

# WHEELTAPPER

AUTUMN 2005

## AUTUMN TOUR—GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY



### GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

The autumn tour of the Guild of Railway Ringers will be held on the Great Central Railway and will provide the opportunity to ring at towers along the route between Loughborough and Leicester. **The autumn tour will take place on Saturday 24th September.**

The itinerary for the day is as follows:

- 10:30—11:00 Ring at Loughborough bell foundry - 10 bells - 6-2-13 (SK541198)
- 11:30—11:47 Train from Loughborough Central to Rothley (GCR)
- 11:47—13:15 Lunch (own arrangements) - Royal Oak is suggested!
- 13:15—14:00 Ring at Rothley, SMV—6 bells—11-2-19 (SK586126)
- 14:33—14:42 Train from Rothley to Leicester North (GCR)
- 15:30—16:15 Ring at Belgrave, St.Peter—8 bells—14-0-23 (SK593072)
- 17:40—18:05 Train from Leicester North to Loughborough Central (GCR)

An alternative route following Belgrave is to catch a bus from Belgrave village into Leicester city centre. Buses are frequent and drop near to Leicester station on the Midland Main Line. Services from Leicester are operated by Midland Main Line (London—Sheffield, Derby and Nottingham) and also by Central Trains (cross country between East Anglia, Peterborough, Birmingham, Worcester and South Wales).

Loughborough Midland station is also on the Midland Main Line and is also served by Midland Main Line and Central services.

For information on train times to Loughborough and Leicester Midland stations try the following websites:

[www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk)

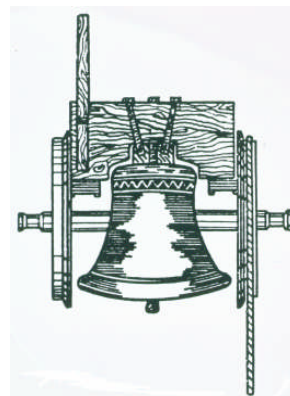
[www.centraltrains.co.uk](http://www.centraltrains.co.uk)

[www.midlandmainline.com](http://www.midlandmainline.com)

Or call National Rail Enquiries on 08457 484950

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Full autumn tour details contained in this issue;
- A full report on the Nottingham tramway AGM this issue;
- Some thoughts on possible future Guild activities
- Details of future events;
- Membership information.



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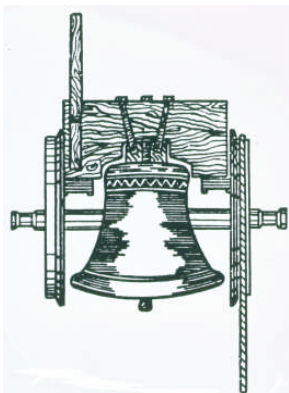
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## AUTUMN TOUR—GREAT CENTRAL

In 1893, the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway received the Royal Assent for the construction of the new mainline from Annesley, 12 miles north of Nottingham, to London Marylebone. It's incredible that the newly opened Channel Tunnel comes almost 100 years after Edward Watkin's original vision of connecting England with the continent, ironically, 28 years after the demise of his remarkable Great Central Railway. Just think if the whole line survived today passengers could be making the journey from Loughborough Central all the way to Paris.

The line opened for coal traffic in July 1898. The following March, the Great Central Railway ran its first passenger train from Marylebone Station, and soon lived up to its slogan, 'Rapid Travel in Luxury'. However, the motor car began to have a serious effect on the railways in the 1950's and long stretches of the line were closed in 1966.

### The bell foundry



In 1969, a group of enthusiasts decided to recreate for future generations the magic and nostalgia of the great British age of steam. From small beginnings, the Great Central Railway is now one of the region's top tourist attractions, providing an unforgettable day out for all the family. Visitors can step back in time and enjoy the charm of steam travel as it once was. Loughborough Central Station is typical of the 1960's. Quorn & Woodhouse Station recreates the 1940's. And Rothley Station captures the Edwardian period.

The Great Central Railway now boasts over 20 steam locomotives and an extensive selection of rolling stock, passenger carriages, wagons, first class dining cars and kitchen/buffet vehicles. In fact, being a mainline railway means that the largest, heaviest and most impressive of British steam locomotives can be operated. In addition to the home-based fleet, famous guest locomotives visit the line on a regular basis. Double track is being re-laid from Rothley to Loughborough Central to allow the passing of trains and the re-creation of true main line operation.

### The Great Central



All in all, the Great Central Railway offers you a feast of unique experiences. Travel through the beautiful Leicestershire countryside passing over picturesque Swithland Reservoir. Steam through the night. Savour the atmosphere of days gone by at any of the restored stations. Visit the museum at Loughborough. See the working signal boxes from which train movements are controlled. Marvel at the magnificence of the steam locomotives. What's more, the Great Central Railway was the first preserved railway to offer a regular dining service and has gained a superb reputation for the excellence of its culinary standards and service.

2001 marked the silver Jubilee of the formation of the Company.

Ambitious plans are afoot to connect the recently reopened Nottingham Heritage Centre at Ruddington to Loughborough Central, the present start of the line.



With 9 more miles of track in the pipeline, visitors to the Great Central will, one day, be making a 17 mile steam train journey between Nottingham and Leicester.

Fares are as follows:

Adult day ticket £12.00

Child & Senior day tickets £8.00

Family tickets are also available

Further details from their website [www.gcrailway.co.uk](http://www.gcrailway.co.uk)



## A.J. PITMAN—A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Despite the request in the last issue of *Wheeltapper*, I've not had any contact from members about the railway life of A.J. Pitman. I'm sure someone out there must have some information on him that I can pass onto Mike Davies for his research project on Pitman's life.

If any of you have any recollection of Pitman, have any ringing or work records that mention him or include him, or if any of you have old photographs of historical Railway Guild weekend tours, let me know and I can pass the information onto Mike.

Thanks, **Tony Manktelow**.

## NOTTINGHAM TRAMWAY TOUR

The 2005 AGM took place in the Nottingham area and was based on the excellent tramway system now installed in the city. The first tower was at Hucknall, at the northern end of the tram system.

Following ringing, the AGM was held in the church coffee shop area.

The usual business was conducted and Chris Bassett was re-elected as Chair, Tony Manktelow as Secretary.

With the AGM business complete, the schedule allowed for lunch in the Weatherspoons pub, conveniently situated half way between church and station!

The tram was then taken to Basford for ringing and then, back north again, to Bullwell where we rang immediately after a wedding.

Members then departed for home either north via Hucknall and the Robin Hood line or south to Nottingham for main line connections.

Despite horrendous organisation issues (this has got to be the most troublesome tour I've ever tried to put together—and it only comprised three towers!!!), the bells throughout the day were very pleasant, the weather was grand and, all in all, we had a good, well attended meeting.



A Nottingham tram stands at Station Street terminus in Nottingham city centre on the day of our tour



Members enjoy the sun whilst waiting for the tram at Basford station. Here, the tramway runs parallel to the Robin Hood line



Also, see the group photo on the back page!



**Hucknall**



**Basford**



**Bullwell**

## 2005 SUBSCRIPTIONS

2005 subscriptions are now due and a white form is attached to this newsletter if you have still not paid.

If subs for 2004 are still due from you, you will also find a red 2004 form attached to this newsletter.

Subs can be sent in the post to the Secretary.

For those of you who just receive the newsletter with no subs forms attached, the good news is that you are fully paid up for 2005 already and you don't owe anything until next year!

As you are aware, subs have been at £5.00 for adults and £2.50 for juniors / OAPs for some years now and it was agreed at the AGM that they will continue at this rate for the next year at least. As normal, if you are paying by cheque, please make sure that cheques are made payable to

**“The Railway Industries Association of Church Bell Ringers”**

rather than the “Railway Guild” or “Guild of Railway Ringers” - It makes paying them into the account so much easier if made out correctly!

Thanks for your help!

**Tony Manktelow** - Secretary

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## SOME FUTURE EVENT IDEAS

Ken Baker highlighted at the AGM that 8th April 2006 marks a significant anniversary for I.K. Brunel, the famous Great Western Railway engineer. Ken is considering the possibility of organising some form of ringing to reflect the anniversary, which could be quarters or peals at Brunel specific locations. If the thought interests you and you would like to be involved, please either contact Ken direct or make your desire known to the Secretary, Tony Manktelow.

On a similar theme, although far, far, far more modern, Chris Hutchinson is cooking up ideas about how to mark the introduction of full tilting trains between London and Glasgow on the West Coast Main Line! His thoughts are much along the same lines as Ken's Brunel idea and could include ringing at various locations and possible incorporate a ride on the train as well! Initial thoughts are that it might happen in December, but Chris is keeping a close eye on Virgin's marketing team to see if they are going to do anything significant to mark the event. Again, if the idea interests you, please either contact Chris direct or make your desire known through the Secretary.

These are just two examples of extra activities that may be run in the name of the Guild. If you have any ideas or wish to organise something for the Guild, please let the Secretary know and it can be publicised in Wheeltapper!

You'll see from the Guild diary, that next year's events will take us across the country. The spring meeting is in Sheffield, the summer AGM will be held in Swindon and the autumn meeting will be held on the Mid Norfolk Railway following the suggestion from Rosemary Charles in the last Wheeltapper.

## RULES, RULES, RULES.

One interesting topic of debate at the AGM was the existence of the mythical Guild rules! The rules for an agenda item at the AGM every year and every year I report that no changes have been proposed! This ancient ritual was interrupted this year by some members asking after the rules and enquiring about their content and general state of well-being.

In my opinion, the rules are outdated and have not seen the light of day really since the formation of the Guild was triggered by railway privatisation and the demise of the British Railways Staff Association (BRSA).

The debate at the AGM left some inaugural members going off down memory lane, remembering initial meetings of the new Guild in the Rising Sun public house in Reading—we have come a long way!

So far, in fact, that it is probably time for the rules to be completely overhauled. With this in mind, I am going to distribute a set to each of you with the Winter Wheeltapper (in original 'multimate' format as a novelty!). Your task, should you choose to take it, is to propose some changes for consideration at the next AGM—I can hardly wait.,.....

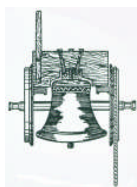
## THE GUILD OF RAILWAY RINGERS

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### NOTTINGHAM TRAMWAY TOUR—JULY 2005

Members gathered outside Hucknall church at the start  
of the AGM day

## GUILD DIARY—MAKE A RECORD OF THE DATES

### 24th September 2005:

Guild autumn tour to the Great Central Railway.

1st April 2006:

Guild spring tour on Sheffield Supertram.

1st July 2006:

2006 AGM at Swindon's STEAM museum.

16th September 2006:

Guild autumn meeting on the Mid Norfolk Railway.

Please note that other events can and may be held in addition to these dates. Please feel free to volunteer to arrange a tour!

Details should be sent to the Secretary for inclusion in Wheeltapper.

All Guild events are also advertised in The Ringing World.

**Tony Manktelow** - Secretary

### Guild poster

Please display your Guild poster (somewhere in your envelope!) on your belfry notice board or at your place of work

You can make additional copies of it if you wish to display it on more than 1 notice board.

Please promote the event to as many people as possible