

# Show-stopper guest for Severn Valley Railway's Spring Steam Gala

January 27, 2023



The [Severn Valley Railway](#) has released the name of the show-stopping guest locomotive that it has secured for its Spring Steam Gala. The iconic 4079 'Pendennis Castle' will be headlining the heritage railway's Great Western Railway-themed celebration between 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> April.

This will be the first time ever in its 99-year history that the locomotive will appear in passenger service on a UK heritage line, and it looks set to attract a great deal of attention, especially with the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Castle class this year.

One of the earliest examples of the 4-6-0 Castle class, and one of just three currently in service, 'Pendennis' has stolen headlines throughout its history. In 1925, it took part in trials against Sir Nigel Gresley's new Pacifics, including 4472 'Flying Scotsman'. 'Pendennis' claimed all the glory, out-performing its larger competitors very convincingly.

Many years later, and after ownership had changed hands a number of times, it was reunited with 'Flying Scotsman' on the other side of the world. The two locos operated alongside each other in Perth in 1989, at

the culmination of a tour to mark Australia's bicentennial celebrations.

Since 2000, the loco has been back on British soil, at Didcot Railway Centre, in the ownership of the Great Western Society. Following a lengthy overhaul, it entered traffic there last year.

"We are thrilled to be hosting a named engine with the prestige of 'Pendennis Castle'," said Duncan Ballard, the SVR's head of steam engineering. "It will prove a magnificent figurehead for our GWR-themed Gala, celebrating 100 years since the grouping of the 'Big Four' companies. We have an extremely strong working relationship with the Great Western Society, and are honoured they've chosen the SVR for 'Pendennis's' debut away from Didcot."

The visitor will be appearing with a further, yet-to-be-announced guest, along with 4930 'Hagley Hall', 7812 'Erlestoke Manor', 7714 newly painted into BR livery, and other members of the SVR's home fleet.

Tickets for the Spring Steam Gala went on sale on Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> January, from 10am, along with tickets for all the SVR's 2023 Gala events, standard running days and Santa trains. There's more information at [svr.co.uk](https://svr.co.uk)

*Photo credit: Duncan Ballard*