

## FROM THE PAPERS

**June 2009 ONGAR NEWS – (1)** A preserved booking office originally from Bethnal Green, and which for the past 25 years has been part of the North Woolwich Station Museum, has been given to the Epping & Ongar Railway, following the Museum's closure.

(2) Work continues at both Ongar and North Weald stations to restore them to their pre-London Transport glory. The aspiration of the Epping Ongar Railway Volunteers is to return the line to steam working and to preserve the two stations in as near as possible to their original states.

**01.06.09 EVENING STANDARD – (1)** LU has upgraded all its ticket machines adding 17 languages to make life easier for foreign travellers. At some machines tickets can already be purchased using French, German and Italian.

(2) A service starting today can automatically update people when their train is delayed by using the online twitter messaging service. The scheme, available to passengers on First Capital Connect, sends a tweet every time a train is delayed, and advises of alternative routes. When users sign up they tell the system which routes they use, and at what time. The system then constantly monitors the rail network using the same data as sent to platform indicators. When a problem is found, a direct message is sent to the user's Twitter account to alert them. Users can view the alerts on a computer or mobile phone.

**02.06.09 EVENING STANDARD –** Police today appealed for help in identifying man who threw himself in front of a Victoria Line train at Oxford Circus station. Despite suffering injuries to his head, pelvis and stomach, he survived and remains in a stable but critical condition in hospital. He has not regained consciousness and was not carrying any identification. Today police released an e-fit image and a CCTV picture taken moments before he jumped in an effort to identify him.

**04.06.09 EVENING STANDARD –** Up to 20,000 fans could miss England's World Cup qualifier at Wembley next week because of a planned Underground strike. The Football Association said it had suspended the sale of tickets for England's match against Andorra because of possible disruption. The RMT union has threatened a 48-hour walkout starting on 9 June which will halt most Underground services.

**THE TIMES –** Network Rail directors are to share more than £1 million in bonuses despite mishandling the upgrade of Britain's busiest line. The rail regulator warned yesterday that the company would face a heavy fine unless it delivered an acceptable recovery plan for the West Coast main Line by the weekend.

**05.06.09 EVENING STANDARD –** A report from the National Audit Office has blasted ministers, LUL and Metronet itself for the scandalous waste a public funds following the failure of the last. This left the Department for Transport having to pay out £1.7 billion because it had effectively underwritten a guarantee by Transport for London for Metronet's borrowing.

**06.06.09 NEW SCIENTIST –** It is now 30 years since Sony launched the Walkman personal stereo cassette player, changed the way we listen to music and put a new word in the dictionary. Sony's subsequent offerings were less successful, mainly because they lost out to Apple's stylish and user-friendly iPods Now Sony is trying to regain the initiative with its X-series Walkman. To put some buzz into the worldwide launch, Sony hired a disused Jubilee Line platform at Charing Cross and a train with fancy furnishings and all the new gear. One of the main selling points of the new

player is Wi-Fi connectivity, podcast direct downloading and internet browsing. It also receives FM radio. Oh dear! Did no one at Sony remember there is no radio signal to be had in a deep underground tunnel? Embarrassed demonstrators were left to explain why those special features wouldn't work.

**08.06.09 EVENING STANDARD** – When the sleek, fast, powerful 3G iPhone became it was followed by a plethora of whizz-bang applications, useful and silly, free and not-so-free. These Apps include London Tube Deluxe, a must for Londoners. Linked to TfL's live updates, it tells you how far away your train is, gives details of delays and has an offline journey planner.

**09.06.09 EVENING STANDARD** – (1) A deal to halt tonight's Underground strike was scuppered by union demands to reinstate two drivers sacked for serious disciplinary offences. An agreement with the RMT union to call off the strike over pay and conditions was about to be reached last night until the shock demand to give the two men their jobs back. One was sacked for opening the doors on the wrong side of the train, at a Victoria Line station, then lying about carrying out safety checks. The second is due to go to trial later this month for theft.

(2) A 32-year-old man, who died after being hit by a northbound Jubilee Line train at Finchley Road station on 26 May, was the private secretary to justice minister, Bridget Prentice. BT Police say they are treating his death as non-suspicious.

**10.06.09 EVENING STANDARD** – Striking Underground workers failed to bring the network to a standstill today although many commuters suffered disruption and delays. Boris Johnson described the action absolutely crazy as he joined passengers on a Thames boat to Canary Wharf. RMT leader Bob Crow insisted the strike was solid but trains still ran on the Victoria Line, his union's stronghold, despite manning a picket line himself at Seven Sisters. Trains were running on nine out of eleven lines with 120 out of the normal 500 trains operating at the height of the morning rush hour. The leader of the rival union ASLEF described the strike as wrong. Hundreds of his drivers, who would normally not cross picket lines and make up 40 per cent of Underground drivers, went to work. Some of the RMT's own members defied activists to report for duty.

**11.06.09 THE TIMES** – (1) Ken Livingstone writes that the Tube strike is unnecessary and is a return to the Nineties when ineffective Underground managers made derisory offers to the unions who would then strike. An improved offer would be followed by another strike and finally a settlement higher than would have been the case if a reasonable offer had been made in the first case. I made it clear that we would never make an offer that we did not believe was reasonable. The unions tested our will but in the three years after the transfer of control to City Hall, the number of shifts lost to industrial action was cut by 90 per cent. Although Boris Johnson gave an election pledge to introduce a no-strike deal, he has failed to meet the transport union leaders in the 14 months since his election.

(2) Bob Crow, in a letter to the Editor, writes that the RMT had spent 17 hours in talks with LUL management over the current dispute in an attempt to avoid strike action but the company refused to admit the existence of a policy of compulsory redundancies for all grades. This leaves us with the threat of 3,000 job losses, a real-terms pay cut and managers continuing with a regime of intimidation against staff. The collapse of Metronet, which left the public with a £400 million bill, has meant that staff have been brought back in-house. We are simply asking the employer to give them the same protection as other staff.

**12.06.09 EVENING STANDARD** – A giant graffiti park where ‘artists’ can spray without fear of arrest is attracting hundreds of people every week. The 200-metre pedestrian tunnel, near the defunct Eurostar terminal at Waterloo, has been adopted by Pictuesonwalls, a company that produces prints by Banksy. The work in the walkway, off Leake Street, changes daily.

**15.06.09 THE GUARDIAN** – Paris Métro line 1 is to be converted into a fully automatic driverless system. Although the director of the Métro, Serge Lagrange, has insisted the makeover was not inspired by the desire for an anti-strike line, unions point out that the reliance on machines instead of people will make the service far less vulnerable to industrial action.

**THE TIMES – (1)** Caroline Pidgeon, Liberal Democrat London Assembly Transport Spokesperson, writes that, while over the past year she has been a forceful critic of Boris Johnson over transport issues, the blame for the Underground strike lies solely with the RMT and not, as suggested by Ken Livingstone, with the Mayor. Mr. Livingstone’s argument, that his actions would have prevented last week’s strike, skates over any mention of the unreasonable actions of the union whose leadership has been spoiling for a fight. It was worth noting that, as recently as 2007, it was the view of Mr. Livingstone that “The RMT leadership is completely and utterly isolated, both in terms of public opinion and the rest of the trade union movement”. He further claimed that the RMT executive “knowingly misled their members” and argued the strike action “was more about the RMT trying to upstage the other unions in the hope of poaching their members”.

**(2)** The Association of Train Operating Companies proposes in a report published today that many of the branch lines closed by Dr. Richard Beeching should be reopened. The report says there is a business case for reopening 14 branch lines, where the costs would be at least equal to the economic benefits, and identifies 20 more lines whose reopening could be justified on employment grounds. In some cases the tracks are still in place and used by freight trains. It also calls for seven park-and-ride stations to be built on existing lines.

**16.06.09 ESTATES GAZETTE** – Scott Wilson has secured a £4 million Crossrail contract for work on a section of track close to the Stratford Olympic Park, and a £10 million deal to design the new Farringdon station. It has secured £25 million of fees since October and could pick up more of the five tranches yet to be tendered.

**EVENING STANDARD** – A Tory government could ban Underground strikes triggered by trivial issues, according to Boris Johnson. Commuters could be spared future chaos through new legislation to outlaw industrial action over matters such as individual disciplinary cases.

**THE GUARDIAN** – Venezuela has rerouted a new metro line away from a chic part of Caracas because it would have unduly benefited oligarchs in a country undergoing a socialist revolution. Under the redesigned plans five stations will be dropped from line five, which is intended to carry 300,000 passengers daily from the central Zona Rental to low-income areas in the south-east.

**17.06.09 EVENING STANDARD – (1)** LUL is cutting spending on the Underground by £60 million. More than £26 million is being slashed from tracks and signals, £19 millions from trains and £18.5 million from stations on lines previously maintained by Metronet. Unions warned that safety could be compromised. LUL confirmed the figures but said costs were being reduced but not maintenance. The Metronet contracts were being renegotiated.

(2) Boris Johnson has threatened to halt the billion-pound project to build five tower blocks to the north of Victoria station as part of a huge renovation of the 6.1-acre site. The developer, Land Securities, agreed to pay £2.5 million to revamp the Victoria Place Theatre. Now the Mayor has ordered Westminster council to withhold planning permission unless they also contribute £1.2 million to the Crossrail project.

**18.06.09 ESTATES GAZETTE** – Hammersmith and Fulham council leader Stephen Greenhaigh has met with government advisory body HS2 to lobby for a national High Speed rail hub to be sited at a proposed 32-acre regeneration scheme on the Park Royal industrial estate.

**EVENING STANDARD** – The country's fastest commuter train made its public debut today, travelling at 140mph between St. Pancras International and Ashford. The 12-carriage 348 seater train took just 30 minutes using the HS1, the Channel Tunnel high-speed line. The trains will operate to and from other parts of Kent, including Canterbury and Dover. To help pay for the trains Southeastern has been given permission to increase peak times fares by three per cent above inflation.

**19.06.09 EVENING STANDARD** – (1) Talks to try to prevent further Underground strikes began today at Acas, the conciliation service. Both LUL and union bosses say they are ready for positive negotiations. The RMT is demanding LUL provides a commitment of no compulsory redundancies, which so far it has refused to give.

(2) Transport for London, in its annual report to be published on Tuesday, reveals that 163 officials were paid more than £100,000 in 2008/9, rising to 231 when Crossrail and Metronet are included. TfL's top earner last year was Commissioner Peter Hendy, with a base salary and bonus amounting to £494,884, equivalent to £9,500 a week.

**20.06.09 ESTATES GAZETTE** – (1) Westminster council has accepted Land Securities' offer of £1.2 million contribution to Crossrail as demanded by Boris Johnson.

(2) Transport for London has launched a requirement for more than 700,000 sq ft near Bow, E.1., to store equipment and building materials to be used during the construction of Crossrail.

**THE GUARDIAN** – Transport for London has narrowed the London Underground funding gap by £2.5 billion after deferring upgrade work, cutting 1,000 jobs and rewriting engineering contracts. The cost saving is a significant step towards solving a financial crisis that has threatened to damage the administration of the London Mayor's office.

**23.06.09 EVENING STANDARD** – (1) Boris Johnson has travelled on the first of the new sub-surface Underground trains at a test track near Oxford (sic) and said the public will be terrifically impressed. Testing has begun on the first of 191 new vehicles, all of which are equipped with air conditioning.

(2) At least nine people have died in a train collision on Washington DC's Metro system. The dead include the female driver of a train that collided with a stationary train in last night's rush hour. The collision happened near the Maryland border in north-east Washington on the Metro's Red line, the busiest on the network. More than 70 were injured, at least six critically.

**24.06.09 EVENING STANDARD** – In an interview Lord Adonis, the new Transport Secretary, said a shortage of bike racks and absence of secure storage was letting down London's cyclists. He spoke after out after cycling to six of the capital's major

station to discover for himself the quality of service on offer. Parking space for bicycles, where it existed, was badly signed, hard to find and in inconvenient locations.

**THE TIMES – (1)** Experts were sifting through the wreckage yesterday of a Washington Metro train to discover what went wrong. The incident was the deadliest in the history of Metrorail. The only previous fatal accident on this fast and clean system was in January 1982 when three people died in a derailment.

**(2)** A mental patient who leapt under an Underground train has won £400,000 compensation from the NHS trust that he claimed had failed to protect him from himself. He sustained head wounds and pelvic fractures when he jumped at Highgate station. He had walked out of Whittington Hospital's psychiatric unit nine days earlier. Camden & Islington NHS agreed to the settlement without admitting liability.

**25.06.09 ESTATES GAZETTE** – Boris Johnson, Transport for London and Wandsworth and Lambeth councils have jointly written to the government calling for a pilot of Tax Increment Financing to be set up to fund an extension of the Northern Line into south London's iconic Battersea Power Station site. The letter says that the extension is crucial to plans to regenerate more than 200 acres in the Battersea and Nine Elms opportunity area. The tax model has not been introduced in the UK previously but is common in the US. It would involve the councils selling bonds to forward fund infrastructure. These would be repaid via an increase in business rates when the regeneration of the area was completed. Developers and landowners in the Nine Elms area include the Power Station owner Treasury Holdings, Irish developer Barrymore, the US Embassy, Sainsbury's and Green Properties remain divided on what infrastructure is required and how much funding each should contribute.

**EVENING STANDARD – (1)** A play that empathises with the 7/7 bombers is coming to London after a string of theatres rejected it. The show, called Pornography, follows a man from a man from Leeds travelling to the capital to commit an act of terrorism on the Underground, and six Londoners caught up in the attack. The play, which seeks to humanise terrorists, is set in July 2005 on the backdrop of the real events. It is made up of seven playlets, interweaving characters' stories in the run up to the bombings. The Tricycle theatre in Kilburn is planning a run from 4 to 29 August.

**(2)** Londoners who want a seat on their trains to work have been advised to move to the seaside by Keith Ludeman, chief executive of the Go-Ahead train operating group. He said commuters should be prepared to stand if they live close to the city. The Department of Transport has said that no one who travels for more than 20 minutes should have to stand.

**THE TIMES** – Obituary: Sir Malcolm Bates was born in Portsmouth in 1934. After University and the RAF he went to Harvard Business School and became a successful financial influence, with a conservative reputation, in several major engineering groups. In May 1997, only hours after the Tony Blair-led new Labour election victory, he was asked to look into the Private Finance Initiative. From 1999 to 2003 Bates served as chairman of London Regional Transport, although in 2001 he briefly made way for Bob Kiley, the American brought in by Ken Livingstone. (Before long Kiley, also Commissioner of Transport for London, was deemed unsuitable for the other post because he opposed plans to part-privatise London

Underground.) Bates was described by one City analyst as very GEC, hard and smart. He was knighted in 1998.

**26.06.09 THE AGE (Melbourne)** – The Australian Government, reeling from a public backlash over the rail network's failings, yesterday dumped the French-owned operator Connex and replaced it with a consortium backed by the Hong Kong metro operator. Premier John Brumby has promised more staff on platforms, fewer cancelled trains and improved punctuality. The government has also replaced the company as operator of Yarra Trams with another French operator, Keolis.

**THE TIMES** – Transport for London has commissioned Jeremy Deller, the Turner Prize-winning artist, to compile a list of appropriate bons mots. Quotations from Albert Einstein, Jean-Paul Sartre and Johann von Goethe are now being read out by drivers on the Piccadilly Line. Like the Underground itself they are often rather deep. An anonymous proverb warns passengers that trouble will rain on those who are already wet. Rush hour travellers will not be surprised to learn from Sartre that Hell is other people. The project is part of Art on the Underground, TfL's endeavour to attend to passengers' moral and cultural refinement.

**29.06.09 EVENING STANDARD – (1)** Following the official launch on 18.06.09 (q.v.), the public Javelin commuter service from Kent began today. There will be limited trains on weekdays before the full service starts on 13 December. In 2012 the trains will be used for the Olympic service which will carry spectators from St. Pancras to the Games site at Stratford in seven minutes.

**(2)** A competition next month, part of a two-day music festival, will see 100 emerging musicians aged 16 to 25 chosen by the public for spots at stations. They will also have the chance to win prizes including a guitar signed and donated by Sting. The scheme is part of the Mayor's Rhythm of London festival on 10/11 July. The event will include classes with professional musicians, children's workshops in unusual instruments and a display of stringed instruments from around the world.

**30.06.09 DAILY TELEGRAPH** – The idea of building an underground railway in Moscow first emerged in the 1870s, by which time the city's population was approaching two million. The plan appealed to Alexander II, a fan of innovation, but the Russo-Turkish war and the assassination of the tsar put the project on hold. In 1902 the idea resurfaced, but the owners of horse-drawn trams objected, as did the clergy, who equated the idea with devilry. Then the First World War, the October Revolution, and the civil war caused further delay until 1931. By then Moscow was the nation's capital, its population had grown to four million, and municipal transportation was an urgent problem. By 1933 the Soviet government had approved a plan of 10 lines extending over 80km. Of all Stalin's grand building projects, this was one of the rare ones for which convict slave labour was not used. The rest is history: fabulous art, underground palaces, frequency and punctuality.

**METRO** – This year, Underground in Bloom, the annual gardening competition, is more popular than ever, with almost a quarter of stations, depots and other establishments taking part. Entrants include some of the busiest urban stations such as Oxford Circus, South Kensington and Victoria. Judging runs from 27 July until 7 August. Winners will be announced on 11 September.