

GCR ROLLING STOCK TRUST

PRESS INFORMATION FROM GRC ROLLING STOCK TRUST

Date: 16 November 2018

Contact: Richard Tilden Smith - gcrrollingstocktrust@live.co.uk

Kate Tilley: 07814 803184

Ancient Rail Carriage Armistice Tribute in Edinburgh/Sheffield Road Dash

Our immaculately restored ancient WW1 Memorial carriage left Nunckley Hill last Thursday for a round trip of over 600 miles to Leith, Edinburgh, to take part in an emotional Eve of Armistice Commemoration service there, returning via a Remembrance Sunday service in Sheffield to Nunckley Hill Museum on Monday morning where once again it is on display. This was the first major public experience outside the County being away just 896 hours, carried there and back for its owner and 15-year restorer, GCR Rolling Stock Trust, on a low loader of specialist Duncan Milner Haulage.

On the Eve of the Armistice Centenary.....

Saturday 10 November 2018 - On the eve of the Centenary of the Armistice of the Great War 1918 - What a highly charged day. Leith families turned out in hundreds to experience for themselves the type of carriage in which Grandfathers, great Uncles and friends had died at Quintinshill, in the worst rail disaster ever, in May 1915. That the carriage built in 1888 and of the type making up a troop train of just under 500 troops of the 1/7 Battalion The Royal Scots, raised in Leith, due to signalling error, had crashed causing so many deaths is not so much history. But, in front of the Malmaison Hotel in the heart of Leith's dockland, a last-remaining carriage of the type today – restored over a 15-year meticulous rebuild - brought the whole cruel reality of loss to life for so many, old and very young, to Leith families where almost everyone was affected. A staggering 225 souls perished in the blazing inferno of wooden bodied carriages when the high-pressure gas lighting tanks split and burst into a massive fire ball. Just 50 troops who had started that journey survived unhurt.

Why did this carriage come to Leith? The owner of the 6 wheel, 130 year-old carriage, the GCR Rolling Stock Trust had dedicated the carriage to the 435 dead, mutilated and wounded of The Royal Scots regiment. This was to be the first visit out of its museum in the East Midlands after completion to museum finish and it seemed most fitting to mark the Armistice in this most positive way, to support the families of Leith in their remembrance of such a massive loss. To some it was totally overwhelming, to the others, living history to show their youngsters.

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Meticulously organised with exceptional precision by Col. Robert Watson OBE, senior officers of the former Royal Scots Regiment, Brigadier Lowther, and a host of the people of Leith, with the Lord Provost of Edinburgh of Edinburgh and Leith's own MP Diedre Brock led the tribute, with haunting piper's lament and the Lowland Band of The Royal Scots, cadets from all the services and some 400 of all ages paying their respects on the waterfront at the Shore, Leith. Two Trustees who had led the carriage rescue and restoration from total wreck to museum gem laid wreaths in remembrance. This is a charity actively giving back to the public its appreciation for their generous support.

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Note to Editor - This carriage is currently on display at the Nunckley Hill Museum on the Mountsorrel branch, off the Leicestershire section of the Great Central Railway, where it is on display for all to view.