

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.

03.09.13 METRO – Four new trams have been ordered by Tramlink to increase capacity on the busy Wimbledon line. The aim of this £30M Wimbledon Line Enhancement Programme is to improve journey time and reduce congestion on board trams and at Wimbledon station. It will increase the frequency from 8 to 12 trams per hour.

03.09.13 TIME OUT – Got room for another novelty Underground map in your life, London? James Wannerton has created a version with a difference – naming each stop according to the way it tastes. James has synaesthesia, a condition in which the senses cross-stimulate. In his case whenever he hears a sound he gets an involuntary taste and texture on his tongue. He first noticed that Underground stations had a flavour at the age of four when travelling to school. He said, “I discovered that a couple of stations tasted sweet, followed by a malty one”. This epiphany led James to visit every Underground in London over a period of 49 years and record the often flavoursome results. The map reveals Willesden Junction tastes of “sticky toffee pudding”, and Kilburn High Road apparently tastes of “putrid meat”. Time Out’s stop, Tottenham Court Road, got off lightly – “sausage and eggs”, which beats the usual “fresh sick and stale Lynx”.

04.09.13 METRO – Research has found that many customers like to hold on to an Oyster card even if they don’t regularly use it. However a new TfL campaign is encouraging people who no longer need their Oyster card, to return it for a refund. More than 40% of those surveyed by TfL knew that they could get a refund of their Oyster deposit and credit. The campaign is designed to increase awareness even more.

05.09.13 EVENING STANDARD – *Letter from Tony* – “Yet again, the thanks we owe for the new ‘walk-through’ Circle Line trains is to Ken Livingstone. Had he remained mayor new trains for the Piccadilly Line would have been ordered too, and we might have as many as 100 step-free stations by now. As it is, we won’t get new Piccadilly Line trains until around 2020 and Boris has announced £100M for cycling but nothing for better disabled access on the Underground”.

06.09.13 METRO – Underground passengers are being asked for their views on the Piccadilly Line, including stopping arrangements at Turnham Green station. Currently, Piccadilly Line trains stop from the first train until 06.50 Mondays to Saturdays and until 07.45 on Sunday. At night, they stop every evening from 22.30 until the last train. It means that Piccadilly Line passenger wishing to use Turnham Green need to change to/from the District Line at either, Hammersmith, Barons Court or Acton Town. Stopping at Turnham Green would reduce the service on both Piccadilly Line western branches as well as incurring longer journey times.

10.09.13 METRO – The Underground is now even more accessible – thanks to the introduction of boarding ramps at 19 more stations, to bridge the gap between platforms and trains. Currently 66 stations on the network are step-free from street to platform, but gaps between platforms and trains can result in wheelchair and mobility scooter users are struggling to board. There is also a Twitter feed to let people know about any changes to lifts, escalators or stations that may affect disabled passengers.

11.09.13 THE TIMES – *By columnist Daniel Finkelstein* – “With HS2, many journeys that currently take two hours or more will become shorter than a London Underground journey. When the trains first came to Pinner, the Metropolitan Railway Company advertised the new station as a place to take holidays, so distant from London did it appear. Now it is regarded as part of London. With HS2, Pinner to Aldgate will be a longer journey than Manchester to Birmingham”.

12.09.13 EVENING STANDARD – Fitness fanatics demonstrated how to combine commuting with exercise as they performed a 4-minute, high intensity “*Tabata*” workout on the Underground at Aldgate station today. The regime was devised by Japanese scientists to train the nation’s speed skating teams. Supermodel Elle Macpherson is among *Tabata* fans, and Fitness First gyms run the classes.

16.09.13 EVENING STANDARD – Battersea Dogs and Cats Home has lambasted TfL’s compulsory purchase plans to make way for the Northern Line extension. The rescue home has joined the

Beefeater Gin distillery to write to the Transport Secretary opposing being made to sell large swaths of property. It would have to vacate 70% of its site on 14-days notice. TfL says it has to construct a concrete raft beneath the building. The Home CEO Clair Horton says: “The transport body has insufficient understanding of the complexity or the facilities at our building. These specialist facilities cannot be substituted even on a temporary basis. Uncertainty is delaying decision making that is impacting on the welfare of several hundred dogs on site”.

17.09.13 EVENING STANDARD – *Letter from Colin Tomkins* – “How about a contest to see who has been the most inconvenienced while listening to inane “there is a good service on all Underground lines” messages? In the middle of rush hour last night it came on the PA at Camden Town station during a 12 minute in services to High Barnet. Is TfL having a laugh or does it think positive reinforcement really works?”

17.09.13 EVENING STANDARD – *Letter from Ken* – “The Battersea extension of the Northern Line has been designed as a taxpayer funded favour to developers. The most worrying aspect of the plan is that it will feed many more passengers into the Northern Line, which is already at capacity. We need to plan and build a new Tube link to south-west London”.

18.09.13 – 01.10.13 RAIL – LU subsidiary Tube Lines is to test Balfour Beatty’s “Embedded Rail System” (ERS) as part of a project examining an alternative trackbed system. The trial will take place in a disused LU tunnel (*Aldwych? – Ed.*). The ERS comprises rails roughly rectangular in cross-section held in place in a cast concrete trackbed. BB claim a 50% increase in rail life, a 70% reduction in ballast, and an 80% reduction in inspection and maintenance costs. It says it is quieter than traditional rails a produces fewer vibrations. BB first installed ERS near Crewe in 2003, following trials at Beeston. It has also been installed in a high-speed test track in Spain. In it, the rectangular rail sits surrounded on three sides by an integrated seal and pad, which in turn is held in place in a shell that is grouted into place in the concrete trackbed. BB claims the system is shallower than conventional ballasted track, so can give extra clearance for larger vehicles or allow smaller tunnels to be used.

18.09.13 EVENING STANDARD – According to Travelwatch, the Mayor should provide interest-free loans for annual Travelcards to help commuters with the cost of fares. Underground travellers can save almost £400 by buying an annual ticket but many are put off by paying in a lump sum. The watchdog says monthly payments should be offered as they are for utility bills. TfL’s direct of customer experience said providing discounts through financing options would result in price rises for other ticket types.

19.09.13 EVENING STANDARD – One of the stars of the fantasy epic Games of Thrones had been the target of abuse on a website attacking men for taking up too much space on the Underground, after a photo of him was shown. Richard Madden has come under attack by hundreds of people for sitting on an Underground train with his legs too far apart since the photo was posted. More than 520 people have posted comments on the site.

20.09.13 EVENING STANDARD – Victoria Line passengers face four weeks of disruption caused by industrial action from the start of October. Train drivers with the RMT union were ordered to cut the number of journeys they make between 8 October and 5 November. Services could also be hit on 25 September after drivers were told not to book on for duty during the six hours up to 03.00.

24.09.13 METRO – If your local Underground station has looked a little brighter over the past few months, staff have been taking part in this year’s Underground in Bloom competition. Staff from 68 competing stations, depots and train crew sites have been potting, planting and pruning in a bid to grow the most beautiful flowers, ripest fruit and tastiest vegetables; all in their free time. This year’s competition was particularly special as the Underground is celebrating its 150th anniversary, with extra points awarded for “greener” gardens, and entries incorporating the anniversary theme. The competition entries were judged earlier this month by LU judges, with the winners receiving shopping vouchers as prizes.

26.09.13 METRO – What’s in a name? Brixton is recorded as *Brixges Stane* in 1062, and as *Brixistan* in the Doomsday Book. The name is derived from the personal name of the Saxon *Beorhtric* and the Old English word *stane*, meaning “stone”. Stones were often used as meeting points. The name changed to *Brixton* in the course of time. The station opened as *Brixton* on 23 July 1971.

27.09.13 EVENING STANDARD – A woman who told an Asian commuter on an Underground train to “xxxx off back to your own country” has been cleared of racial harassment. The Accountant was cleared by a Snaresbrook Crown Court jury after unwittingly starring in a YouTube clip showing her foul-mouthed tirade on an Underground train. She told the court: “I am not a racist. I agree the language is horrific and I am mortified”.

30.09.13 METRO – Next year marks the 150th anniversary of the Paddington to Hammersmith branch of Hammersmith & City Line. To mark the occasion, TfL is asking passengers and staff to share their special memories of the line for a new commemorative book. To join the celebrations, E-Mail your ideas, photos and personal experiences to **150h&cbook@tube.tfl.gov.uk** before 31 December 2013

01.10.13 TIME OUT – The ten feature films including Underground themes are: (1) *Underground* (1928), (2) *Quatermass and the Pit* (1967), (3) *The Bed Sitting Room* (1969), (4) *The Boy Who Turned Yellow* (1972), (5) *Sliding Doors* (1998), (6) *The Wings of the Dove* (1997), (7) *Death Line* (1973), (8) *An American Werewolf in London*, (9) *Reign of Fire* (2002) and (10) *Skyfall* (2012).

01.10.13 TIME OUT – London has risen to new sporting heights. Geoff Marshall, 41, and Anthony Smith, 28, have broken the Guinness World Record for time taken to visit every Underground station, via Underground, on foot or other forms of public transport. 270 stations in 16 hours, 20 minutes and 27 seconds, breaking the old record by 9 minutes. For details see **www.tubeworldrecord.co.uk**

OCTOBER 2013 MODERN RAILWAYS – GB Railfreight has celebrated the movement of the 1 millionth tonne of earth excavated from the Royal Oak portal of Crossrail. The operator has moved over 860 trainloads of excavated material to Northfleet in Kent over the past 15 months. At Northfleet, the spoil is transferred to ships and transported to Wallasea Island in Essex, where it is being used to create a new wetland for birds. Crossrail will excavate about 6M tonnes of spoil during the construction of the stations and tunnels on its 21km route beneath the capital.

OCTOBER 2013 MODERN RAILWAYS – TfL has appointed *Cleshar* as the contractor to lengthen station platforms on the Overground network to accommodate 5-car trains. The stations involved are Highbury & Islington, Canonbury, Hoxton, Haggerston, Dalston Junction, Shoreditch, Shadwell, Wapping, Canada Water, Surrey Quays, Wandsworth High Street, Clapham High Street and Clapham Junction. The contract also includes modifications to Silwood Depot.

02.10.13 – 15.10.13 RAIL – At the National Rail Awards 2013, London Underground were winners of the award for **NRA Passenger Operator of the Year**. In connection with this, there is an article “Underground Overjoyed”. However, the caption to the photograph on page 50, of an S Stock and 1996 Tube Stock train, is at Wembley **Park**, not *Central*.