

# Steam train to make an historic crossing



The City of Truro trundles over Stanway Viaduct for the first time on the approach to Toddington on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway. (s)

AN HISTORIC railway crossing is set to carry passenger trains for the first time in more than 30 years as part of nine days of special celebrations.

**Ian Dipple**

To mark the 175th anniversary of Great Western Rail on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, Stanway Viaduct will once again be used to ferry passengers up and down the line during the

celebrations which runs from May 29 to June 6.

The move also has added significance as it is the first part of the railway to open as part of GWR's plans to expand the Honeybourne Line north to Broadway. It is hoped within the next 12 months the viaduct will be in regular use as railway volunteers are aiming to have work finished at Laverton.

From there the plan is to extend to Broadway but there are significant issues to be overcome first including several

bridges which need repairing and the village station needs to be rebuilt.

Stanway Viaduct first opened in December 1904 but has not carried public trains since 1976. It is the largest viaduct anywhere on a UK heritage railway and carries the line over 15 arches, 50ft above the valley floor and lies just under a mile north of Toddington station in Gloucestershire where the GWR is based.

A successful test run has already been completed over the viaduct using a train powered by the 107-year-old Great Western Railway City of Truro - the locomotive that first broke the 100mph barrier back in 1904.

Malcolm Temple, the railway's chairman, said: "This was a fantastic way to test the new track that passes over the viaduct and I'm delighted to confirm visitors to our GWR175 celebrations will be the first to experience the trip over this amazing structure.

"It's a tribute to our volunteers that refurbishment of the viaduct and the new track work has been carried out to such a high standard."

The 175th anniversary celebrations promises to be the railway's biggest ever display with a dozen steam locomotives working over the nine day event.

Other attractions include static displays and locomotives including the Brunellian 7ft-gauge replica locomotive, Iron Duke as well as the last-ever locomotive built at Swindon works. Dozens of live-steam miniature Great Western locomotives, locomotive nameplate displays, a display by STEAM, the museum of the Great Western Railway, as well as rolling stock and equipment will be on show at Toddington, Winchcombe and Gotherington stations.

Full details of the celebrations are available by visiting [www.gwsr.com](http://www.gwsr.com) where tickets can be booked at discount prices.

## Bands battle goes on

THE SECOND quarter-final in Evesham's Ultimate Battle music competition takes place at the Railway Hotel this weekend.

Naked Remedy go up against Torn on Friday (May 14) as both bid to gain a semi-final place at the High Street venue.

Then on Saturday (May 15) it is the turn of the band The Ex Presidents to perform on the big stage.

Both gigs are free and start at 9.30pm.

## Fire hits chimney

FIREFIGHTERS spent almost an hour battling a chimney fire at a house in Evesham on Monday (May 10).

Crews were called to the house in Pershore Road, Hampton at about 9.15pm.

A spokesman from Evesham Fire Service said: "Luckily no one was injured and we were able to control the fire. But this is another warning to people to make sure their chimney is clean and in full working order."

## Simon opts for dry land

A KEEN swimmer from Evesham has swapped his goggles for running shoes after going to great lengths to raise money for the town's

Simon Cook decided to take the plunge and tackle a five-mile fun run in a bid for new equipment at Evesham Swimming Club.

Ten fathoms of two, which took part in the run as part of the

Tewkesbury Half Marathon on Sunday (May 9), also raised much needed money

Children's Hospice.

The 41-year-old said he was delighted to have completed the course in about 45 minutes.

"This was the first time I had done anything like this since I was at school so it was hard work," he said.

"I think I got a bit carried away trying to keep up with other runners so I was exhausted at the end.

"I wanted to raise money for more pace clocks because we only have one and they are about £120 each so they're not cheap."

Mr Cook managed to raise about £160 which will be added to the amounts raised by the 12 other swimming club members who took part.

swapped running shoes to raise money for worthy



## Digging deep for our boys

AN EVESHAM funeral directors is raising money for Help For Heroes by selling a range of the charity's items.

So far £175 has been raised from the sale of lapel pins, key rings, wrist bands, fridge magnets, car stickers and lanyards. But staff at the company, based in The Leys, hope to boost the total and are encouraging townspeople to pop in and show their support by buying

one of the items.

Anna Moratoria, funeral director at Philip Tomlins, said: "We regularly raise funds for local charities but felt Help For Heroes was an excellent cause particularly as our armed forces are so frequently in the news at the moment.

"The display has also encouraged families to ask for donations in lieu of flowers in memory of their loved ones to go to the charity."

## Join in the Big Sing

THE ORGANISERS of the popular Big Sing have lined up another exhilarating workshop for budding singers next weekend.

Dee Jarlett and Ali Orbaum, leaders of the Gasworks Choir in Bristol are coming to Toddington Village Hall to give a one day workshop called Pop and Passion! on Saturday (May 22).

The event gives people the chance to learn simple, yet stunning songs in four-part harmony.

Dee and Ali teach all their arrangements by ear so participants do not need to be able to read music to take part - simply turn up and have a good sing.

The Big Sing takes place from 10.30am until 4.30pm with the doors opening at 10am for tea and coffee.

Tickets are £20 including refreshments but singers need to bring lunch.

To pre-book tickets call 01386 882 889 or e-mail [alice@naturalvoice.net](mailto:alice@naturalvoice.net) for a booking form.

For more information on the Gasworks Choir log on to [www.gasworkschoir.co.uk](http://www.gasworkschoir.co.uk) or [www.singyoursocksoff.co.uk](http://www.singyoursocksoff.co.uk).

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