

BEWARE OF THE TRAINS.

News from
RailSchool
and the
Royal Docks
Heritage Railway

**RailSchool gathers pace
with first funding**

**Glorious news
at North Woolwich**

**Why E&I is more than
just a couple of words**

**Going under in Paris:
secrets of the Metro**

May 2007



● ● From the Editor

IT'S JUST OVER two months since we published our first *News from North Woolwich*, and we hope you like our new title *Beware of the Trains*.

A lot has happened since March: we have received our first grant from the Learning & Skills Council, and with their generous help have been able to make significant progress with key projects.

As seems inevitable with projects like this, some aspects of developing RDHR and RailSchool are taking longer than we had hoped, but the important thing is that we are moving forward.

One recent development was our acquisition of Class 50 diesel locomotive *Glorious* on indefinite loan from *Steam* – the museum of the Great Western Railway at Swindon – to whom we are very grateful. *Glorious* is much more than a classic diesel: this locomotive will be a vital tool for RailSchool, and should arrive later this year, when secure accommodation is ready for her at North Woolwich.

You can also read about an exciting event being planned for later this year in connection with the railway milestone of 14 November, when Eurostar moves out of Waterloo and starts to use St Pancras International as well as the completed High Speed Line to the Channel Tunnel.

We are now booking students from the railway industry for *RailSchool* courses later this year and into 2008. More than 60% of the places have already been allocated, which is probably faster progress than we could have reasonably expected. The reaction across the railway industry has been almost invariably supportive, although we also understand that what we are up to does take some explaining! But innovation is what we do, and we will have many more stories to tell in the next edition.

Until then, all good wishes – and thank you for reading *Beware of the Trains*. As always, we hope you enjoy the ride.

THE EDITOR

Beware of the Trains
is produced and published
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First grants for RailSchool and Museum

RailSchool has received a £50 000 Learning & Skills Council capacity building grant. The money will be used to fund RailSchool's Eastside Community Rail Recruitment Network. Meanwhile, the Railway Heritage Trust has pledged £40 000 in match-funding towards the refurbishment of the 1854 Grade 2 listed Museum building and integration with the 1970s building next door. The money will be used to support the Heritage Lottery Fund bid which is being developed. The pledge follows a site visit by Jim Cornell, RHT Director and former ScotRail General Manager. Mr Cornell's credentials in promoting youth recruitment are impeccable – when he was General Manager in Scotland he founded the railway youth opportunity programme which resulted in a then very young man called John Thompson joining the railway as a second man. Today that same John Thompson is our Traction Inspector. ■



Glorious to arrive at North Woolwich

A former British Rail diesel locomotive built in the late 1960s is coming to North Woolwich to join RailSchool – thanks to the generosity of the *Steam* Museum in Swindon, which has agreed to lend the Class 50 locomotive *Glorious* to us indefinitely. RailSchool Chairman Neil Howard said: 'I am very grateful for this gesture, which will mean that hundreds of RailSchool students will benefit from access to a working diesel locomotive over the next year or two. It really is an unparalleled piece of good fortune, and my sincere thanks go to *Steam's* curator Felicity Jones.' Felicity said she was delighted that *Glorious* is to be part of a project to help young people launch their careers in the railways: 'The new home will give this locomotive a new lease of life by allowing her to operate as a working locomotive and so bringing her back to her former glory. We wish RailSchool and all the project partners every success in this innovative and worthwhile venture.' ■



● RailSchool update

Course dates (subject to funding)

2007

3 September to 5 October: 5 week course *full time*

8 October to 9 November: 5 week course *full time*

3 September to 7 December: 13 week course *two days a week*

2008

from 7 January: 13 week course two days a week

from 3 March: 5 week course full time

from 16 June: 13 week course two days a week

from 21 July: 5 week course full time

from 6 October: 13 week course two days a week

Five week courses are for full time attendees, while the 13 week version involves attendance two days a week which allows the candidate to continue to receive benefits.

The educational content is the same in each case.

Curriculum

The course is designed to give candidates a taste of the total railway and choose the part they find exciting. It is sometimes overlooked or not understood that there are three railway industry branches: Infrastructure, Traction & Rolling stock and Operations. All require separate skills and inevitably appeal to different types of people. But the decision about which one to join has far-reaching consequences – few people can manage the change from one branch of the railway family to another once they are committed to a full-time job in the industry.

The curriculum has been developed in conjunction with the relevant professional bodies such as the Institution of Railway Operators, and the whole course provides foundation skills for appropriate National Vocational Qualifications. It is managed and run by fully accredited trainers.



● RailSchool update

It's your journey: the RailSchool course

Week 1 *Training and induction*

Monday Welcome, what is a railway; its importance to London; introduction to sponsoring employers; Equality and Inclusion in the modern railway community. Health and Safety. Depot awareness course; issue of uniform and PPE.

Tuesday Team-building exercises; learning styles assessment; time management; model railway operational problem solving.

Wednesday VISIT (from a selection: Temple Mills International, Stratford station/depot, Ilford, East Ham, Upminster, Fenchurch Street, Liverpool Street, New Cross Gate depot (from 2009) and others.

Thursday Basic First Aid; Phonetic alphabet.

Friday LUL Track Accustomed test.

Week 2 *Infrastructure*

Monday Introduction to Infrastructure; Personal Track Safety Part 1.

Tuesday PTS Part 2; Results and review.

Wednesday Track and Points. Maintenance, laying, track machines. Small plant.

Thursday Signals. Plant and Machinery; Level Crossings; Lifts + Escalators.

Friday Structures: visit to Connaught Tunnel on the Royal Docks Heritage Railway.

Week 3 *Traction and rolling stock*

Monday Introduction to Traction & Rolling Stock. Meet the train; how it works.

Tuesday Inspections and problem solving.

Wednesday Manuals and procedures.

Thursday Workshop experience (at Newham College).

Friday Fault tracing and resolution.

Week 4 *Operations*

Monday Introduction to Operations. Write invitations for Graduation Train.

Tuesday Timetables, not times-tables; train planning, time and distance. Signalling and control, route setting. Service recovery.

Wednesday Train despatch. Theory, then group exercise with a train in the platform.

Thursday Shunter – model railway, then Shunter – real railway. Coupling and uncoupling, reaching a clear understanding. Buckeyes; emergency couplings; coupling to loco, brake pipes (air); heat/light jumpers. Brake test (air); handpoints, handsignals.

Friday Driving. Starting, stopping, risks and threats. What is a SPAD? Tail lamps; securing train; train protection: track circuit clips, detonators, flags/lamps, 'Rule 55'.

Week 5 *Customer service*

Monday Introduction to Customer Service. Who are the customers? Why do they matter? Retailing: selling and checking tickets.

Tuesday Running a station. Cleaning. Fault reporting. Leaflets and posters. Information and making announcements.

Wednesday Disability awareness; emergency preparedness.

Thursday Rosters for Graduation day. Preparing the station and train for special run on Graduation Day.

Friday Graduation: run special train for friends and family.



- E&I: more than a
- couple of words

Railschool is developing a cutting edge Equality & Inclusion action plan that goes way beyond traditional corporate policy documents.

RailSchool Chairman Neil Howard explains why this aspect of RailSchool is so important.



Evening Standard

CONFESSION, THEY SAY, is good for the soul. When I was a senior manager in British Rail a decade and more ago, I was free to appoint black people to any job I chose – but only if that job involved wearing a uniform or pushing a broom.

The rail business I helped run employed 1500 people in suburban south London and had just one black junior manager. What London Mayoral adviser and erstwhile black activist Lee Jasper calls institutional racism had a pretty strong hold on our affairs.

No-one ever said anything negative about black people – senior railway officers were nothing if not chivalrous and no-one was in the National Front, but you just knew not to rock the boat – not if you wanted your career to continue upwards at any rate. So white men continued to promote white men (rarely women), in a self-fuelling circle of shame – only white men could be trusted because only white men knew anything or anyone, because only white men ever got promoted into good jobs where they could be groomed for the next precious promotion.

Having one solitary black manager meant we were failing everyone inside the company and outside too, but above all we were not reflecting the south London community we served, where 45% of the population was (and is) Black and Minority Ethnic – often referred to as BME. We wouldn't give them management jobs, although we took their taxes as operating subsidy willingly enough. >



● E&I: more than a couple of words

It wasn't right and it couldn't last, of course, and gradually women broke upwards through the glass ceiling that had kept them away from the levers of power. Now the BME population is starting to follow suit. Nowadays the incumbent franchise operator of my old patch – Southern Railway – has a much better story to tell about women in the workplace, and, uniquely among the twenty or so franchised passenger train companies in Great Britain, even has a black press spokesman to tell it.

But, our years of 'white rule' have left a dreadful legacy. The customer face of rail looks more like the community it serves than it used to, but board rooms don't.

In engineering, a huge reservoir of railway talent and experience is vested in a senior management cohort that is almost exclusively white and male. RailSchool is committed to playing a proactive part in creating a level playing field for anyone with talent to join the industry and thrive in it. With financial support from the Learning & Skills Council we are creating a rail recruitment network that reaches deep into eastside London communities that have been excluded, by accident as much as by design, from traditional railway management recruitment.

We are developing a graduate programme that will see black faces in traditional white strongholds such as signal design. In partnership with Newham Education Business Partnership we will promote aspiration for a railway career in young BME people from fourteen years and upwards who would never have even considered the railway as an employer. We don't have all the answers – but we are trying hard to work out what the questions are.

At the last railway industry Grand Poobahs' lunch I attended, there were three black faces in a room of 500 railway people. There is still a big job to be done if we are to have a fair 21st century railway. ■



- Further away: a chance
- to go under in Paris

As well as our predilection for running heritage lines in improbable parts of east London we sometimes like to spread our wings a bit further afield.

We have a particular passion for unusual and stylish rail trips, and have one this year that we particularly commend to you. We hope you will join us on board.



REGULAR READERS will know that we are pretty passionate about studying foreign railway best practice and having fun while we are doing it. Our annual foreign adventure in 2007 is to Paris, for a really unusual trip on the Paris Metro.

Why Paris? Well, soon Eurostar will be moving on to our patch, with a very smart new depot at Temple Mills – a site with an impeccable Great Eastern pedigree. They are good friends of the North Woolwich project and we hope to be providing them with engineering apprentices at Temple Mills from our students.

But there's more: on 13-14 November Eurostar undertakes a stunning logistics exercise. Waterloo International, its London home since 1994, will close after the departure of the last Paris train. The next morning the whole service will start using the breathtaking new terminal at St Pancras, and the high speed line through Stratford.

We are developing a trip with Eurostar and Paris Metro to travel on an evening train from Waterloo, spend the night touring the Paris Metro by 1930s Sprague stock, and return to London next morning on one of the first trains over the new line. Sprague stock, the Parisien Routemaster in design icon terms, is so achingly nostalgic and romantic that it should really run in black and white. We will visit the disused and secret never-opened stations of the Paris Metro on a five hour tour, which includes a glass of champagne and musical entertainment on the old platforms.

As always, deadlines for *Beware of the Trains* are before we have finished the detail with Eurostar. But places are limited, so if you would like to register for further details, please send an email with **PARIS** in the header to project@railschool.org. ■



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