



PRESS RELEASE

'Clun Castle' Steams Again!

RECORD BREAKING LOCOMOTIVE No: 7029 'CLUN CASTLE' STEAMS AGAIN!

Tyseley Locomotive Works, Birmingham – Sunday 29th October, 2017

Vintage Trains are pleased to announce record breaking steam locomotive No: 7029 'Clun Castle' will publicly return to steam for in a recommissioning ceremony to be held at Tyseley Locomotive Works on Sunday 29th October, 2017.

The ceremony will take place on the turntable at 11am alongside other locomotives in steam including sister double chimney Castle class loco No: 5043 'Earl of Mount Edgcumbe'.

Following the commissioning, at 2:30pm Michael Whitehouse, Chairman of Vintage Trains, will be hosting 'Vision for the Future' presentation followed by a Q&A in the LMRCA at Tyseley Loco Works.

Tyseley Locomotive Works have fully restored 'Clun Castle' with the aid of staff, volunteers and donors; a restoration that has taken 7 years and countless hours of blood, sweat and the occasional tear.

After the first public steaming and recommissioning ceremony on Sunday 29th October, 'Clun Castle' will undergo further testing at Tyseley Locomotive Works, before beginning a series of mainline trial runs in early 2018. The loco will then begin a program of railtours promoted by Vintage Trains that will see 'Clun Castle' back on the mainline, visiting Chester on 31st March and Oxford on 21st April, 2018.

For more information on the 'Clun Castle' Recommissioning Ceremony at Tyseley Locomotive Works or the Vintage Trains steam railtours featuring 'Clun Castle', please contact Vintage Trains via the internet: www.VintageTrains.co.uk or telephone: 0121-708-4960

Comment:

Michael Whitehouse, Chairman of '7029 Clun Castle Limited' commented:

"I am thrilled that *Clun Castle* will be back in steam in October. We know very many people are looking forward to see her hauling our express steam trains and all of us at Tyseley are absolutely delighted that the locomotive which founded our charity will soon be back on the main line where she belongs. We are taking bookings now for her first trains too!"

"All of us at Vintage Trains look forward to welcoming everyone to Tyseley Locomotive Works on Sunday 29th October. We will be able to show you two double chimney castles in steam together for the first time in many years."

About Clun Castle:

'Clun Castle' was built in the former Great Western Railway works at Swindon in 1950 as part of the last batch of Castle Class locomotives ordered by British Railways.

The Castle Class locomotives were first introduced in 1923 and were built for hauling express passenger trains on the Great Western Railway such as 'The Bristolian' and 'The Cheltenham Flyer'.

The Castle Class was one of the most successful and prolific steam locomotive designs built in Britain, eventually numbering 171 in total.

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The first in the class was No: 4073 'Caerphilly Castle' which was exhibited in the British Empire Exhibition in 1924, alongside another iconic British steam locomotive of the day, 'Flying Scotsman'.

On 9th May, 1964 'Clun Castle' broke the record for a steam locomotive over the Devon Banks from Plymouth to Bristol; a record that was held for 50 years until the time was beaten by another Castle Class locomotive, Clun's stable-mate at Tyseley and older sister No: 5043 'Earl of Mount Edgcumbe'.

After touring throughout England to mark the end-of-steam, in 1967 'Clun Castle' was purchased from British Railways by a group led by Mr Patrick Whitehouse for the scrap value of £3,600.00. The loco was placed in trust and subsequently moved to the former steam depot at Tyseley, Birmingham where the loco has resided for 50 years and become the foundation of the '7029 Clun Castle Limited' charitable trust.

'Clun Castle' hauled the last steam train from London Paddington, the last through train on the GWR's route north from Birmingham to Birkenhead, and the very last train from Birmingham Moor Street station prior to closure.

'Clun Castle' was seen throughout England in the 70's and 80's hauling steam railtours and took a leading role in the 1985 'GWR 150' celebrations, running daily shuttles between Gloucester and Swindon. 'Clun Castle' was last seen on the mainline in 1988.

'Clun Castle' last steamed at Tyseley Locomotive Works in 2001.

About Tyseley Locomotive Works:

Tyseley Locomotive Works is the engineering Subsidiary of Vintage Trains, located on the site of the former Great Western steam depot. TLW specialises in the overhaul, repair and maintenance of heritage steam and diesel locomotives, and the restoration of heritage carriages with the focus of mainline railway operations. Tyseley Locomotive Works employs over 25 full time staff, including 3 engineering apprentices, ensuring the continuation of heritage engineering skills for the next generation and beyond.

About Vintage Trains:

Vintage Trains is a leading promoter of steam and heritage diesel railtours starting from the Midlands. Vintage Trains and Tyseley Locomotive Works are based on the site of the former Great Western Railway depot at Tyseley, Birmingham. Celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year, Vintage Trains operate approximately 40 steam rail charters throughout the year, including The Shakespeare Express that shuttles between Birmingham and Stratford-upon-Avon on summer Sundays. Vintage Trains exclusively operates locomotives and rolling stock from the '7029 Clun Castle' collection, also based at Tyseley.

Contact Information:

For further comment, photographs, etc, please contact Ben Mason via email: ben@vintagetrains.co.uk or telephone: **0121 708 4960**

Vintage Trains / Tyseley Locomotive Works

670 Warwick Road

Tyseley

Birmingham

B11 2HL

www.VintageTrains.co.uk

www.ShakespeareExpress.com