managers in employee relations have left and it is no longer clear to anyone just who is in charge or who can make an agreement.

The company has made many mistakes in their meetings with us. (We can’t really call them negotiations, since negotiating implies some give and take on both sides. They have only been interested in taking, not giving). But perhaps most serious has been their insistence on tying any pay offer to changes to our rosters to facilitate the introduction of all night services on Fridays and Saturdays. In effect they are blackmailing drivers.

Because they are saying to you: ‘If you want a pay rise, accept you will have to work any number of nights turns and weekends we decide for the rest of your career, and be grateful for a one-off payment of £250, less tax, for the privilege.’

Coupled with an offer that is way below those made right across the rest of the rail industry, they should have realised that the result, inevitably, would be an industrial dispute. That is not something we welcome, or want, because it causes chaos for Londoners and London and also impacts on our members.

But, when faced with a management whose only comment to us, during two days of talks at ACAS, was ‘Your position is noted,’ then the last resort of strike action is the only option we have left.

Perhaps it’s because of the lack of a railway background among the senior managers at London Underground that they do not understand that our members will never be prepared to be treated like this. Or, of course, it may be that the Mayor of London wants to demonstrate how tough he is. Either way, they have badly misjudged the situation and risk scuppering the Night Tube in London and destroying all the good work that has been done in the recent past to improve industrial relations.

The excellent work done by our reps and activists across the combine to keep members informed of the issues has meant that we had a massive Yes vote for industrial action. It’s up to London Underground now to decide if they want this dispute sorted out, in a civil manner, at the negotiating table or out there on a picket line when they are failing to deliver a service to the capital. It’s their call…
Why the S stock seat is a pain in the posterior

MARC TANNER, health & safety council, and upgrades rep, lifts the lid on problems with the S stock seat

INCE the introduction of the S stock seat, drivers have been complaining that it is extremely uncomfortable and puts them in a very difficult driving position, with many saying that older stocks were much more comfortable. London Underground’s reply to this complaint was that the seat was designed to the industry standard of being able to seat the 95 percentile male to the 5 percentile female and was extensively consulted on by the union’s upgrade representatives. In a nutshell, LU would not accept there was a problem with the seat.

After much discussion with SSR branches, it was decided a survey should be taken to prove to LU that the seat was as bad as we were saying it was. The survey demonstrated that this was not just a few reps and activists with ‘sore bottoms’ but a large percentage of the workforce with wide ranging muscular and skeletal issues. Due to the overwhelming return from the drivers on the SSR, detailing their issues with the seat, LU commissioned Dr Amanda Elliott, a leading ergonomist, engineer and human factors expert, to review the seat and cab environment.

It has been assumed by the S stock manufacturer, and all manufacturers of rolling stock with trains built to the same standard, that if a seat fits drivers between the 95 and 5 percentile, then it will fit all drivers in between. This, the report shows, is incorrect.

The report goes on to make recommendations on how by moving the seat upwards and increasing the number of forward and backward positions, plus training drivers to find a seating position optimised for them, we can improve the driving position for many drivers. This, however, will not make the train more comfortable for all drivers to sit on.

It has been agreed that once the changes have been made and training given, a new survey will be commissioned, one that is not as leading as ASLEF’s own – the good doctor’s words, not mine – to see if the seat needs more padding in the seat’s cushion. The report will be put together by Dr Elliott and me, and will examine what, if anything, needs to be done next. If the survey says we need more work then we will push forward to achieve a more comfortable ride for our drivers.
Dad’s union helped my family get our first trip to seaside

SADIQ KHAN’s father was a London bus driver for 25 years. Sadiq, who is hoping to be Labour’s candidate for Mayor of London, has been endorsed by ASLEF. Here he explains what he will do for you if selected and elected.

If you were to ask me what my earliest memory of trade unionism was I’d tell you it was my first trip to the seaside. As a family of 10, living on an inner London council estate, with little spare cash, we’d never experienced the traditional charabanc trip to the coast. It was my dad’s union that helped me and my family get our first experience of British seaside culture, candy floss and all.

I know from my own family what a difference unions make to working people. My dad had a decent wage and a good pension because his union fought for them and got them. My mum, on the other hand, didn’t have a union where she worked, and so spent years on poverty wages and left without a decent pension. That’s the trade unionism I know, it’s the trade unionism I’m proud of, and it’s the trade unionism I will support as Mayor of London.

HELPING BULLIED WORKERS

My early life experiences have been fundamental in forming my core beliefs. I was lucky enough to be raised in an affordable council flat and have a good state education that gave me the chance to study law. When I became a lawyer I chose to focus my work on representing the underdog – helping the worker bullied at work, representing the woman discriminated against by her employer, supporting workers unfairly sacked.

These are the principles I brought with me when I became a Labour MP – I wanted to make a difference for working people. There is much I am proud of that the last Labour government did – the minimum wage, union recognition in the workplace, the Human Rights Act. For me personally, when I look back at what I did as a minister, I am proud that in 2009, when I was at the Department for Transport, I brought the East Coast main line back into public ownership. It was a brilliant example of how a publicly-run company could deliver high quality services that delivered for its customers.

BETTER PAY AND CONDITIONS

Standing up for the public interest is why I am in politics. I want a London that has the same opportunities for working people that I had – good jobs, affordable homes, and a chance for a good life.

We need a Labour Mayor who will stand up for working people:

I will be a living wage Mayor. As Mayor I will fight for the London minimum wage to be the London living wage as a step towards a £10 an hour minimum wage.

I will build homes for Londoners. I will ensure more council homes are built, make renting more affordable and more secure, with a London living rent.

I will stand with workers. No company engaged in blacklisting workers will get a contract from my Mayor’s office.

I will fight for equality. I will use all the Mayor’s powers to tackle discrimination and inequality.

I will work with unions. As Mayor I will work with unions to provide job security and fair working conditions for workers by setting up a team in City Hall to focus on better pay and conditions for all workers across London.

Transport in London would not work without the professionalism and dedication of its staff. In the coming years there will be major changes to the Tube network as we move towards a 24/7 service. That will be good for London and good for Londoners. But introducing this has to be done through consensus and negotiation.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Workers need to be reassured that their shift patterns will not be dictated by a management who appear to show little interest in the quality of life for Tube workers and their families. I commit to you that, as we move towards a 24 hour Tube network, workers and their representatives will be central in finding the right solutions to maintaining a life/work balance.

I will offer union members the chance to pay their subs directly from their wages.

Second, I will make it easier for members to participate in union democracy. Workers should be able to take part in secure electronic ballots at their workplaces.

I am proud to have been endorsed by ASLEF to run for Mayor of London. I hope that if you are an ASLEF affiliated member you will vote for me in the selection. Then, if I’m fortunate to win the selection, please support me in the election in May 2016. It would be a privilege to have your vote in the Labour Mayoral primary.

You have until 11 August to register to vote. You can do it online at www.unionstogether.org.uk/our_voice

Sadiq camping on the streets of the capital and (above) with Michael Dugher and Mick Whelan at ASLEF’s Parliamentary reception

Sadiq Khan was born and brought up in Earlsfield, south London. He was a solicitor, specialising in human rights, and a councillor on Wandsworth Borough Council, before becoming Labour MP for Tooting in 2005. He was Minister for Transport under Gordon Brown and Shadow Justice Secretary, Shadow Lord Chancellor and Shadow Minister for London in opposition.
HE history of Britain in the 20th century is, at least in part, the story of the struggle of women to be treated the same as men. At work, at home, and at the ballot box. The Representation of the People Act gave women over 30 the right to vote in 1918 (men could vote at 21) but it wasn’t until ten years later, in 1928, that the Equal Franchise Act put women on the same footing as men.

Barbara Castle, as Secretary of State for Employment in Harold Wilson’s Labour government, passed the Equal Pay Act in 1970. Hannah Daddys became the first female train operator on London Underground when she began driving trains on the District line in 1978 and Karen Harrison and Annie Rutter blazed a path for women drivers on the main line when they stepped onto the footplate in the early 1980s.

**LONDON GIRL**

One in twenty train drivers in Britain is now a woman; one in nine operators on the Underground is female. The second statistic is better than the first, but it’s still a long way from reflecting the society in which we live. Traditionally, working on the iron road was seen as a difficult, dirty, and physically demanding job. But that ceased to be true when the last steam train left the station in 1968. So why don’t more women apply to be a driver?

‘People don’t want to sit in a tunnel all day,’ says Lucy Roach, a Tube driver on the Northern line. ‘It’s not glamorous. It’s seen as heavy work – you’ve got to be able to fix the train if it breaks – and it can be intimidating, as a young woman, to be in a minority, in a male, middle-aged, environment.

‘Some people like trains, but perhaps not so many girls. I liked Thomas the Tank Engine when I was young – Grumpy Gordon was my favourite – and I would tell any woman thinking of becoming a train driver, go for it.’

Lucy, 27, was born and brought up in north London. Her mum and dad were both teachers – you’ve got to be able to fix the train if it breaks – and it can be intimidating, as a young woman, to be in a minority, in a male, middle-aged, environment.

When she passed out Lucy was sent to the Finchley branch for a year but, when she came back, ‘it was time to do something else. I went into advertising sales with a firm that represented websites, including Jamie Oliver and TfL, selling ad space on the journey planner page.

**HELLISH, HORRIBLE**

‘I thought it would be wining and dining people, but it was hellish. Horrible. All sales targets, white boards – that white board was the bane of my life – on the telephone from an office in Waterloo, although they liked us to say it was Westminster. You put your forecast on the white board on Monday morning and if you hadn’t hit your target by Friday afternoon it got very stressful. TfL were so strict about what they would put on their website. The National Lottery wanted to advertise but TfL didn’t like their logo, they didn’t want people thinking crossed fingers, no late journeys! After a year I’d had enough. And my boyfriend Harry’s father suggested becoming a Tube driver.’

Harry, an engineer with Siemens for Heathrow Express, spent nine years in the Royal Engineers, including tours of duty in Afghanistan – ‘You can’t change how a nation works’ – while his father Paul Stacey has been on the Underground – he’s a driver on the Northern line, too, out of High Barnet – all his life. Lucy was recruited in April 2012 as station staff; ‘I didn’t want to do that, but anything to get out of sales, then train driver came up, when I’d not even done my probation. My first day in the cab I couldn’t believe how dark it was. How close, no space, between the train and the wall.’

When she passed out Lucy was sent to the District line – ‘a lovely line, nice big trains, it’s outside’ – and then, after 18 months, to the Northern line – ‘far more intense, with the number of passengers, and stops, but the drivers are a good crowd.’

As soon as she became a driver she joined ASLEF – ‘Paul played a big part in that’ – and thinks it’s important to be in the union. ‘My parents were members of the NUT, ASLEF is focused on drivers, it’s the right thing. A lot of people in this country are scared of losing their jobs. There’s a recession, people are struggling, and this government is trying to scare people into behaving themselves. The unions stand up for ordinary hard-working people.’

**IT’S IN MY BLOOD**

She was one of the ASLEF activists – all of them women, most of them Tube drivers – who joined the Labour Party’s pink general election battle bus, meeting Harriet Harman, deputy party leader; Diane Abbott, MP for Hackney North & Stoke Newington; and Val Shawcross, London Assembly Member for Lambeth & Southwark.

‘It didn’t need to be pink – that was superficial and silly – but it’s in my blood – mum and dad were Labour supporters, I went out leafleting with them – and it’s something that’s important, something I believe in.’
Now you’re knocking on my door

District Council 7 held its meeting at the offices of Thompsons solicitors in Cardiff for a very good reason. Council had volunteered to go canvassing with Jo Stevens, a director of Thompsons, who was standing as the Labour candidate, and is now the Member of Parliament for Cardiff Central. We held a shortened meeting with DO Brian Corbett and EC member Andy Hudd restricted to brief reports by a tough chair and our guest of honour, GS Mick Whelan, limited, by his inimitable standards, to a relatively brief address.

Under Jo’s guidance we got our instructions for the day, and which watering hole we were all meeting in afterwards, then off we trooped into deepest darkest Cardiff, some of us to deliver Jo’s newspaper, others to knock on doors. Overall, we got a good reception (where the doors were opened).

We have decided to do everything we can to raise the profile of ASLEF, to move away from the old traditions and try something more radical. We held a meeting at the Welsh Assembly, where one of our speakers was the then Transport Minister, a joint district council at the Houses of Parliament, and made a visit to a former coal mine. Quite an eye opener for some delegates. We are trying to arrange another meeting this year at the Assembly, to show ASLEF’s support for the Welsh government’s desire to establish a ‘not for dividend’ railway in Wales.

Ian Thompson, DC7 secretary

A world beyond the spoken word

Some members wonder why ASLEF gets involved with lifelong learning. Well, I went on a sign language course, organised by ULR Trevor Southgate at Ipswich, delivered by Enable and funded by my employer Abellio Greater Anglia. It was absolutely amazing! There’s a whole world beyond the spoken word, language as gesture, emotion, expression, body language; sound need not be a barrier! Trev, without your hard work and dedication this course would never have happened. You helped create a milestone in my life I shall never forget! I had seen flyers on the notice board and thought ‘Nah.’ It looked too difficult. It was difficult, but what an eye opener! Myra, the tutor, made the course inspiring, engaging, and fun. Her way of teaching made us want to come back. And that is why we get involved in lifelong learning; to change lives, educate, upskill, and question our perceptions of the world.

Mick Avern, Ipswich

Long serving Bob

Bob Long, a long-serving member based at Edgware Road, Hammersmith & City line, recently retired. A number of his current and former colleagues joined Bob and his wife for a social evening arranged by Simon Blakesley and a presentation was made by ex-Edgware Road train operator, now EC member for District 8, Terry Wilkinson.

Marylebone line up (top) while Dave Leigh gets his certificate from the GS (above)

(45). Retirement certificates were presented to Dave Leigh and Pete Miller and we wish them all the best for the future.

Patrick Houghton, branch secretary

Upcoming events

- **TONBRIDGE – THURSDAY 2 JULY**
  Southeastern retired and working members’ reunion from 11.00 at the Royal British Legion, 26 Priory Road, Tonbridge.

- **RAINHAM – THURSDAY 1 OCTOBER**
  Southeastern retired and working members’ reunion from 11.00 at Rainham Social Club, 86 Station Rd, Rainham, Kent.

Please send your branch news and photographs to journal@aslef.org.uk

Latest developments

- **Polmadie branch where long service badges totalling 730 years were handed out by DO Kevin Lindsay.**

- Marylebone line up (top) while Dave Leigh gets his certificate from the GS (above)

- We had an excellent turnout for Marylebone’s May meeting and welcomed back DO Brian Corbett, EC member Andy Hudd and GS Mick Whelan who updated us on all the latest developments. Then members received an ASLEF long service award in recognition of many years’ loyalty to our union. Congratulations to Phil Lowman, Madanjit Singh, Richard Thomas, Kevin Whitmee (5 years); M Paszke (10); Sean Dunne, S Hazelwood (15); Mark Goldsmith (20); Jim Daniel, Andy Rigby (25); Dave Farrell, Bob Head, Matthew Shipp, Darren Varney (30); John Attridge, Chris Edgson (35); Ray Chawda, Ian McLeay (40) and John Redrup (45). Retirement certificates were presented to Dave Leigh and Pete Miller and we wish them all the best for the future.

Patrick Houghton, branch secretary
BANNER MAN HELD THE BANNER HIGH

At our packed April meeting, Cambridge was pleased to welcome GS Mick Whelan and former GS Lew Adams. It was a special occasion as the GS presented the branch with our union banner. A design by driver Trevor Smith was adopted and the banner was made by York Disabled Workers’ Co-operative. Peter Cornwall, one of our retired members, said: ‘I would have crawled here over burning coals for this, it’s history in the making!’ Lew spoke about his time at Cambridge, and as GS, and Mick presented retirement certificates to Peter Newman and Dave Sanderson. Long service badges were given to Mick Jenkins, Trevor Smith (40 years); Peter Emmington, Alan Cook, Trevor Steggles, Roy Whiterod (30); Michael Willson (25) and Matt Chapman (5).

HIGHLIGHT OF THE MEETING

The Retired Members’ Section was invited to address Saltley branch. Tony West, Alan Taylor, Les Muir and I attended. It was a lively meeting, with some contentious matters dealt with. To those who did not attend, remember decisions made at branch can affect you. So be there to have your voice heard! We in the RMS like to attend branches to explain what we do on their behalf and inform them what is going on out there in the big bad world (and what may be waiting for them when they retire). Tony gave a frank and full overview, without boring the members present, and fortunately we had time, before catching our train home, to take part in what I think is the highlight of a branch meeting, the socialising! Thanks again and may the branch continue to prosper.

Peter Smith, RMS reporter

PRESENT AND CORRECT

(front row, from left): Ian Mandley, Kevin Johnson, Mick Geary, Andy Bullock, Michael Clatworthy. Back row, from left: Jim Ball, Simon Black, Mark Kendall, Alan Taylor, Tony West, Les Muir, Steve James, Jason Hickling

A GLASS OF BULMER’S

Alan (right) with Trevor

Alan Bulmer, who has worked in transport for nearly 40 years, 36 of them for Tyne & Wear Metro, has retired. He has been a loyal member of ASLEF for 33 years. Good luck, Alan, and enjoy your retirement!

Trevor Graham, branch secretary

DOUBLE BUBBLE IN BEDFORD

Bedford branch was doubly proud to have Mick Whelan visit because he came to present 40 year badges to Brothers Paul Adams and Keith Mitchell, a retirement certificate to Brother Alan Fraser, and to chat to new and old drivers alike about where the union is and where he hopes it is going. The GS covered a lot of subjects: the political fund, the state of the union’s finances, ERTMS, campaigns ASLEF is involved in, the general election, the incident at Wootton Bassett and its safety implications, and aspirations for the future of the grade. It speaks volumes for Mick’s oratory that members of Unite holding a meeting in the next room came in to listen. The guys from Unite said how much they enjoyed Mick’s talk and were very impressed that the GS of the union would visit a branch. Our warmest thanks to Mick and DO Dicky Fisher.

Rob Reddan, branch secretary

MICK HOLDER LOOKS BACK TO JULY 1915 AND LIFE BACK HOME IN BLIGHTY

VERDICT OF MANSLAUGHTER

The editorial in the Locomotive Journal notes: ’Both the signalmen in the Gretna Green disaster have had a verdict of manslaughter returned against them, and Fireman Hutchinson, of the local passenger train which was crossed on to the up line, has had the same verdict returned against him. This is on the grounds that although he carried out rule 55, by going to the box and signing the book, he did not see that the lever collars were in position before returning to his engine. Hutchinson is not a member of our union, nor are any of the locomotive men concerned, but the GS attended the Board of Trade inquiry at Carlisle in the interest of the locomotive fraternity as a whole. In the defending of Hutchinson there is a splendid opportunity of exposing the uselessness, and even danger, of rule 55.’

CHILD LABOUR DURING THE WAR

The Workers’ Educational Association has just published a pamphlet on child labour during the war and after. It examines the position of the child (any person under 14) under the existing law, and presents in comprehensive form the regulations which enable children to be exempted from school for the purpose of industrial, agricultural and general employment. It directs special attention to the large number of children who, as early as eight, are set to work for wages outside school hours. The immediate value of the pamphlet lies in the information it contains in regard to the relaxation of the laws for the employment of children in agriculture since the war broke out.

SHARP CONTRASTS IN CAPITAL

JRR, in Chats on the Footplate, writes: ‘I suppose most of us get to London occasionally, and all of us take an interest in its teeming population, its great buildings, its wonderful ways and its sharp contrasts of riches and poverty. No one can pass from the dismal and crowded East End without thinking deeply of the problem of the existence of its million denizens. You cannot walk in the sunshine of the West End without realising the riotous waste of wealth which causes the poverty beyond Fleet Street. The majority have too little to live upon because the minority have too much.’
Our people are at the heart of our success. So, you’ll make a big impact during an exciting time of transformation by helping our colleagues achieve their potential and be the best they can be. Joining our Operations Training team, you’ll shape training plans for drivers and colleagues. You’ll develop and deliver innovative training solutions that drive cultural change and skill development. You’ll also feedback on individual performance and play a lead role in management development.

Sharing our passion for development, you must be forward thinking, well organised and a confident communicator. Your train driving experience will have given you an excellent understanding of PTS, different forms of traction and relevant rules and regulations. Ideally with some training qualifications, you should also be able to advise on working practices and act as a Competence Assessor.

To apply online please visit uk.firstgroupcareers.com
STEVE RAYMOND ENTERTAINER IN THE HOVIS AD

It was Steve (the Entertainer) Raymond’s wish that we celebrate his life, not mourn his passing, as he lived life to the full. At Southport crematorium he was played in by a jazz band, with no hymns or prayers, and, as this was his final appearance on stage, Syd the Greek sang one of Steve’s favourite songs. When the final curtain came he went out to rapturous applause with the jazz band in full swing. The show didn’t end there as friends and family gathered at the railway club for a wake which became a show celebrating his life.

Steve was a semi-professional singer, member of Equity and, many years ago, did an advert for Hovis. It took three days and he was treated like royalty. He did many charity gigs and was a regular compere at the railway club in its heyday. Steve was also a giver – he would hand you his last shilling for your bus fare and then walk home himself – and he always looked after everyone else.

His railway career started at Aintree MPD in 1940. He transferred to the Cheshire Lines LMG depot Walton-on-the-Hill in 1957, moving to Bank Hall in 1960 to fill a driver’s vacancy after being an apprentice for 20 years and, when steam trains finished in 1966, and Bank Hall closed, went to Liverpool Exchange. When that closed he moved to the new Kirkdale electric and diesel depot and eventually transferred to Southport. He retired in 1988 with 47 years’ service as a bar lad, cleaner, fireman, spare and driver. He was a lifelong member of ASLEF, doing several jobs, including branch chairman and LDC rep. He loved Doris and his family. Rest in peace Steve but, knowing you, up in the great theatre in the sky you will be singing your favourite Al Jolson songs and keeping an eye on your loved ones.

Bill Baxter, Southport

JD takes a busman’s holiday days with motorbikes (the Manx grand prix), pencil drawing, model making and photography (he did his own d&p and became the in-house depot snapper) while family holidays were two weeks wherever the TA took him.

Mel Thorley, Longsight

STEVE MASTERS MYSTERIES OF A STOCK

Steve Masters, one of London Underground’s test train drivers, has died at 52. Steve started his career with LTE as an engineer on London Buses. Following deregulation and privatisation on the bus side of London Transport, he transferred to the Underground, working firstly as a guard on the Northern line, then qualifying as a driver and transferring to the Jubilee, and then to Neasden Met. He became an instructor on the Metropolitan line and particularly enjoyed teaching the mysteries of the A stock to those moving to the Met. In 2009 Steve joined LU’s test train section, ending as duty team leader. He had successfully beaten two previous bouts of cancer, and when it returned again fought it with great bravery, more concerned about looking after others than dwelling on his illness. He had hoped to hold on for his daughter Gemma’s wedding, but unfortunately passed away two days beforehand. Our thoughts go to Steve’s wife Wendy, and to Gemma and Lee.

Tim Miles, LU test trains

BARRY TYSON

Further to Michael Clatworthy’s obit (Journal, June) Barry Tyson, 44, was a keen cyclist, often cycling through the Gloucestershire countryside, and a very popular personality among his workmates. He was often in the mess room, taking the mick, and never taking himself seriously. He is sadly missed by his children Freya and Cameron, his family, friends and workmates at Bristol and Birmingham.

Bernard Kennedy, Bristol

REX CRAWLEY

Rex Crawley, a retired Bedford driver, has died after complications following a fall at home. Always cheerful at work, he did his job without fuss, and was a totally reliable railwayman who served his time through the eras of steam, diesel and electric. Our sympathies go to Eileen and his family to whom he was devoted.

Bill Davies, RMS

BRIAN BULLOCK

It is with deep regret that I inform you of the passing of my uncle, and a long term member of ASLEF, Brian Bullock. Brian, a driver at York and Leeds depots in his time, passed away peacefully in hospital on 7 May.

Gordon Fitzgerald, TPE and Hull Trains

Obituaries

JULY 2015

STEVE RAYMOND ENTERTAINER IN THE HOVIS AD

STEVE MASTERS MYSTERIES OF A STOCK

REX CRAWLEY

BRIAN BULLOCK

FINAL DEPARTURES

JOHN DOBSON was quite a character, always involved with anything happening at the depot. Dobbo spent all his railway life at Tonbridge, apart from national service, served on the LDC and was chairman of our social club. He was a good family man, sang in the choir at his local church, and his other love was golf.

GORDON HOBDEN, who also spent time on the LDC, and who had to retire early through ill health, has also passed away. Gone, but not forgotten, and we are thinking of his family at this sad time.

Dave Weddle, Tonbridge RMS

JACK FAULKNER THE ROCKIES ROAD

Jack JD Faulkner (1925-2015) was born in Salford and signed on at Trafford Park loco in 1943. Ten years later, he nearly swapped a view of the Stretford End for a view of the Rockies. As a corporal in the Territorial Army, at the coronation, he met a man who offered him a job on the Canadian Pacific railroad. Only the imminent arrival of his son prevented the switch.

JD settled in on the old Midland Railway route out of Manchester Central, along with the Cheshire lines to Chester and Liverpool. The closure of Trafford took him to Longsight. JD filled his rest
We welcome letters, either by email to journal@aslef.org.uk or by Royal Mail to ASLEF Journal at 77 St John Street, London, EC1M 4NN. Each month the writer of our star letter wins a rich range of ASLEF regalia.

**Coupons the way forward**

I am writing in response to recent letters from Scott Letham and Rod Bryant (May and June respectively) in the Journal. I have to ask why a safeguarded member of staff would go to an operating company which does not honour safeguarded travel facilities? There are various reasons why a member would do this, but it is a significant benefit to lose.

I agree with Rod that it may not be achievable to get safeguarded travel for all staff but I do not think it is something the union should give up on. Yes, there are more pressing issues to deal with, and fight for, a prime example, as Rod rightly mentions, being pensions, but chipping away at the staff travel issue may be the way forward.

As non-safeguarded staff are entitled to a multitude of travel benefits in Europe, in the shape of ticket reductions and coupons, would it not be possible for ATOC to allow non-safeguarded staff a coupon facility for travel in this country? If this was achieved it would go some way to redressing the balance.

As non-safeguarded staff are entitled to a multitude of travel benefits in Europe, in the shape of ticket reductions and coupons, would it not be possible for ATOC to allow non-safeguarded staff a coupon facility for travel in the UK? I am pretty sure that CIE and NIR staff can obtain coupons for travel in this country, so why is this facility not available to non-safeguarded staff who work in the railway industry in this country? If this was achieved it would go some way to redressing the balance. ASLEF should try to improve travel facilities for all members of staff, regardless whether a member is safeguarded or non-safeguarded.

Edward Pearce, Marylebone

**First past post out of time**

The Conservative government won less than 25% of the votes yet they can rule as they please; this has got to be wrong. The first past post system must be changed for the 2020 election because this out of date system is failing the voters. Under the proposed new Tory trade union laws ASLEF would have to have 50% of members voting with 40% voting yes for industrial action. Strange, as Rod rightly mentions, being pensions, but chipping away at the staff travel issue may be the way forward.

As non-safeguarded staff are entitled to a multitude of travel benefits in Europe, in the shape of ticket reductions and coupons, would it not be possible for ATOC to allow non-safeguarded staff a coupon facility for travel in the UK? If this was achieved it would go some way to redressing the balance.

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Edward Pearce, Marylebone

**NEW LABOUR AGAINST REAL LABOUR FOR PARTY’S SOUL**

In the wake of Ed Miliband’s resignation, and then Jim Murphy’s, after the call by ASLEF in Scotland for his head, it seems timeous to comment on the future prospects of a party which is now obviously in some difficulty. I voted Labour, but am not a member of any political party, and was distressed to hear Peter Mandelson, Tony Blair, Tristram Hunt and Chuka Umunna, among others, suggest that Labour’s abject failure could be reversed by embracing New Labour values. I was equally upset to hear suggestions that Scottish Labour might become a separate party.

Mandy, Blair, Tristram and Chuka are the problem – not the solution. They represent the metropolitan Labour Party of north London, Oxbridge-educated intellectuals who believe the working-class to be corporate lawyers earning £150k while the Tories are their City trader masters who earn multi-million pound salaries and even bigger bonuses. They think the solution is to ‘finesse the message’ to appeal to specific groups of ‘middle-class aspirational voters’ – ie, people like them.

They are wrong. They should leave the Labour Party, taking their tarnished New Labour ideas with them and join the rump of the Liberal Democrats to create a New SDP. Meanwhile, real Labour – created by Mandelson, Blair and Chuka – can get on with dealing with the problems real people face every day – problems I suspect are alien to City lawyers, traders and bankers.

If Labour wants to win again it needs to stop finessing what it’s saying to target groups and start listening to the mass of working people. Because if Labour really listens to working people, it can distill a message which millions will understand and for which they will vote.

And there are a hell of a lot more ordinary people than City lawyers and traders. Simply grafting a new head onto an otherwise necrotic body will not save the heart or soul of a party punished by the SNP in Scotland – and their ideological bedfellows UKIP in parts of England – for failing to listen.

Labour members now have an opportunity to seize their party back from an out-of-touch and elitist leadership and the sooner they do so, the better for all of us.

Tom Burns, Perth

**South East: Slur on the EC**

I must reply to the gross distortion of the facts as represented by Laurie Holden (Journal, May). I was the executive committee member for District 1 during the entire privatisation period. AAD laid down principles for the EC to enforce by recommending, or not, the various restructuring deals presented to them by company councils.

It is a slur on the eight members of the EC at that time to suggest we’d done an underhand deal with Connex South Eastern when, at the same time, we were conducting an industrial dispute with their sister company Connex South Central. It is no good quoting the votes in favour if you do not state the votes against. And if you cannot be bothered to vote you cannot complain about the result. It would appear that Laurie is endorsing the
AAD FLYING HIGH IN SOUTHEEND

I was a first time delegate at AAD in Southend and was really impressed with the speakers, especially Tony West and Keith Ewing. I would like to say thank you to Marz Colombini and the District 1 delegates for the way we all worked as a team. And a big thank you to all the other delegates for making it a very enjoyable four days. It was the first time I’d got to see Tosh McDonald and Torries’ policy on trade union ballots, ie there must be a 51% majority. He refers to the RMT branch at Slade Green but does not tell us if it still exists. I hesitate to remind him that because of the shameful number of scabs during the 1982 dispute on South Eastern a scab’s union was formed only to vanish soon after.

Bill Mackenzie, former EC president and member for District 1

Who’s rewriting history?

Who is rewriting history, as defined by Laurie Holden (Journal, May)? Let’s put the record straight, my friend. DRI came about through negotiations within the remit contained in RJNC instruction. Negotiations are just that, and not everything one would wish for is attainable straight away, but once the principle was achieved a highway was set up for year on year improvements.

Prior to DRI drivers worked 312 hours over eight weeks. This averaged out to a 39 hour five day week for the princely salary of approximately £12k per annum. SE drivers also worked about 23 Sundays each year. Sunday working was optional, but it would be grossly misleading not to include these hours in any calculation when assessing the hours drivers were actually working, pre-DRI, because of the pittance drivers were earning at the time.

Sundays played a huge part in forming any semblance of a living wage. Although not all depots worked nearly every other Sunday, in reality, prior to DRI, most SE drivers were working 43 hours every week, including Sundays, and after DRI an average of 44.5 hours per week, including Sundays.

Now to this ‘shameful period of history’. In 1997 the master roster was 44 hours 20 minutes. Maximum day 11 hours, minimum 6 hours. Salary £23,750. In 1999 (my last negotiation before I retired) the master roster was 42 hours 30 minutes. Maximum day 10 hours 30 minutes, minimum 5 hours 45 minutes. Salary £26,008. So within two years SE drivers were working fewer hours for almost double the salary than they were earning pre-DRI.

Since then the District 1 Organiser and company council have skilfully negotiated salaries and hours that were, in 2013, a master roster of 35 hours, maximum day 9 hours 15 minutes, minimum 5 hours 30 minutes. Salary £43,391. Whilst I will always congratulate those who took over from the then company council, and me, I am sure they would be the first to accept that without DRI in 1997 there would never have been the conditions and salaries now achieved on SE.

I must finish with Laurie’s red herring. The CC and DO don’t have responsibility for the rosters that depots operate; that is the remit of the local reps. And 77 hours a week? Laurie, who are you kidding? Any rep who produced a roster like that would have been given short shrift in my day.

‘We never actually vote for. SE voted by a simple majority, a system by which MPs are elected, so is Laurie advocating the Tory philosophy that we must have 51% of the total membership and not of those who voted? And, as for all those drivers who were dropping like dead sheep, within 14 months rest day working began again, which wasn’t the case in 1997.

Laurie pleads ‘Don’t allow Len, or anyone, to rewrite this shameful period of history.’ But it is you, my friend, who should hold your head in shame for accusing ASLEF, the then EC, honourable representatives, and me, of being in the pockets of SE management. I don’t give a fig what you think of me but you insult my union, and my colleagues, who work tirelessly for those they represent. Len Worboys, Retired Members’ Section
Let me smile with the wise and feed with the rich

Dr Johnson’s house in London was opened to the public 100 years ago. KEITH RICHMOND looks around Gough Square and wonders what this literary giant – and ardent Tory – would have made of the Conservatives’ way with words these days

R JOHNSON is a man of letters – the second most quoted English writer after Shakespeare – whose words and wit echo down the centuries. He made a lasting contribution to the English language, and English literature, as a poet, critic, biographer, essayist, editor and lexicographer. He was born at Lichfield in Staffordshire in 1709, went to the local grammar school, and then to Pembroke College, Oxford, but left after a year when he ran out of money. He walked to London to find fame and fortune. He became a hack, first for The Gentleman’s Magazine, and while he did become famous, riches remained tantalisingly just out of reach all his life. A devout Anglican, and passionate Tory, he was the subject of his friend James Boswell’s celebrated biography The Life of Samuel Johnson, and was buried in Westminster Abbey when he died in 1784.

‘When a man is tired of London, he is tired of life; for there is in London all that life can afford.’ – Dr Johnson

For 11 years, from 1748 to 1759, he rented a four-storey house on the western side of Gough Square, just off Fleet Street, hard by Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese where he enjoyed company, conversation and a drink, while he was compiling his enduring legacy, A Dictionary of the English Language. Published in 1755, it included 42,773 words, some with colourful definitions. Politician: A man of artifice; one of deep contrivance. Lexicographer: A writer of dictionaries; a harmless drudge. Oats: A grain, which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people. He lived here, with his family, working in the study on the top floor, the premises conveniently close to those of William Strahan, his printer, just around the corner in Little New Street.

The house is glorious. It contains some lovely pieces of furniture, together with artifacts such as walking sticks belonging to Johnson and David Garrick; Boswell’s (rather small) coffee cup and (considerably bigger) mug (for drinking ale) as well as a dish from a service made for Sir Joshua Reynolds, who painted a famous portrait of Johnson. There are also paintings of friends such as James Beattie and Henry Thrale, and rivals like Oliver Goldsmith, as well as facsimiles of his works, including pages from his annotated edition of The Works of the Most Celebrated Minor Poets, and a magnificent facsimile of his Dictionary.

Johnson was an arch-Tory – which he defined as ‘one who adheres to the ancient constitution of the state, and the apostolical hierarchy of the Church of England’ – but, given his way with words, I wonder what he would make of the language of David Cameron and George Osborne? Because, since they were re-elected on 7 May, the Prime Minister and his heir presumptive have, with enormous chutzpah, turned the language of English public discourse inside out.

‘Man is born crying, lives complaining, and dies disappointed.’ – Dr Johnson

Cameron sold himself as a One Nation Conservative, a line he lifted lock, stock and both barrels still smoking from Ed Miliband’s campaign – although, to be fair, it dates back to Benjamin Disraeli and his novel Sybil, or the Two Nations which spelt out his political philosophy in 1845 – while proposing the most brutal boss class legislation since Margaret Thatcher in the Queen’s Speech.

Then the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced what he was careful to describe as ‘efficiency savings’ last month which are, in fact, just another round of savage cuts.

What the Tories have done in the last couple of months – in the short election campaign, and in the immediate aftermath of their unexpected victory – is quite canny. But while it is clever – and the speechwriters and policy works at Conservative central office and in Downing Street are acting with malice aforethought – it is also spectacularly misleading.

‘Patriotism is the last refuge of the scoundrel.’ – Dr Johnson

It’s the iron fist inside a velvet glove. Thatcher played up to her image as the Iron Lady, but Cameron is cuter. He and Osborne pay lip service to the notion of One Nation while pursuing a policy of divide and rule on behalf of the rich and powerful. They know the big bosses, hedge fund managers, and bankers who brought Britain to the brink, will realise what they’re up to. And they hope the rest of us will swallow the top line.

Dr Johnson, who preferred a man to say what he means, and mean what he says, would have been appalled.
The ASLEF JOURNAL

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More than just a union

Prize Crossword number 111 by Zebedee

Solution to Prize Crossword number 110 which appeared in the June edition of the ASLEF Journal

Across: 1 Transgress 8 Waylaid 9 Paste 10 Rout 11 Detached 13 Mason 14 Dixon 16 Dripping 17 Pair 20 Finch 21 Velling 22 Stonehenge

Down: 1 Tower 2 Any Questions? 3 Slav 4 Rudder 5 Sephardi 6 Asphyxiation 7 Deaden 12 Snapshot 13 Modify 15 Uneven 18 Rogue 19 Wish

Congratulations to Joe Kennedy of Liverpool who was last month’s winner.

Thanks for all your responses to the 110th ASLEF crossword in the June edition. If you successfully complete this month’s crossword please send the solution to the Editor, ASLEF Journal, 77 St John Street, London, EC1M 4NN by 14 July

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

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4. Based on AA Case Repair Rate September 2013 - August 2014.

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