

# THE ROCKET



## Thomas Elliot Harrison

On 25th November 2008 over 50 people attended the launch of Trust's latest publication at the NE Mining Institute - a booklet celebrating the life of one of the industry's leading lights.

Thomas Elliot (TE) Harrison was a contemporary of Stephenson and his achievements are highlighted in the book Thomas Elliot Harrison (1808-1888) Founder and Engineer of the North Eastern Railway, by John Addyman and Bill Fawcett.

Born in London, Harrison was brought up in the Sunderland area - a plaque in his memory was unveiled at his former home in Whitburn in September 2008 - and was involved in a number of major North East rail projects.

These included working with Stephenson on the Stanhope & Tyne Railway, as engineer-in-chief for the Newcastle & Berwick Railway and the North Eastern Railway.

He was also responsible for designing the Victoria viaduct which crosses the Wear and the Durham Junction Railway.

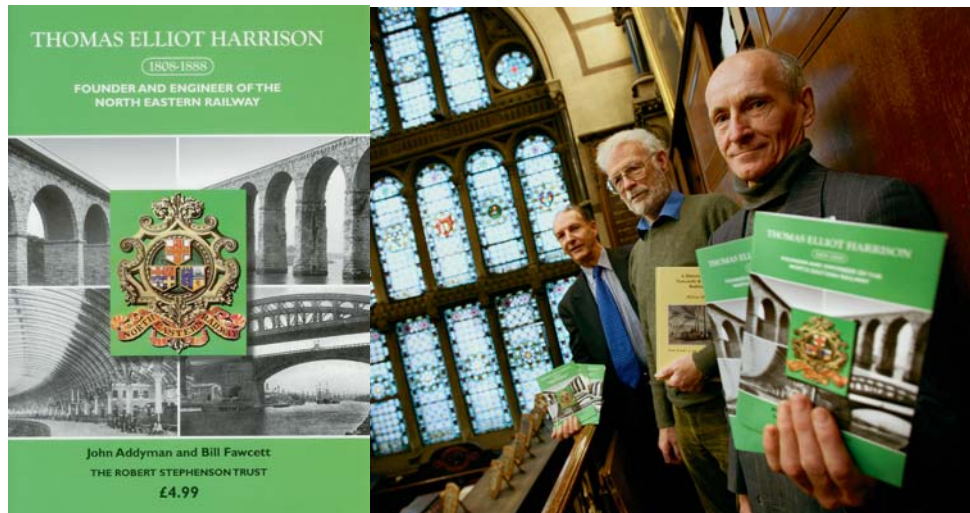
Supported by ICE North East, the book, published by the Robert Stephenson Trust, is priced at £4.99 plus postage and packaging. (But available to 'Friends' for £5 including p and p)

Bob Longridge, Chairman of The Trust, said " T E Harrison remains undeservedly little known, despite having been one of the North East's leading engineers and playing a pivotal role in developing the regions's railways. with the 200th anniversary of his birth this year, activities such as the launch of this book have helped raise his profile and I hope they go some way towards rectifying that"

Bob (on left below) went on to express gratitude to ICE for supporting the project and congratulated the Authors Bill Fawcett, (centre) and John Addyman (right) on the publication. Also launched by NERA at the same time was the authors book 'The history of the Newcastle Carlisle Railway'

*36 pages softback - price £4.99 plus p+p  
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*Can be obtained directly from the Trust by contacting either by telephone 0191 222 0905 or by email to robert-stephensontrust.com or rstrust@hotmail.com*



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The Newsletter of the Robert Stephenson Trust - February 2009

## Stephenson's Works, 20 South Street

I have some very disappointing news to give you. Despite our best endeavours it has not proved possible to reach an understanding with the owner of 20 South Street (Silverlink Properties Ltd) to cap the potential financial burden which we judged would fall on the Trust if we continued with our occupation of Stephenson's Works beyond March 2009. By the end of the current financial year we estimate the Trust will have spent £36,000 but only generated £12,000 income. No two years are alike but without a reasonable certainty of greater income and much lower costs, Trustees had to put the future viability of the Trust before other considerations - we are statutorily bound to do so.

You may like to have some more detail about all this. When we were able to let the Boiler Shop space we had a rental income of £40,000. This year that possibility was closed to us for two reasons: Silverlink's planning application to develop the Stephenson Quarter (which was approved on 14th November 2008) meant that prospective tenants were aware of the likelihood of building work in the vicinity, with restricted access; but the main problem was the negotiations over the Trust's lease and the new rental

demand of £140,000. The landlord would not allow us to let any part of the building until the lease issue was settled.

We sought advice from experts in contract law and were told the terms of the original lease (dating back to 1988) could not be overturned. Without boring you with the detail, rent had to be assessed as if it was a cleared site! Unbelievable I know, but that is where we stood. Our solicitor told us that unless we could find that amount per year we had no alternative but to surrender our lease (which could have run until 2054).



Those of you who have ever rented property will know that giving up a lease is not a simple matter of providing notice. The landlord can (and usually does) check the state of the building and call for any defects to be made good. Again the terms of our lease were onerous. Not only were we required to renovate 20 South St but to maintain it in a good condition. The sur-



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veyor appointed by Silverlink identified a long list of what were relatively minor works (eg pointing, brick replacements, roof slates and glazing panels) but which he estimated would cost some £67,000! Fortunately our Trustee architect Jim Coulson was able to obtain quotes allowing the tasks to be completed for much less than that, but part of our high expenditure this year reflects this work. An old building will always be expensive to maintain; and until the surveyor checks again after our departure, we shall not know the final bill.



There is one more aspect with which to acquaint you. During consideration of the planning application the City Council pressed Silverlink to recognise the importance of 20 South Street in a tangible way. It was agreed that part of the building would be used for heritage purposes for 5 years (no dates were specified). Informally, the developer indicated a willingness to allow the Trust to remain in occupation of the offices on a licence for the next 3-5 years, at a peppercorn rent; but in the Trust's view this alone was not enough. Opening to the public carries costs, not least insurance (£5k),

heating, cleaning, service charges for the fire and security systems, lift maintenance and so on. Where was our income to come from? We receive no grant from the City towards running costs and it has been made clear that is not going to change.

At our most recent Board meeting on 28th January it was resolved to abandon our attempts to stay in 20 South Street and to vacate by 27th February. This will mean a lot of work in taking down and packing. We intend to place the bulk of our pictures and furniture in store for the time being. The Northern Mining Institute, with which we have close ties, has kindly agreed to take most of our book collection and to provide some work space for us in their magnificent library. Sadly, we cannot control what happens to items which have been on loan to us, of which the grasshopper-type beam engine made for Robert Stephenson & Co. in 1823 is the most precious. Its owner, the Birmingham Museum of Arts & Science, is willing for it to remain in the north, and Beamish is the most probable destination. There is a tacit understanding that it could return to Newcastle at some future date.

### Where next?

Is this the end of the Trust? Far from it. Even without a building we have much we can aim to achieve. The protection and renovation of 20 South Street was the initial spur, but not our sole purpose. The promotion of Robert Stephenson's life and work is a core task which can be approached in many ways. This year is the 150 anniversary



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## TORNADO 60163

Locomotive Tornado 60163 completed her first passenger trip on the main line on 31 January 2009, a return trip from York to Newcastle, via Darlington and Durham. This would see Tornado repeating the route of the last tour hauled by the last surviving original Peppercorn A1, 60145 St. Mungo, 42 years previously. The first Peppercorn Pioneer train carried 500 passengers in a rake of 13 carriages.

By hauling various A1 Trust railtours charters and other activities, Tornado will begin to recoup the estimated £800,000 debt remaining from the project, which cost around £3 million.

With a shorter rake of 11 coaches compared with the original Peppercorn A1's usage, it is expected that Tornado will achieve contemporary mainline operating speeds. Theoretically capable of

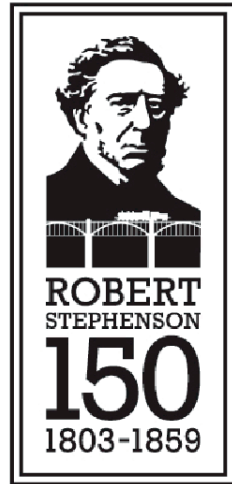
100 mph (160 km/h), Tornado will be limited to a top speed of 90 mph (140 km/h), making it the fastest operational steam locomotive on the UK main line.

Tornado wears the historic Apple Green livery of LNER, although with 'British Railways' on the tender, the first livery worn by 30 members of the original 49 strong Peppercorn A1 class. The original locomotives entered service with the nationalised British Railways, which absorbed the LNER and other private railway companies in 1948. The original A1 class were all scrapped by 1966 after a relatively short service life, after the railway Modernisation Plan of the 1950s called for the replacement of steam with modern traction comprising both diesel and electric locomotives.





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## Commemorating a Great Man

Since September 2008 regular monthly meetings have been held in Newcastle and Berwick with the aim of developing and coordinating a programme of events associated with commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the death of Robert Stephenson. Meeting attendance at both centres has been from a wide range of organisations all of whom have embraced the the coordinating objectives. The Newcastle meetings which have been held at 20 South Street have been convened by the Institution of Civil Engineers and chaired by Newcastle City Council. The Trust is also represented at the Berwick meetings where an equally imaginative series of events is planned. A comprehensive list of events will be published in June by the Institution of Civil Engineers and this programme booklet will be circulated to friends in due course. The following list details early events and highlights others.

### Outline Programme

21st April	Talk	'The Art of Robert Stephenson'	Coxlodge
23rd to 25th May	Exhibition	'Rbt Stephenson's Berwick Connection'	Berwick
23rd May	Lecture	'Who Needs a bridge?'	Berwick
27th to 28th May	Exhibition	Berwick Guild Hall	Berwick
27th May	Lecture	Rbt Stephenson by Prof Michael Bailey	Berwick
28th May	Excursion	Steam trail	Berwick
2nd August	Guided Walk	Norham Station	Norham
26th August	Lecture	Newcastle Berwick Railway	Berwick
29th August	Drama	The Railway children	Berwick
29th August	Lecture	Local Railway development	Berwick
August	Children activities	Family Days Locomotion	Shildon
August	Children activities	Family Days Stephenson Museum	Shire
9th September	Lecture	Prof Michael Bailey	Newcastle
12th/13th Sept.	Open Days	Heritage properties with Stephenson link	Various
28th September	Film	High Level Bridge repairs	Newcastle
8th Sept -21st Oct.	Exhibition	London Birmingham Railway drawings	Newcastle
TBC	Open days	Dial cottage	Killingwrth
TBC	Lecture	High speed rail link	Berwick
12th October	Weath Laying	Anniversary of death of Rbt. Stephenson	Westmnstr
15th November	Lecture	'Rbt Stephenson' by John Addyman	Newcastle
17th November	Lecture	'Rbt Stephenson - Mechanical Engineer	Newcastle

Further events are in the planning stage and 'up to date information can be obtained from Michael Taylor. [jmichaewltaylor@btinternet.com](mailto:jmichaewltaylor@btinternet.com)

A brass over Rbt's grave, designed by Sir Gilbert Scott, shows him in Doctor of Civil Law dress with his arms folded. The inscription reads: "SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF ROBERT STEPHENSON M.P. D.C.L. F.R.S. etc. LATE PRESIDENT OF THE INSTITUTION OF CIVIL ENGINEERS WHO DIED 12th OCTOBER A.D. 1859 AGED 56 YEARS".



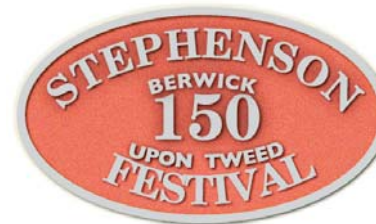
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## A Logo for Berwick

Recently the Trust was asked to express a preference between a number of design options for a Logo to promote the Berwick commemorations of the 150th anniversary of the death of Robert Stephenson. Let us know what you think.



Option 1



Option 2



Option3



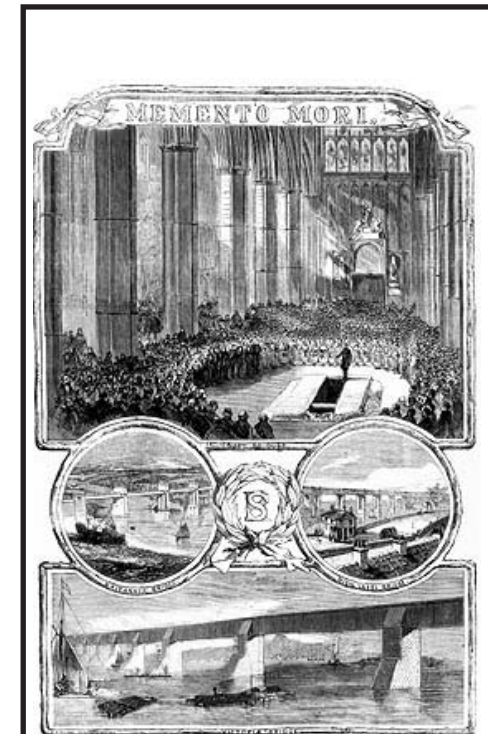
Option 4



Option 5



Option6



Robert Stephenson's funeral service in Westminster Abbey, 23 October 1859 (from the Illustrated London News, 29 October 1859)

