

TOP LINK

No. 16 March 2010

Tornado on the Royal Train again...



Geoff Griffiths

...and rescuing commuters in the snow



Craig Stretten



The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust
New Steam for the Main Line

THE AI STEAM LOCOMOTIVE TRUST CONTACTS

President

Dorothy Mather

Vice Presidents

Malcolm Crawley (malcolm.crawley@alsteam.com)

Peter Townend

Board of Trustees

Mark Allatt Chairman (mark.allatt@alsteam.com)

Graeme Bunker Operations (graeme.bunker@alsteam.com)

David Burgess Company Secretary (david.burgess@alsteam.com)

David Elliott Director of Engineering (david.elliott@alsteam.com)

Gill Lord Merchandise Director (gill.lord@alsteam.com)

Rob Morland Electrical (rob.morland@alsteam.com)

Graham Nicholas Quality and Certification (graham.nicholas@alsteam.com)

Barry Wilson Finance (barry.wilson@alsteam.com)

Alexa Stott Sponsorship & Events (alexa.stott@alsteam.com)

Advisers to the Board

Julian Birley Grants and Big Ticket Fundraising (julian.birley@alsteam.com)

Richard Peck Commercial Manager (richard.peck@alsteam.com)

Duncan Ross Director of Administration (duncan.ross@alsteam.com)

Tony Streeter Publications (tony.streeter@alsteam.com)

Top Link Editor

Stephen Slack (stephen.slack@alsteam.com)

Designed by Debbie Nolan

* All information correct at the time of going to press on 14 March 2010.

For up-to-date information and dates please check the website www.alsteam.com.

- The AI Steam Locomotive Trust, Darlington Locomotive Works, Hoptown Lane, Darlington DL3 6RQ

- e-mail: enquiries@alsteam.com
- website: www.alsteam.com

Darlington Locomotive Works is normally open to the public on the second Saturday each month (11am – 4pm).

Access to the works is via Head of Steam (the newly refurbished Darlington Railway Museum) where covenantors are entitled to free entry.
Charity registration No. 1022834.

The Trust respectfully requests that anyone wanting to see *Tornado's* main line passenger trains follows the rules of the railway and only goes where permitted.

© 2010 The AI Steam Locomotive Trust except where shown.
Views of contributors are not necessarily those of The AI Steam Locomotive Trust.

Contents

- 2 **AI Trust contacts**
- 3 **Editorial comment**
- 4 **The Royal Train**
- 8 **GCR Preview**
- 10 **Shildon Preview**
- 12 **From the chair**
- 14 **Where to travel**
- 16 **The big picture**
- 18 **Winter Maintenance**
- 24 **Tornado's new support coach**
- 28 **Trains of thought**
- 32 **A tale of commuter heaven**

Editorial comment *by Stephen Slack*

Another year, another story...

WRONG! *Tornado* made Headlines in 2009 and has continued to make headlines in 2010. In late 2009 those of us living in the 'soppy south' had to deal with snow and sub-zero temperatures, roads at a standstill and rail services to London in chaos, but who came to the rescue? *Tornado* – a marvel of North Eastern design and build quality. When visiting the world's oldest existing railway station in early 2010 which locomotive performed a Royal command performance? The world's newest steam engine – *Tornado*!



In this edition of *Top Link* have an insight into the Winter Maintenance programme. Now that *Tornado* is active there are Exams to pass. We also look forward to where you can see and travel behind *Tornado* in the spring. And don't forget those fillers that might have dropped out – some

of these explain exclusive offers for Covenantors!

The expectation is that *Tornado* to be out and about 100 days a year. All this keeps *Tornado* in the public eye and all this activity sets *Tornado* an exacting and exhausting schedule. The locomotive always looks in tip top condition wherever she goes and whenever she is seen. This fact is testament to the commitment, energy, enthusiasm and skill of *Tornado's* Support Crew. Often involved over three days at a time they are just as much on the move as *Tornado* and rely on the Support Coach for precious moments of rest and relaxation. The Support Coach too is a mobile workshop while *Tornado* is away from home. Currently *Tornado's* Support Coach is loaned but the Trust has been in receipt of an extremely generous donation: one Support Coach. So look out for and 'USE YOUR LOAF' and think about how you can have a 'slice of the action' as we launch our fundraising initiative. **TCC**



60163 *Tornado* upon arrival at the world's oldest surviving passenger railway station. Manchester's MOSI. 4 February 2010.

***Tornado* and the Royal Train**

4 February 2010

The run up to any special train takes a lot of careful planning but the 4 February was extra special as *Tornado* was prepared for Royal Train duty once again. The support crew were very pleased to find the engine and coach well prepared. Many of our volunteers, with a great contribution from the Darlington 'Gang', had seen that the engine was in good order and allowed the support crew to top it off.

This magnificent effort meant that *Tornado* passed the two day fitness to run exam characteristic of these operations. The support coach was in receipt of a heavy polish and some painting of wheels,

steps and buffers. With the now familiar Prince of Wales feathers on the smokebox door the locomotive was ready for the off.

Leaving York in the early hours with Graham Pearce onboard as the rest of the support crew got some sleep, *Tornado* backed into Preston station, platform 7 at 0750 to await the arrival of the Royal Train.

At 0815, the distinctive claret coloured coaches drew gently to a stop alongside in platform 6 and the cl.67 locomotive stood aside to let the AI and its gleaming support coach take charge. Mark Allatt, Gill Lord, Rob Morland and Graham Nicholas, as representatives of the Trust, boarded the staff dining car, which was to



Graham Nicholas

be their home for most of the day!

Precisely on schedule at 0843, *Tornado* was gently eased away from the station and headed south to pick up the slow lines through Leyland. Pausing briefly at Euxton to await its path the A1 continued south along the West Coast mainline until reaching Golborne Junction. There, she took the left hand road and came to a rest in a holding position on the curve between Lowton and Parkside Junctions.

At the appointed moment, *Tornado* was in motion again, picking up the historic metals of the world's first passenger railway (Liverpool-Manchester). Given the train's destination (the Museum of Science & Industry in Manchester) this was a most appropriate way to approach the city and the train was able to follow the exact

route of the railway.

After crossing the Chat Moss section, *Tornado* gently eased into the original Manchester (Liverpool Road) station that forms the centre-piece of the museum. Arrival was – of course – spot on time at 1015 and *Tornado* and her train was rather grandly serenaded by a brass band to the tune of 'See the Conquering Hero comes'.

Waiting to greet *Tornado* was the museum's own new-build, the replica locomotive *Planet* and, after the royal party has disembarked onto the platform of the world's oldest existing railway station *Tornado* moved up into position at the demonstration platform where it was admired for over an hour.

Following the Royal couple's departure Steve Davies, the out going director of

The Royal Train by Graham Nicholas

MoSI and newly appointed head of the National Railway Museum, presented Mark Allatt with a painting of the station to commemorate *Tornado's* first visit.

Rob Morland



HRH Prince Charles meets the crew and AI Trust Operations Director Graeme Bunker.

Rob Morland



Mark Allatt presents HRH Prince Charles with a photograph of the naming ceremony.

David Elliott



MOSI Director Steve Davies presents Mark Allatt with a painting of Liverpool Road station.

Reattached to the Royal Train, *Tornado* was then able to take it easy as the train, now hauled by the CI.67 locomotive at the other end, made its way back to Preston, via the more conventional route through Bolton and Chorley, before berthing at Preston's platform 6. *Tornado* herself detached from the train for mid-day servicing.

At 1514, *Tornado* headed out of Preston once again via Golborne Junction. The running was excellent as expected. This time though, on the approach to Manchester, *Tornado* skirted round the north side of the museum and made her way into Platform 3 at Manchester's Victoria station to await the return of the royal party, this time minus the Duchess.

At 1633, with His Royal Highness aboard, *Tornado* now faced her sternest test of the day – immediately out the east side of the station lies Miles Platting bank, a one mile long incline that starts at 1 in 59 and steepens to 1 in 47. In steam days, banking engines were routinely buffered up to the rear of all but the lightest departing trains. Technically speaking, *Tornado* did have recourse to a banking engine if required, with the CI.67 locomotive sat idling at the rear of the train. However, for driver Bob Hart this was a matter of honour and he skilfully judged the amount of power that could be applied without slipping and *Tornado* responded magnificently, striding sure-footedly up the hill and taking the right hand bend at the top away out towards Ashton Moss North Junction. After gently traversing the normally freight-only route across the south Manchester inner suburbs *Tornado* had time in hand at Heaton Norris before joining the Manchester-Crewe mainline.



**60163 Tornado meets
MOSI's 1830 Planet replica.**

With darkness falling, the route south became clear and the Royal Train crossed the Mersey Valley before entertaining the homeward-bound commuters with a spirited acceleration through Stockport station. Continuing through Cheadle Hulme, *Tornado* paused at Handforth. Here the Trust's representatives were presented to His Royal Highness and gave him a photographic montage of the naming ceremony. The prince enquired as to how the past year had been for *Tornado* and was delighted with the Trust's up-beat news.

However the primary reason for the stop was to allow the heir to the throne to make his way to the footplate for his now customary footplate ride! With Graeme Bunker as his guide the prince was shown what an AI Can do and *Tornado* treated him to a rasping acceleration in

the best traditions of East Coast pacifics, sweeping imperiously through Wilmslow and Alderley Edge and onwards across the open expanses of the Cheshire Plain running at her maximum of 75mph.

A final stop at Sandbach allowed the Principal to return to the train then the operational plan allowed one final flourish as *Tornado* strutted proudly through the centre roads at Crewe, before being hauled back into Platform 12 (direct access not being possible from the Manchester lines).

And with that, *Tornado's* royal duty was done and she quietly detached from the train to prepare for the light engine jog south to Bescot yard and the start of her second season of main line operations.

Space does not allow everyone who helped make this day possible to be named but you know who you are and the Trust is most grateful for your hard work. **TCC**

Storm Warning in Leicestershire

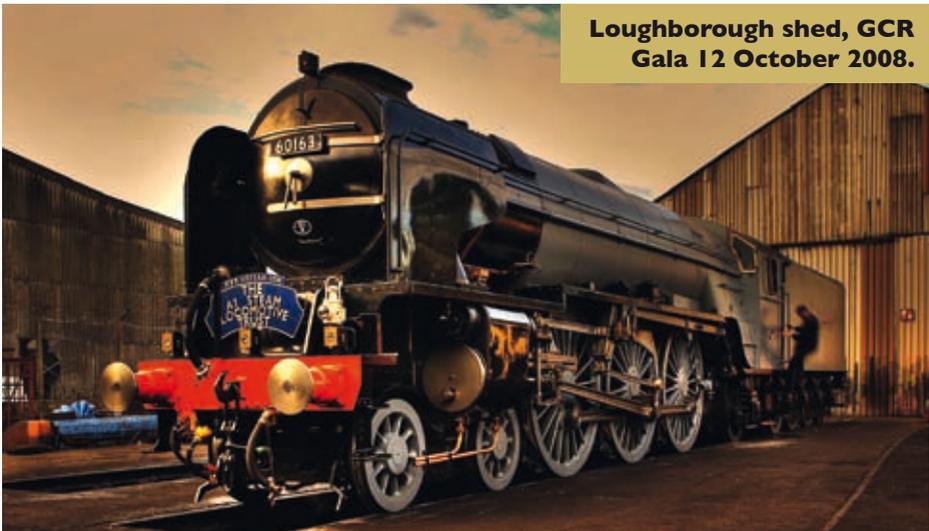
Following our hugely successful visit in 2008, during which time *Tornado* undertook her first test runs and wowed the crowds at the October steam gala, the details of the locomotive's much anticipated return to the Great Central Railway have now been confirmed. *Tornado* is due to arrive at the railway on 17 March and I am delighted to announce that the first people who will be able to ride behind the locomotive are our Covenantors. A letter has already been sent out with details of the special dining train that has been organised for the evening of Friday 19 March. Tickets, which are only available to Covenantors and their guests, are priced at £45 each and can be purchased by ringing the Great Central booking office on 01509 230726.

But that's not all! The following day,

Saturday 20 March, Covenantors will be entitled to a discount on Great Central Railway entry tickets. The price for Covenantors will be £5 for adults and £3 for children on production of a Covenantor's card. It is anticipated that *Tornado* will be part of an all steam weekend with LMS Jubilee Leander also in action.

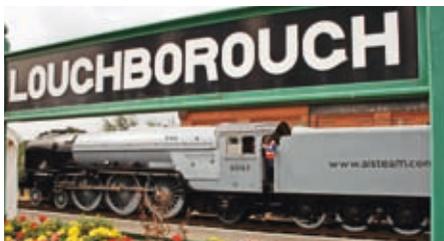
26 to 28 March sees the Great Central Railway celebrating with a four day 1960s gala weekend when *Tornado* will join other visitors to the railway such as BR Standard 4 number 80072 and Black 5 number 44767. *Tornado* will be in steam throughout the weekend.

The Easter weekend kicks off with *Tornado* hauling a VIP dining train on 2 April. Starting at 6.30pm at Loughborough with a champagne and canapés reception



Loughborough shed, GCR
Gala 12 October 2008.

Andy Graves



Above: Tornado passes through Loughborough Central Station during the transfer from Quorn at the GCR. 20 August 2008.
Below: Tornado at Quorn, GCR, 21 September 2008.



and entertainment provided by a jazz band, *Tornado* will depart at 7.30pm for a 7-course dining extravaganza. During the evening Mark Allatt will host a Q&A session about *Tornado*. A very limited number of tickets for this event were still available at the time *Top Link* went to press. Due to the unprecedented demand for tickets on *Tornado* dining trains a further dining date has been added on the evening of 21 March. Please call the booking office on 01509 632315 or 01509 632311 for further information or to book tickets on either of these trains.

Tornado will be in operation throughout the Easter weekend from 2 to 5 April.

During *Tornado's* visit, there will also be opportunities to drive and fire the locomotive. There are two Driver

Tornado at Woodthorpe, 28 September 2008.



Experience packages: "Silver" which costs £750 - although Covenantors are entitled to a £50 discount on this price - and "Emerald" which costs £450.

- **SILVER:** Drive *Tornado* for a full line return (16 miles) with carriages. Then ride another return trip on the footplate (32 miles in total).
- **EMERALD:** Drive *Tornado* light engine for a single eight mile trip along the line. Ride on the footplate in the other direction. Slots available on Friday 2 April only.

If you would like further information on driver experience packages, please contact me at alexa.stott@a1steam.com or the Great Central Railway and ask for Steven Saunders in the booking office on 01509 230726. **TCC**

Tornado Returns to the North East

Special Covenantors Event



Locomotion

Tornado is making a much anticipated return to the North East of England on 24 April, fresh from a first northbound tour over Shap just three days earlier. Having hauled 'The Tyne-Tees



BR Standard Class 7 70013 Oliver Cromwell stands resplendent outside Locomotion. 60163 Tornado will visit in April and May.

Tornado' tour from York to Newcastle and back to Darlington via the Durham coast, the locomotive is due to arrive at Locomotion, the National Railway Museum's sister museum at Shildon, on the evening of 24 April. Those familiar with the area will know that Shildon is only a few miles from *Tornado's* birthplace in Darlington; indeed visitors coming to Locomotion by rail will pass through North Road station, immediately adjacent to Darlington Locomotive Works, where the Trust's latest project – the overhaul and renovation of its own support coach – has just started.

In what is now becoming a tradition in *Tornado's* operating calendar, I am delighted to announce that this year's "Covenantors Spring Day Out" will take place at Locomotion on Sunday 25 April. All Covenantors are invited to come to see *Tornado* at Locomotion and ride behind the locomotive throughout the day. Although the museum will be open to members of the public, only Covenantors, their families and guests will be able to ride behind *Tornado* on production of a Covenantor's card.

Entry to Locomotion, which will be open from 10.00am to 5.00pm, is free and there will be many other things to see and do at the museum. For those wanting to make a day of it there are picnic areas and a cafe and plenty of car parking for those not coming by rail. Most importantly, the Trust's merchandising team will be on hand to sell you those official *Tornado* products you don't already own!

Tornado will remain at Locomotion until 6 May and will take part in the museum's May Day Bank Holiday weekend "North Eastern Giants of Steam" event on 1, 2 and

Locomotion



**Fletcher NER Class '901' 2-4-0
No. 910 at Locomotion.**

3 May alongside V2 Green Arrow, currently resident at the museum, and several other LNER locomotives. Other events planned during *Tornado's* stay include: - David Elliott, the Trust's Director of Engineering, will be giving a lecture in the museum on Wednesday 28 April, starting at 7.00pm. Tickets are £5 each and can be purchased by ringing Locomotion on 01388 771439.

- There will be an "Early Bird" photo shoot on Sunday 2 May. Tickets priced at £5 can be purchased by ringing Locomotion on 01388 771439.
- In conjunction with *The Northern Echo* newspaper, "An Evening with *Tornado*", an exclusive ticket-only event, is planned. *The Northern Echo* will also be producing a commemorative booklet to celebrate *Tornado's* return to the North East, which will be published during the Bank Holiday weekend.
- There will be opportunities throughout *Tornado's* stay to visit the footplate.

This promises to be a very special week in *Tornado's* 2010 calendar and we hope that as many Covenantors as possible will be able to join us at Locomotion to celebrate *Tornado's* return to the North East. **TCC**

Although it's rather late in the day, I thought I'd start by thanking all of our volunteers, Covenantors and other donors and sponsors for their support during our inaugural year of main line operations: a year that started with the amazing line-side scenes from 'The Peppercorn Pioneer' and 'The Talisman' and concluded with our head-line grabbing rescue of stranded commuters in Kent with 'The Cathedrals Express' on 21 December. During last year *Tornado* crossed the length and breadth of Britain and I'm very pleased to say that the substantial crowds that greeted us in the early part of the year were still to be seen in December.

As you can read elsewhere in *Top Link* the last few weeks have seen David Elliott and his team pull out all of the stops to complete the winter maintenance of *Tornado* in preparation for her annual exam – which she passed with flying colours. Again, thank you all for your hard work and to the National Railway Museum for its hospitality. Those of you who visited York during January were treated to a rare sight of two ex-LNER pacifics in the workshop; reminiscent of the Crimsal erecting shop in 'the Plant' for those of you old enough to remember it!

One of the reasons why the pace of work was rather more rapid than initially anticipated was our very special duty on Thursday 4 February – taking TRH The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall from Preston to Manchester and then on to Crewe on the Royal Train. You can also read more about this extraordinary day elsewhere in this edition of *Top Link*.

Financially, thanks to your continued

generosity and hard work, the Trust continues to reduce the amount of debt owed and a full update of our progress will appear in the next edition of *TCC*. However, we still need to service the bond issue to ensure the locomotive's long term operations and then there is the matter of our own fully equipped and certified support coach (see articles elsewhere) and the costs of future overhauls.

I'm writing this column on an East Coast train back to London from York having just represented the Trust at the Heritage Railway Association's AGM at the National Railway Museum. I recently had the great honour of receiving from Lord Faulkner the HRA's prestigious Peter Manisty Award, given to the Trust, "in recognition of its unique accomplishment in raising the profile of the British railway heritage movement to the general public and throughout the world with the steam locomotive *Tornado*".

We are therefore keener than ever to encourage as many supporters as possible to join us by becoming a Covenantor, making a donation and/or taking out a dedicated donation to sponsor a part of the locomotive (there are still many components left to support even though almost all of them are already on the locomotive!). We are still seeing growth in numbers of covenantors coming on board, so if you know anyone who wants to become part of *Tornado* please encourage them to join us. Details on all of these can be found in the 'how you can help' section of our website (www.a1steam.com).

Gill Lord and her team have already started this season's merchandising

operation following last year's successful trading. There will be several new lines for sale on-board our trains, at heritage railway's during visits and, of course on-line at www.a1steam.com!

Finally, on pages 14/15 you will find *Tornado's* operational schedule, with visits to the Mid-Hants Railway, the Great Central Railway, Locomotion and the Bluebell Railway now booked in addition to our main line tours. The Trust is organising *Tornado's* first north-bound trip over Shap with 'The Border Raider' on Wednesday 21 April. The tour departs from London Euston and picks up at several stations on the route to enable as many people as possible to join us for the day. *Tornado* joins 'The Border Raider' at Crewe and will haul the train along the West Coast Main Line direct to Carlisle. The return tour will head over the famous Settle and Carlisle line to Hellifield where *Tornado* will be detached and the train returns to London via Crewe. Prices for 'The Border Raider' are: Standard Class £89.00, First Class (non dining) £129.00 and Premier Dining £189.00. Booking is via the Trust's agent, Steam Dreams (Web: www.steamdreams.com; Tel: 01483 209888; Email: info@steamdreams.co.uk). Our 2010 Spring Day out is at Locomotion: the National Railway Museum at Shildon on Sunday 25 April, see enclosed form for more details. Please put these dates in your diary and help us to fill these trains. We will inform you of details of future events and milestones as soon as we can but please keep an eye on our website for the latest information.

I look forward to seeing you with the big apple green machine soon. **TCC**

Where to travel

Here are the confirmed future operations for *Tornado*. More details of the 2010 programme will be published as trains are finalised. Please go to www.a1steam.com for up-to-date information:

- **Fri 19 March - Mon 5 April** – Great Central Railway Gala
- **Wed 14 April** - 'The Cumbrian Coast *Tornado*' (Crewe to Carlisle and return) - promoted by HF Railtours
- **Wed 21 April** - '**The Border Raider**' (**London Euston to Carlisle and return – *Tornado* from Crewe to Hellifield), *Tornado's* first northbound trip over Shap and then over the Settle & Carlisle line - promoted by AISLT, bookings though Steam Dreams**
- **Sat 24 April** - 'The Tyne-Tees *Tornado*' - Gloucester - Newcastle-upon-Tyne - Gloucester (*Tornado* York - Newcastle-upon-Tyne - Durham coast route via Sunderland and Hartlepool - Darlington) - promoted by Pathfinder Tours
- **Sun 25 April** - Wed 5 May - Locomotion: National Railway Museum at Shildon. Private event on Sun 25 April; special event Sat 1 to Mon 3 May; *Tornado* will be on exhibition at other times.
- **Sat 8 May** – 'The Cathedrals Express' (London Kings Cross to York and return) - promoted by Steam Dreams
- **Sat 15 May** - 'The Canterbury *Tornado*' - London Victoria to Canterbury and return - promoted by Pathfinder Tours
- **Sat 22 May** - 'The Cathedrals Express' (London Euston to Chester and return) - promoted by Steam Dreams
- **Fri 28 May** - 'The Great Eastern Explorer' - London Liverpool Street to Norwich and return - promoted by Amethyst Experience Ltd.
- **Sat 29 May** - 'The Bath & Bristol Explorer' - *Tornado* heads west from Kent to Bath and Bristol - promoted by Amethyst Experience Ltd.
- **Mon 31 May** - 'The Canterbury *Tornado*' - London Victoria to Canterbury and return - promoted by Pathfinder Tours
- **Thu 3 June** – 'The Cathedrals Express' (London Kings Cross to York and return) - promoted by Steam Dreams
- **Sat 12 June** - 'The Canterbury *Tornado*' - London Victoria to Canterbury and return - promoted by Pathfinder Tours
- **Wed 16 June** - 'The Purbeck *Tornado*' (London Waterloo to Swanage and return) - promoted by UK Railtours
- **Sun 20 June** - 'The Cathedral Express' Father's Day Luncheon and Dinner – promoted by Steam Dreams
- **Sat 26 June** - 'The Bristolian' - (Bristol to London Paddington and return) - promoted by Torbay Express Ltd.
- **Sun 4 July** - 'Torbay Express' - (Bristol to Kingswear and return) - promoted by Torbay Express Ltd.
- **Sat 10 July** - West Midlands (*Tornado* from Bristol) to Carmarthen and return - promoted by Pathfinder Tours
- **Sun 11 July** - 'Torbay Express' - (Bristol to Kingswear and return) - promoted by Torbay Express Ltd.
- **Mon 12 July - Fri 16 July** - *Tornado* visits the West Somerset Railway
- **Sat 17 July** - Bristol to Salisbury and Eastleigh and return - promoted by Ranger Trains
- **Sun 18 July** - 'Torbay Express' - (Bristol to Kingswear and return) - promoted by Torbay Express Ltd.

- **Sun 25 July** - 'Torbay Express' - (Bristol to Kingswear and return) - promoted by Torbay Express Ltd.
- **Mon 26 July** - 'The Midland Tornado' - London Victoria (*Tornado* from Gloucester) to Leicester and return via Midland Main Line - promoted by UK Railtours
- **Thu 29 July - Tue 10 August** - Bluebell Railway 50th Anniversary Celebrations
- **Sat 14 August** - 'The Cathedrals Express' (London King's Cross to York and return) - promoted by Steam Dreams
- **Sat 21 August** - Hampshire (*Tornado* from Bristol) to Plymouth and return - promoted by Pathfinder Tours
- **Sun 22 August** - 'Torbay Express' - (Bristol to Kingswear and return) - promoted by Torbay Express Ltd.
- **Sat 28 August** - 'The Bristolian' - (Bristol to London, Paddington and return) - promoted by Torbay Express Ltd.
- **Mon 30 August** - Bristol to Camarthen and return - promoted by Pathfinder Tours
- **Sat 11 to Sun 12 September** - Bristol to Falmouth and return - promoted by Pathfinder Tours
- **Mon 13 September - Fri 17 September** - *Tornado* visits the West Somerset Railway
- **Sun 19 September** - 'Torbay Express' - (Bristol to Kingswear and return) - promoted by Torbay Express Ltd.
- **Sat 25 September** - Hampshire (60163 *Tornado* and 6024 *King Edward I* from Bristol) to Plymouth and return - promoted by Pathfinder Tours
- **Sun 26 September** - 'Torbay Express' - (Bristol to Kingswear and return) - promoted by Torbay Express Ltd.

The following tour operators are running the trains listed opposite

Steam Dreams

www.steamdreams.com

tel: 01483 209888

email: info@steamdreams.co.uk

Torbay Express Ltd

www.torbayexpress.co.uk tel: 01453 834477

email: contact@torbayexpress.co.uk

Pathfinder Tours

www.pathfindertours.co.uk tel: 01453 835414

email: office@pathfinder.co.uk

HF Railtours

www.hf-railtours.co.uk

bookings through Pathfinder Tours

UK Railtours

www.ukrailtours.com tel: 01438 715050

West Somerset Railway

www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk

tel: 01643 704996

email: info@west-somerset-railway.co.uk

Amethyst Experience Ltd

www.amethyst-experience.com

tel: 01702 200048

email: info@amethyst-experience.com

Great Central Railway

www.gcrailway.co.uk tel: 01509 230726

Bluebell Railway

www.bluebell-railway.co.uk tel: 01825 720800

Locomotion: National Railway Museum at Shildon

www.locomotion.uk.com tel: 01388 777999

email: info@locomotion.uk.com



Heading for Swansea on St. David's Day, 60163 *Tornado* powers past



Geoff Griffiths

Ruscombe with Steam Dream's Cathedrals Express. | March 2010.

Nowadays we are used to machines which operate for long periods with minimal or no maintenance. By contrast steam locomotives using so much Victorian technology require constant attention to lubrication and frequent maintenance. *Tornado* has a maintenance plan structured in the same way as modern traction comprising daily inspection, an A exam roughly monthly, a B exam every 6 months and a C exam annually. Each higher exam includes the work required for the lower level exams so the C exam includes A and B exams.

In addition to the scheduled exam work and the repairs arising, we have been accumulating some modifications and repairs which require the locomotive out of traffic. We are lucky in having a design of locomotive which was highly developed and incorporated a number of features designed to reduce maintenance and improve reliability. We have also been fortunate in being allowed to carry out the winter maintenance at the National Railway Museum at York which has excellent facilities including a wheel drop and has the virtue of being WARM. Rod Lytton and the other workshop staff have been great, lending us tools where necessary and generally going out of their way to make us welcome.

PREPARATION

The locomotive arrived at York on 22 December and was drained. Between Christmas and the New Year, notwithstanding the bad weather, Peter Neesam carried out a boiler washout and with some assistance steam cleaned the underframe. As a result the engine is significantly lighter! Such was the

impression made on us by the power of the high pressure hot water cleaner, we now own a similar reconditioned machine which will allow us to clean the underside of the loco regularly.

THE C EXAM

The major elements of the C exam include: **Piston and valve exam**

This involves removing the piston and valve chest covers, removing the valve spindles, removing the gudgeon pins that link the connecting rods to the crossheads and pushing the pistons out of the front of the cylinders for inspection.

The valves and valve rings were generally in good condition, however measurements indicated that the left hand front had moved forward slightly which accounts for the slightly off beat sound that the engine has been producing for the last few months. At 15% cut off the chimney was producing 5 even beats and a quiet 6th beat. The movement of the liner would cause this as the effect is to produce a much shorter cut-off on the front of the LH cylinder.

As the liner was still tight, it would suggest that the engine has been subject to loss of lubrication or hydraulic lock due to water carry over. Initially we considered pressing the liner back in to its original position, however as this would run the risk of breaking it (it is made of cast iron which is brittle), the geometry was restored by inserting a washer equal in thickness to the movement of the valve liner behind the valve piston.

The piston inspection revealed that the rings were worn and showed evidence of scoring of the lower part of the bores by the piston. This is common and is likely to



The maintenance team takes a short break from their work on 18 January.



Refitting coupling rods using sky hooks and chain blocks.

be caused either by lack of lubrication or ash being drawn back down the blastpipe when the engine is coasting or being towed at speed. An anti-vacuum valve is fitted to prevent this by allowing fresh air into the superheater and main steam pipes when the engine is coasting, however it is not likely to be totally effective when being dragged tender first at speed which is common event with empty stock movements. The problem can be alleviated by running with the regulator slightly open to keep fresh steam in the cylinders.

All the piston rings were replaced and the bores hand polished to remove the worst score marks.



Paul and Pete set bogie back on rails in wheel.

Connecting and coupling rod bearings

All the coupling and coupling rods were removed to allow inspection of the rod bearings. The white metal in the two middle coupling rod bearings had small cracks, so both were re-metalled by the Great Central Railway.

The inside small end bearing bush was found to be loose so a new one was made short notice.

The wear on rod bearings has been small, the worst wear being on the two rear coupling rod bearings which tend to suffer from flying sand when the sanders are used. However even these should do

another 17,000 miles before they need attention.

All the oil pads which regulate the flow of oil into the bearings were renewed as they tend to become choked with small particles of white metal which ultimately leads to oil starvation and bearing failure.

Other C exam items include engine/tender coupling inspection, AWS/TPWS and OTMR system tests, speedo calibration check and re-weighing the locomotive to set the axle weights correctly.

MODIFICATIONS AND REPAIRS

Bogie

Ever since *Tornado* first moved, it has been observed that when traversing tight curves

on uneven track in yards, the backs of the bogie tyres rub on the bogie frame. This was caused by “cumulative metrication”. Original AIs had bogie frame plates 1 1/8” thick for which the nearest metric equivalent is 30mm which is 0.056” thicker. Over the horn cut-outs (where the axleboxes pass through the frames) are welded on doubler plates which were originally 3/8” thick for which we substituted 10mm plate. This is 0.019” thicker. Thus overall the frames were 0.075” (almost 2mm) thicker on each side than the originals. The fix was send the frames to have 0.075” skimmed off each doubler plate. The opportunity was also taken to weld in spring guides to keep the axlebox coil springs central on their spring bolts.

David Elliott



60163 *Tornado*, minus her front bogie, receives attention at the NRM. January 2010.

Steam valves and fittings

Almost all the steam valves on the locomotive have had their valve seats re-cut and lapped in and their spindle packings renewed. Both clack valves were re-ground and the safety valves lapped in.

Exhaust injector output control

When the injectors were fitted, it was decided to use the tender water valves to control the water flow in the injectors instead of the water valves fitted to the injectors. Up until now, we have set the output to maximum and left it there. It has been felt for some time that it would be advantageous to have this under the control of the fireman, so we have fitted a drive mechanism made up of shafts and small universal couplings and

David Elliott



The piston and valve chest covers were removed for the C Exam.

passing through a tube set into the brake equipment cubicle under the fireman's seat.

Cab roof panel

There is a removable panel in the front centre of the cab roof to give access to the steam manifold on the top of the firebox. This was held on by nuts and bolts, however with the fitment of gauze over the ventilators in the removable panel, it is extremely difficult to get to the nuts to stop them turning, so new captive nuts were made and welded into place. This enables the panel to be removed entirely from the outside.

Ash pan wash down valve

As part of the preparation of *Tornado* for a trip, the ash pan is emptied and to get the ash out of inaccessible corners, a hose is used. Often we are stabled away from a stand pipe to connect the hose to, so a 1" water valve has been fitted to the front of the tender tank just above the floor in the cab. Provided the tender is fairly full, there is sufficient head to provide a good flow through the hose.

Inside slide bar lubricator

After the incident of overheated white metal on the inside slide bar during the first loaded test run in November 2008, an additional oil box was fitted onto the middle side bars. However access to this is poor and to ease access we have to move the oil box onto the inside upper edge of the loco frame, enabling to be filled from the running plate.

Firehole mask

When the boiler was built, to save time and cost, we used the German style

rectangular fire hole. To make it look and behave like an LNER oval fire hole with half flap door, an oval mask plate was designed and manufactured to fit. With the constant licking of flames round the fire hole, the lower part of the mask plate had burned away, so some repair profiles were obtained, the burnt metal cut out and new material welded into the mask plate.

Bogie top centre

The bogie top centre casting (which fits between the locomotive frames and carries the pintle which engages in the bogie) is cast in the form of a matrix of ribs on a base plate which form pools for water, oil, etc and make working on the inside valve gear uncomfortable. To cure this we have fitted steel cover plates sealed in place with silicone sealant to prevent them filling up.

ELECTRICS

The electrical team has been working hard during January completing a number of new installations and carrying out the C Exam.

Steam Atomiser indicator

Running the locomotive without the atomiser reduces the lubrication to cylinders and valves and could cause serious damage. We have fitted a pressure switch to the atomiser steam pipe and provided two LED indicators in the cab - red for steam off, blue for steam on.

Coal space lights

Two new armoured bulkhead light fittings have been provided to aid safe coaling and bringing forward coal at night.

Cab control panels

Having received feedback from crews on our two electrical Control Panels in the cab we have committed the labels to silk screens and produced final panel fronts. These were fitted in a delicate process that involved a halfway point with a rather worrying nest of unsupported wires and switches. There was a nervous moment when we re-applied power but everything has gone back in place and works perfectly. We hope the new panels are easier to read and quicker for crews to find their way around.

External frame lighting

Another job on the original list was installation of LED strip lighting outside the frames to illuminate the wheels and motion. The outside frame lighting will be a great help to cleaning and lubrication in poor light. Nearly 12 metres (40 feet) of LED lights have been set into custom-made brass channels attached to the underside of the running plate. They provide excellent light and will be a great help when there isn't much natural light available.

Headlamps

Finally we were able to commission two more of our well-known LED headlamps. This gives us two day and two night-time lamps. The additional lamps can be used on the rear of the tender if required, but will normally be kept safely in the support coach as spares.

We have also successfully completed the electrical C Exam, with no significant faults found and just a few signs of water getting into conduits to be attended to. The TPWS and OTMR system, passed all tests. The inspection showed up a few loose



The impressive external frame LED lighting designed by Rob Morland.

fixings and a split flexible conduit, which will be replaced when the locomotive is next stopped close to the team.

ENGINEERING ACCEPTANCE CERTIFICATE RENEWAL

The culmination of all this work has been the renewal of the engineering acceptance (EA) certificate. This is issued for a maximum of one year and analogous to an MOT certificate on a car (but much more expensive).

Tornado was subject to a cold exam on Tuesday 5 January and a boiler cold exam on Wednesday 13 January. Both inspections were satisfactory. On Thursday 28 January hot inspections of the loco were performed as were the AWS/TPWS and OTMR systems checks. Once again

the outcome was satisfactory enabling the new EA certificate to be issued at 14.00 on Friday 29 January.

With the re-metalling of rod bearings and the first job being a Royal Train, it was felt prudent to have a test run so on Saturday 30 January a York – Castleford – Leeds – Micklefield – York run was undertaken. *Tornado* performed well with all bearings cool and the exhaust beat back to what it should be. It is lovely to see us back on YouTube!

Space does not allow everyone who has contributed to be named but please be assured of thanks due to the many volunteers who came forward to clean, help the fitting staff and man the balcony to explain what was going on to the Museum visitors. **TCC**

Tornado's new support coach

A support coach and crew are an essential part of the long distance operation of steam locomotives on the main line. Since main line steam operation ended in 1968, much if not all of the static infrastructure to support steam locomotive operation no longer exists, requiring the use of support coaches and crews to travel with the locomotive. The support crew supplements the three man professional train crew consisting of the driver, fireman and Traction Inspector, who are employed by the train operating company, in our case DB Schenker, formerly English, Welsh & Scottish Railways.

Our support crew are volunteers, giving their free time as holidays from work, if they are not retired and our paid staff. They will often travel long distances before carrying out their duties on *Tornado*. Our

support crew will usually number around a half dozen people, and often includes a mixture of professional railwaymen, or experienced volunteers to ensure that *Tornado* is well prepared and turned out to the highest standards.

A typical commitment is seventy-five hours for twelve hours of actual train running, although commitments of up to seven days are not unknown. Support crew members must have a Personal Track Safety (PTS) certificate, before being allowed to be a full part of a support crew.

Support coaches are usually drawn from passenger brake coaches of the BR Mark 1 era, taking advantage of the guards/parcels van space for ease of conversion to workshop/stores/mess functions. The seating portion of the coach will often be of the compartment with side corridor

Extraction for asbestos removal.



David Elliott



The corridor connection is removed.

layout. One part of the van area contains a storage and workshop area, another serves as the mess room, while the passenger area provides seating and/or sleeping accommodation. The support coach will invariably be positioned immediately behind the locomotive.

The spares compartment carries equipment and spare parts that might be required should the locomotive develop a problem. In addition to the traditional steam locomotive spares and consumables, spares are also required for the electrical equipment required for operation on the modern railway, such as radios, event recorders and signalling / train protection equipment.

Storage is also required for the miscellaneous items required for train operation, such as bulk amounts of sand



Corrosion is a big problem on BR Mk 1s.



Corrosion under the luggage compartment.

(for wheel traction), water hoses, train lamps and headboards.

The mess includes a cooker and washroom, and will carry all food and drink supplies required for the entire trip, as work schedules and locations usually preclude sourcing supplies during operation. The coach also carries all the water required for cooking, washing, cleaning and the toilet.

Tornado's new support coach will carry a number of changes from the existing coach. Given the high volume of work undertaken by the locomotive the support coach project will deliver a coach which;

- Is fit for purpose with minimum maintenance for ten years
- Provides good quality accommodation to the support crew
- Is self sufficient even when remote from

David Elliott



David Anderson drills out corridor connection.

mains electricity or the locomotive and in unusual locations

- Has a bespoke storage area for our merchandising supplies to support this important part of the Trust's activities

So you can see that under the preservation banner support coaches have steadily improved, and it is planned that by the Autumn of 2010 *Tornado* will have a support coach designed to ensure the successful running of the locomotive for many years.

The support coach currently being used is normally to be seen with Thompson B1 61264. As this historic locomotive is due to return to traffic after overhaul later this year, the Trust has to have a replacement in place.

In 2008 Mark I Brake Corridor Composite (BCK) 21249 was moved to Darlington Locomotive works from Ruddington on the GCR (N). The vehicle is a Swindon 1961 built, five compartment composite brake with three second class and two first class compartments,



The corridor connection.

David Elliott

How YOU can help give *Tornado* her own support coach

The overhaul and conversion of E21249 to *Tornado's* support coach is budgeted at under £100,000. Following the success of our dedicated donation scheme for the construction of *Tornado*, the Trustees have decided to follow a similar route for *Tornado's* support coach. But instead of “an AI for the price of a pint” we’ve decided to raise the “bread” in a different way: “Use Your Loaf”:

- The coach is 63ft 6in in length – 762 inches – or 1524 ‘slices’ at ½ inch each.
- Each ‘slice’ can be sponsored for £50; £100 for a ‘doorstep’; £1,000 for ‘half a loaf’; and £2,000 for a ‘loaf’;
- If all are sponsored, it would raise £76,200; if we assume 80% of the donations come with Gift Aid, this rises to over £93,000

And, as with the dedicated donation scheme, “Use Your loaf” comes with benefits for those generous enough to take part:

- A certificate recording the details of the sponsorship and a copy of a drawing of the coach noting which slice(s) have been sponsored
- Name inscribed on the official Role of Honour carried on the coach which will detail the slice(s) sponsored
- Entry into draw for main line footplate ride on *Tornado*
- Exclusive opportunity to order Bachmann model of E21249 (a perfect companion to the new model of *Tornado*) with appropriate one of 1524 certificates produced for sponsors. The model is expected to cost about £25.

It really is that simple. With your help – and ‘slices’ *Tornado* could be running with her own dedicated support coach in September. The team in Darlington has already started work – please “Use Your Loaf” and complete the enclosed form today.

Thank you.

two toilet compartments, a guard’s compartment and a caged luggage area.

The coach was part of the SLOA set from 1981, sold to Pullman Rail in 1984 and then to the Lavender Line c. 1989. Frank Nicholas bought it in November 2001 and moved it to the Telford Railway. Subsequently it was moved to the GCR(N) at Rushcliffe in July 2002. It was then moved to Ruddington for extensive works and rebuilt using parts from another BCK. From here it was moved upon sale to our works and stripping ready for a main line refurbishment has begun

The coach was initially purchased by

Barry and Linda Wilson who have now, most generously, donated it to the Trust for use as *Tornado's* support coach. The Trustees would like to register their deep gratitude to Barry and Linda for their kind donation on top of all of Barry’s hard work and Linda’s support for almost the entire duration of the AI Project.

The Trustees have decided that the coach’s overhaul will take place at our works in Darlington, with only selected specialist components being dealt with externally. They also decided that the coach will be painted in Crimson and Cream and carry the running number E21249. **tcc**

So ran the title of an article I wrote in *The Pioneer* (our in-house journal of the time) issue 7 in Spring 1992. In it I tried to forecast what *Tornado* would look like when it started running. I wrote that it could operate in all four liveries, as is now planned, and as a product of its time would look authentic hauling a rake of Inter City, NSE coaches or “whatever the mainline railway of the future brands them.” I mentioned it could haul Mk 1s in red and cream, crimson and cream (I’ll refer to both as ‘red & cream’) or maroon liveries. It could pull LNER coaches of Gresley and Thompson design or mix them with Mk 1s. It would look “majestic” hauling Pullmans. So after 60163’s first year in service let’s see how correct these forecasts were.

One thing not envisaged then was that 60163 would run for four months in works grey and not only at the works at Darlington but also on a heritage line and the national network. We didn’t foresee the AI Trust’s web address on the tender but

then most had only probably just heard of this vague thing called ‘the internet’ then. We didn’t expect ‘national express’ on the tender on its final, storming test run up to Newcastle as they only ran long distance road coaches then.

It was expected that *Tornado* would visit heritage lines though probably not four in its first year. So hauling Mk 1s and maybe Gresley/Thompson teaks was predicted. However, the range of colours in one train wasn’t. We’ve had combinations of red & cream, maroon, Southern green, and chocolate and cream in trains. For example, on its first test on the Great Central its 11 Mk 1s were 5 green, 2 red & cream and 4 maroon - plus a green “Peak” diesel on the end. On the Covenantors Day it hauled 3 red & creams plus 4 green coaches but a surprise was the rebuilt LNER observation car in maroon with BR crest on its end. Last May on the NYMR 60163 was seen with 5 and 7 coach uniform rakes of maroon Mk 1s. On the West Somerset Railway it pulled a rake of 9 chocolate

David Elliott



60163 Tornado on the GCR with the Covenanator's special. 21 September 2008.



Left: Former ECML franchise holder National Express sponsored the final mainline test run. Right: 60163 Tornado stole the show on the GCR's Thomas weekend. 25 August 2008.



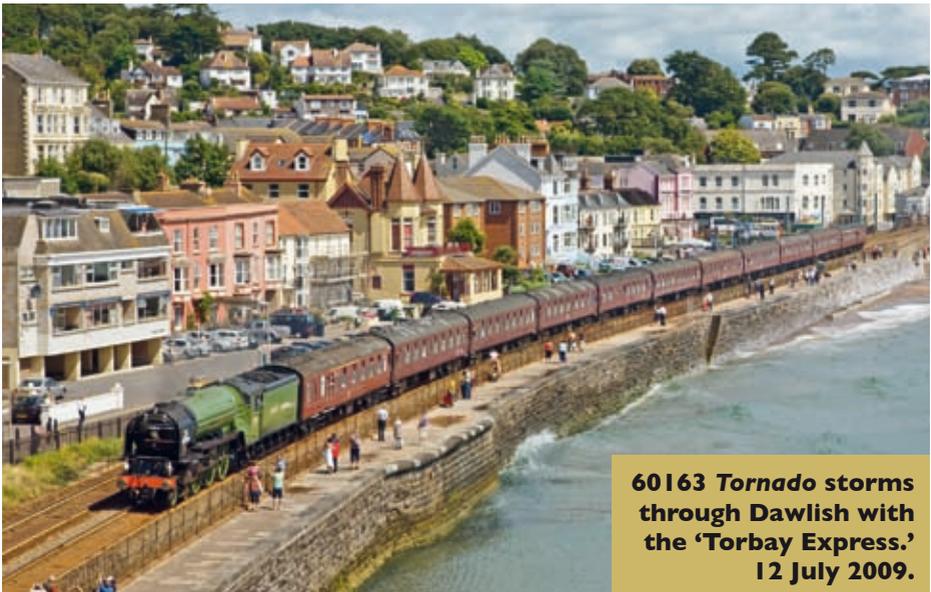
Trains of thought by Phil Champion

and cream coaches - but I don't know if we would have thought it would reach WR territory so early in its career. An AI hauling teaks was certainly looked forward to for years and we saw that not just on the NYMR but also the Severn Valley though a pair of Mk 1s, maroon at the NYMR and red & Cream at the SVR, was added at both to cope with passenger numbers.

On the national network (it was all BR in 1992) some sights we envisaged and some we didn't. The maroon support coach nearly always in tow was expected. However, seeing it coupled to a rake of Virgin-liveried later Mk 2s, with their red bodysides, white lining and black body ends, flying past through Durham on its final test was not. The variety of liveries in most main line trains has been noticeable. On 'The Peppercorn Pioneer' we travelled in a mix of maroon support

coach, blue & cream carriage, one red & cream (I believe both of these were Mk 2As), 3 maroons then 7 more red & cream Mk 1s. The *Top Gear* train had a more uniform sight with 9 red & creams behind the support coach. Sometimes though a Mk 2 has been included in the rake on a mainline run.

We got the first Pullman train (how many new build locos manage this in less than a year?) so *Tornado* was well-matched to its 10 Pullmans with matching Mk 1s at each end in similar colours. They were the traditional 1920s/30s Pullmans as envisaged. We did not expect it to haul the Royal Train though with its claret carriages. The idea of interesting a high profile personality had been formed early on but who could have expected that HRH Prince Charles would name it and for the AI to have his plume of feathers headboard.?!



Edward J Dyer

I did write that *Tornado* might well haul a goods train on a heritage line's gala days. So it hauled a 'Windcutter' of LNER type brake van, 16 restored mineral wagons and LMR brake van on the Great Central. I don't think though we expected it to show a *Thomas* face like it did soon after arrival at the GCR! But I didn't expect to see it hauling a mail train at their October gala either.

Diesel locos for 'insurance' against breakdown or where run-rounds are impractical are not unknown. The sight of a Class 37 at the NYMR was not unusual. However, Class 67s at the other end on the national network would not have been in anyone's crystal ball as they were not built until the late 1990s. We might have expected a 47 instead.

I concluded that "there are many different views possible... the fells of the Settle and Carlisle... or a wooded valley."

Well, we have seen it going up river valleys such as up the bank to Goathland, across the moors on the east and west sides of North Yorkshire, in sight of the sea at Dawlish or both sides of the Bristol Channel, through the countryside of the south, East Anglia and the Midlands, along the East Coast Main Line, over viaducts like Ribbleshead, across structures like the Tyne and Royal Border Bridges, and passing in sight of a number of cathedrals like York, Durham, Gloucester and Salisbury. I suppose we expected it to be a big draw but probably never expected the crowds of people we would see as *Tornado* sped past.

So some of our sights of *Tornado's* trains were as expected; some were not. What will we see it hauling, and where, over its next few years? So wide has been its range and so varied its trains that little would surprise me now! **TCC**



Ian McDonald

60163 Tornado was a hugely popular visitor to the West Somerset Railway in June 2009.

So, you have just completed a hard day at the office, the Christmas shopping has still to be done and the weather is awful. You rush to the station thinking 'I'll try for the early train', except when you finally battle your way onto the concourse you find London Victoria wedged with humanity, and you know that it is not going to happen. More to the point, 'when will I get home' becomes your uppermost thought.

The departures board tells you with words such as 'cancelled' and 'delayed' that the commute home is going to be a long, exasperating and unpleasant experience. But is it? Did you notice that different looking train slip into the station, the one with the funny looking coaches with doors which do not slide, but open outwards - and the people heading for that train have smiles, not grimaces on their faces. Men with overalls and blackened faces wander around looking important, and so they are, because unbeknown to you they are your ticket home.

A man with a jaunty gait and strange black rims around his eyes wanders over; "anyone for Swanley or Maidstone East?" he enquires. 'Yes, I'm for Maidstone East' you hear yourself say, stealing yourself for the 'tough luck, mate' response you expect. Instead, the man says, "do you want to come with us, we have some spare seats which you are welcome to use", pointing towards that funny looking train that by now is issuing strange puffing type sounds from the front and seems to be leaking an awful lot of what looks like steam. 'Hah!' you think, 'the heating systems already knackered judging by all that steam', but, it has to be better than just standing here wishing ill on the departure board. So you



step forward to follow the man, and find you are now one of a throng who are heading for this train.

And you climb aboard. It is warm. 'Funny that', you muse, 'didn't expect heat'. You look round, no plastic. Where plastic should be in your scheme of things there is wood, and instead of looking at a seat back you face your fellow sufferers, sorry



60163 Tornado awaits departure from Victoria Station on the cold night of 21 December 2009.

commuters, across a table. and the seats, instead of being like sitting on a piece of cloth covered wood, are really comfy and the cushion moulds itself around you and you begin to relax.

With the Southeastern rail system grinding to a halt because of the snow that is falling, you are grateful for somewhere warm and comfy to spend the evening,

when suddenly, with a jerk, the coach lurches forward. This surprises you - a train moving. You peer out of the window, and sure enough you are on the move, and at a steady pace too. Out of the station, the train maintains good progress as it climbs towards Grosvenor Bridge, in so doing overtaking a packed commuter train on the parallel tracks, whose passengers look

over at you with in a mixture of incredulity and envy.

And onwards you go, passing through many increasingly more snow-bound stations that were beacons of light in a black evening. You notice passengers huddled in corners against the developing snowstorm, and also men with cameras. 'What goes on here', you wonder, as a wisp of steam drifts past your window. 'The heating', you think, 'must be on its last legs, hope it doesn't peg out before Maidstone.

It is then that you realise there is something missing - trains! Since Victoria you haven't seen one. The snow is getting deeper, you haven't seen another train, and here you are in some weird coach on a train where the heating is going to pack up any moment allegedly taking you home. At this point you realise that you maybe have read too much science fiction, that you have not been hijacked into a parallel world and that the coffee actually tastes like coffee.

And all the time men in oversized luminous orange coloured safety clothing keep wandering about talking about water stops and coal consumption. The heat inside the coach is making you drowsy, and you actually drop off for a short while, being wakened by the cry for all Swanley passengers to make their way forward to leave the train. For a second, panic, 'where am I'; then reality returns, and you remember you are on this strange train going home.

Soon, it is your turn to move forward as Maidstone East is approaching. Further up the train the carriages become even quainter, with tables laid for a silver service meal. You notice the bottles of wine. The occupants are happy, enquiring did you

enjoy your ride home behind *Tornado*? 'Tornado, what are they talking about' you think, as you ease through the coach. 'It's only snow, not a tornado' you mutter under your breath.

Then suddenly the cold hits you. The platform is covered in snow and it's very cold. You become aware of some hiatus at the end of the platform, and curiosity takes over. Gradually through the drifting steam and falling snow you notice the word 'British Railways' and a strange ethereal orange glow. The sound of someone shovelling furiously, followed by the 'whish' of the shovels contents being delivered to the appropriate place. A man in overalls and blackened face leans out of a cab window; you recognise him, he was on the platform at Victoria. Then you see a number, 60163, and a bit further along a plate, on which is written in cast letters *Tornado*. Then the penny drops. So what if Santa's sleigh on that night looked a bit more like a Peppercorn A1 Pacific? Who cares, you are nearly home, and this is Commuter Heaven! Delivered by steam!

Fact, not fiction: on 21 December, Steam Dreams' operated two steam-hauled specials featuring No. 60163 *Tornado* on a circular route in the South East. The first was a luncheon train, and the later dining train also celebrated Steam Dreams' 10th anniversary as a railtour operator. Adverse weather in the South East had disrupted transport in the region all day, but the luncheon train ran without a hitch, and to time. The evening train was booked into Victoria just after 17.30, in the midst of the rush hour; only on 21 December the rush hour was going nowhere fast because the weather was closing in causing widespread disruption. But *Tornado* was

going somewhere and for the benefit of around 150 commuters for Swanley and Maidstone who were invited aboard, as well as the booked passengers for the tour, 21st century steam succeeded where the modern day railway failed. Indeed, when the commuters were leaving the train many did not realise that they had indeed been hauled by steam. It proved to be a media triumph for both Steam Dreams and The AI Locomotive Trust, as the story was widely reported both locally and nationally.

From an operating viewpoint, the fact that a 13-coach steam-hauled special can get in and out of Victoria at rush hour with the minimum of fuss is a tribute to all involved. Given the chaos that evening, and that it gave a clean pair of heels to every other train in the area speaks volumes (except for the sluggish EMU that caused *Tornado's* 20-minute late return to London Victoria). In many ways it typifies a Steam Dreams' operation; the company has been operating throughout its first 10 years in one the harshest environments for charter trains, London and the South East. The aim is not to be seen, allowing its trains to pass through the busy commuter belts leading to and from the Capital without hindering anyone or anything. This policy has worked, and as a consequence the company is well respected within the railway community for professionalism and enterprise.

This train was also special as Steam Dreams was celebrating 10 years of running the 'The Cathedrals Expresses', the brainchild of founder Marcus Robertson. He guided the business through difficult times, always confident of the product. Reflecting over the past 10 years, we asked him four questions; his best and

worst moment, what he would have done differently and greatest regret. His best moment was the poignancy of the Bryan Dudley Ward Memorial Train. Bryan Dudley Ward was a most respected footplate inspector with EWS, whose untimely death was universally acknowledged by the industry, and Marcus remembers the moment the train slowed for Bryan's ashes to be placed into the firebox of BR Standard Class 5 No. 73096, which was hauling the special working.

Marcus describes his worst moment was also a footplate experience, when a steam pipe burst on Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35005 *Canadian Pacific* while working 'The Cathedrals Express'. Fortunately the train had been halted due to the reporting of an oil discharge from the locomotive, as had the incident happened while the locomotive was in motion, the consequences would have been potentially far more serious. As the then head of the Strategic Rail Authority, Richard Bowker was also on the footplate at the same time, the consequences were potentially dire. Best move, he adds with enthusiasm, was bringing in Graeme Bunker as Managing Director, while the thing best done differently was being far more businesslike from the onset. Comments typical of Marcus, whose commitment, enterprise and willingness to listen has created a fine company offering a very good product, which is proven time and time again by well loaded trains. Well done Marcus and Graham, happy anniversary Steam Dreams, and here's to the next 10 years. **TCC**

This article originally appeared in Issue 207 of Railway Herald (11 January 2010) and is reproduced by kind permission of the Editor.

The AI Steam Locomotive Trust is pleased to display the logos of organisations giving us their ongoing support. Their contribution is gratefully acknowledged.



PRINCIPAL SPONSOR

