

PRESS INFORMATION - PRESS INFORMATION - PRESS INFORMATION

9 July 1993

PROJECT BUILDING NEW MAINLINE EXPRESS STEAM LOCOMOTIVE SIGNS
PARTNERSHIP WITH DONCASTER COUNCIL

- Locomotive will be built in Doncaster -
- A1 Steam Locomotive Trust Limited awarded Charitable Status -

The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust, which is building the new ex-LNER Class A1 Pacific 60163, today signed a Partnership Agreement with Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council.

At a press conference held today (Friday 9 July 1993) at The Mansion House, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust Limited and Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council agreed that:

the locomotive would be built in its spiritual home of Doncaster or its environs and they would both use their best endeavours to ensure the successful completion of the Project

they would encourage the Project to promote long term job creation, economic regeneration and tourism within the Council's administrative area

they would seek and encourage the involvement in the Project of persons who have skills in the construction of steam locomotives

the Council would assist the Trust in obtaining grants towards the completion of the Project and the Trust would actively publicise the involvement of the Council.

Commenting on the signing of the Partnership Agreement, Councillor John R Quinn, Mayor of Doncaster, said:

“The Partnership Agreement is a meeting of minds and hearts. Of minds, because the Council is impressed with the business-like approach to this exciting and innovative concept - the building of completely new steam engines. And of hearts, because we felt strongly that the Industrial Heritage of this great Railway Town must be conserved.

“Heritage is much more than just artifacts, it is the specialist skills that have been acquired over generations, a communal pride in doing the job to perfection, it is the soul of Doncaster.”

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26 of the 49 original Class A1 Pacific locomotives were built in Doncaster, with the remaining 23 built in Darlington. They were designed by Arthur H Peppercorn, the Chief Mechanical Engineer of the London and North Eastern Railway (LNER) but were not built until 1948/9, after the nationalisation of the railways. The A1s were the last of the East Coast Mainline's series of thoroughbred express passenger steam locomotives - a tradition which included the Stirling

Singles, the Ivatt Atlantics and the Gresley Pacifics. Examples of all of these Doncaster built locomotives have been saved for preservation, except the Peppercorn A1s which were scrapped, following dieselisation of the railways, in the 1960s with the last, 60145 Saint Mungo, going in 1966.

David Champion, Project Manager of the A1 Project added:

“Doncaster is a very special place for railway enthusiasts - it is where many great steam locomotives, including Flying Scotsman and Mallard, were built and maintained. The signing of this agreement with Doncaster Council means that the next Peppercorn A1 - and whatever we build after it - will be built in the great railway town of Doncaster, where the first members of its class were built in 1948/9.”

“60163 will not be a replica, but the 50th Class A1 locomotive, and it and the locomotives that follow from Doncaster over the coming years will help to generate new jobs and interest in this area. It is these new steam locomotives that will safeguard the future of nostalgic steam railtours and provide the motivepower for the nation's preserved steam railways as existing preserved steam locomotives become too delicate to be used on a regular basis.”

Councillor Quinn continued:

“The Partnership between the Council and the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust will help regenerate the town by providing a means of skills retention, job creation and promotion of Doncaster's place in the tourist industry. This scheme will assure Doncaster's position as a mecca for all those who are thrilled by the thoroughbreds of the world of steam.”

At the press conference Peter Kelly, the Editor of Railway Magazine, who is on a John O'Groats to Lands End bike ride to raise awareness of and funds for the Project, delivered the Partnership Agreement and messages of support from interested organisations including the National Railway Museum. He was riding a 1906 bicycle and dressed in period costume. Nigel Harris, Editor of Steam Railway magazine, addressed the press conference on the importance of new steam locomotives to the railway movement.

The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust was also pleased to be able to announce that as of 21 June 1993 it had been awarded charitable status by the Charity Commissioners. This gives the Trust several significant financial advantages.

The press conference was followed by an Official Reception where the Project's Technical Team demonstrated how they are using the latest Computer Aided Design (CAD) technology to produce a modern mainline steam locomotive in the 1990s.