

Fife Man in Epic Journey?

☒ *One suspects The Edinburgh Reporter's Mike Smith has been partaking in some early Christmas 'festivities' of an alcoholic nature so the story below should be taken with a suitably sized serving of salt. Or should it...?*

Major Tim Peake hit the headlines last week with his journey into space but next week will see a Scot embark on an equally trying adventure which will test his resilience to the full.

On Thursday, Major Trauma will set out on a journey which is expected to see him away from home for up to six months as he boards a train at Leuchars hoping to arrive at Edinburgh Waverley at some point in 2016.

Major Trauma spoke exclusively to The Edinburgh Reporter.

"This isn't something I've decided on a whim" he said. "I'm not foolish enough to just turn up at the station without a ticket and hope to enjoy a hassle-free journey to Scotland's capital city.

I have an important meeting scheduled in Edinburgh in 2016 and with the Forth Road Bridge being closed and travelling from Fife to the capital taking longer than the Space Mission to the International Space Station, I knew I had to give myself plenty of time for the journey. By leaving the day before Christmas I hope to have a decent chance of arriving for the meeting at a relatively early stage of 2016"

Planning ahead has been a crucial part of his preparations. "I purchased my ticket several months ago but I know I'm still unlikely to get a seat as it's probable an elderly woman will be sitting in my reserved area not realising this is for me. With this in mind, I fully expect to spend some time in cramped conditions with limited privacy. I don't know how long it will take me to get to my destination but I've told my wife

not to expect to see me again before June.

I've taken my mobile phone and laptop but the Wi-Fi access is very limited on some of these trains so I don't know whether I'll be able to keep in touch with them."

Major Trauma said he had trained for his journey by travelling on the Fife Circle and he believes the primitive conditions he endured there would stand him in good stead.

"It's going to be difficult" he continued, "but I've undergone extensive training. I know I will encounter horrific conditions – points failure, leaves on the line, signal problems, drunks on the line at Inverkeithing – but the journey will give me valuable insight into whether there really is intelligent life out there in the rail network.

What I will need to get used to in my long journey is the blackness of the view from the train. Dark, bleak, desolate and a feeling of emptiness – but I'm hoping we won't be in Kirkcaldy too long..."

Asked what he will miss most in the months ahead, Major Trauma said that, apart from his wife and children, the thing he would miss more than anything would be proper nourishing food.

"I know I will need to adapt to the tasteless, almost inedible fare on offer" he said, "but this is a horrible necessity I will need to overcome. As well as the food, being in a cramped environment with little room to move and conditions completely lacking in heating and atmosphere will be challenging as well as dangerous with the real threat of scalding hot coffee being spilt over me as I try to clutch at a polystyrene cup tossed in my direction."

With the Forth Road Bridge closed, Major Trauma's trip will be a daunting one. The Edinburgh Reporter will look to make contact with him again for an update on his epic journey as soon as possible – probably around Easter...

