

GWR honours WWII codebreaker Alan Turing

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Great Western Railway (GWR) has honoured World War Two codebreaker Alan Turing by including his name on its popular 'Trainbow' Intercity Express Train.

Members of Alan's family officially named the train at London Paddington station today (Thursday 26 May). The ceremony also saw the unveiling of GWR's new 'Trainbow' livery celebrating the LGBTQ+ community.

Alan famously led a team in 'Hut 8' at the Government Code and Cypher School (GC&CS) at Bletchley Park, Britain's codebreaking centre during the war.

In 1942 he and his team cracked the vitally important and most difficult German Naval Enigma. His work in the field of computer science was groundbreaking and paved the way for modern computing.

- **SWR launch new 'trainbow' to mark Pride month**
- **Avanti West Coast announces the name of its new Pride Train - Progress**
- **GWR staff wear their rainbow colours with Pride**

Alan is also an admired role model within the LGBTQ+ community and his legacy has helped change social attitudes in Britain.

Although laws during the 1950s made it illegal for him to be openly gay, Alan did not shy away from his sexuality. He was arrested for gross indecency which resulted in a sentence of chemical castration.



Two years later Alan died of cyanide poisoning. Following the launch of an internet campaign in 2009, he was granted a posthumous royal pardon four years later. A subsequent legal amendment, known as 'Turing's Law', pardoned 65,000 other convicted gay and bisexual men.

'Trainbow' was first unveiled in 2018 to support Pride events across the network and demonstrate GWR's support for the LGBTQ+ community.

Its livery has now been updated to include black, brown, light blue, light pink and white, bringing focus on inclusion for trans individuals, marginalised people of colour and those living with HIV/AIDS.

Intercity Express Train 800008 also pays a nod to the World War Two codebreakers and their mastery of palindromes. And, as you might expect with something related to Alan Turing, there is more to the design of the new livery than first meets the eye.

Ian's niece, Inagh Payne, speaking on behalf of the family, said: "Alan was very special to us and we are so incredibly proud of everything he did. Despite not being fond of neither fuss nor social occasions, he would have been delighted to have a train named after him.

"We have our own fond memories of him as a loving and caring uncle and it is wonderful to see this tribute

to him, and that he is remembered, and his life celebrated by so many people.”

GWR Managing Director, Mark Hopwood, said: “It is an honour for us at GWR to name this Intercity Express Train after Alan Turing as we continue to remember those who gave so much during World War Two.

“We at Great Western Railway have a long history of naming trains after Great Westerners, the past and present heroes from across our network.

“It is also great to see this fabulous new Trainbow livery, celebrating not only Alan Turing but also the LGBTQ+ community across the GWR and indeed our colleagues within the rail industry.”

Plymouth City Councillor for Compton, Cllr Dylan Tippetts, said: “Thank you so much to GWR for always standing with the whole LGBTQ+ community and celebrating our diversity; the things that bring us together and not those that divide us.”

Research Historian at Bletchley Park, Dr David Kenyon, said: “It gives me great pleasure to add the endorsement of Bletchley Park Trust to the naming of this locomotive. We hope that it will remind travellers of Turing himself, but also of the thousands of others who worked alongside him to bring signals intelligence to Allied commanders and help bring victory in the Second World War.”

GCHQ Historian Dr David Abrutat said: “Turing’s scientific genius helped to shorten the war and influence the technology we still use today. Today illustrates his status as one of the most iconic LGBTQ+ figures in the world.

“Turing was embraced for his brilliance and persecuted for being gay. His legacy is a reminder of the value of embracing all aspects of diversity, but also the work we still need to do to become truly inclusive.”