

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.

27.02.14 METRO – The London Underground logo is one of the most iconic and recognisable in the world. Show anyone a picture of the famous “bar and circle” – or roundel, as it is known – and they are likely to identify it with London. It first appeared on Underground station platforms in 1908 and comprised a solid red enamel disc and horizontal blue bar. Registered as trade mark in 1917, the roundel became an integral part of station architecture in the 1920s. During this time it was mounted on masts outside stations and stained glass versions were incorporated into station entrance windows. Underground trains featured their first roundel in the 1970s – a plain colour version with no text. Over the years there have been many attempts to redesign the logo – and even do away with it altogether. It has survived into the 21st century, however, and is one of the most recognised symbols in the world

28.02.14 METRO – As part of the refurbishment of Embankment station, the replacement of the escalators is well under way. There are 426 escalators on the Underground network, and some are nearing the end of their lives. Around 200 have been replaced or restored so far, and work continues on a number of others. LU’s David Waboso explains: “Our escalators are heavy-duty machines that are custom made for each station. It can take up to 24 weeks to carry out an overhaul – particularly when spare parts have to be manufactured from scratch and installed deep underground in confined spaces. By comparison, the average escalator in a department store can be replaced over a weekend because they are standard, lightweight pieces of machinery. Physical and geological considerations mean that every escalator on the Underground network is custom-built for its location. Many components are handmade by the manufacturers, which mean a stockpile of spare parts can’t be built up. Each escalator on the network is inspected regularly for wear and tear so replacement parts can be ordered if necessary. The sheer volume of use, and occasional misuse, can result in their withdrawal from service at short notice if a defect occurs”.

28.02.14 EVENING STANDARD – A former Underground station near Harrods has been sold for £53M. Developer Michael Spink is understood to be working on transforming the property at 206 Brompton Road into flats. (See 22.03.14 below)

03.03.13 METRO – The search is on for the supplier that will build the “New Tube for London”. LU is seeking expressions of interest to build the Underground’s new energy-efficient, walk-through trains. Capable of full automation, the trains will run on the Bakerloo, Central, Piccadilly and Waterloo & City lines, enabling more frequent and reliable services. They will also boost capacity and make journeys better and more comfortable. The 250 new trains will also include air-cooling for the first time on deep-level sections of the Underground – a challenge thought to be almost impossible to overcome until now. Alongside modern signalling systems, the new trains will help to meet the challenge of London’s growing population – set to increase from 8.2M today to around 10M by 2030 – by increasing capacity on the Central Line by 25%, the Bakerloo Line by 25%, the Waterloo & City Line by 50% and the Piccadilly Line by 60%. LU’s Mike Brown said: “The modernisation of the Victoria and Jubilee lines has delivered faster, more frequent and reliable journeys and this year we will also complete the upgrade of the Northern Line ahead of Schedule”. The formal invitation to tender is expected to be issued early next year.

03.03.13 EVENING STANDARD – *Text from Malcolm Howard* – “The only place a Senior Railcard can be put on an Oyster card is at a Underground ticket office. I updated mine at Oval on Saturday. Can Boris tell me what we are to do when he closes the Underground ticket offices?”

06.03.14 PINNER OBSERVER – More people use Harrow & Wealdstone station than rail passengers travelling to and from several larger towns. It is the 179th busiest station in the country – busier than Stoke-on-Trent, Welwyn Garden City or Basildon. The station is served by Overground’s Euston to Watford Junction line, the Bakerloo Line, and London Midland and Southern trains. It is the most-used station in the boroughs of Harrow or Brent. ORR figures based on ticket sales has 2,673,348 entries and exits through the ticket barriers in 2012/13, a 26,000 drop from the previous year. Harrow-on-the Hill station similarly saw a drop of more than 30,000 from a total of 1,444,388 in 2012/13.

07.03.14 THE TIMES – Smell branding have produced mixed results. Some experiments have backfired. A campaign by liquor company *Disaronno*, to waft the distinctive marzipan aroma of *Amaretto* through the Underground was abandoned in 2002 – it coincided with a scare over cyanide gas being used in a terrorist attack and highlighted the fact that cyanide smells of almonds. Some companies had been slow to adopt smell branding for ethical reasons. Smells such as coffee in a bookshop, or flowers by the till, seem acceptable but a cheap hotel chain pumping out the smell of bacon and eggs to get you to buy breakfast might be considered more manipulative.

07.03.14 EVENING STANDARD – Building Crossrail? That's women's work. Almost a third of Crossrail Ltd's jobs are filled by women, compared with only 20% in the construction industry as a whole. Crossrail is particularly hoping to increase the number of engineers who are women. In the UK, that figure stands at only 8.5% – the lowest in all of Europe. Crossrail and its contractors regularly visit London schools to inspire the next generation of construction workers and engineers. But a joint effort is needed between schools, parents, government and industry to encourage more young people, including women, to pursue a construction and engineering career.

07.03.13 EVENING STANDARD – A Crossrail worker was killed today, the first death on the £15B building project. Fire fighters tried to rescue the man after he suffered head injuries down a tunnel at the Fisher Street site near Holborn but he was pronounced dead at the scene. A full investigation in to the incident has commenced.

08.03.14 THE TABLET – Commuters on the Underground will be able to reflect on the Passion this Lent. With an exhibition of Stations of the Cross featuring on billboards at Underground stations whose names have a symbolic link with the life and death of Christ. Poster featuring the Passion, including a modern take with Christ on an electric chair will appear in stations including King's Cross, St. Paul's, Angel, Temple, Marylebone and Tower Hill. The exhibition will be based at St. Marylebone Parish Church and will run the 40 days of Lent.

12.03.14 EVENING STANDARD – *By LU's MD Mike Brown* – “Bob Crow believed in making the Underground better. Bob Crow agreed with TfL's Peter Hendy and me on much more than the media headlines might have suggested. Bob came to represent a much wider national constituency as head of the RMT, but he started out as a track worker at LU. There he developed a fierce pride in the service and really understood how the place worked from the ground up. We shared the view that LU remains a people business. Alongside advances in technology, it is people who are at the centre of delivering a safe, reliable and accessible service to our customers. With us, Bob was instrumental in arguing for steady and sustained investment to overcome decades of neglect in the system. Bob could also see the need to plan for the future. London's population of 8.4M today will become 10M by 2030. He knew that we needed to work together to make sure the Underground remained a vital piece of the national infrastructure. Frankly, Bob didn't much care for what other people thought. He represented his members – end of story. Yet despite the deliberately gruff public persona, Bob was unfailingly courteous in private. Yes, we exchanged full and frank views. But there was never any personal malice. He was blunt and tough. But I always knew that ultimately we could work together to reach a deal. What Bob and I believed in was something a bit old-fashioned these days – sitting around a table and working the issues through. It was not all sweetness and light. The RMT executive resorted to strikes – or at least the threat of them – far too often. And strikes would be called off at the last moment with claims of major new concessions having been wrung out of us, which was never true. Bob Crow was a decent and straightforward man. Those are not traits as common as they should be.”

13.03.14 METRO – With 96.9% of its trains arriving on time last month, the Overground was rated the top performing TOC in Britain, according to Network Rail's monthly punctuality tables. Train company timetables across the country were affected by the bad weather, however, the Overground's performance also exceeded the national average performance figures for the same period last year. The national average for February this year was 87.1% of trains arriving on time.

13.03.14 EVENING STANDARD – LU have admitted for the first time that the collapse of £350M Underground signalling contract will cost taxpayers. They also said that it could not be guaranteed that the project – the biggest ever signal upgrade on four lines – would be delivered on time in 2018 after LU tore up a deal with Bombardier on New Year's Eve.

13.03.14 EVENING STANDARD – *Text from Alex Bell* – “In your report on Underground stations worst hit by lift breakdowns, it was interesting to see that of the 18 stations listed, 11 are on the Jubilee Line Extension – rushed to completion in time for the millennium – and a further 6 (Wembley Park, Earl’s Court, Green Park, King’s Cross, Kilburn and Brixton) are new installations and/or refurbishments to ready those stations for 2012 Olympics. Stations with much older lifts such as Caledonian Road, Goodge Street and Holloway Road, etc., don’t seem to suffer so badly”.

14.03.14 WATFORD OBSERVER – The design of the Croxley Rail Link viaduct has been described as a “Portakabin on stilts” by a Three Rivers councillor and as “a hideous design”. The Council was told that the colour of the viaduct would be lead steel grey and it would be difficult for the Council to refuse the condition of design in regards to the colour of the viaduct. Work is due to start on the project in September and completed in 2017.

14.03.14 EVENING STANDARD – *Text from John Bush* – “It was bad enough being told on an aircraft that we were landing “into” Heathrow, I now hear the Underground announcing that my train is going “towards” Wimbledon rather than “to” Wimbledon. Are they hedging their bets in case the train does not make it that far?”

17.03.14 EVENING STANDARD – *Letter from Peter Pinkney, RMT President (see 12.03.14 above)* – “The RMT cannot allow to go unchallenged LUMD Mike Brown’s misrepresentation of Bob Crow. Yes, Bob and the union he led saw the need to plan for population increase in London over the next 15 years from 8.4M to 10M in terms of expanding services. The suggestion, however, that Bob was in any way complicit with the smuggling in of the savage austerity cuts dressed up as modernisation, driven by Mike Brown and his team has sickened Underground staff. Bob implemented RMT executive decisions to the letter. Brown’s claim that strikes were called without reason, and that the union lied about why some actions were subsequently suspended, is a disgraceful slur. Brown should feel ashamed of himself for trying to use Bob’s untimely death to tarnish his reputation. Bob Crow believed in making the Underground better, as your headline said. The cuts planned by Brown’s team would make it a whole lot worse. RMT will keep fighting management proposals just as Bob would have wanted us to”.

17.03.14 METRO – Around 1,800 bus passengers have received refund totalling £18,000 after oyster readers charged the wrong card. Some disgruntled commuters ended paying twice as money was taken from their credit cards despite having a season ticket. This has led to fears of more over-payment when the technology is rolled out further across TfL later this year. About one per cent of all oyster and contactless journeys involve a card clash when the reader detects two cards and rejects them both, although the number is dropping each week as the publicity campaign (reminding passengers not to keep their cards together) continues.

19.03.14 METRO – Commuters will soon be able to shop at a variety of new and innovative retailers thanks to TfL’s plans to introduce pop-up shops at Underground stations. The deal with *Appear Here*, and online marketplace for short-term retail space, will provide brands, designers, artists and entrepreneurs with easy access to retail sites in central London. Around 15 pop-up shops will launch at key stations such as Old Street, Piccadilly Circus, St. James’s Park and Baker Street, with more to follow. LU’s Mike Brown said: “Millions of people use our stations every day and we are always looking at innovative ways to improve our customers’ experience of using the transport network. Pop-up shops are a fantastic way to showcase new products on a temporary basis”. There are more than 1,000 TfL-owned retail properties at Underground, Rail and bus stations and 1,200 arches under railways. As leases expire, more spaces will be marked for pop-up use with any revenue reinvested into the transport network.

19.03.14 METRO – Paralympian Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson has urged disabled Londoners to take advantage of TfL’s increasingly accessible network, and to make the most the city has to offer. Her comments came at the launch of TfL’s “turn up and go service” on the Overground. It means disabled people who need assistance can arrive at stations and have staff help them without being asked to book in advance. She said: “TfL really are now leading the way in accessible transport. While it isn’t perfect and many stations were built in an era when accessibility wasn’t even considered, all London buses, taxis, the whole of the DLR and large parts of the Underground, and now the Overground networks are accessible to disabled customers including wheelchair users. As of today, the entire Overground networks are “turn up and go.”

19.03.14 EVENING STANDARD – *By Jennifer Smith* – “All aboard the secret Underground. Mail Rail will be opened to the public in £20M project. Tunnels once used to carry millions of letters deep below the streets of London will be opened to the public within two years. Visitors will be able to ride the “secret underground”, also known as the Mail Rail, after Islington council gave the go-ahead for it to be restored. A section of track will be reopened as part of a £20M plan for an archive centre and museum celebrating the postal service at Mount Pleasant mail centre in Clerkenwell. The Royal Mail opened its driverless electric railway in 1927, and it shuttled 4M letters across the capital every day for more than 75 years until closure in 2003 after becoming less economic. The tunnels run for 6.5 miles between Paddington and Whitechapel. A 1km stretch is due to reopen in 2016. Ray Middlesworth, a Royal Mail engineer who still maintains the line, said: “I am pleased something is being done with it and that we can give back to the community because the post is a community service after all”.”

20.03.14 EVENING STANDARD – *Letter from Stephen Spark* – “David Sexton is sniffy about those who eat on public transport, but for hard-working, harder partying Londoners it is sensible time-management. Table manners are hard to maintain in the absence of tables. There was a time when you could sit down in a leather armchair and enjoy breakfast, lunch, tea or supper on an Underground train. The Metropolitan Railway had two plush Pullman cars to cater for the tastes of the well-heeled businessmen on the Baker Street to Aylesbury run. Sadly when war broke out in 1939 these magnificent carriages were shunted off to a timber yard”.

21.03.14 THE TIMES – *By Gaby Hinsliff* – “Spotted at Paddington Underground station; an empty advertisement hoarding, on which someone had written: “Why do people write insane things?” I know, graffiti is vandalism, even when it is clever. But still”.

21.03.14 EVENING STANDARD – *Text from Cynthia Hay* – “Deep in Dante’s inferno are passengers caught on a Tube train stalled in a tunnel, with fast food ripening rapidly in the heat generated by passenger numbers. London needs a mayor to take action on such offensive social habits”.

21.03.14 EVENING STANDARD – *Text from Jay Benedict* – “I agree with everything David Sexton has to say about Underground eating. In France I look forward to buying my croissants in a delicious boulangerie, full of pleasant people, then taking them across the street and eating them at my favourite cafe. Without the management batting an eyelid – a common practice there. Can you imagine that happening over here? “I’m sorry sir, you can’t eat those in here ...” But on the train it seems OK”.

21.03.14 EVENING STANDARD – *Text from Mike Leibling* – (see 20.03.14 above) – “Stephen Spark recalls dining cars on the Metropolitan Line. With the expansion of walk-through trains, TfL could consider food trolleys like those on trains and planes – naturally only at off-peak and where possible featuring local produce. Swiss Cottage Cheese and West Ham accompanied by a chilled glass of Canada Water on the Jubilee Line”.

22.03.14 THE TIMES – (see 28.02.14 above) – The Ukrainian billionaire Dmytro Firtash, arrested in Austria last week on suspicion of links to organised crime has emerged as the buyer of the “ghost” Brompton Road Underground station in Knightsbridge. He has close business ties to Ukraine’s deposed former president Victor Yanukovych, and the Russian state energy group GAZPROM, is believed to have bought the disused station from the MoD for £53M. The chemicals and energy tycoon was one of the most influential men in Ukraine before the recent revolution and was part of a group seized in Vienna by Austrian police at the request of the FBI, after being under investigation since 2006. Austrian authorities said the arrest was unconnected with the political upheaval in Ukraine.

25.03.14 METRO – *Text from VainGuy* – “Is it me or do Tube doors/windows add 10lbs to your reflection?”

25.03.14 EVENING STANDARD – Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin signalled that London would have to wait for investment in the much-needed Crossrail2 scheme. He said that the Government was already pumping billions into London’s railways, and other schemes needed investment first. He also dismissed Boris Johnson’s recent attack on the commission exploring options for a new London runway. He said: “Boris is doing a fantastic job as Mayor and he’s seen a lot of changes which will greatly enhance transport in London. Not least Crossrail, which has

happened basically as a result of his very hard lobbying. Of course now Boris has Crossrail1, he wants Crossrail2. That's fair enough, but we've got to make sure other areas get a bit of infrastructure investment as well". TfL says the £12B Crossrail2 Tottenham to Wimbledon link as also needed to help London cope with population growth.

26.03.14 METRO – *Text from Disappointed* – “VainGuy, you're right, Tube-window reflections do put 10lbs on you. I lean forward to see how my hair looks and sit back sharpish.”

26.03.14 EVENING STANDARD – *Text from P. Newman* – “Why is TfL raving about its ugly new walk-through Circle and District trains, which remind me of cattle trucks? When there are passengers behaving in an anti-social fashion at night, it is no longer possible to get into another carriage. Likewise there is no escape from noise”.

26.03.14 EVENING STANDARD – *By Richard Godwin* – Any morning, any evening you can count them on the Underground. There are at least four in my Piccadilly coach as I write this on my BlackBerry. The guy next to me is cradling his Samsung to hide his shame, but you can tell what he's doing. He's playing Candy Crush Saga – the crystal meth of the commute. If you haven't fallen into its garish maw, Candy Crush Saga is a smartphone game in which you move coloured sweets around a screen. I vowed never to touch it after an existential crisis brought on by Angry Birds Star Wars. Nevertheless, it has already claimed half of a billion souls. Recently its London developer, King Digital Entertainment, raised £4.2B on the New York Stock Exchange. Some see this as a triumph for the British tech industry. I'm not so sure. Still, it's not just the decline of civilisation that worries me, but the (related) effect on Tube manners (Candy Crushers are rarely chivalrous).

28.03.14 EVENING STANDARD – *Letter from Baroness Valentine of London First* – “Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin's comments about Crossrail2 are worryingly complacent. London has growing population and the Underground and rail services are already full to bursting. The Government should not see this as a game of Chicken with Boris to see who will blink first. Crossrail2 is the key to ensuring London's transport arteries do not get clogged up, limiting the capital's potential to grow and benefit the whole UK economy. London First has shown that a new line need not be a drain on the public purse as less than half the cost needs to come from central government – unlike schemes such as HS2 that are wholly reliant on public subsidy. Let's not jeopardise the UK's recovery by slamming the brakes on transport investment in the capital”.