

Press Release

11 November 2007

'Joining together' in new rail company



Lynn and John Mackintosh-Braisby with CrossCountry commercial director Catherine Mason (centre)

The start of the new CrossCountry rail franchise will be particularly meaningful for one West Midlands couple.

John Mackintosh-Braisby, a driver with Central Trains and his wife, Lynn, a train manager with Virgin CrossCountry, find themselves working for the same train company from this weekend, when they both transfer to the new Birmingham-based train operator - CrossCountry.

John and Lynn, who live in Willenhall, Walsall, met before Lynn had joined the rail industry. They married 11 years ago when John had already had 23 years experience as a train driver. One year later, Lynn joined him in the rail industry after taking up a vacancy in the staff canteen at Birmingham New Street, where John had his regular meal breaks. She moved on to Virgin Trains in 2000, where she worked as a senior catering steward for six months, before becoming a train manager.

John is a regular driver on the Cardiff-Nottingham services, and the Birmingham-Stansted Airport services. Lynn travels as far as Newcastle, Bournemouth and Plymouth looking after customers. Both are based at New Street station but will now find themselves going to work in the new CrossCountry uniform and working for the same company.

John said: "I look forward to being part of CrossCountry. As a driver I'm hoping to get to drive some different trains and on new routes. I've driven HSTs before and would like another chance to do so with them coming back into CrossCountry service from next year".

Lynn said: "I love HSTs as well and look forward to working on them again. Maybe one day I will be managing passengers on a train that John is driving! It would be quite a change from when I used to serve him lunch in the canteen".

Catherine Mason, CrossCountry's commercial director, said:

"CrossCountry is all about its people. John and Lynn are part of a wider 'joining together' of people from different backgrounds into our new company.

"We welcome John and Lynn, and many other dedicated professionals like them into CrossCountry, as we start to work together to deliver a high quality train service for our customers.

CrossCountry's innovations, which are planned for introduction within the first two years of the franchise, feature the following benefits for travellers:

- 35 per cent increase in seating capacity in critical evening peak on principal routes
- at-seat catering on all routes for all passengers and not just First Class
- radical improvements in ticketing and reservation booking, including home printing of tickets and tickets by mobile phone, with discounted tickets available much closer to the start of travel
- investment in improved rolling stock, with all other trains refurbished to the standard of the popular Voyagers
- the reintroduction of HSTs to provide 550-seat trains on busy routes
- Wi-Fi available to all Voyager and HST passengers, free in First Class.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

- Photograph attached (from left): Lynn Mackintosh-Braisby, Catherine Mason (CrossCountry commercial director), John Mackintosh-Braisby. For higher resolution images please contact us.
- From 11 November customers requiring timetable information should log on to www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk or call 0845 7 48 49 50. To purchase CrossCountry rail tickets call 0844 811 0124. Customers requiring special assistance or additional support when travelling should contact Journey Care on 0844 811 0125 (telephone) 0844 811 0126 (textphone).

- CrossCountry is part of Arriva plc. Arriva is one of the largest private sector providers of passenger transport in mainland Europe, employing more than 37,000 people and providing more than one billion passenger journeys every year.
- Arriva provides transport services including buses, trains, commuter coaches and water buses in nine European countries: Czech Republic, Denmark, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the UK. Operations in a tenth country, Poland, are due to start later this year.
- Arriva's rail services operate in Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK, with Polish services scheduled to start in December 2007.