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THURSFORD COLLECTION

VICTORY TO STEAM ONCE AGAIN!

Thursford announces restoration of Victory.



The Thursford Collection houses the world's largest collection of steam engines, organs, fairground carousels and tractors. The Mighty Wurlitzer is the fourth-largest theatre organ in Europe with a total of 1,339 pipes. Amongst the collection is Victory the showman's engine. Victory is currently being returned to steampable condition after many years dormant. The process began with a strip down and thorough boiler inspection. With that done and the full scope of works agreed, repairs to the boiler have now started (replacement stays and rivets, a new set of tubes). All steam fittings will be thoroughly

overhauled. The repaired boiler will be hydraulically tested to 1.5x working pressure and certificated for use. Attention will then turn to mechanical aspects and the main dynamo (mounted on the front and used to power the canopy lights), a new set of front tyres will also be fitted.

The vast majority of the work is being undertaken by Jamie Allen of Craftmaster Restorations at their premises in Over, Cambridgeshire. Work is being overseen by local traction engine owner and trustee of the Thursford Collection, Andrew Waling.

Jamie said, 'It has been an absolute honour and privilege to have been asked to tender for the Victory project in the first place and even more so that it has been entrusted to me to return it to steam. This engine being returned to steam is something that I and many others in the steam world never thought would happen. To be trusted with such a significant item of steam and fairground history is showing its challenges. The main being to disassemble the engine and repair and overhaul as necessary without damaging the patina of the paintwork and all round ascetics of this quite dominant and admired engine. This is the first project of not only this scale but importance for Craftmaster Restorations and what better way to showcase our abilities?! I'd like to thank the Thursford Collection for entrusting us with their flagship engine.'

Victory was collected by Andrew in September and work began in November 2022.

Craftmaster Restorations are working to have the engine completed for Steam Gala Day at Thursford on Sunday 2nd July 2023.

'I feel very privileged to head this project and am very positive about the future at Thursford and look forward to many happy years of steaming and the joy that Victory will bring,' said Andrew.

The boiler has been found to be in very good condition throughout with only minor work needed. The engine has come apart incredibly well and is a testament to how well it has been preserved. Victory was the 1st of its kind to be designed and built by Burrells of Thetford, these were known as the *Special scenic engines* and on the back of Victory, 21 other engines were built but only 12 have survived into preservation. This is a significant

milestone not only in the steam world but beyond. Out of all the scenics that have survived, all have been in steam at public events over the years, but to most people in the preservation world none have ever seen Victory outside let alone in steam. With Victory being returned to steam after nearly 40 years sitting dormant this is a very exciting new chapter not only for the Thursford Collection but also for the Cushing family.

‘Victory was purchased by my father, G.T Cushing in 1947 for preservation,’ said CEO John Cushing OBE, ‘it was one of three Thurston engines bought from Kings scrap merchants along with Alexandra and Unity. Victory was the first engine in the county to be painted for preservation in 1949 and although it steamed several times after this the work needed to bring the engine up to the correct standard for health and safety was too great. All of us here at Thursford are very excited that this project is taking place and are very much looking forward to seeing Victory in steam once again.’

Visitors to the Thursford Collection can also stop by the shopping village, home to the famous Christmas Shop and pantry and Thursford’s Garden Pavilion, one of North Norfolk’s leading Wedding venues. The luxurious, award-winning bed and breakfast Holly Lodge is also only a 3 minute walk away.

Project Victory should be completed by late May, early June 2023.

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For further information, interviews and press opportunities, please contact Emma on emma@thursford.com or 01328 878 477.