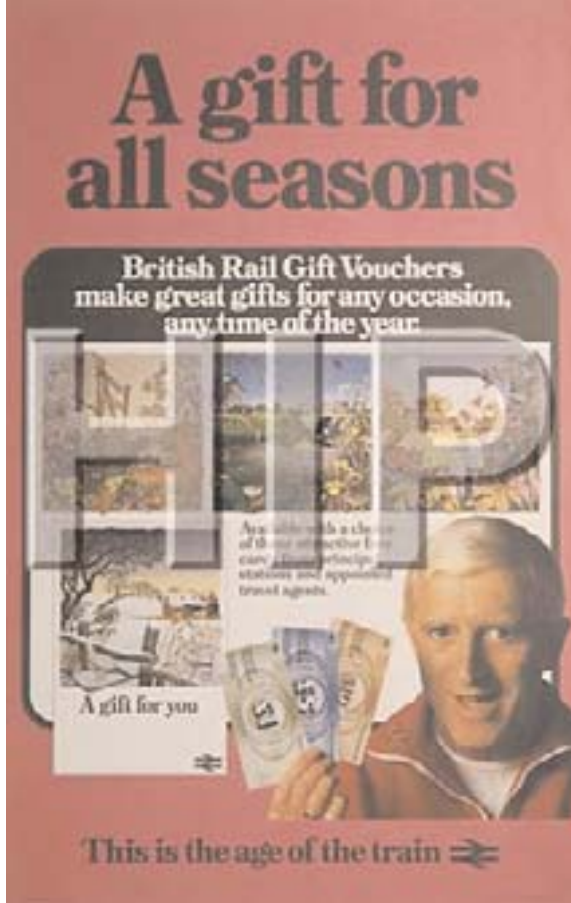




Jimmy Savile was helping to promote the benefits of rail travel as long ago as 1975, in the poster, left, which can still be seen on the National Railway Museum's website at www.nrm.org.uk/ In the poster right, dating from 1982, he is advertising BR's range of gift vouchers.



The age of the train?



The railways looked more modern and forward-looking in 1975, as this poster shows, than they do now. It's a terrible indictment of the Tories who brought us a botched privatisation and Labour which has waited seven years before getting to grips with the basic problems

TV personality and DJ Jimmy Savile joined forces with Arriva Trains Northern to help celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

Sir Jimmy joined actor Brian Blessed – who came to national attention in Z Cars – at Ilkley station on 30 January.

Arriva runs trains on the Leeds-Settle-Carlisle route which provides excellent access to many parts of the national park. Arriva donated 55 free rail tickets for a VIP day-out to celebrate the anniversary launch.

“Rail is an ideal way to get into the park,” said Arriva’s Simon Godfrey. “We hope many more people will be encouraged to public transport to get out and take advantage of the stunning scenery that the Yorkshire Dales have to offer.

“We are delighted to support the 50th anniversary in such a practical way.”

The Yorkshire Dales national park was created in 1954 from 12,000 square miles of land.

The image of the railway in the 1970s and 1980s was probably better than it is now.

The private companies that took control of our national

assets in the 1990s have failed to promote it as effectively as British Rail.

The massive network benefits of the railways have been virtually thrown away and the large amounts of money that have been wasted have also given some unscrupulous politicians the chance to challenge whether the railway deserves proper investment.

We are now in the absurd situation where the Strategic Rail Authority is having to justify the railway’s very existence, when it should be given the necessary funds to expand the network to cope with more diverted traffic from the roads.

A whole series of relatively small scale projects is waiting for the go-ahead but instead the Government is wasting money on ever more discredited road building and even attempting, to pile absurdity on to absurdity, converting existing railways into busways.

Railfuture lottery

Winners for December: DJ Barr, Harrogate £56, John Barfield E16 £35, Bill Stoneham, Maidstone £21, D Fifer, Corley £14, R Burrows, Hassocks £7, S J Vatcher, Teddington £7.

Railwatch

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is edited by Robert Stevens and Ray King, 4 Christchurch Square, London E9 7HU

Tel 020 8985 8548

Fax 020 8985 8212

editor@railwatch.org.uk

To subscribe to Railwatch, send £5 (cheque payable to Railwatch) to: Alan Cocker, 11 Franklin Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP3 9DX

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Contact: Robert Stevens

info@railfuture.org.uk
020 7249 5533

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Tel: 01223 232709



is an independent voluntary campaign group.
Room 206, The Colourworks, 2 Abbot Street, London E8 3DP
Tel 020 7249 5533
Fax 020 7254 6777
Website
<http://www.railfuture.org.uk>

General enquiries: John Lee, The Birches, Eye Lane, East Rudham, Norfolk PE31 8RH
Tel 01485 528088 (and fax)
john.lee@rdsadmin.freewire.co.uk

Media enquiries: Chairman Peter Lawrence, 3 Hellesdon Road, Norwich NR6 5EB
Tel 01603 627217
peter.lawrence@paston.co.uk

Policy officer: Mike Crowhurst, 33 Station Court, Aberforth Road, Garforth, Leeds LS25 2QQ
Tel 0113 286 4844

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New members and membership queries: Railfuture, 13 Arnhill Road, Gretton, Corby NN17 3DN
medieval@leisurelearning.co.uk