

# LIONSMEET

THE  
OCCASIONAL  
NEWSLETTER  
OF THE OLD  
LOCOMOTIVE  
COMMITTEE

SESQUICENTENARY YEAR; Issue No.3 LATE SUMMER 1988

## LIONSMEET AT WROUGHTON SUNDAY 11th. SEPTEMBER YOUR MODEL ALONGSIDE *LION*. CURRENT BOILER CERTIFICATE PLEASE

Everyone is now well aware that the traditional Open Day for the Science Museums Large Object Store at Wroughton, near Swindon, is the second Sunday in September every year.

1988 will be similar in many ways to 1984, the year that OLCO re-formed. Once again *LION* will be there as the old locomotive in steam, and once again there will be a portable 5" gauge track, together with accommodation for those with 3.5" and 7.25" gauge versions of *LION*.

This year of course, we anticipate many more model versions of *LION* than we had four years ago. Last year there was a record turnout at painting of eleven *LIONS* and one *TIGER*, a sister engine to *LION*, and this was by no means the full complement of miniature *LIONS* that we know to exist, or indeed, have competed at previous LIONSMEETS.

This year may be the very last time that it is possible, to have the miniature versions 'in-steam' alongside the prototype, also 'in-steam'.

Unfinished, as well as complete models for static exhibition, will be very welcome. Those members and non-members wishing to steam must have a current boiler certificate. *LION* herself has had hers renewed, notwithstanding a very disquieting moment when the Boiler Inspector expressed some reservations about

some of the firebox stays. Fortunately the Greater Manchester Museum of Science and Industry has a bolt making machine as a working exhibit. This made it possible to make and replace about a score of stays almost overnight. The sweat and real agony of actually doing the job cannot adequately be described in a single sentence. Neither is it possible to say "Thank You" adequately enough to those very dedicated members, and others, who worked so very hard in dirty and arduous conditions to ensure that *LION* would complete her steaming programme for this year.

Many members are conscious of the fact that the boiler tubes, so generously replaced by Rustons in 1979, will reach their 10th. birthday next year. Ten years is the mystical 'sell by' or 'best before' date that applies to boiler tubes. A very full review of the entire boiler condition is automatically scheduled for 1989. The outcome of this, together with a review of 'cash needed' being matchable to 'cash available', will determine the sort of steaming programme that it will be possible to undertake.

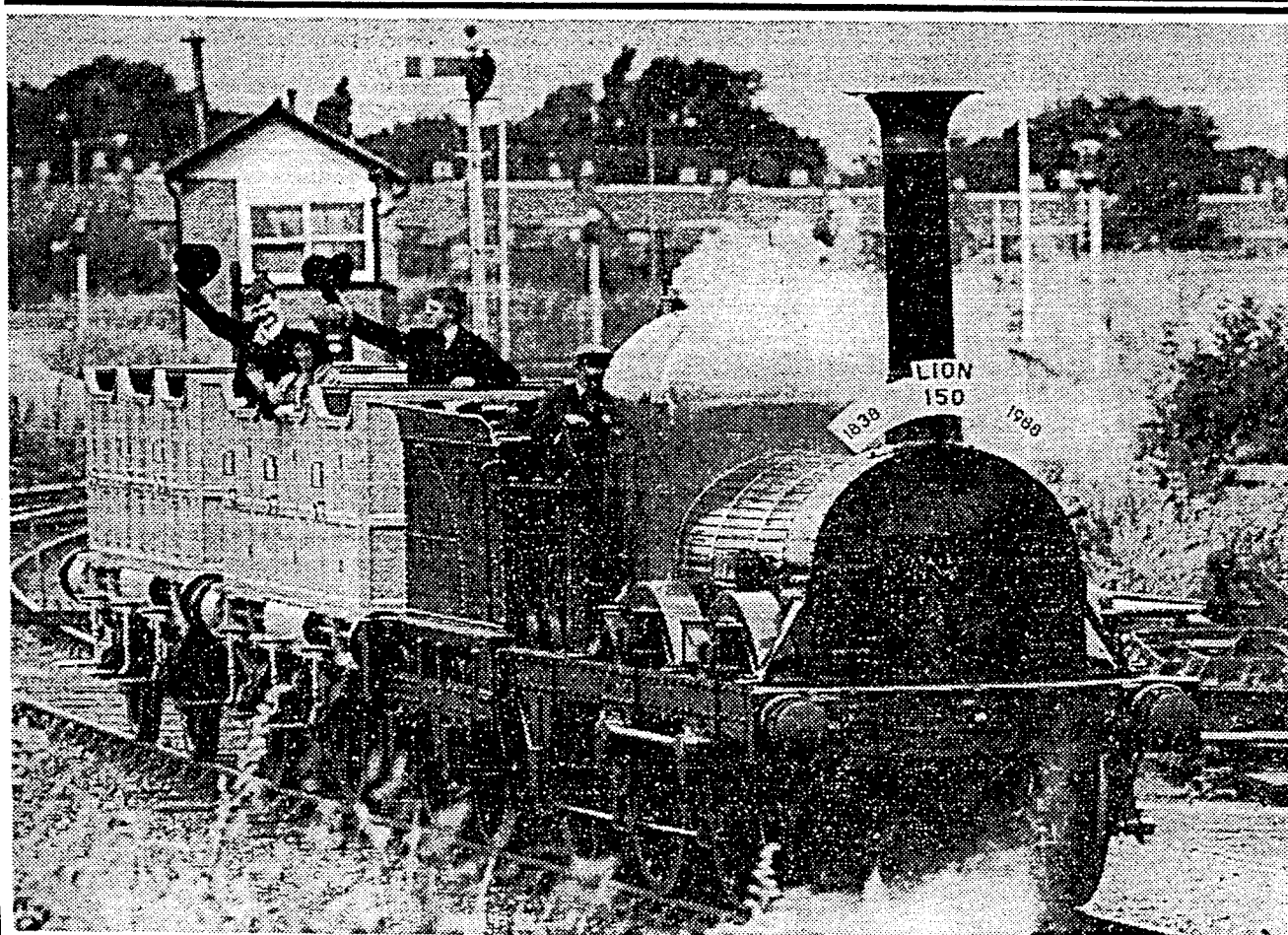
No one can say, at this stage, what will be possible between now and the 200th. birthday in 2038, but, just in case Wroughton 1988 is the the last opportunity this century, it would be as well to be there, and with your model if possible.

# TYSELEY A RUNAWAY SUCCESS CREWE FAILED TO ADVERTISE NATIONALLY

BOTH THE **TIMES** AS WELL AS *The Daily Telegraph*

HAD PHOTOGRAPHS OF *LION* ON THE 5th. AUG.

ON SUNDAY THE 7th. THE CROWDS FLOCKED IN.



Full steam ahead: Birmingham Railway Museum celebrates Lion's 150th anniversary on Sunday, when visitors will be able to ride behind the world's oldest working locomotive in old-time open carriages (Photograph: Graham Wood).

It was very satisfying to have almost a train behind *LION*. Instead of the single, well worn, vehicle, we had two beautifully painted and lined open coaches, actually the remaining two of the three built in 1930 for Wavertree, giving almost 2,000 passenger rides in one day at Tyseley. The Birmingham Museum's publicity organisation had managed to get TV coverage and the major National Dailies to mention the sesquicentenary. The net result was almost 1,700 people actually paid to get in.

The OLCO costume group could have done with the turnout we enjoyed last year at Crewe, but there were enough of us to answer questions and keep the cameras clicking just as fast as usual.

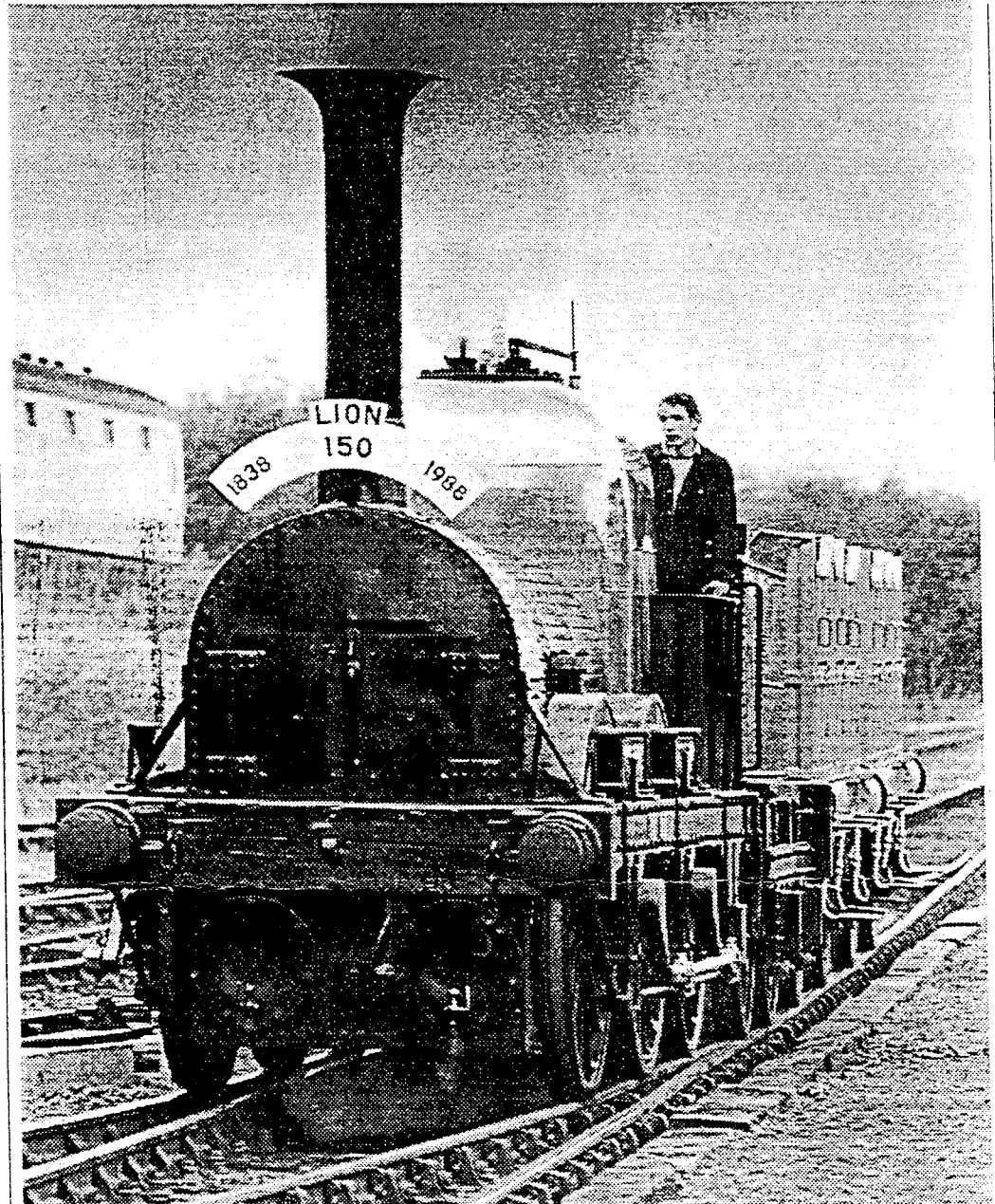
It is desperately sad to see that the ideal of a Crewe Heritage Centre looks as if it will be left to decay. It is impossible to criticise the staff who are all dedicated to the Centre and believe in the potential for the future. The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress seemed to be very impressed and enthusiastic when they visited the Centre but nobody else outside the Town seemed to know that the place exists.

Picture: JOHN POTTER

So many of the visitors who spoke to us complained that the AA had not put up any signs, that it was hard to find, even when it was visible from a distance and the engine whistles could be heard and their smoke clearly seen. Even the Townsfolk seemed to get bewildered. "Why is it not advertised" they'd ask. "We'd only heard about it on Radio Stoke this morning".

LION has attracted more than one passenger to break their journeys and leave their train at Crewe to visit the Centre. One even joined OLCO, another was an American tourist. Both were fortunate to find their way.

Although the Centre is clearly visible from the station platforms, as well as all trains on every line arriving from, or going to, the North, just try asking BR staff how to get to the Centre. "Don't know nuthink about it mate." is the standard reply. Will



The world's oldest working steam locomotive, Lion, being taken for a test run by Mr Paul Rées at the Birmingham Railway Museum yesterday to celebrate its 150th birthday. It was purchased as a "luggage engine" for £1,100 in 1838 by the Liverpool and Manchester Railway. Visitors to the museum on Sunday will be able to ride behind it in open carriages

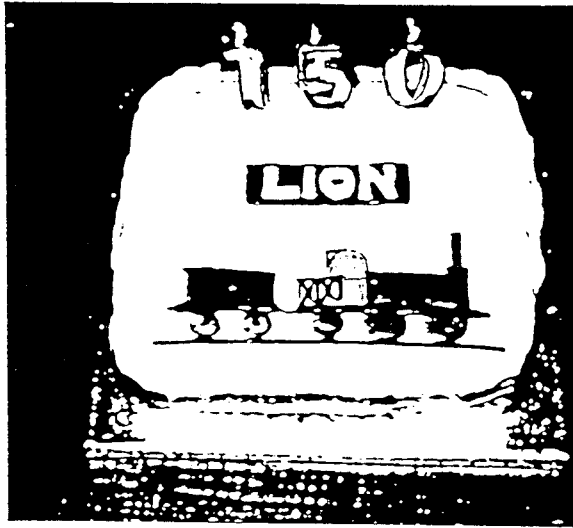
the footbridge from the station ever be built? The technology for automatic unmanned ticket offices already exists. It is in daily use on the Docklands Light Railway. If the question is one of the cost of having the entrance manned, then it needn't be.

Understandably there must be some councillors on the Town Council who will regard the Centre as a burden on the rates. They are quite right, a mere £5000 for the advertising budget has been a total waste of the ratepayers money. It was not nearly enough to be effective, and, to prove the point, it simply has not been effective. LION appears to have moved more passengers in one day at Tyseley than she moved during her nine days 'in-steam' at Crewe. The final figures will be very interesting and hopefully the supposition will be proved wrong.

The Centre does not have to be a burden, it has the potential to be a net contributor to the rate if it is allowed to generate its own profits.

One cannot help being saddened by the situation. A friend cannot be blamed for falling sick, and it is only natural to feel compassion for a sick friend. There is so much that could be done to bring our much respected friend back to health and strength.

The NRM's APT, currently exhibited on the Heritage Centre site, attracts a lot of interest. It is in daily use as a restaurant and was an excellent venue for the OLCO dinner following the AGM. However it provided some hilarity amongst the assembled steam devotees when the lights went out. In spite of a generator going full tilt, (pardon the pun) they just faded and once again this marvel of modern railway technology 'failed in service'. Even so it was a very jolly, and enjoyable little party.



ONE OF THIS YEARS BIRTHDAY CAKES FOR LION.

THE ENGINE WAS IN GREEN MARZIPAN AND LIQUORICE. THE NAMEPLATE, IN RED WITH 'BRASS' LETTERS, WAS ALSO MARZIPAN. ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY CANDLES WOULD HAVE BEEN USEFUL WHEN THE LIGHTS FAILED IN THE A.P.T. BUT AS IT WAS THERE WERE ONLY THESE THREE WAX CANDLES FORMING THE FIGURES '150' AND GIVING SCANT ILLUMINATION THROUGHOUT THE COACH.

## Full steam ahead...



ALL ABOARD! A joking Stuart Hall, the popular TV presenter, got Crewe's big summer festival off to a flying start at the Heritage Festival site on Friday. He is pictured on the Lion, the world's oldest working steam engine, which took visitors for rides around the site. (7742B20). A report and more pictures appear on page 17.

ALL THIS WONDERFUL AND ENTHUSIASTIC COVERAGE WAS PUBLISHED ON THE DAY THAT LION LEFT CREWE TO GO TO TYSELEY! STEWART WAS ALSO GOOD ENOUGH TO MENTION THE HERITAGE CENTRE AND SHOW THE ENGINE IN MOTION ON 'LOOK NORTH WEST' ON THE VERY SAME EVENING OF THE DAY THAT THESE PICTURES HAD BEEN TAKEN, FRIDAY 29th. JULY. THE ENTIRE CLIP LASTED JUST 12-15 SECONDS WE THINK, BUT AS THE CREDITS WERE ROLLING AT THE SAME TIME IT WAS DIFFICULT TO BE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN.

THE CHRONICLE, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 3, 1988 (Gp 7) 17

## Leisure and Pleasure

# STUART GETS FESTIVAL UNDER WAY IN STYLE

A JOKING Stuart Hall, the ever popular TV personality, got Crewe's big Summer Festival under way in great style on Friday.

Together with the new Mayor, Councillor Alice Roberts, he cut the ribbon at the entrance to the site, off Vernon Way, and the public poured in to start what will be five weeks of fun.

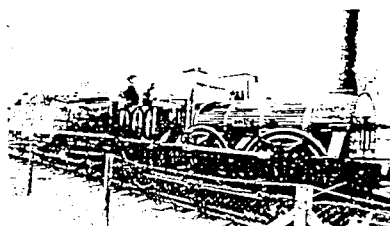
Stuart was the perfect choice to get things started. A self-confessed steam engine 'nut' he took great pleasure in giving passengers rides aboard Lion, the oldest working steam engine in the world.

After the first run he was supposed to go elsewhere on the site, but he laughed: 'No chance! You are not getting me off this yet, and with a toot of the whistle he was off again, obviously soon getting the hang of the controls.

He laughed, he joked, he signed autographs, he posed for pictures for anyone who had a camera, and obviously enjoyed every second.

And he recalled the day when, as a young reporter, he and a photographer were covering a royal visit and his cameraman discovered he had no film in his camera.

Stuart asked the royal visitor if she would reverse the Rolls-Royce and go through the procedure all over again - and the charm which carries him through today worked even then!



Well, it may not be first class, but these festival visitors seem happy enough to travel in the 'cattle wagons' pulled by the world's oldest working steam engine, Lion, seen above. (7742B27 and 7742B28)



One hundred and fifty years of steaming for Lion to celebrate. Stuart Hall and Tim Mayman, 13, of Coppenthal have smiles to match the occasion. (7742B26)

*PAID YOUR SUB? MEMBERSHIP CARD ENCLOSED IF YOU HAVE.*



Together, TV personality Stuart Hall and the Mayor of Crewe and Nantwich, Councillor Alice Roberts MBE, cut the ribbon to open the Crewe Heritage Summer Festival. (7742B14)



Budding engine driver Nigel Oates, of Wistaston, meets fellow learner Stuart Hall. (7742B24)



Stuart Hall was like a Pied Piper at the festival, drawing large crowds of children, and their parents, wherever he went. Always laughing and joking, he made everybody feel happy. (7742B18)

AGM held Saturday, 30th. July 1988

There will be no change in subscription rates for this next year.

The Executive Officers were re-elected en bloc together with Eddie Ball from OLCO NW. Next year the Chairman, E F Clark, Hon Sec. Charles Taylor-Nobbs and David Neish will have served four years and be ineligible for re-election. You should be thinking about their replacements NOW.