

FROM THE PAPERS

Items for “From the Papers” should be sent to Ian McKenzie at 24 Thamespoint, Fairways, Teddington, TW11 9PP, and not to the Editor of this journal. Please ensure that contributions are identified by date and source publication.

20.03.14 NEW CIVIL ENGINEER – London’s Deputy Mayor for Planning, Sir Edward Lister, says that Crossrail2 will relieve pressure on Waterloo. The proposed Chelsea-Hackney line would give much wider benefits. He said: “If we don’t do something soon, Waterloo will come to a crunch point”.

20.03.14 NEW CIVIL ENGINEER – Former transport minister Steven Norris says that Crossrail should have included a station at London City Airport. He said it had been a mistake to ignore the airport because of its proximity to the route and because it has potential to grow. He said: “I think it is perfect for a station, the airport is well below its capacity, adding that the cost of such a station could be contributed to by the Airport”.

28.03.14 HOUNSLOW CHRONICLE – *From the Archives 28 March 1914* – “Under the heading “Earwig holds up 600 tons of traffic”, the Express gives an account of the District Railway earwig’s great adventure at Heston-Hounslow station. It would appear an earwig held up for 10 minutes all rail traffic from Hounslow Barracks station – about 600 tons. The signal was seen to be at danger when the 12.01 train arrived at Heston-Hounslow station and other trains following were similarly delayed. It was afterwards found that an earwig had found its way into the signalling apparatus between the magnet and the contact. This caused the signal to be set at danger. Signals in the ordinary course stand at clear. They are held in this position by electric magnets and are so weighted that the slightest interference they fall automatically to show danger. The earwig’s adventure has caused the contact to be destroyed and the signal to show red”.

02.04.14 EVENING STANDARD – LU’s longest serving member of staff has retired after 55 years. Allan Hoare, 72, started as a signalling consultant at the Northern Line Signalling Control Centre in 1959. Over the course of his career, he has greeted the Queen twice – first at the opening of the Victoria Line in Cobourg Street in 1969, and last year at Victoria at the Underground’s 150th anniversary. Mr. Hoare signalled the last train into Morden station under programme machine control last month, in what he described as “the end of an era”.

02.04.14 EVENING STANDARD – Escalators in Underground stations are to be standardised under plans to improve reliability and make them easier to maintain. LU boss Mike Brown claimed that passengers can look forward to fewer lengthy station closures for escalator replacements. Embankment station is currently closed for Northern and Bakerloo passengers for 10 months while escalators are replaced as part of a £19M upgrade. The works at the busy station are taking place 24 hours a day, with 220 workers at night. The Underground, as well as Crossrail, would have standardised modular escalators, which would be much easier to fit and maintain than the various models at present. These escalators will last 40 years, but will be much more reliable. TfL is replacing 54 of the Underground’s 426 escalators over the next decade.

02.04.14 EVENING STANDARD – Underground passengers criticised TfL bosses after being trapped a lift in “stifling heat” for more than an hour while alarms blared. About 20 passengers were stuck in the lift at Elephant & Castle, when power cuts across parts of South London caused it to break down. One commuter claimed TfL’s response was shambolic. The trapped commuters were assured the fire brigade were on their way but did not arrive for 90 minutes. He claimed that there was no contingency plan and staff didn’t have a clue what to do or what to tell them. He claimed that once they were freed, staff did not offer them water, and people were left to make alternative arrangements to get home, at almost midnight. TfL denied the accusations, and a spokesman said it followed correct emergency procedures, which included calling its own emergency response unit of engineers, who freed the passengers, as well as the emergency services. He said staff were in constant contact with the passengers. Staff were on hand to ask if anyone needed help from paramedics standing by, and insisted that no one had any problems, or wanted to report any poor customer service.

03.04.14 EVENING STANDARD – Rush-hour commuters faced severe delays after a fire broke out near Holloway Road station today. More than 30 fire-fighters rushed to try to put out the blaze at an electrical substation behind the station. The fire which broke out at 09.00, caused severe delays to the Piccadilly Line.

03.04.14 EVENING STANDARD – Plans to introduce “contactless” payment on the Underground to replace Oyster cards have been delayed after staff working on the public pilot scheme were seconded. The trial will now take place later this month. The Mayor pledged to launch contactless by the end of 2013. The system will be available to everyone this summer. TfL has started warning of “card clash” – when passengers swipe in with a wallet containing both an Oyster and a contactless bank card. If the bank card is charged, passengers risk losing their daily fare caps. This problem has already hit buses, with 11,000 refunds issued since its introduction. TfL says the move will help save an annual £80m on fare collection and boost passenger numbers.

03.04.14 METRO – Underground services out of Uxbridge will be suspended for 3 weeks in the summer as essential track work is carried out to renew and replace expired infrastructure on the Metropolitan and Piccadilly lines. The 6km track replacement work will boost the reliability of Underground services on this part of the network. The work will take place between 19 July and 10 August between Uxbridge and Rayners Lane. A replacement bus service will operate connecting Uxbridge with the Central Line at West Ruislip. By closing that section of the network, LU says the work can be completed in 23 days, rather than 14 weekends.

08.04.14 EVENING STANDARD – *Text from Roger Harding* – “Re:Women who Eat on Tubes: shouldn’t objectionable behaviour in the Underground deserve exposure on Facebook, etc? In many world Metro systems, eating or drinking on transport systems is prohibited and penalised – sensibly so. Why should the travelling public be subjected to the mastication, slurping, gulping and litter-depositing of a selfish few? The Mayor has outlawed alcohol on the Underground. Let’s go further”.

09.04.14 THE TIMES – *By Columnist Matthew Parris* – “I’m disappointed in Boris. The man is a classicist and edited the *Spectator* magazine, so as London’s Mayor he surely ought to have cast his eye over a poetry-led campaign to improve Underground passengers’ behaviour. Illustrated posters on platforms and in carriages carry Hilaire Belloc-like cautionary verses: a neat idea; but the poems don’t scan!

One example:

*If you spot someone ill or in pain
Please try to help them off the train
We can offer aid more quickly
On the platform if they’re sickly.*

Gizza job, Boris.”

Argh! Try:

*If someone’s ill or seems in pain,
Please do assist them off the train.
Our staff can help them much more quickly
On the platform if they’re sickly.*

09.04.14 METRO – *Text from Alexa Michael* – “For those women who dislike being photographed while eating on the Tube, I have a simple solution – don’t eat on the Tube! Eating on the Tube is antisocial, and public transport would smell much fresher if people refrained from eating while travelling”.

09.04.14 METRO – A pop-up art shop appeared yesterday in the main concourse at Piccadilly Circus station, selling specially commissioned, limited edition prints celebrating 150 years of the Underground. The 15 signed and numbered prints, inspired by the Underground, come from 15 international artists including Sarah Lucas, Gillian Wearing and Wolfgang Tillmans. The Print Shop is *Art on the Underground’s* first pop-up retail outlet.

10.04.14 METRO – Over the next seven years, 70 Underground stations will be modernised with upgraded flooring, walls and ceilings, CCTV systems and electrical equipment. LU has chosen more than 20 contractors and 3 design firms to bring an innovative and collaborative approach, which will see stations modernised and maintained to a standard that will mean no significant work should be needed for 10 years. Stations that will benefit for the £330M programme include Charing Cross, Earl’s Court, Embankment, Paddington and South Kensington. LU will be working with small to medium enterprises to employ the craftspeople who will work on-site. They are also working with the successful suppliers to establish craft academies to support the aim of delivering work faster and on a larger scale. Academies will provide craft skills training as well as frontline leadership for supervisors and construction managers on the skills and practices needed to deliver the programme efficiently.

11.04.14 WATFORD OBSERVER – One of the new Croxley Rail Link stations in West Watford will glow in the dark and act as a “beacon” for the area, according to the architect who designed it. Michael Watkins said the Cassiobridge station, which will be elevated above Ascot Road, would be

made of material which would illuminate, and would be built of light, fine materials so it did not have an intrusive presence. As the Cassiobridge station connects the viaduct, which comes over the Grand Union Canal, platforms will be raised over Ascot Road, and will be more prominent than the other new station in Vicarage Road, which will be at ground level. Mr. Watkins said: "What I have attempted to do all the time with this very large structure is to make it as fine and small and as least intrusive as possible. It is a beacon in the sense it is a fairly large structure and will glow at night".

11.04.14 EVENING STANDARD – A Facebook group that encouraged people to share photos of women eating on the Underground, has been shut down. Film director Tony Burke, who set it up in 2011 as *Women Who Eat on the Tubes* as an "observational, artistic, photographic study of human behaviour", to go out to his friends, announced that it had been axed. He said: "It was never destined to become this radioactive monster which it has mutated into. We have a right to take photos of people without their permission. I was trying to capture a moment and created something artistic". Critics of the page have called it voyeuristic and humiliating to women. A *Woman Who Eat on Tubes* Tumblr page is still online.

11.04.14 EVENING STANDARD – Jubilee Line commuters could face Underground disruption after strike action was threatened in a row over safety and driver training. Walkouts by train drivers could take place at the end of the month on a network route used by nearly 600,000 passengers a day. Railway union ASLEF has accused LU chiefs of overriding agreements to train their members to manually operate trains, which are currently now largely automatic.

11.04.14 EVENING STANDARD – *Comment by Andrew Neather* – "Rats are part of any big city's subconscious. But even if the claim that you are never more than six feet from a rat is a London urban myth, they do mostly stay hidden. Which is what makes the decision of one rodent to board a New York Subway train this week, so unsettling. More shocking still was the response of Gotham City's über-tough urbanites; as video footage shows, most of them are standing on their seats screaming in a New York minute. Would London's Undergrounders be more phlegmatic? It might depend on the size of the rat's rucksack or the rap blasting from its headphones. Thankfully the question is academic; there isn't room for a rat to fit on the Central Line in rush hour anyway".

12.04.14 THE TABLET – Last month (08.03.14 in *Underground News* No.629 on page 293) we reported that the Stations of the Cross would be on display on the Underground thanks to the public art enterprise *Art Below*. Now TfL has deemed 8 of the images unsuitable to be shown on billboards on the Underground. Among those rejected are Anthony Micallef's *Kill Your Idol* – three pieces showing Jesus standing before a television talent show panel; Xavier Ellis' *The Covenant*, was refused because it included a small amount of graffiti-style lettering, which falls foul of a ban on anything that suggests an advert has been defaced; and Paul Fryer's *Black Pieta* which depicts Christ in an electric chair. A TfL spokeswoman pointed us to its advertising policy, which states as reason for banning material: "The advertisement is likely to cause widespread or serious offence". The Rector of St. Marylebone Parish Church, where the images are on exhibition, said it was difficult to understand TfL's position in view of the sexualised and violent imagery often approved on advertisements. The exhibition "was tame by comparison" he said.

14.04.14 METRO – The current DLR Pudding Mill Lane station will close on 18 April and the replacement station 100 metres away will open on 28 April. The new station will offer better facilities. It will also enable Crossrail work to continue and the building of a second DLR track between Stratford and Bow Church. Further benefits will be an increase up to 15 trains per hour, as well as better weather protection and more seating areas.

14.04.14 EVENING STANDARD – *Comment by Richard Godwin* – "I am concerned that the wrong conclusions are being drawn from the eating on the Underground affair. Yes, it is creepy and misogynist to create a Facebook group to shame women you have covertly photographed cramming crisps into their gobs. We can all agree on that. But it does not make Underground-eating, male or female, any less regrettable. The idea of a mass eat-in – taking over a carriage for a chomping protest, as a group of righteous picnickers did earlier this week – fills me with horror. I must ask: "What if my mother had been in that carriage? Should she have been subjected to such abomination just because some lowlife created a Facebook page? My heart goes out to those caught in the crossfire".

14.04.14 EVENING STANDARD – The number of sex assaults on the Underground and Overground networks rose to the highest level in the past five years in 2013. There were 403 cases in London in the 12 months to January 2014, compared with 310 in the previous year. The increase coincides with the launch of a police operation, *Project Guardian*, to raise awareness of sex attacks on trains. The figures obtained show 367 of the victims were women, with 88 cases leading to a suspect being charged. Liverpool Street station recorded the highest number of assaults, with 25 taking place within the station's Underground network. Statistics suggest there is a huge under-reporting of sex attacks, with surveys showing 15% of women have experienced attacks or "unwarranted sexual behaviour" on trains although about 95% of those incidents are not reported. BTP said: "We believe the increase in the number of reported attacks is due to a rise in confidence rather than an increase in the number of incidents". Other stations with reported assaults in double figures last year were: Bank-Monument, King's Cross St. Pancras, Oxford Circus and Stratford. The number of sex attacks has fallen compared with 10 years ago, when 1,120 were reported on the Underground and Overground networks.

15.04.14 METRO – Yes I eat on the Tube ... so what? Dozens of women ate their lunch on the Underground yesterday in protest at a Facebook page where unsuspecting female travellers are photographed enjoying food. The picnickers wanted to "reclaim power" from the Women Who Eat on Tubes group, which has been accused of "stranger shaming" innocent members of the public. Alexis Calvas, the organiser of the picnic protest said: "This was about letting women know it is OK to eat anywhere they want".

15.04.14 EVENING STANDARD – *By columnist Melanie McDonagh* – "As invitations to lunch go, this one on Facebook had a certain chutzpah: *"Many of you may have started to avoid eating in public for fear that a stranger might take your picture and publically humiliate you. Join us for this lunch party where we will eat in solidarity, because we don't want to be alone and afraid of simply having our lunch. Bring your lunch and snacks and food to share, bring signs, and bring a message for the Women Who Eat on Tubes group. We will be taking our own photos to show that, yes, women do eat but it is for them to document it, not strangers"*. Duly that's what happened on the Circle Line yesterday. Young women duly consumed bananas and salad and Yorkie bars in front of baffled fellow travellers and photographers, a tad self-consciously, it must be said. This organised eat-in on public transport was the latest bout in a stand-off between the website *Women Who Eat on Tubes* founded by artist Tony Burke, and two students Lucy Brisbane McKay and Alexis Calvas. He defended the photographs of women eating as "art", nay "high art", and likened it to "wildlife photography". The women felt that this is an invasion of their personal space. What none of these opinionated individuals seems to realise is that they are invading our space, viz. the common space of the Underground passenger. Do you like looking at someone eating food on the seat opposite, or inhaling the aroma of a kebab, or the spectacle of spilt food on the floor? Nope, me neither. The big mistake here appears to be that the original website documented women eating in public, as opposed to men and women eating in public. The exercise thereby took on a misleadingly misogynistic aspect and public snack consumption became a feminist gesture. A colleague has suggested we follow Singapore, where police deal with people who eat on public transport. Actually in Singapore the trend started of posting images of people flouting the rules of eating on trains – except they didn't call it art. Alas, TfL's only reaction to the eat-in was to suggest that it was wrong to take photos of passengers without their consent. Who had to clean up after this public picnic? If TfL has the will to ban drinking on the Underground, it can ban eating too".

17.04.14 EVENING STANDARD – *Text from Anna Doyle* – "I rarely eat on the Underground but Melanie McDonagh's snooty piece make me want to follow her around eating kippers".

17.04.14 EVENING STANDARD – London faces the threat of a 5-day strike on the Underground. Leaders of the RMT union were meeting in crisis session saying talks with LU over the closure of ticket offices and the loss of up to 1,000 jobs have broken down. Senior sources have told the Standard that one of the items being discussed is for a 5-day walkout.

18.04.14 WATFORD OBSERVER – *Letter from Dave Degan* – "If a pile of bricks or an unmade bed is a work of art (as it is in the Tate), then most certainly, the sight of the new Cassiobridge station – which has already been dubbed a "Portakabin on stilts" – will be a "beacon" for the area when it glows in the dark. Many prime buildings which are monuments to architecture are lit. But the illumination of the medieval St. Mary's church in the town centre with its characterful arches,

stonework and tower is somewhat set apart from showcasing a steel green box resembling a refuse bin. With the exception of the iconic Underground roundel, the station looks best at night as it is – pitch black under the shroud of darkness. And it will also save energy; something the Council are keen to do. If the streets are plunged into darkness then surely this eyesore can get by without lighting”.

20.04.14 MAIL ON SUNDAY – A poster advertising a satirical display about the Monarchy and, showing Prince Charles gagged, has been censored by LU because it fears it could cause offence. The advert for the critically acclaimed production of *King Charles III* features a punk-style portrait of the Prince with his mouth covered by white duct tape. But despite the fact that the poster has been displayed across London since the play opened three weeks ago, a nervous TfL has decided to pixelate Charles’s face. TfL laid the blame on the company, *Exterion Media*, that deals with adverts on the Underground, saying the ban was made amid fears that the image might cause offence, but it could not say who it was afraid of offending.

22.04.14 METRO – From 23 April until late June, Central Line trains will not stop at Bond Street station while further upgrade work is carried out. The work includes the construction of a new lift shaft that will provide step-free access, new passageways to increase capacity, and a link to the future Crossrail station. Central Line passengers are advised to use nearby Marble Arch as an alternative, as Oxford Circus often has restricted entry at busy times to prevent overcrowding.

22.04.14 EVENING STANDARD – LU’s Mike Brown accused the RMT of being stuck in the past after the Union voted for a fresh wave of strike action over ticket office closures. The RMT announced walkouts of 2 days next week and a further 3 days in early May. The strike calls follow a 48-hour walkout in February that paralysed much of the network. A summer of industrial action on the Underground looms as union candidates vie to succeed the late RMT General Secretary Bob Crow, with a new boss to be named in September. After eight weeks of talks, LU insist they have compromised on some of the initial proposals for the network shake-up. The plans affect 950 jobs, but LU said 650 employees have already applied for voluntary redundancy, while an additional 200 staff will be needed for a new 24-hour Underground service at weekends.

22.04.14 EVENING STANDARD – *Text from Labels* – “I never thought I’d be on the side of the Underground strikers, but I am wholeheartedly with them this time. We don’t want to be run by machines that often don’t work and are incomprehensible to many including elderly, tourists, etc. Just for once let a huge public and staff protest sway your minds, TfL, and change your plans”.

22.04.14 EVENING STANDARD – *Text from T. Thomson* – “Smart workers adapt. Militant workers may try resisting change but they’re doomed. Good luck to Underground employees who will see sense over ticket offices”.

25.04.14 EVENING STANDARD – The first picture of artist Rachel Whiteread’s design for the new cover of LU’s free pocket Tube map was revealed today. The Turner Prize-winner’s idea involves a series of holes revealing parts of the map underneath. She said she wanted to “bring some culture into what is sometimes a pretty dull place”. Her design – called the *Hole of London 2014* and commissioned by *Art On The Underground* – will be one of the world’s most widely viewed art works, with a print run of more than 12 million. It is the 20th cover in the series and will be released on 16 May. The artist said: “The holes give you a glimpse of parts of London, which is how you see the city when you are on the Tube”.

28.04.14 EVENING STANDARD – Paris Métro bosses have backed plans to emulate the use of driverless Underground trains in London. RATP has advised TfL as it plans to convert 4 ‘Tube’ lines to full automation, beginning with the Piccadilly Line in the mid-2020s. Under the £16B programme, passengers will travel on trains “driven” from a control centre. Some unions have opposed the plans, insisting they pose a safety risk while many passengers remain unnerved at the prospect of a cab-less train. The Paris Métro has led the way in Europe, with the first driverless line opening in 1998, a second in 2012 and a third due by the end of the decade. Trains in Paris operate to the highest level of automation – more advanced than the driverless trains of London’s DLR – with automatic trains braking and accelerating, doors operated remotely and tracks protected by platform edge screen doors familiar to Jubilee Line passengers. With no staff on the automated trains, a passenger alarm connects to RATP’s control centre using live CCTV cameras which also show views of the tunnel ahead. Advanced signalling enables trains to run at a rate of 38 per hour – 85 seconds apart – in the peak, four more than London’s top performing Victoria Line.

28.04.14 EVENING STANDARD – Bombardier can expect to lose out on future contracts as a result of the bungled £350M Underground signalling project. The contract for the upgrade of the Hammersmith & City, Metropolitan, Circle and District lines – the world’s biggest re-signalling project – was abandoned on New Year’s Eve after Bombardier missed a series of deadlines. Bombardier signed the £354M deal in 2011, but work stopped after it told LU the task of fitting new signals to some of the oldest lines was too complex. It will receive £85M for building a new control centre. But the rest of the contract was re-advertised for between £450M and £600M.

29.04.14 CITY AM – *The Capitalist Column* – “Gatwick obviously didn’t Bank on a week of major Underground strikes. There are plenty of Londoners hoping that TfL could still cut a deal with union leaders and halt the current Underground strikes, but Gatwick’s ad men might well be crossing their fingers more tightly than most. The airport has staged a week-long advertising takeover in both Bank and Westminster stations but with the strike, which spans much of the next two days, it’s likely to have far less of an impact than they’d hoped. The *Gatwick Obviously* campaign has picked the two stations in a bid to target business and political leaders and “uses cheeky slogans that counter Heathrow’s claim for a new runway”. It’s not a complete disaster, there are still some lines functioning out of both stations – Northern and Jubilee lines – but footfall will be vastly reduced”.

30.04.14 METRO – An Underground driver facing jail for driving a train while drunk has died at his home. His body was found days before he was due to face claims that he drank a bottle of vodka as he ferried (?) 500 people. A friend of his said his death was probably the result of “unwise lifestyle choices”, not suicide. ASLEF union said: “He was a genuinely nice guy, very popular and highly respected by colleagues”.

30.04.14 EVENING STANDARD – *Text from Chris Berry* – “Misery for millions” – is your headline for real? Millions of us made it to work yesterday and will have done so again this morning in relatively good humour despite the strike. We love the Underground but can retain our sense of proportion”.