

Summer 2017

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On Shed

The Journal of the 8E Railway Association

Welcome

to **On Shed**, the official journal of the
8E Railway Association.

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[Front Cover: The National Railway Museum's Class 52 Diesel Hydraulic locomotive D1023 'Western Fusilier' seen outside the main erecting shop at Crewe Works during the last open day in 2005. 2017 marks the 40th year since the last of the Westerns was withdrawn from service.

This page: Now back in action on the main line following its major overhaul at LNWR Heritage, Crewe, British Railways Merchant Navy Class locomotive 35028 'Clan Line' on the pit at the Crewe Heritage Centre in November 2010. Both photos: Mike Lenz]]

From the Editor. Mike Lenz

The reaction to the first issue of the resurrected 'On Shed' journal has been very favourable (See 'Letter to the Editor' on page 14) and the intention will now be to produce two issues per year, one in late January, and the other in the late summer in time for the start of our new season of meetings. As always contributions from members are welcome either in the form of articles or pictorial features. Contributions for the next issue must be with me by December 15th 2017.

Chairman's Report. Mike Lenz

Since the start of the year your committee has met on three occasions to discuss several issues, the most pressing being finding suitable speakers for our monthly meetings.

The meetings have been reasonably well attended and thanks to Wayne Jones for his work in finding an excellent selection of presentations for us to enjoy. The start of the new season of meetings is almost upon us and the programme through to January can be found on page 4 of this journal.

Our finances remain healthy and thanks go to Paul Tench for looking after this aspect of our activities.

Our June evening out at the Railway Inn in Mobberley turned into something of a disaster due to the windy weather bringing down a tree across the line at Mobberley which resulted in no trains running on the Manchester to Chester line at the time we were due to travel. On arrival at Northwich station I found fellow 8E members Peter Dixon and Keith Roberts discussing the options for the evening. When by 7.15pm there seemed little likelihood of reaching our destination we all adjourned to the 'Penny Black' in Northwich for the remainder of the evening. Alan Ashurst only got as far as Altrincham before having to turn back and return home.

Membership Report. Brian Burgess

There have been no changes to our membership status since the last issue and renewal forms for Full Members are included with this Journal. Prompt payment of your membership is much appreciated. The current status is as follows;

Honorary Life Members - 13

Life Members - 9

Full Members - 35

Total overall - 57

Fixtures Programme 2017-2018. Wayne Jones

Tuesday 12th September - Russell Hatt - Memories of BR in the latter years of steam.

Tuesday 10th October - Les Nixon - Miscellany of pre BR Steam.

Tuesday 14th November - TBC

Tuesday 12th December - AGM followed by slide presentation of railways around Chester.

Tuesday 9th January - John Cashen - West Country memories of the 1960s and 1970s.

All the above at the Gladstone Club, Station Road, Northwich, CW9 5RB

Commencing at 7.45pm. Admission for first-time guests is FREE, subsequent meeting entrance fee is £3. Sandwiches provided free of charge.

Photo Puzzle.

Can you identify the location of this photograph taken on one of our annual summer outings? Answer on page 14.

(Photo: Mike Lenz)



A History of the 8E Association-Part 2 Mike Lenz

In early 1987 we received a request from the National Railway Museum asking if we could clean and prepare the locomotive 'Cornwall' which was then located at Crewe Works as seen below, where it was to be exhibited at the upcoming open day to be held as part of the Crewe 150 celebrations. We were also asked to provide stewards for the locomotive during the event.



(Photo: Mike Lenz)

We also received an invitation from Tony Moseley, the manager at the Crewe Heritage Centre which was due to be officially opened by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on the 24th of July, although the Centre actually opened to the public in the June, to assist with servicing and cleaning some of the visiting main line steam locomotives which were moved to the Centre in a cavalcade from Crewe Works following the open day.

A colleague of Alan Ashurst's at Rail House in Crewe, Graham Brocken, also asked Alan if we could provide additional support with running the Collector's Corner shop at the Heritage Centre, and so we found ourselves extremely busy that summer. The original plan was for the Centre to only be open for 12 weeks that summer and then the site would be redeveloped for commercial use. However due to the number of visitors over those 12 weeks, 20,000+, Crewe & Nantwich Borough Council decided that they would retain the facility as a permanent Heritage Centre. Amongst the locomotives present that first summer were BR Standard Pacific 71000 Duke of Gloucester, LMS Pacific 6201 Princess Elizabeth, Class 8F 2-8-0 48151 (ex Northwich engine) plus several tank locos, plus several diesel locos including D1041 Western Prince which was still in its original Rail Blue livery, albeit somewhat less than ideal condition body wise. Its owner, Dave Edleston became a good friend of the Association due to several of our members being partial to this class of locomotive, myself included, and he entrusted the locomotive into our care when he

was of present himself. The same was the case for the ex Northwich 8F which belonged to David Smith (of West Coast Railways) and had just one person with the loco, namely Brian Gibson. Brian was happy to leave the locomotive in our care during its stay and we again maintained our reputation as the group to turn to for servicing and cleaning locomotives to a high standard.

During the 1987-88 winter period the hall was used for some events such as swapmeets and duly reopened the following spring, when again 8E were involved with both locomotive servicing and the Collector's Corner shop. We also received a request from the 71000 Duke of Gloucester locomotive group to go into Crewe Works to assist with painting the locomotive frames whilst it was in the works for some work to be done before returning to the Heritage Centre the following season. The 'Duke' was not the only locomotive to go into the works from the Heritage Centre as D1041 Western Prince was also in 10 shop undergoing an overhaul and full repaint into original maroon livery as seen in the photos below. (All photos: Mike Lenz)



Another successful summer season was had in 1988, during which the Centre gained a new addition to its permanent exhibits in the form of the remaining cars from the Advanced Passenger Train prototype, which were then in the care of the National Railway Museum but had been in store at Crewe Electric Traction Depot following withdrawal from service. This together with the returning D1041, 71000 and 6201 plus Liverpool & Manchester railway locomotive 'Lion' seen here and otherwise familiar to many as the 'Titfield Thunderbolt' from the Ealing Comedy of the same name, and other smaller tank locomotives again provided much for the returning visitors to see. The 8E volunteers were kept busy and gained many new members from the Crewe and Stoke areas who assisted with the locomotive servicing and general stewarding and also manning the Collector's Corner shop again, this time with a selection of our own sales stock as well. (Photo: Mike Lenz)



After the season ended in the autumn the Heritage Centre obtained its next exhibit, which was Class 47 number 47001(D1521), but as this was not a Crewe built example of the Class, its presence at the Centre was short lived, as it was exchanged for a Crewe built machine 47192 (D1842). However 47001 departed somewhat lighter in weight than when it arrived as 8E and Heritage Centre staff stripped the locomotive of all usefulparts to act as spares for its replacement. Even our then steam orientated chairman, Colin Worrall, was noted assisting with the work on the diesels as seen here! (Photos: Mike Lenz)



During the winter of 1987-88 a team of volunteers and staff from the Heritage Centre, assisted by Crewe Diesel Depot and Crewe Works staff worked on restoring 47192 to original condition and livery. Our own Len Clarke was responsible for the repaint in to original two tone green with small yellow warning panel and 4 digit headcode box. The restoration was undertaken in the Centre's main exhibition hall. Below are a selection of images from the restoration process. (All photos: Mike Lenz)



From 1989 onwards the former McAlpine's Site Office building which Collector's Corner had used for their shop was donated by Graham Brocken to the Association in recognition for our assistance during the first two years. This then served as our sales outlet and store until 1993 and proved initially to be a good source of income for the Association. Below is the shop seen during the summer season in 1989. (Photos: Mike Lenz)



In the early nineties visitor numbers to the Heritage Centre started to fall and after spending most of summer 1992 running the shop for very little return in income the decision was taken in early 1993 to not open the shop but to relocate the building to my home in Northwich to use as a storage facility for our sales stock, as we continued to regularly attend swapmeets at Crewe and Stoke and occasionally elsewhere.

There was however one other aspect of our activities at Crewe and that was our involvement with the return to steam out of Crewe with the North Wales Coast Express specials. In 1988 locomotive 6201 Princess Elizabeth inaugurated a series of trips from Crewe called the 'Cheshire Cheese' which ran Crewe-Chester-Shrewsbury-Crewe, with two trips each day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon with the ticket price including entry to the Heritage Centre. These proved a great success but were not continued the following year. Instead, in early 1989, the locomotive 35028 Clan Line gave a press run for the first of what was to become the North Wales Coast Express runs. The Association was tasked with locating all the suitable watering locations along the North Wales Coast and subsequently providing 2 volunteers to accompany each locomotive support crew with the sole responsibility for attending to the watering of the locomotives on these trips. Here we see members Geoff Smith and Colin Mansell attending to the watering of locomotive 6201 Princess Elizabeth at Chester. (Photo: Mike Lenz) We continued this duty into the start of the 1990s by which time most of the locomotive support crews were then familiar with the watering locations and the need for our own volunteers to accompany the various locomotive support crews was at the discretion of the particular crews person in charge on the day.



In part 3 of this story I will look at our next project at Crewe, the locomotive 'Robert'.

The bottom left hand corner Dave Hawkes

As some of you know I spent a portion of my school years in Plymouth. After a few months in rented accommodation near North Road station my parents bought a house on Llanhydrock Road. This just happened to be across a playground from the Southern main line into Friary station and the Western branch to Yealmpton. With such a grandstand view of the steady procession of trains my interest in railways grew rapidly. The locomotives to be seen ranged from M7 and O2 0-4-4 tanks, through medium sized T9 4-4-0s and N 2-6-0s to the light Pacifics (West Country and Battle of Britain). In the distance was invariably a B4 0-4-0T on its way to or from the Cattewater docks. There were, of course, daily appearances of ex-GW 43xx 2-6-0s, which took the Okehampton route from Exeter in order to retain route knowledge, useful in the event of the coastal route being closed (!!), and of an ex-GW pannier tank (usually 1650) on its way to the docks at Sutton Pool. The main line and the branch formed two arms of a triangle, the third being the Cattewater docks line, which passed in front of Friary shed. Since the turntable at Friary shed was only 50 feet long the Pacifics used the triangle to turn, affording three opportunities to see them. (On Sundays they used the triangle at Laira since the branches were switched out.)

As you might expect, from time to time something unusual would turn up. The primary school I attended at that time used playing fields opposite Friary shed. On one occasion (in 1954 or 1955, it really was a long time ago) I could not believe my eyes and asked a fellow pupil for confirmation. 34082, "615 Squadron". The Southern was split into three sections - effectively Western, Central and Eastern echoing the spheres of influence of the pre-grouping companies. Since we were at the extremity of the Western end the chance seeing anything from the others was nil. To the best of my knowledge 34082 was allocated to Ramsgate at that time. Why it appeared at Friary remains a mystery to me and I never saw it again. Answers on a postcard!

Also in full view outside Friary shed for a long time were two of the Plymouth, Devonport and South West Junction engines, 30757 and 30758. These 0-6-2 tanks were built for and used on the Callington branch, but I never saw them move, and then they were gone, presumably for scrapping at Eastleigh.

At that time 19 of the BR Standard Class 3 2-6-2 tanks were to be found in Devon, nine at Newton Abbott and the remainder at Exmouth Junction. The Western men soon disposed of theirs, but they suited the intensive service on the Exmouth branch. Occasionally one would appear on an express from Exeter if they could not provide anything bigger. Although the ruling gradient was 1 in 75, most expresses were of three or four coaches, the rest of the train having been split at Exeter Central to be distributed around the "Withered Arm". So this was not too big a problem for the occasional tank engine, and T9s were used daily on the Atlantic Coast Express. The only proper express was the 11 a.m. to Portsmouth and Brighton (and return, of course). This had a minimum of ten coaches and always a Pacific. The basic arrangement was four coaches for Portsmouth and six, including a restaurant car, for Brighton. Additional coaches were added for either destination as traffic demanded - not readily achievable in modern times. For trips to Exeter this was my favourite train, with the steady three cylinder beat for mile after mile to the summit near Okehampton. Bliss!

Friary also had some Ivatt 2-6-2 tanks. These were largely unseen. I suspect they loitered at the sub-shed at Callington, since the passenger trains for the branch always seemed to be in the hands of the O2 tanks. These hauled the LSWR gated stock. The gates were situated half way along the coach and were the only means of entry for passengers. Health and Safety? I am not aware that anyone fell out in transit. The larger M7 tanks operated the Tavistock services.

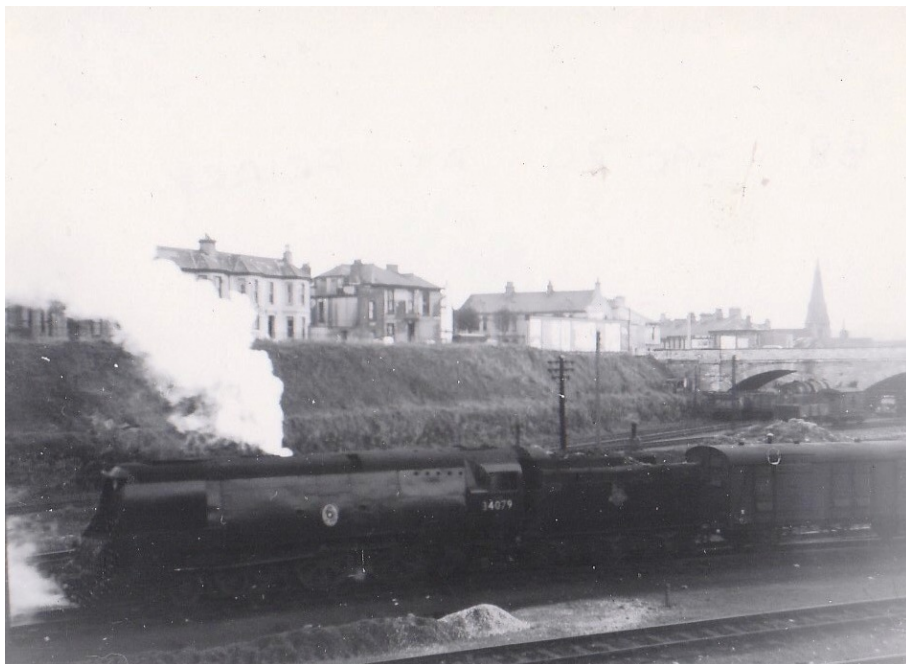
A G6 0-6-0 tank was added to the complement for a short period, although I am not sure why. It was put to work on the Cattewater docks branch and had to be rescued at least once by one of the diminutive B4s, which were perfectly capable of hauling quite lengthy trains from the docks to

Friary goods yard. This yard was quite spacious. In the centre was a line which dropped away steeply into a tunnel. Where did it go? I never saw anything on it. Apparently it served the northern part of Sutton Pool.

With the rebuilding of the Pacifics, which were not permitted West of Meldon at that time, and electrification in Kent the block allocations started to break down and unexpected observations like that mentioned above soon became commonplace. The somewhat grainy Box camera photo of 34079 shunting coaching stock illustrates the point. It would have been improbable only a year or two before. Other points of interest are the cleanliness of the engine (typical in the South-West) and the extent of the goods yard at Friary, extending well beyond the bridge in the background.

Other signs of changing times were the arrival, apparently week by week, of the final batch of Standard Class 4 4-6-0s, 75070-79. These were allocated to Exmouth Junction, but did not stay long. And finally the elderly B4s were replaced by an equal number of Drewry 204 hp 0-6-0 diesel shunters. Progress?

Across the hill behind my house was a much larger enterprise - Laira. But that will have to wait for next time.



(Photo: Dave Hawkes)

Where in the world am I?



Turn over the page to find the answer.

An African Sojourn Paul Tench

In October 2016 we were lucky enough to take the luxury 'Rovos' train from Dar es Salaam in Tanzania all the way to Cape Town in South Africa passing through Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana on the way. This 6,800km journey runs just 3 times a year and takes 15 days to complete. Check out the details of this journey and many other African trips on www.Rovos.com

PS. The Worcester on the previous page is in South Africa.



The 'main line', indeed the only line northwards out of South Africa. This line through Zeerust is part of Cecil Rhodes 'Cape to Cairo' line.



Map showing route of the train from Dar es Salaam to Cape Town.



Steam hauled out of Pretoria behind engine number 3360, a 1949 North British build class 19D (Note the extra large water tender to cope with going across the arid Karoo desert)



Our train sitting on the Victoria Falls bridge which was constructed by the Cleveland Bridge Co. in England and then transported to Africa in pieces. The final piece at the centre of the 513ft span did not fit so the engineers went for a drink and a think. The next morning, after the bridge had contracted in the cool of the night, the piece fitted with an 1/8 inch to spare!

Right; Water towers are still maintained and in good working order in Zimbabwe.



Below; The orange and cream Bristol Lodekka buses are a common sight in Zambia and the Leyland's home is in the tiny village of Matjiesfontein in South Africa.



Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir,

Having read the splendid resurrected 8E On Shed Magazine - Winter Edition I would like to thank the Editor for his efforts in putting together the magazine once again, and to look back at some of the suspect characters, visits and photographs of both past and current members.

I keenly look forward to the second part of the 8E Story in the next issue with such subjects, photographs or topics as:

Auntie Janes Therapeutic Outings, Chester Swopmeets - the under the counter sales story by Dave Healey, Letters to the Editor, to save the 8E embarrassment, we really should buy Mr Bennett a good pair of Braces!!

Keep up the sterling work my boy.

Yours

Isambard Bullied-Stanier

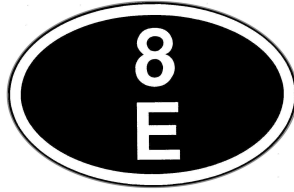
Member Profile - Alan Ashurst

Alan came to railways from an early age, being from a railway family on his Mother's side, originally in the Manchester area where Grandfather Norman was a driver at Newton Heath and Longsight before transferring to 8B Warrington Dallam shed. 1950's childhood days living alongside the railway in Latchford on the Warrington Arpley to Skelton Junction route further added to the railway interest and eventually led to a railway career in the mid 1970's, initially with Booking Office duties at Central and Bank Quay stations before a move into Train Planning / Timetabling at Rail House, Crewe. As steam died in the North West in the late 1960's hobby interest transferred to the diesel hydraulic classes in the West of England, but upon their demise in 1977 the focus turned back to steam and the Rocket 150 events of 1980 proved a particular stimulus into the preservation scene following involvement professionally at Bold and Rainhill that year. The 'Open Day' at 8E Northwich in May 1980 was attended with a few Warrington friends and once it became apparent that steam was to make more regular appearances there Alan joined the then infant 8E Association in the spring of 1981.



Involved initially with publicity and PR work for the group, other concepts were also to play a part over the years including sales and exhibition activities, historical research, public speaking and slide show presentations plus arranging day trips and outings throughout the north west and beyond, as well as hands-on duties with steam visitors to Northwich, Chester, Crewe and elsewhere. Maintaining a part time role with timetabling matters on behalf of Cross Country Trains at Birmingham keeps Alan involved in railways on a professional basis - at least for a little while longer, although relocation to Shropshire in recent years means that regular attendance at evening meetings in Northwich is more difficult these days. Being hugely pleased to accept the role of Vice President a few years ago was the icing on the cake for Alan, who continues to hold a great affection for all things '8E'!

PHOTO PUZZLE: The location shows the top of the tunnel mouth under the A6 trunk road in Stockport on the former Cheshire Lines route through Tiviot Dale station.



The 8E Railway Association

Founded 1981

President
Vice President

Graham Roughsedge
Alan Ashurst

Committee Members

Chairman
Vice Chairman
Secretary
Treasurer
Membership
Fixtures Officer
Publicity/Webmaster
Additional members

Mike Lenz
Wayne Jones
David Hawkes
Paul Tench
Brian Burgess
Wayne Jones
Jon Penn
Roger Morris

On Shed Journal

Contributions for future issues are welcomed.
Please submit these to the editor at the monthly meetings or by email to the address below.

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[Rear Cover: Class 90 electric locomotive 90027 entering the loop approaching Acton Bridge station. Photo: Mike Lenz]

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