

British Railways in the 1950s

How good is your knowledge of British Railways (BR) in the 1950s? Just for fun, here are a dozen questions to test your grey matter!

Skip to page 2 for the answers.

The questions

1. On what date in 1951 did the Harrogate to Pateley Bridge line close?
2. What were the 'Flying Bricks'?
3. What famous film was made in 1952 using the railway line between Limpley Stoke and Camerton?
4. On what date in 1953 was the line between York and Pickering via Gilling closed?
5. On what date in 1954 did a full passenger and freight service start on the Woodhead line?
6. What was the significance of 3rd June 1955 to BR passengers?
7. In 1956, what livery experiment was applied to the front of DMUs (Diesel Multiple Units) to aid visibility of the sets to track workers?
8. What was the running number and nickname of the 0-10-0 locomotive built for banking duties on the Lickey Incline?
9. In 1957, BR introduced a new class of rolling stock, known as a 'GUV'. What is 'GUV' short for?
10. On what date in 1958 did Gatwick Airport station open?
11. What was the name of the blue paint used on the blue and white livery of the Midland Pullmans?
12. What was the name of the font used for the BR lettering on locomotive tenders and tanks?

The answers

1. The Harrogate to Pateley Bridge line was closed on 2nd April 1951.
2. 'Flying Bricks' were an experimental lightweight diesel passenger train, built in a similar manner to the much-despised latter day Pacer trains.
3. The film made in 1952 using the railway line between Limpley Stoke and Camerton was 'The Titfield Thunderbolt'.
4. The line between York and Pickering via Gilling was closed on 2nd February 1953.
5. A full passenger and freight service started on the Woodhead line on 14th June 1954.
6. On 3rd June 1955 BR abolished 3rd class for passengers, which was then known as 2nd class.
7. 'Cats Whiskers' were applied to the front of DMUs in 1956 to aid visibility of the sets to track workers.
8. 58100 was the running number of the 0-10-0 locomotive built for banking duties on the Lickey Incline, and its nickname (or should that be her nickname?) was Big Bertha.
9. The new class of rolling stock introduced by BR in 1957 was called a General Utility Van.
10. Gatwick Airport station opened on 28th May 1958.
11. The name of the blue paint used on the blue and white livery of the Midland Pullmans was called Nanking.
12. Gill Sans was the name of the font used for the BR lettering on locomotive tenders and tanks.