

NEWSFILE

RICKMANSWORTH AND EALING COMMON



During the August Bank Holiday weekend, with points replacement taking place at Rickmansworth (*Above*), your photographer was amused to see an umbrella covering a small track trolley (*Left*). Presumably it was raining at that point?

Both photos: David Hibbert

Opposite: (*Top*) Work continues with the rebuilding of the east end of Ealing Common depot, as this view on 3 September 2014 shows. The 'shape' of the extended building is similar to its predecessor but is not in any way an accurate copy. The west end of the depot remains in original condition.

Photo: David Burleigh



“END OF TUBE” EVENT AT THE EPPING-ONGAR RAILWAY

The Epping – Ongar Railway hosted an “End of Tube” three-day event from Friday 26 to Sunday 28 September 2014, to commemorate 20 years since London Underground closed the Epping Ongar section of the network. For this, the train that worked on the last day – the three-car unit of 1960

Tube Stock owned by Cravens Heritage Trains – worked throughout the three-day event, but with current rails no longer, operated in push-pull mode with Schöma diesels providing the power.



For the weekend event, replica lined station name bullseye signs were provided by Link Signs and are seen in position at each station (*Above*). Back in 1971/72, the Underground was 'measured' in kilometres and the starting point was Ongar, which remains unchanged today. Sadly, the original 0.0 plate 'disappeared' many years ago, so a replica (*Left*) was provided, again by Link Signs. Roger Wright, Chairman of the Epping Ongar Railway invited LU Managing Director Mike Brown MVO to unveil the sign which, we are told, will later be placed trackside.

All photos: Brian Hardy, except Blake Hall – Nick Agnew

Our story starts with the transfer from Northfields to Ruislip of the Cravens unit on 16 September 2014 in readiness for its transfer to the Epping – Ongar Railway. This was to be by rail, through the long disused connection at Epping, and a path was provided for its transfer on Thursday night 25 September, leaving Ruislip depot at 23.21. It would then run 'in traffic', being top and tailed by battery locomotives L47 (east end) and L15 (west end). On arrival at Loughton it would then wait in the middle road until after the last train and then run to Theydon Bois, where the 'possession' would be taken for transfer to the EOR. In the event, the train left Ruislip depot a little later than planned because of becoming stalled leaving the depot, but this was soon resolved and the train made its way east, just in front of the last eastbound train to Epping.

Once the possession was taken, the train arrived at Epping where the stop lamps in platform No.1 were lowered for the train to pass over to the EOR boundary. Much work had been done in advance to make this section 'rail worthy' again after so many years of abandonment. And so at 02.40 the train departed platform 1 at Epping.



Above: The transfer train passing through Bethnal Green eastbound, a little later than planned at 00.44, with the last eastbound Epping train close on its heels.

Photo: Kim Rennie

Below: Push-pull is demonstrated in this photo of the 1960 Stock unit at North Weald on Friday 26 September, with two Schöma diesels at the west end of the train. By this time the headboard "The Silent Whistle" had been removed from the cab front and placed in the offside cab window.

Photo: Brian Hardy





Above: For the train to reach the Ongar branch the fixed red lights in platform 1 at Epping had to be lowered for the train to pass over, the right-hand lamp already having been dealt with and pointwork in the process of being secured.

Below: In addition to the Cravens three-car unit and the four Schöma diesel locomotives running to North Weald from Epping during the transfer, so did one of the battery locomotives from the train, being L15 and seen at North Weald next to stabled EOR coaching stock. The locomotive later returned to Epping and was reunited with L47 in time for its journey back from Epping to Ruislip depot at the start of traffic on Friday 26 September.

Both photos: James Galbraith





Left: A late decision in the planning process was to have four Schöma diesels available, two providing the power and two as a standby. At various times throughout the weekend, however, the train was quadruple-headed by all four.

The Schöma locomotives involved were 1 and 12 (named “Britta Lotta” and “Melanie” respectively, and the ones fitted with coupling adaptors), along with 3 and 9 (“Claire” and “Debora”). Seen in the headshunt at Ongar on Friday morning are 1 and 9.

Note that No.1 has the wedgelock coupling adaptor for coupling to tube stock. These locomotives haven’t been used before to haul ‘passenger’ trains and it is unlikely they ever will again in this condition as all 14 are to be converted to battery electric locomotives.

Photo: Brian Hardy

Below: The Cravens set nearing Ongar on 27 September 2014. But for the lack of current rails, this scene could be September 1994.

Photo: Tommy Cooling





Left: For the End of Tube event, being a special occasion, higher fares were charged as compared to normal operating days, the full fare being £18 for the day, or £15 if booked in advance online. This is the ticket issued to your Editor on the Friday, the back being date-stamped.



Above: As well as the Cravens unit working on the Epping – Ongar Railway 26-28 September 2014, another ‘show stopper’ was Metropolitan E Class No.1, which has featured significantly in recent months. This is ‘handing over the tablet’ at Ongar on Friday 26 September.

Photo: Justin Bailey

Below: No.1 served two roles – hauling passenger trains with the EORs coaching stock, and also operating a ‘demonstration’ goods service, which was once familiar at the east end of the Central Line. Nearest the camera is the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre’s superbly restored ‘pup’ brake van FB578 at North Weald.

Photo: Nick Agnew



Left: Schöma locomotives 3 and 12 at North Weald on Saturday 27 September, at which time just two Schöma locomotives were still providing the motive power.

Photo: George Odlum

The Cravens unit and Schöma locomotives were returned to LU and Ruislip depot during the night on Tuesday/Wednesday 30 September/1 October 2014, preceding the first passenger train 'through the road', in front of which was another engineer's train, comprising four battery locomotives.

It was just before 06.00 that the Central Line service came to grief, with the first two westbound trains becoming immobilised because of a loss of traction shoes, one train at Tottenham Court Road and the other approaching Chancery Lane – a dislodged positive current rail was eventually discovered near Chancery Lane. At the time of going to press, investigations were under way to determine what caused the problem, and how much the Cravens unit may (or may not) have played a part. For this and further details, we wait until a future issue of *Underground News*.

Meanwhile, Met No.1 was observed on the back of a lorry on the M25 at 14.15 on 1 October travelling in an anticlockwise direction and heading for Quanton Road. Later in the month No.1 was scheduled to go to the Swanage Railway for their Autumn Gala.