

THE RHINELAND TOUR

(5 DAY TOUR BY LARGE EURO-COACH

and with no overnight travel)

Wednesday 2nd to Sunday 6th June, 2010



ALL INCLUSIVE FARE - £482.86

Hotel Single Room Supplement - £98 (Optional)

**In Order to Qualify for Members' Loyalty Discount on this Tour –
You must book by 19th March, with a Minimum Deposit of £120, and
the balance must be paid by 16th April.**

Our intention for this tour was to use a Minibus/Coach and call it the '*Rhineland Rapide*'. However, we then gave it further thought and concluded that we could address two of the more persistent requests of our members.

The first is timing. This is a tour we traditionally ran in late autumn, but many of our Members remarked that the first 'biting' winds of winter whilst standing on Gleis 6 of the Hbf or freight watching at Köln West, rather took the edge off the experience. On the basis that hypothermia is a 'cop' you can well do without, we have given the tour a summer 'slot'.

Secondly, for many years we have given thought to starting a tour in the morning and eliminating overnight travel. Previously, we have not taken the concept further on the basis that having to make an overnight stop so soon after arriving in Europe wasted a day and added one night's hotel accommodation to the cost. However, this year we have decided to 'trial' it on two medium distance tours. This is the first. The second will be the Paris tour later in the year. Perhaps it is appropriate that another '*STARS First*' occurs on a tour which was our first ever German tour 20 years ago!

The itinerary largely follows the format of previous Rhineland and Köln *Rapide* tours, includes a Free Day and a Day spent visiting probably the four most prolific locations in the area. On this popular tour, we visit the Main Depots and most local 'Hot Spots'.

TIMINGS

Out and return timings are set out at Timings Band 'B' – see page 8 of this brochure

ITINERARY

Day One - Wednesday 2nd June

We make an early departure from 'base' and work our way through the pick up points to Dover for a late afternoon ferry departure. We will make a stop for lunch at Maidstone Services on the way. After leaving Calais we head directly Brussels which will be our overnight stop. The Hotel faces Brussels Midi Station, which might warrant investigation before you 'turn in'.

Day Two - Thursday 3rd June

Perhaps last night the lure of your bed was stronger than the lure of Gare du Midi. No problem. A 10am departure means that you can enjoy an unhurried breakfast and still take in 2 hours of the morning 'peak' on the Station. Once under way we are direct to Köln, stopping only for a break at **Stolberg Hbf**. On arrival in the City our order is **Bw. Köln Gremberg**, a view of **Gremberg Rbf**, and **Eifeltor Gbf.Bw**. We then go directly to the hotel to arrive late afternoon. For this Tour we will stay at Leverkusen, but **Köln Hbf** is easily accessed in about 25 minutes on the 'S' Bahn. You are then free to keep your first vigil at the Hbf (stay as long

as you choose). One of the highlights will always be standing on the Hbf whilst the trains parade past you at roughly one every 90 seconds. Despite the introduction of the Class 644 'Talent' DMUs and Class 423 & 425 EMUs, not to mention ICE 3s, well over 50% of the trains are still loco hauled.

Day Three - Friday 4th June

A Free Day. The opportunity for you to 'take off' to wherever you wish. The options are considerable, and by making use of the very reasonable Nordrhein Westfalen Ticket (25 Euros - single ticket, or 34 Euros - group of up to 5), Dusseldorf, Essen and Dortmund are easy destinations. However, could you manage a full day on the Hbf? Perhaps you could if you mixed it with freight watching at Köln Sud or West.

Day Four - Saturday 5th June

Back to the Coach for a day of Depot visits. Once again, we believe we have chosen the pick of the 'bunch'. We start off with **Hagen Hbf** and then the nearby **Vorhalle Depot** and **Rbf SP**. We continue to **Bw Dortmund** and a view of **Dortmund Gbf**. Next up is **Wanne Eickel**, a very large Stabling Point where not only can a number of Railion locomotives can be found, but also locos of private ownership. One location we could not leave out of the itinerary comes next, **Bw Oberhausen Osterfeld Sud**, including the top yard where locomotives can be both stabled and stored. The day is concluded with a visit to **Oberhausen West**. We return to Köln late afternoon and sufficient time for a final 'stint' on the Hbf, or a good meal (or both!).

Day Five - Sunday 6th June

Before we leave the City we will visit **Bw. Köln Deutzerfeld**. On our run back to Calais we call at **Aachen West Gbf** and **Aachen Hbf**. Aachen is a location we visit frequently but, with the prospect of around 20 locomotives, it is not a location to miss.