



The creation of Metro-land

WHEN the world's first underground railway was built 150 years ago the plan was to ease the traffic gridlock between West London and the City. It ended up transforming London.

The previously rural areas north-west of the capital opened up by the original Underground network became known as Metro-land. The name was coined in 1915 by the Metropolitan Railway's publicity department, which set up a company to develop housing and shops along the line. Londoners could escape the crowded city streets for a slice of country living within easy reach of the capital.

From then on, Metro-land was the key word in advertising slogans drawn up to entice workers 'from cramped homes in central London into a rural paradise', where detached houses 'built of the finest materials' could be bought for under £700 (£36,000 today).

Most of Metro-land was developed between the two world wars and its 'new havens' were said to have created a distinctive atmosphere.

The future

Work is currently under way to improve the Tube network. New air-conditioned, walk-through carriages are being introduced on a number of lines, featuring easier access, better audio and the latest visual information systems. New signalling technology is also helping to increase capacity on lines by enabling the new trains to run faster and more frequently.

This work is part of the wider Tube improvement plan to improve trains and stations, increase capacity and make the network more accessible.

■ For more information, visit tfl.gov.uk/tip. To find out more about Metro-land, go to www.ltmuseum.co.uk

Family fun day out in August

Step back in time and find out what it was like travelling by train during the Victorian era at a special three-day event at the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre in Aylesbury next month.

Once the furthest outpost of the Metropolitan line, the family fun event marks the 150th birthday of the Tube.

Visitors will be able to ride in vintage locomotives, travel on a miniature railway and see Churchill's Royal Carriage. Plus, there will be museum displays, exhibitions, films, stories and

craft workshops, as well as a transport-themed bouncy castle. 'Discover Forgotten Metro-land' is on August 3, 4 and 7. Family tickets and early booking discounts are available.

There are direct trains from Marylebone station to Aylesbury Vale Parkway, and a free vintage bus service from Aylesbury Vale Parkway station to the centre.

■ For more information, or to book, go online to www.ltmuseum.co.uk or call 0207 565 7298

Poetry in motion on the Tube

LOOK out for a new set of Poems on the Underground on Tube trains over the next few weeks.

The latest collection reflects places and sights across the capital as imagined by poets spanning two centuries.

The collection includes works by William Blake, R.P. Lister, Thom Gunn, Andrew Waterman, Francis Thompson and Grace Nichols.

Poems on the Underground was launched in 1986. The verses are displayed on posters in 3,000 advertising spaces in train carriages across London, and are usually changed three times a year.

It was the idea of American writer Judith Chernaik,

who wanted to bring poetry to a wider audience. She said: 'London life and its pulsing transport network have often inspired our greatest poets. I hope both commuters and tourists will enjoy this latest set of poems.'

■ To celebrate the Tube's 150th anniversary, a new edition of the Poems on the Underground book has been published by Penguin. It contains many of the verses that have been displayed in Tube carriages since the programme started. It is available for £16.99 from the London Transport Museum shop in Covent Garden, and online at www.ltmuseumshop.co.uk

Tube improvement plan – post weekend update



Weekend closures enabled the following improvements to be carried out:

- 320 metres of track was replaced at Mile End on the District and Hammersmith & City lines in preparation for new, air-conditioned trains to be introduced next year
- 500 metres of drainage was improved between Hornchurch and Upminster on the

District line, which will ensure continued service reliability

- New signalling on the Edgware branch of the Northern line was tested. Ballast, timbers and sleepers were also replaced, and maintenance work was carried out on points and crossings

■ For details about how closures may affect your journey this weekend, see Friday's MetroTravel page

Keep up with the improvement plan and how it might affect you at tfl.gov.uk

London travel advice: plan your journey now

tfl.gov.uk

24 hour travel information
0343 222 1234*

tfl.gov.uk/socialmedia

London Travelwatch
London's transport watchdog
call 020 3176 2999, or visit
www.londontravelwatch.org.uk

*Service and network charges apply.
See tfl.gov.uk/terms for details.

Newspapers left on the Tube can jam doors and cause delays to your journey. Take your newspaper with you or put it in a recycling bin.