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UXBRIDGE – Metropolitan Railway locomotive 12 Sarah Siddons helped to operate a railtour around various sections of the Metropolitan line on 7 May 1994. The special train had a class 20 locomotive on the other end and is seen shortly after arrival at Uxbridge.

Photo: Iain Frew

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SHINKANSEN
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● HOME NEWS

PRESTON - The entrance and ticket hallway, together with the ramp to the main platforms and associated bridges to the other platforms, were all closed to the public during spring and early summer while major modernisation work was undertaken. A side entrance was used instead with the luggage tunnel half way along the platforms giving access to all parts of the station.

CARNFORTH - Noted in passing on 23 May was a Volk's Railway car lying in the Steamtown Museum. Stock from the Volk's Railway has been overhauled at Carnforth during the past winter.

WEST MIDLANDS - Class 323 units are now being used on all local routes across the county and the Cross city line continues to suffer 304s, 308s, 310s and a motley selection of time and virtually life expired dmus. The attempt to run semifast locals to Coventry has been abandoned since InterCity trains give such a good service far beyond anything Centro could attempt. Locals now serve all stations. Following complaints from residents many Walsall trains again serve Duddeston restoring a useful link to the major shopping centre at Perry Barr. After much discussion and changes of plan, a new semifast service has been introduced between Rugby and Crewe calling at main stations only. (The previous meagre stopping service to Coventry continues.) These trains are worked by three car class 304, 310 or 323 emus and give excellent connections to the north and south. Within days a significant traffic had developed at Lichfield TV to/from the Cross City line. InterCity services continue to serve Lichfield and Tamworth during the morning and evening business peaks but have ceased to serve these stations midday.

Plans to improve greatly passenger access to New Street station, and to reconstruct

Proof House Junction just east of the station have been announced. This would enable larger numbers of trains and passengers to use the station at which rush hour crowding is now a problem. The Proof House changes would separate the Cross City line from the Euston main line. The cost will be about £4m and a source of finance is sought. In order to relieve the chronic stock shortage for local services, several class 308 units refurbished and repainted in the Leeds local livery for use on the Ilkley service in September, have been pressed into service on West Midlands local routes during July and August.

D-DAY - In connection with the D-Day Golden Jubilee Celebrations, the London to Bognor Regis service was diverted on 4 June to Portsmouth. Shuttles ran between Barnham and Bognor. Very heavy traffic was handled that day to Portsmouth where a large flotilla was drawn up to re-enact the invasion.

DIVERSION - The main line between Headcorn and Staplehurst was closed throughout the first two weeks of June to permit the reconstruction of a bridge. An hourly fast service to various Kent destinations was maintained via the alternative Maidstone route.

EDINBURGH - A cable fire in a signalling relay room at Haymarket during the night of 25/26 May put out of action the entire signalling system west of Waverley station. Most points have been locked in a through running position with the lead into the diesel depot, and the connection to the Carstairs/Shotts line operated by hand. Services through the area run at no more than 10mph, and all East Coast InterCity services booked to serve Glasgow have been cut back to Waverley. Repairs will take until autumn to complete.

LUL TAKEOVER - Within two weeks of the takeover by LUL, Network SouthEast

platform signs at Wimbledon Park, Southfields and East Putney had been replaced by standard London Underground signs. These stations became covered by LUL's *No Smoking* rules immediately following the takeover.

84001 - After a long period on uncertainty this pioneer 25kV West Coast loco has now been confirmed as part of the National Collection. Originally E3036, and built by North British Locomotive Company with General Electric equipment, it entered traffic in March 1960 and was withdrawn in January 1979, still in good condition, for possible preservation. This class of 10 locos suffered excessive drive arm wear so their active life was shorter than expected. The class 84 machines were used predominantly on Freightliner or other long distance freight workings, but 84001 was for a time a favourite on enthusiast specials.

PITSFORD - The 4DD coach stored at Pitsford and Brampton station on the Northampton and Lamport Railway has been seriously vandalised with every window broken, including the curved panes of the upper deck. It presents an especially sad sight and is unlikely now to have a long-term future.

LIVERPOOL - The new Regional Railways fairly fast service between Liverpool and Birmingham is not being worked by modern class 158 diesel railcars as once planned, but by class 310 emus reduced from four to three cars so as to improve the power:weight ratio, and hence the journey times. Although the 310s are now rather careworn and lack air-conditioning, they are more spacious than the 158s and have more capacity which seems to be needed judging from various trains noted during early June. A trolley refreshment service is operated on most workings.

CHANNEL TUNNEL - The first ordinary freight service to travel through the tunnel

ran on 1 June when a train carrying Rover cars ran from Longbridge, through the Tunnel, and then went forward to Italy. Rover hope to send several train loads of car to Europe each week. Freightliner/Container service through the tunnel started up on 13 June, and Wembley sidings, for ordinary freight trains, opened for business on 27 June. Good progress is now being made with setting in motion the freight side of the business though it will be a long time before the full potential is achieved. An International freight depot near Daventry was approved for construction on 24 June and this will take about two years to become fully operational.

EUROSTAR DELAY - Passenger services through the Channel Tunnel from London to Paris and Brussels have been delayed until the autumn at least. It is felt that track circuit and signal interference problems on the BR route from the Chunnel to London have not yet been resolved properly and that this must be achieved before the Eurostar sets can enter revenue service. In addition, the Eurostar sets are still not fully tested and there have been equipment failures on test runs. An unusual passenger traffic was, however, carried on 5 July when the entire Tour de France race was carried through the Tunnel on several special shuttle workings. Around 3,500 people and 1,500 vehicles were involved. Two stages of the race were held in England and the race organisers, ever even handed, used the ferry service from Portsmouth to take the entourage back to France.

GREENOCK - The 2245 from Wemyss Bay to Glasgow on 25 June became derailed while passing through the Greenock suburbs. The three car train struck a bridge structure killing the driver and one passenger. Vandalism was thought to be the cause of this disaster; the problem has been increasing in the Glasgow area lately and police action is being boosted.

GREENWICH – A station is to be provided at North Greenwich on the Jubilee line extension. British Gas which owns the land in the area, is to make a contribution to the costs and will recoup its investment when redevelopment occurs around the station.

MORE MAIN LINE ELECTRIFICATION? – Electrification of the York-Leeds link is likely to take place so that Leeds can benefit from through main line services from the north including Channel Tunnel services. This link forms part of the Trans-Pennine scheme which is again being examined.

WCML UPGRADE – It is hoped that the scheme to modernise the West Coast route will commence in mid-1995.

MANCHESTER – The class 323 implementation programme has made steady progress and the first unit entered revenue service on 4 July. Since then additional units have been passed for service and it was hoped to turn the airport stopping trains over to the new stock from 1 August.

TRANSPORT AND WORKS ACT – Three applications under this new planning procedural measure replacing the historic Private Bill procedure, are expected during the next few months. First will be LUL's application to extend the East London line past Shoreditch to Dalston. Next will be the application to build the Croxley Link enabling Metropolitan line LUL trains to run into Watford Junction station over the little used BR Croxley Green branch with the closure of the remotely situated existing Metropolitan station in Watford. Finally, the Crossrail Bill will be resubmitted under the new procedures facing a long period of examination and debate. The last scheme to receive its Bill under the old processes was the Croydon Tramlink scheme which completed all stages at the end of July.

NORTHAMPTON – Because of a shortage of serviceable class 321 emus, the 0740 from

Northampton and 1720 return service from Euston were operated by a class 86 loco hauling a rake of Mark I stock for several weeks in June and early July.

SHOREDITCH – Formal closure notices have appeared for this LUL station, but the wording used suggests that closure may, in fact, be linked to the creation of the planned extension of the East London line north to Dalston Junction. Closure is stated to be planned no sooner than 30 June 1995 and bus links are promised to either Whitechapel, or to a new station at Bishopsgate, 200 metres to the north. The complex plans to extend the ELR at both ends are at present being studied in detail by Government bodies.

ISLE OF WIGHT – The last of the pre-1938 stock on the island was scrapped during April. A total of 44 cars was taken to island and six seven car formations were made, each sub-dividable into four and three car sections. Apart from a few early casualties following collisions the stock remained intact until the 1980s with mass scrappings in 1989 and 1990. Four cars remained on the island and for a time there were ideas that they might be converted for de-icing or other engineering department duties. Later one car was considered for preservation by the Isle of Wight Steam Railway, but the car was asbestos laden so the preservation plan was abandoned. The four cars were cut up at Gwent Demolition's Sandown plant in mid-April. Five of the island cars do, in fact, survive and are in LUL ownership being considered for a vintage train.

● NEWS FROM EUROPE

FRANCE – The Post Office has purchased a TGV Sud Est train set and will re-equip it to carry mail. The Post Office already operate similar stock on the Paris-Lyon TGV route.

The route of the TGV Mediterranee which will complete a high speed route all the way from the Chunnel to the Mediterranean Sea was finally published on 2 June. The extension is 295km in length and starts at St Marcel-les-Valence where it leaves the Paris Sud Est line from Lyon, opened as recently as 28 June. It runs south to a point west of Avignon branching there with routes to Montpellier in the west and Marseille in the east. A three hour Paris-Marseille time will be possible when the line is completed. This route is further west than that planned originally and the change has been the result of protests from local communities. SNCF have agreed to buy properties up to 150 metres on either side of the new route. Stations will be at St Marcel, Avignon and a location near Aix not yet finalised. The formal opening of Lyon (Satolas) station took place on 28 June 1994.

GREECE – Work has begun on the boring of the city centre tunnel for line 2 of the Athens Metro. Work will start fairly soon on boring the tunnel for line 3 to create a network of Metro routes serving most areas of the city. Line 1 is the historic route from the port of Pireas in the south-west which runs to the city centre at Omonia Square before running on to Kifissia in the north-east. Line 2 will run from the north-west to the south-east (Sepolia to Daphi) but extensions from both terminals are planned (to Themistkleous and Ilioupoli). Line 3 will be more or less west to north-east (Keramikos to Pentagono with long extensions planned to Egaleo and Stavros respectively). The main sections of lines 2 and 3 will open in 1996 and 1998 respectively with the further extensions

coming early in the next century provided funding is confirmed.

SPAIN – Substantial plans have been unveiled to improve services in the north and south of the country. In Andalucia existing railways which connect with the high speed (AVE) route from Madrid to Cordoba and Seville are to be improved to allow 220km/hour operation. These are Seville to Huelva; Seville to Cadiz; Cordoba to Malaga, Fuengirola and Granada, Cordoba to Linares and the Jaen branch. A number of lines would be electrified including La Roda-Utrera, Linares to Granada and Almeria. New links might eventually be built along the coast between Cadiz and Algeciras, Malaga and Fuengirola, and America to Lorca (for Alicante). In the north a new route from Zuera, near Zaragoza, to Lourdes replacing the Canfranc branch and involving a 38km tunnel below the Pyrenees would create a short Paris-Madrid route (1380km). The present routes via Irun or Barcelona measure 1455km and 1824km respectively. The AVE line carried 317,911 passengers in March 1994 – a new record for a month and 11.6% up on March 1993.

NETHERLANDS – A strike by rail workers over a de-manning dispute halted virtually the entire rail network on 14 and 15 June.

AUSTRIA – The line from Bludenz up to Ludesch is now double-track; the line between Wörgl and Kundl is now triple-track.

ITALY – The Genova Metro is now operating from P. Principe, at the entrance to the port, up to Brin, with one intermediate stop.

SWEDEN – The Government has at last given approval for the construction of the part bridge, part tunnel link across the Øresund linking Malmö with Copenhagen in Denmark. The tendering process can

● NEWS FROM AMERICA

now get under way and the link may be in service by the year 2000. X2000 services, using short sets, were introduced between Göteborg and Kalmar and Karlskrona on 12 June 1994. X2000 services will link Stockholm and Malmö from early 1995 about a year sooner than expected. As part of the build up of X2000 services an additional 16 coaches are being ordered from ABB. A line to Arlanda airport north-west of Stockholm has received Government approval.

NORWAY – The 18km long section of the Oslo-Kristiansand main line between Skøyen and Asker is to be quadrupled with the new tracks used by expresses calling at main stations only. The original tracks will be used by the local service which has seen a marked rise in traffic in recent years.

AZERBAIJAN – An explosion on a Metro train between two city centre stations on 3 July killed six and injured three dozen passengers. A similar explosion in March killed 12 and injured 46 people.

BERLIN – Three short extensions to the U-Bahn are being built at present involving lines 1, 2 and 8. A further long extension from Rudow to Schönefeld airport will start soon. An additional six long and four short extensions are planned.

SWITZERLAND – The Bad Ragaz-Maienfeld line is now double-track except for the two bridges over the Rhine and the motorway immediately south of Bad Ragaz station. This means that the entire Zürich-Chur line will be double-track except for a short stretch along the Walen lake between Murg and Mühlehorn. Locos 641-4 have been delivered to the Rh B.

LOS ANGELES – Work commenced on the construction of the second section of the Blue Light Rail line at a site close to Union Station on 8 April. This will run over a new right-of-way for the first couple of kilometres from Union Station, much of it along a viaduct, through Chinatown before reaching the former Santa Fe RR right-of-way once used by Chicago expresses. This will be followed through South Pasadena to Pasadena itself (15.5km from Union Station) where the original Santa Fe station will be reopened to serve the light rail cars. Beyond Pasadena the route will travel east to Sierra Madre Villa Avenue (21.8km) and further extensions along the old track bed are being considered. There is no word as to when the missing link between the Long Beach and Pasadena segments might be joined by a part viaduct part tunnel link through the city centre, but the line is expected to open north-east to Pasadena by the end of 1996 with the Sierra Madre section following a years.

The Green line will open during the summer of 1995 using initially "spare" Blue line cars plus 15 LRVs whose delivery from Sumitomo began in May 1994. Eventually all of these cars will be used on the Blue line's northern section to Pasadena. Seventy-four Standard LRVs are being built by Siemens-Duewag for the Green line at their new factories in the Los Angeles area (with finishing work at Sacramento). It is hoped that these standard cars will find wide use of light railways across California. A possible branch from the Green line into Los Angeles International airport is now being planned with a people mover feeder or bus feeder as possible alternatives. Tunnel construction for the north-western extension of the Red Metro line continues. The soil excavated is carried away in wagons used earlier for similar duties in the Channel Tunnel. The eastward extension of the Red line has now been agreed extending first from Union Station