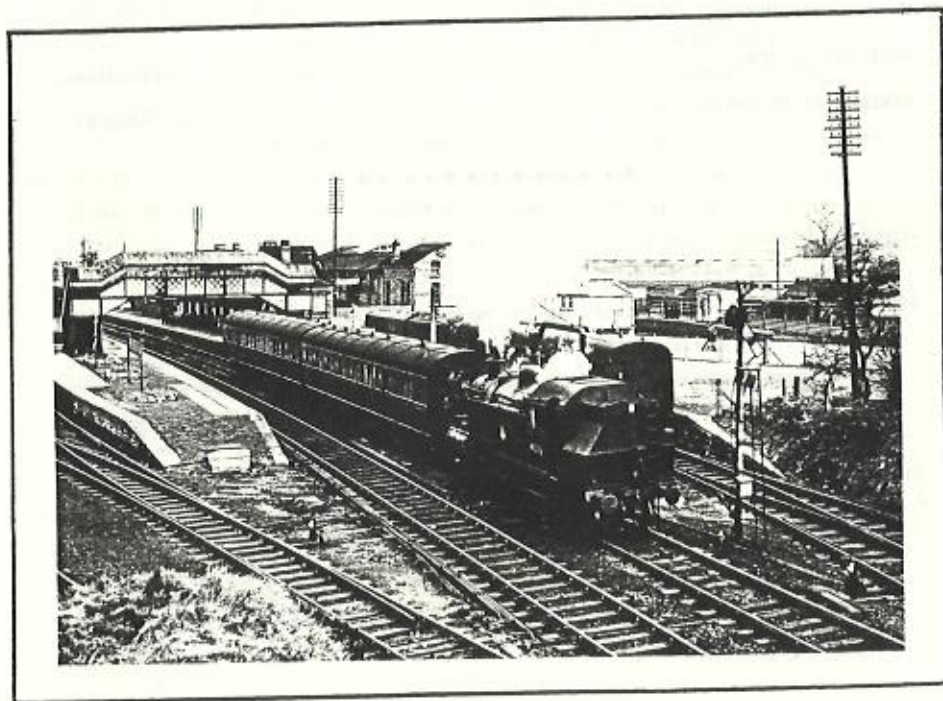




ON SHED.

ISSUE 36

SUMMER 1993



THE MAGAZINE OF THE 8E ASSOCIATION

COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

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PROJECTS OFFICER:	Tom Walton.
BE ARCHIVE OFFICER:	Ian Haselgrove.
MAGAZINE EDITOR:	Paul Yates.
NEWSLETTER EDITOR:	Alan Ashurst.

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COVER PICTURES

FRONT: Market Drayton station, Easter Monday 15-4-63. Ivatt '2MT' 2-6-2T No. 41232 leaves with a train from Crewe to Wellington. Passenger services ceased shortly afterwards (9-9-63). [See feature article on page 19 - Ed.] (Photo - M. Mensing.)

REAR: Riddles '8P' 4-6-2 No. 71000 Duke of Gloucester prepares to leave Crewe Heritage Centre for Crewe station in order to take over the 'Welsh Marches Express' (Crewe to Gloucester) on the 7-11-92. The restored Exeter West signalbox provides the backdrop, the box was officially re-opened at the beginning of May 1993, and is open at weekends throughout the summer. (Photo - A. Carr.)

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EDITORIAL

First of all I must apologise for the delay in the publication of the summer issue of the magazine. This is as a result of several factors, the major one being the time available to me in order to work on the production due to a number of other commitments outside of the Association's activities. The other reason was that I wished to include details of all our fixtures through to the year end and also include details of our change of venue for the Northwich meetings, which from September will be held in the upstairs room at the Lion and Railway Hotel, opposite Northwich B.R. Station.

As you will already see, we have returned the magazine to the A5 format and for this issue, at least, we have not involved an outside printer in any way, the complete issue being done on a photocopier. The reason for this is that as membership of the group has declined quite appreciably in the last twelve months we decided in committee that the cost of publication at our existing printers was more than could be justified by the size of membership. Our main liaison with the printers was through Doug Spencer who, through pressure of work and family commitments, has had to step down from both our committee and that of the Crewe Heritage Supporters Association, and thus we could not guarantee that the price of the printing would remain the same as for previous issues, and unfortunately a decrease in the size of the print run does not necessarily mean a decrease in cost. Nevertheless I hope that you will find plenty of interest in this issue, including a feature from our overseas correspondent (and regular Editor) Paul Yates!

I intend to publish the winter issue in December around the time of the A.G.M. and this will include as a separate publication the Annual Report. If you feel you would like to contribute any articles or photos for the winter issue then please do not hesitate to send them to me or pass them over at any of the monthly meetings. The cut-off date for contributions to the winter issue will be the November meeting (Tuesday 9th). I also look forward to hearing your comments on the new format and any suggestions or offers to assist with the printing will be gratefully accepted.

Michael Lenz - Acting Editor

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CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS.

As Summer (what Summer!) draws to a close, the SE can look forward to a season of meetings at our new home at the 'Lion and Railway' next door to Northwich Station and of course, the reason SE was formed, the Northwich Shed. The Committee have, in the last few months noticed a decline in Membership, so therefore we must take steps to encourage new members and at the same time make sure that we keep our members satisfied. One of the reasons for moving has been that the 'Red Lion' at Barnton which has served us well over the past few years has, in the last 12 months, seen a decline in standards of cleanliness, plus the fact that we have had to find chairs and tables, remove glasses and filled ashtrays before the meeting could start. We as a Committee feel that the members deserve better and although the room at the 'Lion and Railway' is smaller, we think that it will be more of a Clubroom so to speak plus the fact that members can travel by train to Northwich if they so wish. I'm sure that our new venue will suit us fine.

Members are well aware of my involvement with 6201. Along with Roy Kelly I became involved when 'Lizzie' visited Northwich in 1986 (through the SE of course) and ever since cannot stay away from the Bloody Thing !! Seriously though, it is very hard and heavy work but the results are there for all to see. 'Lizzie' has moved to a new base at the Midland Railway Centre at Swanwick where she will be steamed a couple of times before work commences on a major overhaul. Swanwick has all the facilities and a long term future for 'Lizzie' has been assured. The only problem is the amount of travelling involved, but make no mistake, 'Lizzie' will be back on the Main Line where she belongs.

The 'Railway Age' at Crewe defies everybodys gloom and doom about its' future. Work is continuing on Peter Watermans Class 46 scheduled for Main Line work in August, subject to BR exams of course. On the steam front, John Kennedy's 'Prairie' is awaiting cylinder liners, boiler tubes are expected to be delivered shortly and most of the other boiler work (new stays, washout plugs etc) is completed. The 0-6-0 Austerity 'Robert' continues to languish at the top of the yard but strong moves are afoot to start restoration, hopefully by SE members.

North Wales Steam has been pencilled in for Autumn and Winter along with Welsh Marches, engines being based at Crewe. At the time of writing the identity of locomotives to be used has not been announced.

0-4-0 Kerr Stuart 'The Witch' provides brake van rides at weekends and has just returned from a Gala Weekend at Foxfield, having proved to everyone what a powerful little engine she is. The Railway Age has a new man in charge, Mr Alec Cowan, who comes with vast experience, his last involvement being the Catalyst Museum at Widnes. I'm sure that we all wish him well. Tony Mosley continues in a different role as Engineer, being in charge of restoration (must get on to him about all those diesels).

To close, I here that there are possibilities of the Middlewich branch opening to passengers, and why not ! Perhaps BR can recall the 'Northwich Dodger', steam hauled of course, (I can dream can't I ?)•

Colin Worrall.

PUBLICITY OFFICERS NOTES (or "Alan's Almanac")

Most of the items upon which I would normally report have been very adequately dealt with by other contributors to this magazine. Alan Carr has provided a comprehensive run-down on the current fixtures situation at Northwich and Crewe and has covered some other associated topics. Whilst not wishing to go over the same ground twice there are nevertheless one or two subjects worthy of a little further comment.

Meetings change of venue

We are looking to all members who are able to go to meetings to help consolidate the move to the 'Lion and Railway' in Northwich. This is in many respects our spiritual home, being so near to the SE shed site which we hold so dear. Meetings can only be a success if there is an audience, which is down to you, the general membership. Ease of access by public transport (especially train!) will we hope be another boost to attendance figures. Some posters and leaflets have been produced to advertise these meetings and samples are enclosed with this magazine. Your help with display of these will be very welcome and I will be glad to provide bulk supply if you can arrange suitable distribution.

Crewe Group

At the time of writing (early August), I am awaiting a meeting with the new manager at the 'Crewe Arms' to see whether or not we can continue to hold fixtures there, albeit on a reduced scale. Personally I am convinced that there is still a role for us to play in Crewe, although many of the SE Committee are not quite so sure, bearing in mind the effort needed to "keep the show on the road". Many thanks go to Doug Spencer for much "backroom" help in this quarter. Due to career and domestic pressures, Doug has now formally relinquished his responsibilities not only with ourselves but also with the Heritage Supporters Association whose activities he has helped to shape since the inception of their group. His ever willing style will be greatly missed. It is fairly certain that, without a Crewe based Committee member interested in organising social events, our tenuous foothold in this area will become ever more problematical. This is especially so considering that other Heritage Supporters Association personnel seem reluctant to devote much energy in this direction.

Do you live in South Cheshire ? Can you help to run these meetings ? If the answer from all sides is 'NO' then without doubt we have no sure basis on which to continue.

Hopefully a hand-out will be included with this issue to up-date you further, with additional info. to follow in the September/October edition of your "Members Notes" which will be distributed at the September meeting in Northwich. If we can continue in Crewe the first meeting will be on Friday October 1st.

Warrington Group

I am delighted to advise that our recently dormant Warrington fixtures will be revived with a pilot gathering at our previous venue (St Hilda's Clubroom, Slater Street, Latchford) on Friday September 24th at 7.30pm. There will be no specific subject matter, although some form of entertainment (probably video) will be provided. This will be an exercise to test the market. With a reasonable response dictating whether or not we can resume the format of a couple of years ago. Accordingly, provision of refreshments etc at this first event will be limited until we know what the future may hold. This will also be setting up night for the Warrington Model Railway Club's Annual Show on Sat/Sun 25th and 26th September so as I hope to be helping Mike Lenz to organise our sales material this will itself mean less time to prepare the meeting room. Anyway, do try to come along if you can.

It must be noted that a full resumption of fixtures in Warrington will of necessity compromise my involvement with Crewe fixtures, thus strengthening the need for additional Committee help in South Cheshire as already stated !

Saltworks Project

After a quiet spell, things appear to be on the move again here and Tom Walton has been leading a small working party on site recently. He will be pleased to advise anyone who might wish to help with this important local industrial archaeology project (tel. 0606 41708). It is pleasing to report that, after taking redundancy from I.C.I. (now Brunner Mond), Tom has secured a full time post on the Llangollen Railway, for whom he has been a volunteer on the footplate for many years. Look out for him if you make a mid-week visit; he will doubtless be pleased to see any familiar 8E faces!

Len Clarke

We are sad to report that Len, stalwart of the North York Moors, East Lancs, 8E etc etc, recently had an accident on his beloved motor bike which will see him laid up for quite some time. I'm sure you would wish to join me in offering Len our best wishes for a speedy return to good health.

Local Rail News

The campaign to get a serious evaluation of the passenger potential of the Middlewich branch is gaining momentum, aided very much by our good friends in the Mid-Cheshire Rail Users Association. There will be more about this in the next "Members Notes" but in the meantime please note that the campaign group meets in the 'Boars Head', near to the site of Middlewich Station. The next meeting is on THURSDAY, 16th SEPTEMBER and Andrew McFarlane tells me that any 8E members who wish to go will be welcome. For further details contact MR. D. ROBERTS, 2 MOTTRAM CLOSE, MIDDLEWICH, CHESHIRE, CW10 0NT.

Although our membership perhaps leans towards steam matters, it has always been an important side of our activities to support the current BR scene and I am anxious that this aspect does not get overlooked, especially so as our national rail system goes through a traumatic period of change and upheaval. Accordingly I propose to write more in forthcoming issues of the 8E magazine as to how you can obtain the best out of your own local railway, even if you have to make do with DMU's! Make no mistake, this is very much "use it or lose it" time. A journey by rail can still be most enjoyable, even without a 4-6-2 at the front, and you can have a few pints without worrying about driving home! Don't forget that loco-hauled trains operate on the Mid-Cheshire route on Summer Sundays until 3rd October direct to Blackpool and Llandudno - your local station has all the details of timings, with reasonable day trip fares and local 'Rover' tickets making less of an impact on the wallet. Also an easy change with 'Metrolink' at Altrincham will take you to Bury for a day on the buoyant East Lancs Railway, with through fares available from Northwich and other local stations to avoid those awkward automatic fares machines on the "Super-Trams".

Our M.C.R.U. friends have an excursion train booked to run on Sunday 23rd October to Carnforth, Ravenglass, Sellafield and Carlisle for which a booking form is enclosed.

Well, that's about all for now so wherever your 'gricing' hobby takes you, by public or private trains, let's enjoy our nations railways to the full.

Alan R Ashurst.
Publicity/PR Officer.

P.S.

Have you spotted 60103 yet? - Despite all the letters to the "Times" from 'Disgruntled of Doncaster' and 'Livid from Lincoln' it looks fine to me. But then, I'm a child of the 50's and the Lion & Wheel says it all as far as I am concerned. Anyway, who made the so-and-so things work properly? - It wasn't the Late & Never Early Railway that's for sure!

Alan.

STEAM DAYS REMEMBERED.

In the last magazine we were able to read about mishaps involving coal and water experienced by a 'Top Link' crew on an LNER locomotive. Here are two more examples of times when things went wrong, this time the problems are with fire and snow!

FIRE.

They were working the 'Aberdonian' north. This train left King's Cross at 7-00pm each night with quite a bunch of sleeping cars on the long trip to the north of Scotland and it was very important that the connections at Edinburgh ran to time. They coupled on at Newcastle for the third last stage of the nearly twelve-hour journey, one hundred and twenty-five miles non-stop to Edinburgh. In spite of high winds and torrential rain they were not only running to time but had even regained a few of the minutes lost south of Newcastle, when at Goswick a few miles south of Berwick, a sheet of flame shot out of the firebox half-way over the tender and a roar like a clap of thunder hit their ears.

Both driver and fireman then did about three or four things almost in the one movement. They jammed themselves right into the corners of the boiler end, the blower was whanged on, the throttle shut and the second injector brought into action. They really didn't think those things out at all, they didn't have time to think - it was all automatic! No sooner was the throttle closed than that huge tongue of flame disappeared and this told them what had happened. A superheater pipe had burst at the firebox end of the boiler and if they opened the throttle again they could expect another gush of flame, and if they did not want to be stranded miles from anywhere they simply must open that throttle!

When the pipe burst they were doing 75 mph but a long steep bank lay ahead of them, three miles to the top of Scremerston and while their momentum had carried them a fair way up the bank, their speed soon petered out. "Pack a fire into her Jimmy, and put those injectors off" said Norman, "then get outside that cab and stand clear; I'm going to take her over the top and get a fresh engine at Tweedmouth". Mentally he blessed Sir Nigel Gresley for providing him with a throttle which could be worked even if he was all out of the cab window except his boots! By the time it was all set they were only travelling at walking pace so it was safe for the fireman to stand outside the cab. Norman jammed himself as far out of the cab window as he could, yanked the throttle wide open and kept it open for as long as he could stand the heat on his legs, then shut it and allowed the train to run a bit. Thus did they carry on, the train was inched up the hill bit by bit to the top, where they finally shut the throttle to totter down the slight incline to Tweedmouth shed; here an engine was waiting to relieve them, they couldn't have gone much further.

Every time the throttle was opened, the water in the gauge glass fell rapidly while the steam in the boiler pressure gauge made a great leap in a downward direction as well. Most of the power was being used to blow that malicious sheet of flame out of the firebox and it was very hot - too hot for comfort. Not only that but as the steam pressure went down, there was a risk of the train brakes going on owing to lack of steam to create the necessary vacuum and it was a nice problem on which to divide one's attention, especially as both of them were like a couple of drowned rats by the time it was all over!

The rain slashed down on one side of the engine then the wind swirled it round to the other side in one solid sheet and Norman's crack to his fireman that "at least we had plenty of heat to warm the water which spouted from us" met with quite a cold reception. Jimmy evidently considered this as ill-timed humour!

SNOW.

Normans' worst experience with bad weather occurred during the big snow blizzards of 1947. They set off on the 7-40am from Edinburgh(Waverley) to Perth on that fateful Monday morning in the middle of a snow-storm which had been raging almost continuously for about three days. They had been warned before setting out that conditions were pretty tough on the exposed parts of the line. They weren't unduly concerned, they had their own engine 'Spearmint' and quite a small train which would be reduced from seven coaches to four at Dunfermline 16 miles out of Edinburgh. The worst snow blocks, they were told, lay beyond that. At least six powerful engines were working with snow ploughs trying to keep the line clear.

They left Dunfermline after being told that the road was not too good beyond Kelty, about half-way between Edinburgh and Perth, and all signals were against them as they drew into Kelty platform with right ahead of them about fifty men with shovels clearing a mountainous drift. "We are going to clear the loop and you will shove back into it - the road ahead is completely blocked" said the Station-master. "There's another couple of Austerities coming along with with snow ploughs, we've got to clear the main line to let them through." So they propelled their four carriages into the loop and passed insulting remarks to the Austerities as their huge bulk lumbered past behind a giant snow plough.

This was at about 10-00am and they stood at Kelty until 10-30pm waiting for the road ahead to be cleared ! To keep the passengers comfortable Norman gave them all the heat he could until the water in the tank was nearly finished. This meant that the train had to be dug out of the loop to allow it to move the few hundred yards to the water column on the main line, after which the road had to be cleared behind the train to allow it back into the loop even though it took only a few minutes to fill the tank !

At mid-day they cut a path to the Kelty Colliery canteen, a few hundred yards away so that the passengers could get something warm inside them, and had to clear the path again to return to the train ! The same performance was repeated at tea-time.

At 10-30pm they received word that one line was cleared. Off they went into the white darkness ahead with a pilot-man on the footplate to keep them company. Norman says that he had run through snow many times before but that twenty-four miles to Perth gave him a few new angles ! The usual technique is almost to close the damper through the drifts to prevent the ashpan being choked, then to open the damper on clear stretches to let air into the fire. But it seemed to be all drifts for the first ten miles - drifts which they couldn't see, but very often felt ! Green lights guided them through a narrow lane of snow fifteen to twenty feet high in one of the dips before reaching Loch Leven, they crawled past no less than six engines buried on the other line to plough through their own particular drifts which they hit with a feeling of sinking their nose into a cushion. This was the sign to give 'Spearmint' all the works and as they smashed into and out of each succeeding drift it cascaded into the cab like a gigantic and solid waterfall. It was solid all right, the caved in cab windows proved that !

They got through the worst at last and steaming through beautiful Glenfarg they were anything but a beautiful sight. They were as black as crows, with strips of sacking tied round their legs and waterproofs belted round them with odds and ends of string in a perfectly useless attempt to keep dry. It took sixteen hours to do that forty-eight miles, which normally took 14 hours with plenty of stops.

That trip at its conclusion gave them a good laugh as well as an example of kindness. They couldn't return to Edinburgh that night but were recommended to a modest hotel. However on their ring at the doorbell being answered by the proprietor, he slammed the door in the face of these three awful looking figures confronting him ! They stood helplessly laughing on the pavement when they saw his horrified look. They decided to try the other extreme and made straight for one of the top hotels where they were received with calm acceptance despite looking like filthy tramps. After hot baths, a good meal, and a dreamless sleep they were ready to return. This time 'on the cushions', and glad to see the bright sun again - the end of that memorable 1947 blizzard.

10th November 1995.

REVIEW OF 5A/8E CREWE ARMS MONTHLY MEETINGS

Tony Mosely guested in November, presenting a slide show review of his photographic endeavours over the last 12 months. He was able to demonstrate what all gricers know too well - the sun is usually missing when a steam train appears within camera shot. Strangely, this doesn't seem to apply to diesels!

In December, Michael Owen (chairman of F.O.S.C.L) showed a video on the history of the Leeds-Settle-Carlisle line. There was a good turnout for this, and the 'Lizzie' Christmas cards were a popular item from the 'Friends' sales stand.

Mike Lenz was relieved of raffle duties in February, when again there was a high turnout, to present his North American video roundup. This one came with extensive programme notes (Mike is nothing if not thorough!) and may have caused some people to miss their buses home - it being our longest show to date.

Recently retired from BR, and moved to Alsager, ex-Rugby man Dave Braden presented a fascinating slide show (March) entitled 'Great Central Steam', using his own material from 30 years ago. I have asked Dave to repeat the show for Northwich, and he has agreed to come along in November - don't miss this one!

Rodney Pitt (Publicity Officer for the Market Drayton Railway Society) failed to turn up for his April booking, which disappointed a few people who turned up especially to hear about the Drayton plans. Fortunately, the effervescent Len Clarke arrived with his projector and slides (does he keep them permanently in his car?) and was swiftly pressed into action. Len gave an entertaining commentary which kept everyone in good humour. Many thanks to him for saving the evening.

Ian Smith (Middleton Railway Chairman) gave a round Britain tour of steam preservation sites in May. This was entertaining stuff, presented with obvious enthusiasm. Unfortunately, the attendance was only about 20, which meant that his expenses were not covered by the raffle - the 8E funding the difference.

It was a hot June, and again a very poor attendance for our first 'AV' show of the year - Colin Ratcliffe's 'North Yorkshire Moors, Railway & Coast'. This was my personal highlight of the Crewe Arms season and I think that those who did attend were very well entertained. Again, the raffle didn't cover the expenses for the speaker.

We continued into July this year to take advantage of the chance to hear David Sutcliffe (Sutcliffe TV) talking about his video operation, and see his latest production 'Stanier LMS Pacific Day'. David had made the trip from Anglesey, so it was a relief that the attendance was back into the thirties. He was kind enough to donate a copy of his new video to the 8E for a future raffle, and I have reviewed it elsewhere in this issue.

At the time of writing these notes, the future of the Crewe meetings is uncertain. For a joint 5A/8E effort to work, it is necessary to have organisational input from both groups. In the latter months, there has been no help whatever from the 5A, the burden of organising the evenings falling entirely on myself, Mike Lenz and Alan Ashurst.

We feel that the Crewe Heritage Supporters should take on some of the work, if they want the evenings to continue. There is also a question of room availability, with the Crewe Arms having had a change of management earlier in the year. It could be that we will be required to pay for the meeting room from September onwards. If this turns out to be the case, then a change of venue (Crewe Heritage Centre?) would probably be necessary.

I would be sad to see the Crewe meetings finish, but I cannot continue to put in the required effort, as well as organising the Northwich fixtures. If any 8E members feel that they would like to assist the 5A in organising Crewe meetings please let a committee man know - your help may ensure their continuance.

Many thanks to Alan Ashurst for providing handouts for the recent meetings, and to Mike Lenz for operating the raffle each month - a much harder job than I had imagined (as I discovered when Mike was the guest speaker in February). Thanks also to all 8E members who have supported the Crewe meetings this year. Any resolution of the 'Crewe' situation will be announced in future 8E meetings and members notes.

AJC

NORTHWICH FIXTURES

(Venue is now the 'Lion & Railway', opposite Northwich station.)

Tuesday 14th September	Eddie Johnson	The Manchester - Derby line (slides)
Tuesday 12th October	Rex Christianson	The Delight of Railways (slides)
Tuesday 8th November	Dave Braden	Great Central Steam (slides)
Tuesday 14th December	A G M	

RAIL - NEW ZEALAND

The variety and beauty of the scenery in New Zealand makes it a pleasure to visit. The large distances and windy mountain roads make rail travel an admirable alternative to the car and the aeroplane.

New Zealand Rail Limited now arranges the passenger railways for the country on 3½ feet gauge tracks. Trains are diesel-hauled by orange liveried locomotives, with four, five or six carriages of blue/silver colour, the last being an observation car.

The North Island is over 600 miles long, with the popular OVERLANDER and NORTHERNER trains leaving Wellington for Auckland and vice-versa early in the morning each day. From Wellington the rural setting gives way to the foothills of the snow covered volcanic range. The train travels by the sea on its last leg to Auckland. Many spectacular viaducts will be crossed, the fare being 31 pounds on standard saver ticket. Other routes are Wellington to Napier, Auckland to Tauranga and Auckland to Rotorua.

Rotorua is a popular tourist destination because of the thermal reserve. Here volcanic activity boils the river bed to pools of bubbling mud, steam escapes from potholes as geysers and crystals of sulphur form on the rocks. The town itself is set by the lake of the same name and cable cars can be taken up the nearby mountains.

RAIL — NEW ZEALAND



From Wellington, the ferry "THE INTERISLANDER" crosses to Picton (South Island) in three hours. Albatrosses will be seen on this voyage, which is also run by the railway company. Most ferries have a car deck. The "Interislander" also has a rail deck, where freight cars are shunted aboard, to be pulled off at the destination. Could the rails be built into the ferry, or are they laid in place later?

The South Island, at 540 miles long, is smaller, but more dramatic, with the Southern Alps descending right down to the coast as fiords. Picton to Christchurch can be travelled aboard the COASTAL PACIFIC for 16 pounds each afternoon, then either take the SOUTHERNER to Invercargill (25 pounds) or the spectacular TRANZALPINE to Greymouth (20 pounds).

The people in New Zealand are very warm, unlike the weather, and the experience very worthwhile.

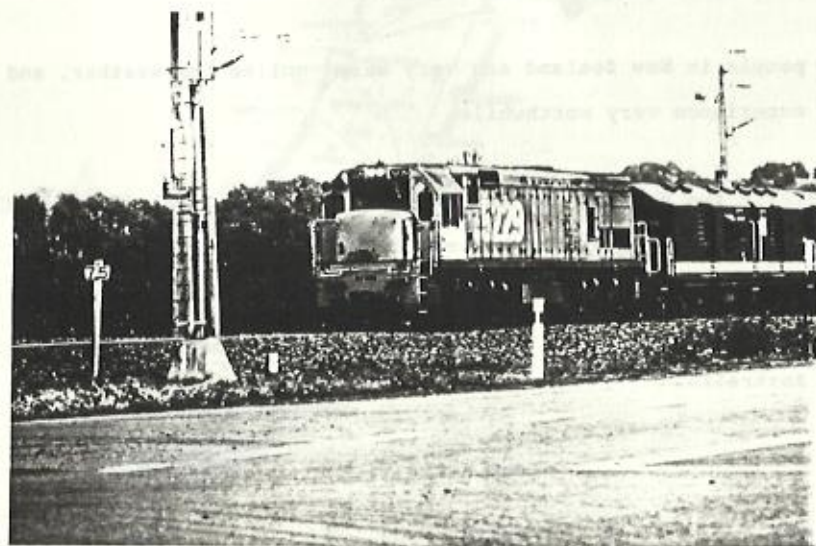
Hopefully the photographs on the following pages will give you a flavour of what can be seen on the railways of New Zealand and upon my return I hope to be able to give you a further display of railways 'down under' both in New Zealand and Australia.

Paul Yates



ABOVE: 2229 shunts freight wagons onto the ferry at Picton, South Island on the 14-4-93.

BELOW: The "Northerner" at Levin (heading South) headed by 5229 on the 12-4-93.



ABOVE: Here we see a Commuter train at Wellington Station on the 13-4-93. Wellington is the capital of New Zealand.

BELOW: 5206 is seen in the freight depot at Picton, South Island on the 13-4-93. (All Photos - P. Yates.)



A SYMPHONY AND A COLLIE

Some months ago I acquired a secondhand book, 'Symphony In Steam' (1970), for 25 pence. It mainly consisted of photographs documenting the end of BR steam in the late 1960's. The author, Colin Garratt, has since become a well known railway photographer. I was pleased to find that it included a photograph of a couple of 8Fs at Northwich shed, as well as some Crewe shots. For me, however, the real gem was in the author's introduction. It is a fine piece of evocative prose which I thought was well worth reproducing.

"Perhaps one of the loveliest memories of all was one September night in 1967 whilst we were spending 4 days filming on Shap Bank, Westmorland. We were staying at a farmhouse, set amongst the fells, which overlooked the railway. Everyone had retired and at 1.00 a.m. the cry of a Britannia's whistle rang out across the lonely fells as the engine prepared to start the long climb up from Tebay."

"The barking exhaust cut through the stillness as it resounded over the hills and the heavy Pacific forged its way up the bank with a northbound freight. From my bedroom window I watched it approach with blazing coals being flung out of the chimney and the cab bathed in a flickering orange glow that reflected in the smoke trail. Spellbound, I watched the drama and listened to the rhythms - for surely a living presence was passing through the fells that night."

If anyone can find a couple of paragraphs to compete with that, for painting word pictures of the days of steam, I'm sure that the magazine editor will be pleased to publish them.

The February 1993 edition of the 'Friends of the Settle - Carlisle Line' magazine contained a short article about Derek Soames, a signalman at Settle Junction who has just completed 47 years of BR service. The following poignant footnote accompanied the piece:

"For the past 15 years Derek has often been accompanied to work in the box by his faithful black and white collie dog Muttley. Sadly, Muttley died of old age on 15th June (92) and, as a gesture of affection, Derek buried his faithful collie on the grassy embankment right outside Settle Junction box, where the dog had spent so many happy hours. The grave is marked by a white cross."

The next time you are passing Settle Junction, have a look for Muttley's grave.

AJC

THE SUMMER PUZZLE.

No crossword this time, instead a rather easier puzzle to solve. All you have to do is to fill in the horizontal clues to reveal the names of two men famous in railway history. No prizes I'm afraid but if you whisper the two names to me at the next meeting, I might buy you a pint!

Ian Haselgrove.

- | | | | | | | | |
|----|--|--|--|--|--|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. | | | | | | | Gives a comfortable ride. |
| 2. | | | | | | | Preserved Deltic 55015. |
| 3. | | | | | | | D 600 is a lively loco. |
| 4. | | | | | | | 55020 drifting high in the sky. |
| 5. | | | | | | | To teach positively. |
| 6. | | | | | | | Urie 'Arthur' 30747. |
| 7. | | | | | | | LMS 45643 Del boys bruvver. |

BE IN ACTION - WELL ALMOST!

Colin Worrall and Ian Haselgrove help prepare 6201 'Princess Elizabeth' for a North Wales Coast run on the 12-4-93.

(Photo - A. Carr.)



CLANKY JUNCTION.

The tale of Timothy Time-and-a-bit.
by Stan Wilson.

On the face of things, Timothy Miller was the most dedicated engine driver on the London Midland and Scottish Railway. A non-smoker and a devout teetotaler, Timothy possessed not a single hobby or pastime to distract his thoughts from his job on the railway. His neighbours saw him as a tall, gaunt man of fifty who was either leaving for work or turning home, when most of the others in the street were in bed. A quiet man who troubled no one, he resisted all attempts to engage him in conversation and rebuffed the womenfolk whenever they attempted to gain access to his house on the pretext of doing a little tidying up. Everyone thought he was crazy putting up with the unearthly hours demanded by his job as an engine driver for, after all, it wasn't as though he had had a family to keep. Still, he was harmless enough and, if he didn't mind, who were they to complain? And yet, to those who knew him best, his workmates at Clanky Junction, Timothy was the most miserable grab-all ever to ride a footplate!

It all had to do with the way that they were paid. An engine drivers working week was supposed to consist of six shifts of eight hours, making 48 in all. But it wasn't as simple as this; if you worked after ten o'clock at night you received time-and-a-quarter; if you worked overtime after ten o'clock at night it was worth time-and-a-half. Further, if you worked on a Sunday they paid you time-and-three-quarters! So you see, dependant on when you signed on duty, eight hours work could earn you ten, twelve or even fourteen hours pay.

It was this remarkable increase in the value of an hours work that lay behind Timothy's strange behaviour. The moment a new fireman climbed on the footplate of Timothy's engine, the money-grabbing engine driver gave him to understand at once just what he expected of him. He made no bones about it - I remember only too clearly how he tackled me:

MONEY.

"Seein' as how you'n me are goin' to be mates together, laddie, we'd better have a little talk!" By this time his hatchet face was no more than a foot from mine. "What d'yer come to work for, eh lad? Because you like it? Course y' don't - you're like me, you come to work for money! That's what matters in this world - money! Now, I'll tell you this lad - you'll make more money with me than you made with all your other mates put together!"

It soon became clear that the driver with whom I was fated to share the footplate was obsessed with the idea of making a fortune by the most primitive and painstaking method ever devised. Timothy's formula for getting rich was to create so much chaos along the line, the people in charge would be so pre-occupied sorting it all out that they wouldn't notice his train steaming farther and farther into the distance. If it hadn't been for Timothy Time-and-a-bit, the name of Thristleton would never have been inscribed in the annals of railway legend. Before that Saturday, when Timothy and I steamed to this remote village situated deep in the Pennines, few people had heard of the place.

Our instructions were to couple to a giant steam crane and a guards van at Darkcroft sidings and proceed to Thristleton to assist in repairs to a railway bridge there. I knew at once that he had great expectations of the trip by the remark he made on climbing aboard the engine: "Have yer brought plenty o' scoff lad? You're going to need it on this trip!"

CRAZED.

Six hours later we came to rest at a signal miles from anywhere. The only other living creatures in sight were the sheep that grazed on the hills around us. When the signal fell we moved slowly forward to stop at a ramshackle signalbox where a red flag hung from a window. Over the door at the top of the steps, hardly readable in the blistered and peeling paint, was the name THRISTLETON.

With a face as creased as the signalbox, the signalman came to the window and opened it. In his hand he was holding a newspaper and on his forehead, like a second pair of eyes, rested a pair of wire-rimmed spectacles. With the air of a man who had all the time in the world at his disposal he shouted: "Nay thar's not clear of t'points yet, go 'ead a bit an' I'll turn thi' into Yebers!"

The branch line where the signalbox stood couldn't have been used by more than a couple of trains a day but Yebers, as the signalman called it, was even more decrepit. Why, it was nothing more than a rusting spur of a railway line hardly visible through a verdant growth of grass and weeds! When the signalman waved us back, we veered off the branch line along the ancient track towards a cluster of trees. After two-hundred yards, both the signalbox and the branch line were out of sight. We appeared to be heading for the middle of nowhere!

Through the trees we came across a pile of rubble. I learned later that this was all that was left of Yeber's Dyeworks, a Victorian factory that had gone out of business after the First World War. Near the pile of decaying bricks a gang of engineers stood waiting for us. After a few more yards, a dozen hands signalled us to stop and, the moment the wheels ceased turning, the engineers started climbing onto the steam crane like a gang of looters. As Timothy and I started on our sandwiches the engineers got busy on the crumbling bridge that spanned the deserted lane below.

"Now then laddie, we've got plenty o' time - if you want to go for a walk there's nowt stopping you!" Throwing the newspaper wrapping of his sandwiches into the firebox, Timothy spoke for the first time since leaving Clanky Junction. It was almost too good to be true! The hills surrounding us, the desolate lane and the lush grass that stretched in all directions were just begging to be explored. "Yes," said Timothy, "we've plenty o' time! Look! See that tree're crag over there - near that clump of trees? Go an' climb up that - why I'll bet you can see for miles up there!" The crag was by far the highest point in the landscape. And so, gullible as most 17 year old lads, I set off to climb it.

FLASH!

The view from the top of the crag was breathtaking. The rolling hills, the trees, the birds and the flash of sunlight on falling water were things I shall never forget. After gazing long in all directions I lay in a trough of heather and went to sleep. Hours later, at six o'clock exactly, I climbed back on board the engine. "Back already lad? Did yer enjoy the view, eh? Did yer enjoy it?" It was at that moment I knew that Timothy was up to something. I could sense it in the eagerness with which he greeted me!

The engineers who had met us on our arrival had vanished. The peace and serenity of the English countryside was all around us, making the engine and the steam crane appear like some monstrous invader. Timothy became aware that I was staring at him. Turning to face me, he indicated my stool with the air of a Royal usher. "Sit down lad an' have a smoke - a few more minutes won't harm anyone!"

Doing as he suggested, I sat on my stool facing him and lit a cigarette. Every second he became more agitated. In the following ten minutes he looked at his watch five times. Then, at fifteen minutes past six, he opened the regulator and we clanked slowly towards the signal that would take us back on the branch line. A yard from the signal we stopped again. "An well, we'll give a whistle to tell him we're ready, shall we lad?" As Timothy pulled on the whistle, he was grinning like a Cheshire cat! He whistled again and again, but still the signal remained against us. With eyes flashing with excitement he said: "He won't let us go y'know, lad - he won't let us go! He's gone home. The signalbox shuts at six o'clock."

Alarmed now, I crossed the footplate and questioned him again: "What time does he open again?" Rubbing his hands together he announced that which he had been scheming ever since we had left Clanky Junction early that morning. "He doesn't open again till Monday mornin' - six o'clock Monday mornin'! Eh we'll make a bob or two on this trip, lad - aye we will that!"

BRASS.

Noticing my jaw drop at the prospect of spending the rest of the weekend in the middle of nowhere, he continued: "There's nowt to worry about lad! We've plenty of tea and sugar! Why, we'll make more brass on this trip than we made all last week, lad!"

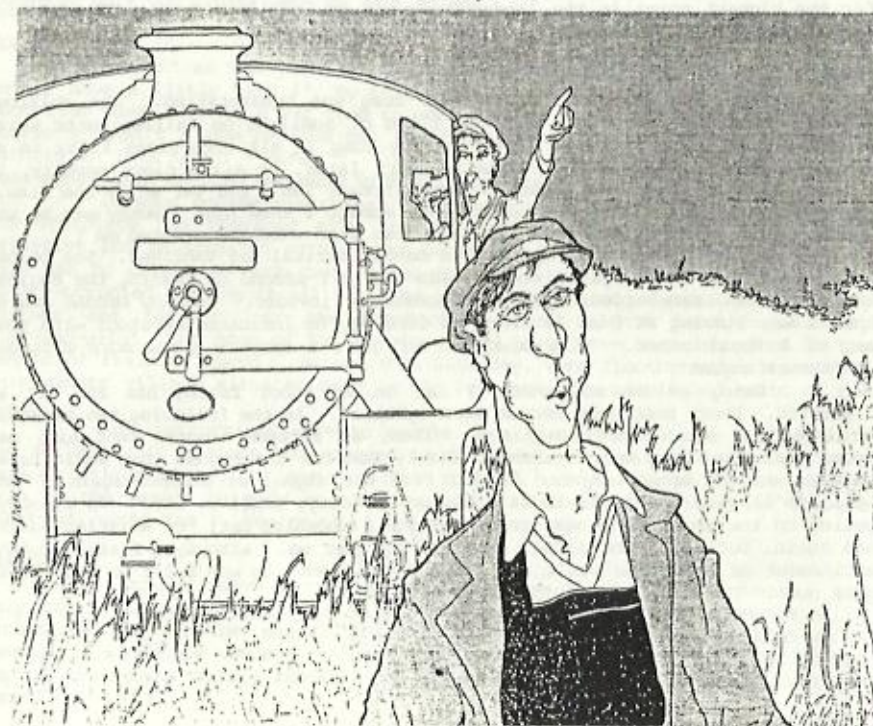
And so it came about that the name of Thristleton became famous. Our total earnings for our lost weekend worked out something like this. Eight hours at ordinary time. Seven hours at time and a quarter. Eleven hours at time and a half. Twenty-four hours at time and three-quarters. In all, 75 hours pay for a weekend of idleness in the countryside!

When Timothy Time-and-a-bit died many years later they found £3000 notes stuffed under the floorboards of his bedroom! That was the mystery of it - after scheming and scraping for that little bit of extra for most of his lifetime - he left it all behind!

FOOTNOTE.

We are greatly indebted for permission to re-print this story to the Editor of the Manchester Evening News where it first appeared on November 30th 1974.

Ian Haselgrove.



THE GINGERBREAD LINE

"RETURN OF STEAM TRAINS TO MARKET DRAYTON?" speculated the Market Drayton Advertiser in its front page headline of 22/11/91. The article (included in the Jan '92 BE Members Notes) outlined the plans of a group of local enthusiasts to reopen part of the Drayton to Nantwich line.

Eighteen months later, very little news of the Market Drayton Railway project has filtered through to Northwich. I have produced these notes, which include a brief history of the line, in an attempt to bring readers up to date with MDR plans. I am grateful for the cooperation of Martin Brinkman (MDR Secretary), who provided some background notes and newsletters.

The railway came to Market Drayton in 1863 with the opening of the Nantwich and Market Drayton Railway. From Nantwich, the LNWR's Shrewsbury line provided the route into Crewe. In 1867 the Wellington and Drayton Railway was opened, giving the GWR a through route into Crewe (and beyond to Manchester, London Road). Finally in 1870, the North Staffs Railway established the Market Drayton - Stoke connection.

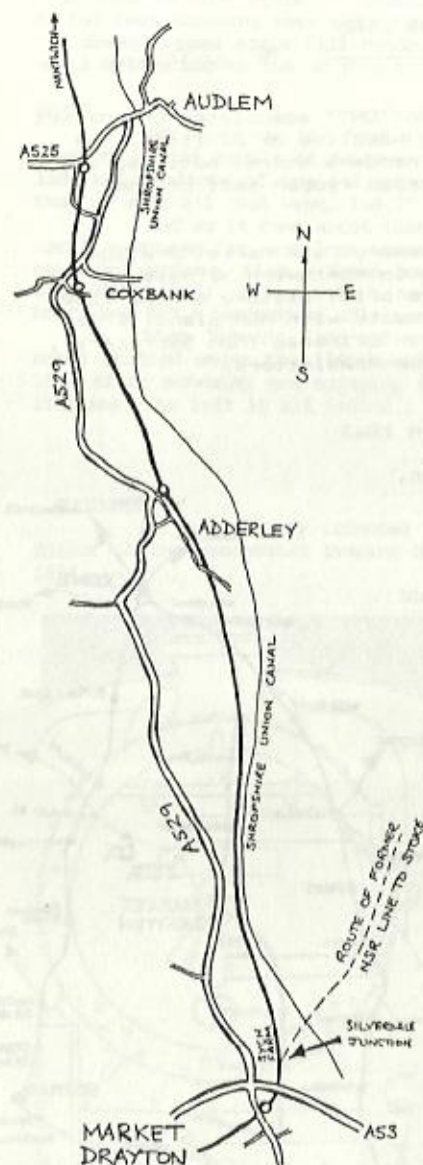
The North Staffs service was closed in May, 1956. Passenger traffic was discontinued between Wellington and Crewe on 9th Sept, 1963 with the final closure of the WR's Crewe branch occurring on 1st May, 1967.

The map shows the pre-1923 grouping layout of M. Drayton and surrounding area.

KEY TO MAP

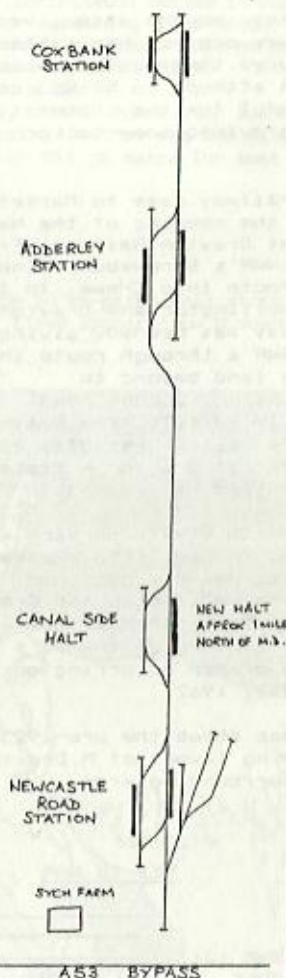
LNWR
GWR
LNWR/GWR (Jt.)
N. STAFFS





ROUTE OF OLD MARKET DRAYTON
TO AUDLEM RAILWAY LINE
(SCALE: 1 1/2 INCHES TO 1 MILE)

MARKET DRAYTON RAILWAY SOC. SUGGESTION FOR LAYOUT OF THEIR PROPOSED NEW RAILWAY



The Market Drayton Railway Preservation Society was formed on New Years Eve, 1991 and now has a membership of around 55. Regular newsletters, monthly meetings and fundraising activities keep the project on the boil. The current priority is to raise £1250 by Christmas for a feasibility study - which would indicate the commercial viability of the project, and form an essential part of the business plan.

The North Shropshire District Council has included the old Drayton to Audlem line in its Local Plan, which (given Dept of Environment approval) should be helpful to the MDR when they reach planning application stage.

The current favoured option is to reinstate a five mile section of the line from the outskirts of Market Drayton, to Coxbank near Audlem. It would not be feasible to start at the original M.D. station site; one of the main reasons is the obstacle of the town bypass. This road is too busy and fast for a level crossing to be considered. Also, the original station buildings have now been demolished (although the goods shed is still in place). The logical southern terminus of the new line is at the site of the old Silverdale Junction (Sych Farm), a quarter of a mile north of the original station.

At Audlem, the station site has now been built on, so the northern terminus is planned for Coxbank, (upgrading it from its original status as a halt between Adderley and Audlem), three quarters of a mile south of the old Audlem station.

The trackbed of the line is reported as being in mainly good condition, with only minimum attention required before rails could be relaid. The MDR is still some way off organising this task however - a complicated series of planning proposals involving the district council and a property developer need to be resolved before the MDR's own plans can be finalised.

The latest fund raising endeavour was the baking of a world record size (9ft 10in) gingerbread man, who made his appearance at Drayton's May Carnival - where he was sold off in fifty pence portions. Market Drayton is known as a traditional home of gingerbread, something which the marketing people have latched onto in recent years, in a bid to attract tourism to the area. It would be no surprise for this label to attach itself to the emerging railway project.

RETURN OF STEAM TRAINS TO MARKET DRAYTON? - it's a long way off yet, but hopefully that day will come. The Secretary believes that if all the negotiations with landowners and local authorities go well, they could be laying their first sleeper in two years time. Market Drayton is my home town, so I am particularly interested in the progress of the project. I will try and keep SE members informed of any significant developments through our newsletters or future editions of the magazine. Those who may be interested in joining the society should contact the Membership Secretary, John Slynne - telephone (0952) 813487.

AJC

SALES REPORT

Since my last report there has been some alterations in regard to the stock that we now have. Because of the poor return on sales at the Railway Age last summer I decided that I would concentrate all sales effort on swapmeets, model railway meets and the like and that I would not be opening the shop at Crewe this year. To that end, it was decided that we would sell off, at cost, all the remaining small stock items that remained at Crewe, and this was duly done early in the spring when the Foxcote Manor Society made us an acceptable offer. This has left us with mostly videos and Corgi and Lledo models together with a selection of T-shirts, Golf shirts, Baseball Hats and railroad pins. By far the bulk of the videos are of American Railroads as are the T-shirts, Golf shirts, hats and pins, although I shall maintain a small selection of British videos as well. I do not intend replacing the Corgi and Lledo models once our current stocks have gone since I now intend to concentrate mostly on American Railroad Videos etc. as this is proving to be our most profitable side, as you will read below.

Our sales events for this year to date have comprised several swapmeets at both Chester and Stoke on Trent, the first two of which gave very poor results, and for the subsequent swapmeets I booked just a single stall so as to cut down on costs. This appears to have been quite effective as we have done very well at the last couple of swapmeets before the summer break. Our next swapmeet is at Chester in early September and I hope this proves to be as successful.

By far our most profitable venues are the regular monthly meetings that I attend at Broadheath of the National Model Railroad Association's British Region Calder Northern Division, where I have averaged takings of between £100 and £250 per month selling mostly videos but also some books, magazines, T-shirts etc. I have also done the British Region's Spring and Summer Meets, the former at Padgate Community Centre in April (takings in the region of £500), and the latter at High Wycombe in June (takings just under £1000). The latter event proved to be the best ever one day sales event in the Association's history and I hope that there will be other similar events in the not too distant future. As a result I am now ploughing most of our sales funds into purchasing a wider range of American videos etc. and I am now building up a regular clientele as a result.

We have purchased a second hand colour portable TV and video recorder for use

both at sales venues and monthly meetings as this has proved to be a valuable asset at sales events in the past.

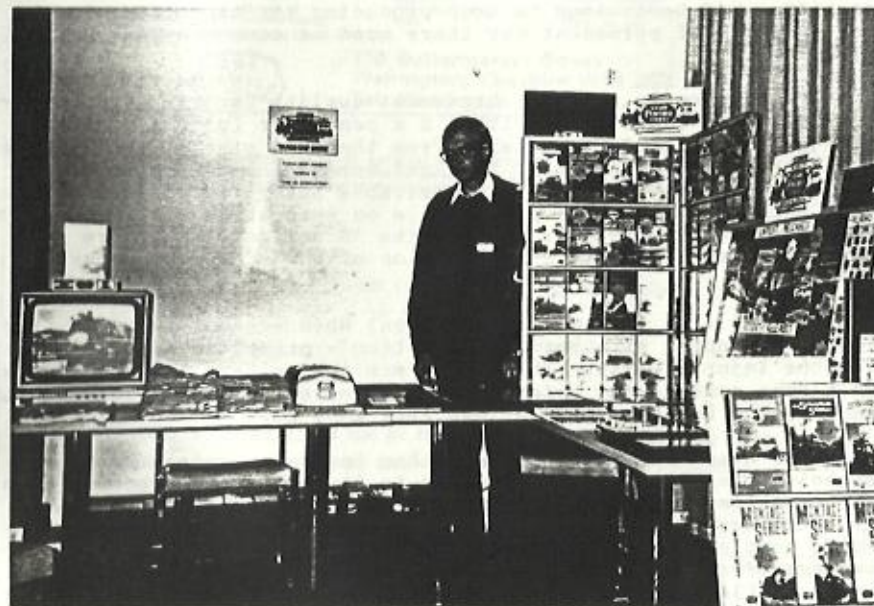
Because of the logistics of storing all the sales stock it has been decided to move the wooden shed, which has served as our shop at Crewe, to a new site where it can be better utilised for storing our stock and where it is under more permanent observation and thus more secure.

With regard to our forthcoming fixtures there are several more swapmeets and also the regular monthly model railway meets. Also we should be attending the Warrington Model Railway Exhibition in late September and I have received an invitation to a further NMRA one day meet in November. So as you can see we have quite a number of events lined up and help with the sales stand is always welcome.

Michael Lenz - Sales Officer

OUR SALES TEAM IN ACTION!

Dave Healey awaits the rush of customers at High Wycombe in June.
(Photo - M. Lenz.)



STANIER LMS PACIFIC DAY - VIDEO REVIEW

This is a Sutcliffe TV video, which covers the events of 13th April 1983, when 'Princess Elizabeth' & 'Princess Margaret Rose' were joined by the 'Duchess Of Hamilton' for a maroon extravaganza along the North Wales coast.

The Sutcliffe trademarks (no commentary, no on-screen locations & the opening shot passing Conway castle) are all repeated in this video. My preference is for brief on-screen location notes. Whilst some locations are readily identifiable, other shots left me puzzling.

The video lasts 41 minutes. Disappointingly, 6201's slice of the screen action lasts less than 7 minutes, covering her outward run to Llandudno Junction, but nothing of her light engine return to Crewe. There isn't any coverage of the 'English' section of the run, which I think was a mistake. It would have been worth sending a camera to the Heritage Centre for the preliminaries, which could also have included the shot (from the North Junction Box) of the Crewe station departure. The Crewe scenes would have been much more interesting than the 5 minutes at Valley triangle, which have been substantially covered in the other Sutcliffe productions.

The problem with these North Wales coast tapes is that they are very 'sameish'. The long sweep around Colwyn Bay on the return leg (taken from near the cliff top hotel) is the best shot, but it has all been done so many times before that the impact diminishes. The Conway castle shot is also overplayed. I think that if these runs are ever revived, some fresh video locations must be discovered by David Sutcliffe - if he intends to keep producing the tapes. Surely on such a length of permanent way there must be some new vantage points?

For the technically minded - broadcast quality cameras were employed with 14 x zoom (doubled up with a 2 x converter for the distant shots). All the shots were taken from the same side of the line (so if the train is passing left to right across the screen, it is returning to Crewe). This is an admirable Sutcliffe policy, although I don't think it would be practicable on some other routes (the S & C for example). Apparently some of the 'Junction' shots were borrowed from HTV due to a malfunction of one of the producer's cameras.

I had to smile at the incident (unseen) when someone walks in front of a photographer at a heaving 'Junction' - prompting a verbal tirade from the injured party. Then there are the golfers at Rhosneigr who don't even concede the briefest of glances as an LMS Pacific snorts past. What a bunch of philistines they must be!

Perhaps I have been more critical than is really warranted (especially as the tape was donated to the BE by the producer after his Crewe Arms presentation). If you want a video record of 'LMS Day' then buy the tape - it is good value (£10.95) and the light engine double heading of PMR & D of H makes a rare sight. The coverage of all three locos at Llandudno Junction, although brief (and a little murky) is also a rarity. The quality equipment makes a much better job than a cheaper camcorder would have managed of such a unique event on a predictably grey day.

AJC



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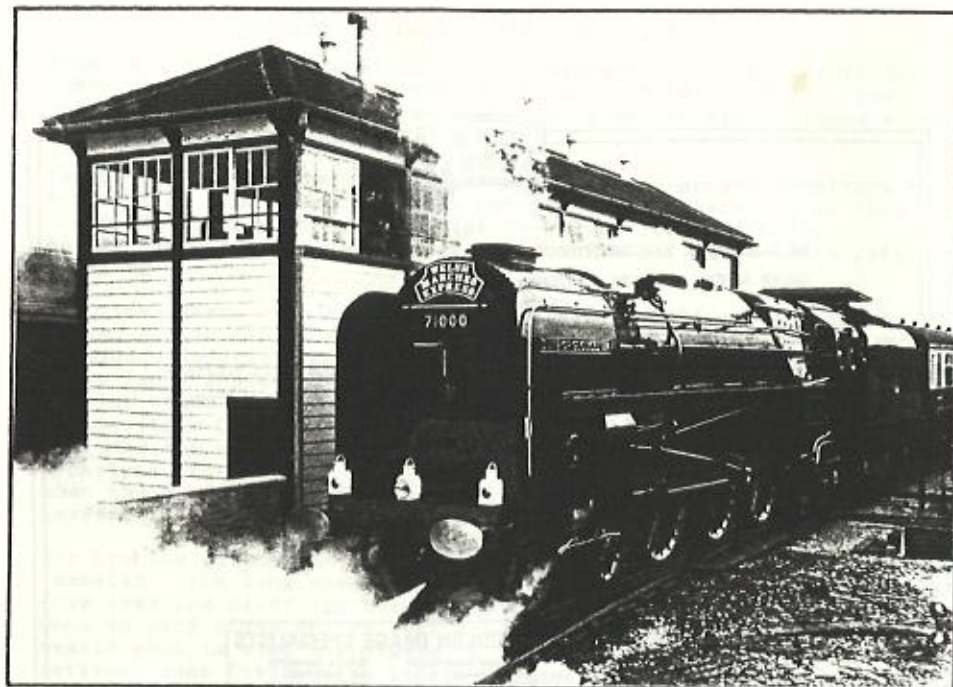


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