

## DVD press release



## Black Five

### The last days of steam

Three films by Paul Barnes that celebrate and regret the final days of steam on the railways – preserved by the BFI National Archive and newly re-mastered for DVD release to mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of steam in Britain

In 1968, enginemen faced the last months of steam haulage on Britain's mainline railways. For those who worked on the Black 5 locomotive the inevitable progress to diesels and electrics prompted mixed feelings.

**Black Five** (1968) directed by Paul Barnes, records their reminiscences as they faced this great change in their lives – of craftsmanship, camaraderie, and of the 'personality' of these great machines. The workers' comments are an elegy to a time gone by, to skills no longer needed, and they make a poignant background to the beautifully filmed images of the heavy iron beasts trundling their way to the end of the line.

*Black Five* is filmed around Carnforth station in Lancashire, a location which had been the setting for the archetypal railway romance, David Lean's *Brief Encounter* (1945) over 20 years earlier.

The DVD also contains two other short films by Paul Barnes. **The Painter and the Engines** (1967) follows painter David Shepherd's race against time to record on canvas the magic and romance of steam during the locomotives' last weeks at South London's Nine Elms sheds. **King George V** (1970) charts the history of the celebrated locomotive, which was taken out of service in 1965 but offered a length of siding at Bulmers of Hereford to continue running, in steam.

#### Special features

- Illustrated booklet containing newly commissioned essays and notes

**NB. Director Paul Barnes (also a radio presenter) is available for interview**

**Release date: 28 July 2008**

RRP £12.99 / cat. no. BFIVD778 / E

UK / 1968-1970 / col / 22 mins + 31 mins extra material / DVD-5 / original aspect ratio 4:3

BFI DVDs are available from the Filmstore at BFI Southbank, all good DVD retailers; by mail order from 020 7815 1350 or online at [www.bfi.org.uk/filmstore](http://www.bfi.org.uk/filmstore)

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Cont.../Notes to editors

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### **The 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of steam in Britain**

The popularity, versatility and sheer number of Black 5s guaranteed their survival to the very end of steam on British Rail – 11 August 1968 – when they were among the last steam locomotives in Britain to haul mainline passenger trains. A week later three Black 5s were among the locos chosen to haul the very last of the many special rail tours marking the end of BR steam – the much celebrated 'Fifteen Guinea Special'.

### **About the BFI**

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