Bahamas 45596 Jubilee Class Steam Locomotive to

'Jubilee' class steam locomotive - 45596 Bahamas

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has awarded a grant of £775,800 to the Bahamas Locomotive Society (BLS), a registered charity based at Ingrow on the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway, to restore its 1934 built Jubilee class main-line steam locomotive 45596 BAHAMAS to running order.

The engine, of both local and national significance, is now 78 years old, and was the last steam engine to be used by British Rail to experiment on in BR's attempts to improve the performance of its fleet of steam engines. This was the fitting, in May 1961, of a unique double chimney and blastpipe.

The BLS will contribute a further £130,000 to the restoration project, to be run entirely by volunteers. John Hillier, the BLS spokesman responsible for the bid, said: "We are extremely grateful to the HLF for endorsing our plans to enable this famous steam locomotive to be restored to running order once more. We are also delighted that the restoration of an historic coach which will provide a unique setting for an educational and exhibition resource centre will be sited adjacent to our museum at Ingrow.

"The project will provide employment, training and skill development opportunities at our contractors and at our base on the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway. We would also like to acknowledge the support of our partners and countless individuals in helping us progress our plans towards a successful conclusion."

Fiona Spiers, Head of HLF Yorkshire and the Humber, said : "This project will deliver high quality benefits and value for Lottery money. The project offers lots of exciting opportunities for employment, volunteers, training and education in addition to wider public participtation in the restoration of this magnificent steam engine. Once it is restored, we hope it will also drive further tourism to Yorkshire."

BAHAMAS is currently on view inside the National Railway Museum at York, but in mid-April is due to return to Ingrow where work on the overhaul will begin. It is hoped that the engine will be operational again by early 2017.

In support of the project BLS has developed several partnership arrangements with groups such as Welcome to Yorkshire, the Great Yorkshire Brewery and the Bahamas Tourist Office. It has a long term tenancy agreement with the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway, one of its other partners.

Notes to editors

The Bahamas Locomotive Society is based at Ingrow Loco on the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway, its headquarters, workshop and museum which achieved accredited status in 2009.

45596 “Bahamas” was built in Glasgow (North British Locomotive Works) in December 1934 and entered service for the London Midland and Scottish Railway in January 1935. It ran in excess of 1.4 million miles before it was withdrawn from service in July 1966 when it was based at Stockport.

It was bought (£3,000) in September 1967 and was then restored to running condition once again by Leeds-based Hunslet Engine Company (September 1967 – March 1968).

British Rail ceased using steam engines in August 1968 after which none were used on BR tracks until October 1971. 45596 BAHAMAS was then one of the few engines selected by BR to run a series of embryonic steam trips in 1972. After a further overhaul, this time undertaken by BLS members, it ran faultlessly until 1997 since when it has been in store. For further information visit the BLS Website.

Further information:

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