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WORK STARTS ON NEW STEAM LOCOMOTIVE: A1 Project gets helping hand from British Steel

The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust, the registered charity which is building the new ex-LNER Class A1 Pacific 60163, the first mainline steam locomotive to be built in Britain since 1960, today announced that British Steel has completed rolling the new locomotive's frame plates. These are the first major components of the new steam locomotive to be manufactured and they were rolled at British Steel's plate mill in Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire.

Although the Trust has paid for the rolling of the frame plates in full, British Steel has made a substantial donation to the Trust which, combined with a recent donation from the readers of Steam Railway and Steam World magazines, has covered their cost.

David Champion, Chairman and Project Manager, A1 Steam Locomotive Trust, commented:

“After three years of preparation - assembling a management team, acquiring and scanning 1,100 drawings, putting in place a fund raising mechanism and so on - we are delighted to be able to announce the start of the building of the new class A1 60163. The frames of a locomotive are the parts upon which everything else is built, and so the importance of this announcement to the Trust cannot be understated.

“We are also very grateful for British Steel's support of the project and look forward to working with the company as construction of the locomotive progresses. The Trust can also confirm that it is on-track for completing the locomotive in 1998.”

Jim Jamieson, General Manager, plate sales and marketing for British Steel added:

“British Steel is delighted to be associated with such a splendid project as the one to build a brand new mainline steam locomotive in the 1990s. The finished locomotive will be a tribute both to the dedication and vision of the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust and the quality of the steel products of British Steel. We look forward to working with the Trust on this and other aspects of the locomotive's construction.”

David Champion concluded:

“The addition of British Steel to our growing list of sponsors, which already includes William Cook plc, Macreadys and Doncaster Council, is a major advance for the Trust. The completed locomotive will be a show-case for all that is best in British engineering. It will demonstrate that Britain still has a world-beating, hi-tech, engineering industry, yet one that still has within it those specialist skills many thought were long gone.

“With the rolling of the frame plates and the agreement to manufacture the driving wheels, no-one can now doubt that we really mean business. 1994 will see further major announcements as the construction of the locomotive gathers pace. We are now appealing to those who want to be a part of this exciting project to become covenantors, sponsors and volunteers to help us maintain this momentum.”