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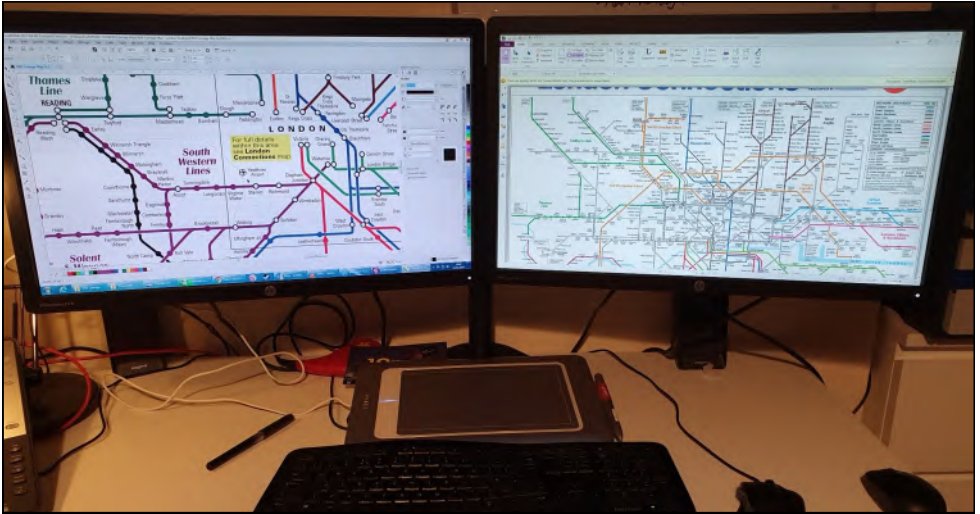
And if you wish, on again to any one of over 400 British Rail stations around London.

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The **LONDON CONNECTION THROUGH TICKET**





➔ **What happens when you combine some graphic design knowledge, a career on the railway and a cheeky idea to 'bring back' some of the elements that made up an iconic brand?**

In early 2017, a collector friend was bemoaning the high prices of railway memorabilia online and at auction. Over beers, we were trying to find a way to get hold of some fairly mundane and plentiful items that were definitely mass-produced back in the day, but were commanding 'stupid prices'.. particularly Network SouthEast items.

As with most 'good' ideas – and fuelled with a few glasses, I said – “I reckon I could recreate some stuff, based on photos...” At the same time, I was also working on planning for the annual Class 395 'Javelin' Railtour to raise money for the Royal British Legion...

and an idea began to form.

Initially we looked at carriage maps and posters, and in my research, stumbled on the NSERS website.

Mindful of copyright and not knowing how much source material had actually survived, I emailed the Brand Manager, Mr Shepherd and explained the situation. He was most gracious in his reply and over a few emails and phonecalls, I offered to digitally recreate the individual route brand logos, most of which only existed in photos or scans, but were not of a quality to reproduce as needed.

(As a side note, when I began my Driving career at Ilford Depot, a number of NSE Brand Logos were displayed in the conference room in the depot offices, all mounted on polished wooden boards.. I do wonder if they're still there nearly 20 years later!)

With most of the items that needed to be digitally recreated, the only source material was a photo of a map or a sign. Using a standard template based on known dimensions, I used Adobe Illustrator or Corel Draw to recreate the design in vector format, meaning that unlike a bitmap, the design could be enlarged without loss of quality. Items that were good enough to scan were converted to vector format using a very useful tool called 'Vector Magic', without which I would have been struggling for many more hours!



↑ *West Anglia Route Brand Recreation*

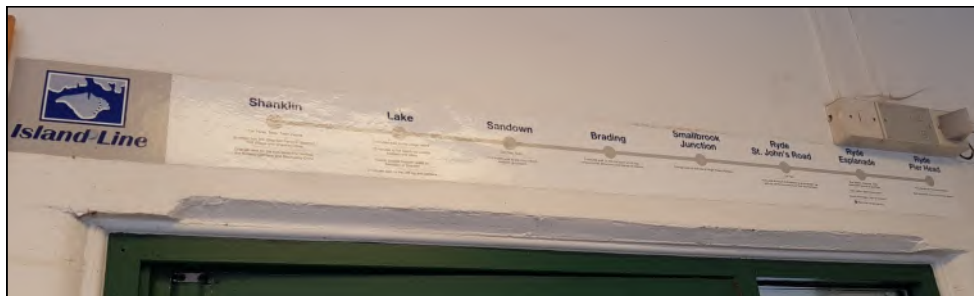
Carriage maps were initially based on scans or actual maps (some of which were in very poor condition) lent to me by their owners so I could measure, draw and recreate some of the icons and fonts. As luck would have it, British Rail and Network SouthEast had very strict design standards, and the fonts used back in the 1980s are still available today, although some of the NSE implementations regarding size and spacing are certainly non-standard!

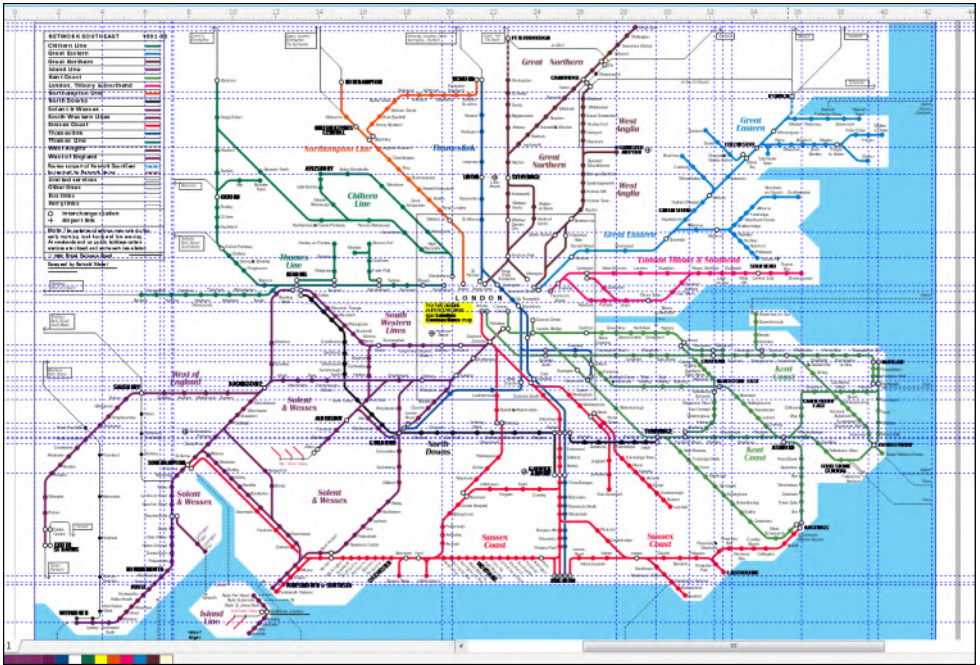
like the West Anglia 'Heron' and the first version of the South West Line 'Victory Arch' from Waterloo did cause some swearing... again I was lucky and found originals that people would lend, all for the benefit of keeping the brand alive and at the forefront of the perseveration scene.

Using multiple sources, I took time to recreate the route branding logos. Some from photos provided to me - some were found online, but each had to be created by hand. Some elements,

One of the biggest tasks was the recreation of the Network Map – I was loaned an original 17” square carriage map dated 1992. Initially I thought I could scan and then convert the image to vector, however the complex shapes

↗ *Island Line Carriage Map, Shanklin Station*
Photo by Paul Cooper



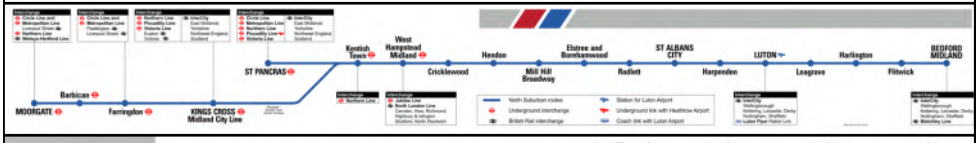
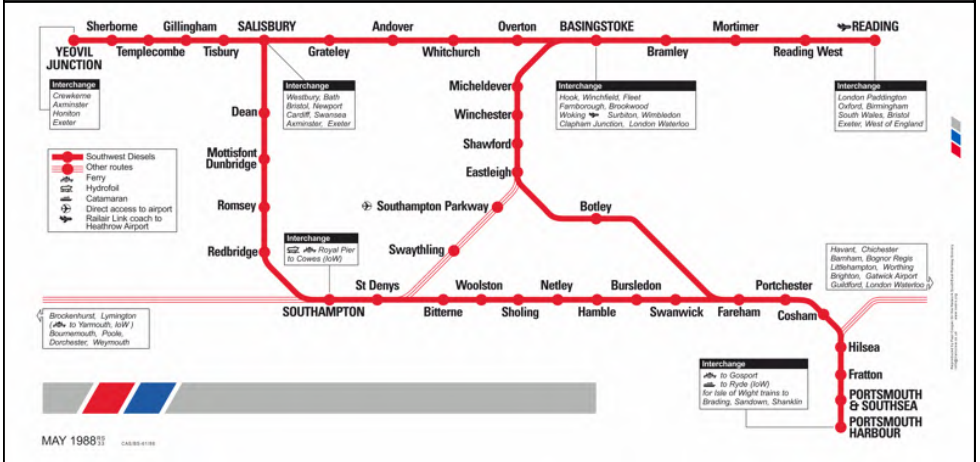
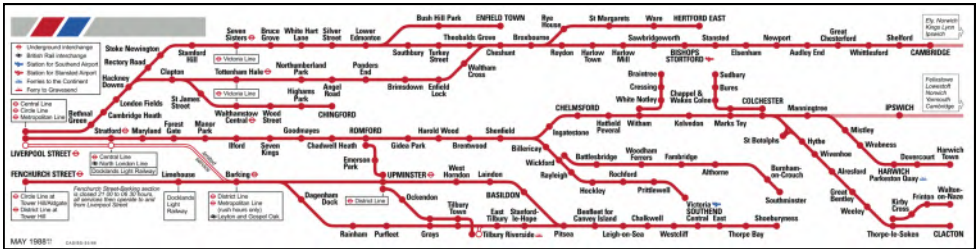


and the station names would not convert correctly, so I began the mammoth task of recreating the design by hand, using a graphics pad and drawing all the shapes and connectors, and re-typing all the station names and legends. 1,944 drawing objects and 7,519 text characters later, we have an *almost* perfect recreation of the iconic NSE map. It took approx. 40 hours of work to recreate over a 3 month period.

The other carriage maps varied in complexity. The South London and Great Eastern maps were labours of love, complex and overlapping lines, with custom elements and some non-standard icons. Simpler maps, such as the Island Line (which did require a detour while on holiday to Shanklin Station, for purely research purposes only, you understand) still presented

challenge, and I respect whoever it was that designed the originals, without the software tools I take for granted today.

With agreement of the Chairman and the Committee, many of the maps or posters I recreated are branded and offered for sale on the Society's Sales Stand, as well as my own online store. Those items that went to auction on successive Javelin Raitours helped raise enormous amounts for the Royal British Legion, and we're currently working on the society's online store to be able to offer these digital recreations to members. While I know not everyone is lucky enough to own an 'original', hopefully the recreations can fill in any gaps in collections! ➡



Thameslink

Portsmouth Line

Great Northern

Great Eastern

