

ON SHED

The Journal of the 8D Association

Volume 8 Number 2 – June 2018



WIDNES NUMBER 1

A train of cement wagons is seen at Widnes Number 1 signal box on 3 March 1980. The wagons were being trip worked between the Blue Circle cement works at Tanhouse Lane and Hutchinson Street Yard. **Photo by Brian Roberts**

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Volume 8 Number 2

June 2018

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Editor



Left: The Liverpool Overhead Railway Dingle tunnel seen from its western portal on 12 May 2018. On xxx xx August 2018 8D Association members will have the opportunity to visit this fascinating and historic site. Photo by Paul Wright

The summer programme is now well under way and a number of interesting site visits have taken place. It's been really pleasing to see a

number of new members on the walks and the feedback that I have received from them has been very positive.

Walks and site visits have been a key feature of the 8D Association since our first full year in 2011 and long may they continue. If members have any ideas for future walks, or are able to organise a walk or site visit then please get in touch we would be delighted to hear from you.

On Tuesday 10 July 2018 we will be visiting the Liverpool Overhead Railway station and tunnel at Dingle. This is a real coup for the 8D Association as very few people have been able to access the site since the tunnel roof collapse of 2012. Details are given on the back page. **Paul Wright**

8D Visits to CLC North Liverpool Extension Line



8D Association at Clubmoor during their visit to the North Liverpool Extension Line on 19 May 2018. Photo by Neil Wilson

Two trips have been made to the CLC North Liverpool Extension Line so far this year. The first was on Saturday 21 April 2018 when the Halewood Triangle was visited. This site has been visited by the 8D Association twice before but it is an interesting site and there have been many new members join the society since the last visit.

Paul Wright who had at one time worked at the Halewood Triangle as a countryside ranger led the walk and pointed out the many features of interest that still survive. He also explained the history of the site after it had passed out of railway use following the lifting of the west chord in 1979. At the end of the walk members were granted access to the visitor centre where they were able to view old photographs of the line. This was made possible by 8D Member Mal Owen who is also a volunteer at the park.

The second visit to the line took place on Saturday 19 May 2018. On that occasion the section of line between West Derby station and Fazakerley South Junction was explored. Lee Woods led the walk which included the site of Clubmoor station a late

addition to the line opening on 14 April 1927. The station was opened by the CLC to serve the vast housing estates that were created by Liverpool Corporation during the 1920s and 1930s.



8D Association members look at old photographs of the Halewood Triangle at the Halewood 'Triangle' Park visitor centre on 21 April 2018. Photo by John Wilson

A Trip along the ex-LYR Liverpool and Ormskirk Line

On Saturday 26 May 2018 the 8D Association did a site visit with a difference. On this occasion trains were used to look at a number of interesting features of the ex-LYR line between Liverpool and Ormskirk. Sites visited included Liverpool Central (not part of the LYR but now the southern terminus for Ormskirk services), Sandhills, Kirkdale, Aintree and Ormskirk stations. Paul Wright explained the often complicated history of each station and the sections of line on which they stand. Being part of the Merseyrail Northern Line with a frequent service of trains made the trip very easy to do.

The trip was well received by all who took part and owing to its success there will be another on xx July 2018. This time we will be looking at the Liverpool and Garston Railway of 1864 which went on to become part of the CLC's main line between Liverpool and Manchester. Full details are given on the back page.



The 8D Association trip along the Liverpool and Ormskirk line on Saturday 26 May 2018 involved travelling on a number of Merseyrail services. In this view members can be seen riding in a class 508 EMU under the streets of Liverpool.

WARRINGTON RAILWAY PENSIONERS

8D association Members are once again welcome to sign up for trips that are organised by the Warrington Railway Pensioners Group. The trips are by coach and run from Warrington and if you are interested in going on any of the ones listed below simply contact Roy Dixon on 01925 638299. All of the trips are on Wednesdays and they all start from Warrington Central station.

Wednesday 13 June 2018 – Severn Valley Railway

Wednesday 11 July 2018 – Beamish

Wednesday 15 August – Knaresborough

Wednesday 5 September – Llandudno

Great Britain Steam Run

On Wednesday the 25 April the annual Great Britain steam train passed through the area. It was observed by three 8D members at Warrington Bank Quay station being hauled by rebuilt Merchant Navy class Pacific 35018 *British India Line*, with West Coast Railway Class 37 number 37 668 assisting at the rear.

The train passed Bank Quay 11 minutes early however a major signal failure in the Warrington area affected all services and caused the train to take nearly two and a half hours to cover the distance between Bank Quay and Weaver Junction. This resulted in the train arriving at Crewe very late. An engine change to Stanier 'Black Five' 45212 delayed the train further and it was unable to make up any further time over the Central Wales Line, before the train arrived in Cardiff for the evening.

Grand National Specials



Left: A six car rake of 158 units seen passing through Mossley Hill station on 14 April 2018. Photo by Doug Birmingham

On Saturday April 2018 two special trains were run from London for the Grand National at Aintree with three returning back to London in the evening. This was

an increase from the usual one special only of recent years.

The Northern Belle train was used for the 06.47 London Euston to Liverpool Lime Street that was routed via Northampton and Birmingham International. Motive Power was West Coast Railways Class 57's 57 316 and 57 313 which top and tailed the train. The empty stock went back to Chester via Crewe. In the late afternoon the return working went from Chester to Liverpool Lime Street via Helsby and the Halton Curve. Departure in the evening from Lime Street was at 18.15 which included a stop of over an hour in Platform 3 at Liverpool South Parkway station awaiting the return of some of the race goers.

The second train was the Belmond British Pullman Orient Express Pullman Cars, which was top and tailed by DB Cargo Class 67's 67 024 and 67 021 which have been repainted in the same livery as the Pullman cars to make up a matching train. The service ran from London Victoria to Runcorn where, after letting off the passengers, the train went to Ditton Yard to reverse before proceeding back to Crewe as empty stock. The train returned to London Victoria from Liverpool Lime

Street at 19.25.

The third service that ran in the evening was provided by Virgin Trains using Pendolino set 390.008. This worked into the Liverpool area as the 11.14 empty stock from Preston to Edge Hill Downhill Sidings via Crewe. After spending the afternoon at Downhill it then formed 1T70 the 19.18 additional special from Lime Street to Euston. This was the only one of three services on which ordinary tickets could be used.

This is the first time that both Luxury trains have been used on the same day for the Grand National Meeting and happened because Belmond sold their interest in the Northern Belle to a consortium which includes West Coast Railways.



The Grand National Northern Belle service is seen at Olive Mount cutting on 14 April 2018. Photo by Doug Birmingham

East Midlands Trains once again this year did not provide a Meridian set to work between Nottingham and Liverpool. Unlike last year they did add additional carriages to the 05.50 from Norwich which ran with a 6 car rake of Class 158 units. Unfortunately as they do not have selective door opening controls, they were unable to call at Warrington Central, Widnes and Liverpool South Parkway stations as the train would be too long for the platforms. The return working the 11.52 to Norwich had to miss the stops as well running non-stop from Lime Street to Manchester Oxford Road. London North Western Railway used an 8 car rake of Class 350 Desiro units on a couple of Birmingham New Street to Liverpool Lime Street services to cater for the crowds.

Closures of Main line through Runcorn

Over the Easter weekend the main line through Runcorn was closed for four days



Left: On Monday 28 May 2018 Virgin Trains Pendolino number 390 127 is seen passing through Huyton on 5P37 an empty stock working from Edge Hill to Preston. The set then worked 08:13 Preston to Glasgow service. Photo by John Wilson

while new signals where installed around the station and towards Halton Junction. A new set of points was also installed at Halton Junction along with

new signals on the Halton Curve enabling it to become Bi-Directional.

Further closures took place from 5 May 2018 (for 4 days) and from 25 May 2018 (for 3 days). The closures allowed further work to take place on the commissioning of the new signalling and points in the area.

For the early May closure Virgin Trains services between London and Liverpool where diverted from Crewe to run via Manchester Piccadilly and the Chat Moss line into Liverpool on Saturday, Sunday and the Bank holiday Monday. On the Tuesday the service went via Warrington Bank Quay and Earlestown to reach Lime Street.

The London North Western services from Liverpool to Birmingham where replaced by buses between Crewe and Liverpool South Parkway, where passengers changed on to other services to take them into Liverpool.

Crew Training



Left: On 18 April 2018 a Trans Pennine Express driver training train is seen passing the site of Halebank station. At the head of the train which ran as 5F26 is class 68 locomotive number 68 027. At the rear is sister locomotive 68 022. Photo by Doug Birmingham

Crew training has commenced at

Allerton Depot on Class 323 EMU's. Units 323.231 and 235 have been observed on

the depot and doing training runs between Allerton and Newton-le-Willows. It is expected that these units will take over some of the duties in the Liverpool area presently performed by Class 319 units.

Trans-Pennine Express have also commenced weekday crew training runs between Crewe and Wavertree Junction using a 4 Coach rake of ex-Virgin and Greater Anglia Mark 3's top and tailed by DRS Class 68's. This is in advance of the new Mark 5 Carriages being introduced onto the Liverpool - Scarborough service. It is anticipated that a set of Mark 3's with Class 68's top and tailing them will be introduced during the course of the summer timetable on a couple of services. These carriages are being maintained at the Arriva trains Crewe LNW depot, and will be worked as empty stock in the morning via Runcorn returning at night, from Liverpool to Crewe.

Another Lime Street Closure

Train Services were suspended into Liverpool Lime Street on Sunday 6 January, due to the overhead wires being damaged as a result of a corroded Gantry. Virgin Trains diverted the majority of their services to Warrington Bank Quay for onward coach connections to Liverpool, while London North Western, Trans-Pennine and Northern services terminated at Liverpool South Parkway with the intention that passengers could transfer to the Merseyrail electric line for the onward journey to Liverpool Central. However, due to engineering works between Hunts Cross and Sandhills on the electric line through South Parkway, a replacement bus service was in operation, which resulted in passengers having to wait for rail replacement buses to be provided. Repair work was carried out overnight by Network Rail engineers, and normal services were resumed from Monday morning, except for Northern who were experiencing one of their strike days.

Trans Pennine Farewell to the CLC



TPE services no longer run over the CLC. In this view taken on 5 May 2018 a TPE service is seen between Widnes and Sankey. Photo by Doug Birmingham

With the introduction of

the summer timetable on 20 May 2018 major alterations have been made to both Northern and Trans-Pennine Express services.

The biggest change involved the removal of the Trans-Pennine Express service from

Liverpool to Scarborough from the CLC route. It now runs along its pre-1989 LNWR route through Newton-Le-Willows. This means that both of the Liverpool Trans-Pennine services run that way. The Liverpool to Newcastle service which had run non-stop from Lime Street to Manchester Victoria now calls at Newton-le-Willows. The Scarborough service calls at Lea Green and Manchester Victoria. Some late night trains will call at both stations.

To compensate the CLC route for the loss of one of its express service a formerly electrically worked service from Manchester Airport to Liverpool Lime Street has transferred from the LNWR route and is diesel worked.

An electric service will continue to run between Liverpool Lime Street and Manchester Airport via Newton-le -Willows but it will be an all stations stopping train that continues from the Airport to Crewe. Journey time from Liverpool to Crewe this way is two and a half hours.

Electric to Blackpool

The Electric service between Liverpool and Preston has been extended to Blackpool North. This has been made possible following completion of the electrification of the line between Preston and the Lancashire seaside town. In addition three Virgin Pendolino worked services link Blackpool North and London Euston which call at Warrington Bank Quay. The early morning and early evening return Voyager worked service from Blackpool to Euston continues to run.

Helsby – Ellesmere Port Service No Better

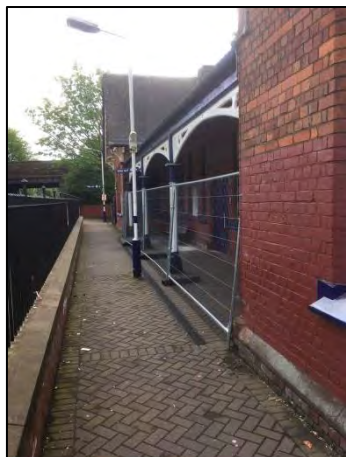
The 'Parliamentary' service between Helsby and Ellesmere Port has been changed for the first time in a number of years and not for the good. The present service has been replaced by an early morning service from Liverpool Lime Street to Ellesmere Port via Warrington Bank Quay. The train then makes one return journey along the line before proceeding to Chester as empty stock. All of the previous afternoon services have been axed and replaced with an early evening service that runs from Helsby to Ellesmere Port before forming the 19.17 Ellesmere Port to Manchester Victoria via Warrington Bank Quay..

The remains of 8D Shed can be seen once again

During demolition of the former Widnes- Runcorn bridge approach road by-pass road at Victoria Road a temporary footpath was constructed which took pedestrians underneath the Low Level line near to the back end of the former Widnes Engine Shed. Part of the end wall which still stands was on view for people to look at. On a couple of occasions photographers were noted taking pictures of the wall. Victoria Road re-opened on Saturday the 12 May 2018 and the footpath was closed. However the palisade fencing near to the Low Level underpass has not been reinstalled so the shed wall can still be viewed at the present time.

Collapse at Widnes station

On Monday 7 May 2018 a serious incident occurred at the 1872 built Widnes station when part of the canopy on the Liverpool bound platform gave way and fell on to the benches below. A Mother and Daughter who were sat on one of the benches were



Left: The CLC station building at Widnes on Saturday 12 May 2018. The area where the canopy roof collapse had occurred had been fenced off. Photo by Paul Wright

injured by the debris and taken by Ambulance to hospital.

Network Rail made temporary repairs to the structure which remained cordoned off to the public at the time of writing.

The station had opened to passengers on 1 August 1873 as Farnworth. It was a CLC 'clone' station being identical to many of the others on the main line. The station became Widnes North on 5 January 1959 and then Widnes on 6 May 1968.

New Container Service at Liverpool Docks

DB Cargo in partnership with Peel Ports commenced operating a container train between Seaforth and Mossend from 8 May 2018.

The service which operates three days a week departs from Seaforth at 14.07 on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays returning from Mossend at 03.05 on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

The Navigation Bell



When the Widnes – Runcorn railway bridge (the Ethelfleda bridge) was opened in October 1868 the River Mersey over which it spanned was a busy maritime artery. For that reason the bridge was fitted with navigational features designed to assist the Masters of the vessels that plied up and down the river. The aids included red and green oil lamps and a bell that was rung during periods of fog or mist.

On Sunday 27 May 2018 just after 08:00 the 'Navigation Bell' (see photo left) was lifted off the bridge by helicopter and then lowered to the ground at the site of the West Bank Dock. This was the first time that the bell had been on the ground for

150 years. Network Rail are currently refurbishing the bridge and the opportunity has been taken to remove the bell so that it can be restored for public display.

After restoration the bell will be housed in the Brindley Theatre Runcorn.

Working the Liverpool – Garston Line - by Rod Dixon



Garston station in the summer of 1971. A Gateacre to Liverpool Central service is seen at the down platform. On a cold and frosty morning during the winter of 1971 Rod Dixon undertook his first driving turn on the main line as a Garston driver.

After reading Paul's informative item on the Cheshire Lines Committee route into Brunswick and Liverpool Central in the December Journal it brought back memories of my time as a spare Driver at Garston.

I went to Garston in 1969 after Sutton Oak had closed but my first encounter with Liverpool Central station goes back further than that. In 1954 at the very beginning of my railway career I went to Liverpool Central for my medical. It was a busy place then but like most major terminus stations of that area it was dark and gloomy.

At Garston I had to learn the various types of traction of which there was quite a variety including DMUs that operated on local services. I also spent time road learning and it was while doing this that I got to know the route between Garston and Liverpool and onwards to Gateacre. The old-hand drivers offered some good tips. One very useful tip concerned the approach to Liverpool Central which was in a very dark tunnel with almost no visibility. I was told to listen out for a rumble which was the point where the former CLC line passed over the former LNWR Wapping branch. It was at that point that the brakes should be applied so that a smooth and undramatic approach to the blocks at the station could be made. A very useful tip.

I spent quite a lot of time learning roads and traction but then one early morning in the winter of 1971 a driver failed to turn up who was rostered to work the Liverpool and Gateacre service. They managed to cover the first service of the day with a night shift man but I was asked to relieve him at Garston station and take over the service.

I felt as proud as punch as I made the short walk between the depot and Garston station as this was a big moment for me in my railway career.

The service that I was to work had departed from Gateacre at 07:05 and it arrived at Garston at 07:15. The night turn driver got out of the cab and I took his place. It was only a short distance to the next station which is Cressington but the line is in a cutting all the way. I set off feeling very happy with myself but as I approached Cressington Junction and applied the brakes the wheels locked and the train started to slip. This was because of the cold and frosty conditions. I released and reapplied the brakes four times in order to keep the wheels turning and just about managed to stop the train at the far end of the Cressington station down platform. The passengers had to walk down to the train but at least I had managed to stop it at the platform. That incident kept me on my toes for the rest of that shift. I would have made about four return trips between Liverpool central and Gateacre on that day.

At this time Liverpool Central was a depressing place with only two platforms in use and much of the site given over to car parking. It had a very derelict feel about it. The passenger service finished on Saturday 15 April 1972 and I thought that would be the last that I saw of Liverpool Central. I certainly didn't think that I would be back there at the controls of a train within a few years.

The end of the passenger service did not mean the end of working along the line though because Brunswick yard survived until 12 December 1973 and we had work to and from there. Even after Brunswick closed there was the work from the Fulwood oil terminal to Courtalls at Holwell, Shottwich steel works with fuel oil and Todd Lane Lostock Hall Preston with gas oil. After leaving Fulwood sidings we had to go to Brunswick sidings to run round because there were no cross over's at Fulwood.



Left: Cressington Junction looking south in the early 1970s.

The oil services did not last long and the line between Cressington and Liverpool Central was closed. A brick train still ran to Cressington from the Manchester direction. It was usually hauled by two class 25 locomotives. Upon arrival at Cressington an 08 locomotive was attached to the rear. The train then reversed and went onto the Church Road branch with the 08 leading. This method of operation had ceased by 4 September 1977 when Cressington Junction was closed and removed.

So after the oil services had ceased the train crews at Garston thought that we would be soon going in to recover redundant rails and other equipment from the now closed lines, but instead the engineering department took over the section and we started to take in new rail

and concrete sleepers with drilled out holes to take third rail insulators. We had heard rumours about plans to build a link line between Liverpool Exchange and Liverpool Central Low Level stations and the work we were now doing seemed to confirm this.

Within a few months we were working into the tunnels beyond Brunswick sidings. Sidings had been retained at Brunswick so that we could run round our trains there and propel into the tunnels at St James's old station. On one occasion I had propelled my train onto the worksite when the site engineer Arthur Smith asked me to move further into the new works. This involved taking my locomotive, a class 40, into a new steeply descending single bore tube and I was a bit reluctant because it looked to be a bit of a tight squeeze. However I had worked with Arthur before so very carefully I inched my train down into the depths of this well-lit tube. After the train was set for unloading I shut the engine down to stop the tunnel filling with fumes. After unloading we worked the empties back to Garston sidings.

As the work progressed further we were taking trains into what is now Central station but at this time it was a building site, the roof had been taken off the old Central Low Level station so that pieces of equipment could be lowered in but most of the bigger items came by rail. As we got further into the work it was decided to put the train crew onto two shifts. The morning turn was about 5 am start to get the locomotive, which was usually a class 25, and the train ready to get onto the work site about 8am. The afternoon shift booked on about 12noon to go passenger from Garston to Lime St and walk across to the Central worksite entrance which was next to the old Lewis store. The access to the actual worksite was by means of ladders and scaffolding going from ground level up a short ladder about eight feet to a scaffold platform over a retaining wall to another ladder which went down about fifteen feet to a second plank platform to a third twenty foot ladder to rail level.



Liverpool Central 'link line' platform under construction in 1976. The Mersey Railway Liverpool Central Low Level station had been located here until it closed on 28 July 1975. The ladder that Rod had to climb can be seen to the right. Photo from Merseytravel



A rock drilling machine at work on the link line construction in the mid-1970s. Photo from Merseytravel

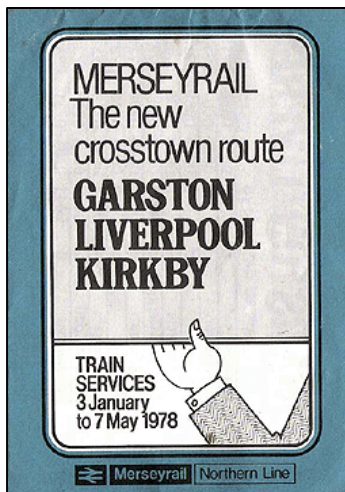
Another problem to this grand plan was a number of the train crew were reluctant to using these ladders so our managers had to ask for volunteers who did not mind using them. So it was down to a group of us to be rostered to this work.

The trains we worked were small and the class 25 loco was compact to fit the tubes and leave space to allow some of the exhaust fumes to clear though the open roof of the central worksite more often we would shut down between moves.

Sometimes the work would mean leaving the loco on site all week so that the day and afternoon shifts would have to use the ladders twice. One of these occasions when I was on the afternoon turn the work had overrun, as a result we could not take the locomotive to the depot for servicing. I was told to take it to the other end of our worksite which we had called Paradise Junction. From the junction there was a single line connecting to the head shunt at James St station where I was to leave the locomotive secured for a Birkenhead crew to walk from James St and take it to their depot via the river tunnel. I had never heard of a diesel making that journey before and I wonder how often that has ever happened.

That connection is now used for stock to be moved between Birkenhead North and Kirkdale depots for servicing.

As the work continued the connection was made to the rails up to the new tunnels from Moorfield's at Paradise Junction. Part of the new works was a double crossover at the Moorfield end of Central station which was installed so that trains could arrive and depart from both platforms.



At the south end of Liverpool Central trains depart and arrive through new single bore tunnels located either side of a shunting spur tunnel this was built to allow trains to draw forward to clear the platforms while reversing. In the original plans the spur was to become part of a link to join up with the Wapping tunnel. This would have allowed trains to run between Liverpool Central and Edge Hill and link up with the main lines with possible dual voltage train services to St Helens and perhaps further destination. The plan was dropped in 1980 as the money had run out but in recent times it has been taken back off the shelf and is being given serious consideration once again.

The CLC line through to Garston reopened, electrified, to passenger services on 3 January 1978 and then on to Hunts Cross from 16 May 1983. The line that I had first come to know in its dying and run down days had come back to life, as a busy commuter railway, part of the Merseyrail Northern line. At the time of writing it has a 15 minute frequency service in each direction the trains running between Hunts Cross and Southport. Garston station however, where I boarded that DMU back in 1971, has vanished from the landscape as it was closed on 10 June 2006. It has been replaced by Liverpool South Parkway station. **Rod Dixon**



Garston station during its first period of closure on 4 April 1977. Work was already under way at this time which would see the line open as an electrified railway. Photo by Alan Young

Steam Crane Activity at Maghull



In this view looking south the two steam cranes are seen at work on the replacement of bridge No. 18 on Sunday 13 January 1980. Photo by Tony Foster

Although not everyone can recall what they were doing at 10.00am on Sunday 13 January 1980, at least 2 members of the 8D Society are able produce separate items confirming their attendance at what was an interesting rail event that occurred over the course of a weekend on the Liverpool to Ormskirk line at Aintree. Unknown to each other at that time, Rodney Dixon, in his role as driver of a Class 25 loco, and Tony Foster, at that time a motorway patrol officer with Merseyside Police, were 'on site' at rail bridge No.18 over the River Alt, between Old Roan and Maghull stations. It was some 36 years later, during a conversation about unrelated matters, that Rodney and Tony became aware of their 'close encounter' in 1980.

In addition to his driver's log sheet for the day, Rodney also kept a personal diary. His ASLEF 1980 (Centenary Year) diary records that, on 13th January, he booked on at Garston at 3.00am, and ended his tour of duty at 12.00 noon. Helpfully, it also shows that he was assigned to loco number 25 284 and that 'Item 3' on the worksheet for the depot involved attendance at Bridge No.18 at Altcar. In fact it was the bridge over the River Alt at Aintree (not Altcar) that was to be replaced by maintenance crews using 2 steam cranes - one at either side of the short span. Rodney's job that morning was to get steam crane RS 1015/50 (at that time based at Allerton) to the site. At the same time, a matching crane - RS 1005/50 - was to be brought in from the Ormskirk direction.

Rodney recalls that his journey from Allerton to the site took him via Edge Hill, down the Bootle branch to Bootle Junction, on to Sefton Junction (Fazakerly branch) and Aintree station. 'Run round' facilities at the Metal Box factory siding then allowed the crane to be propelled the short remaining distance. Overall the train comprised



locomotive, crane, jib support truck, water tank truck, and mess coach. Once on site, there was little for Rodney to do other than sit back and enjoy the spectacle !

For my own part, a Sunday morning patrol of the M57 in mid-January seldom produced any event of great interest - occasionally a broken down vehicle or perhaps a hapless cyclist who considered that

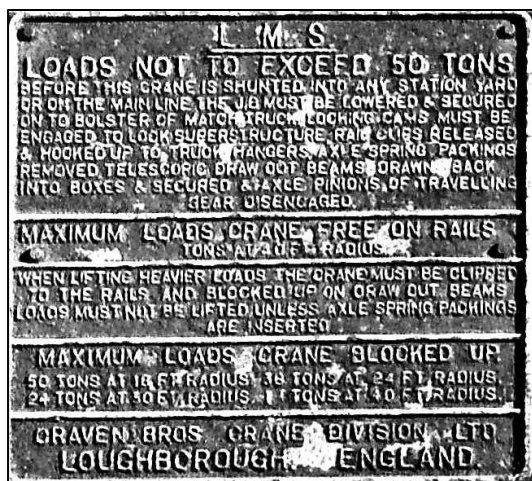
motorway regulations didn't apply so long as you rode your pushbike down the hard shoulder !! On my first 'sweep' of the morning, I spotted the bridge replacement activity going on at a distance of no more than 3 or 4 hundred yards across the field to the east of the motorway. When an opportunity presented itself, I made my way to the site with camera in hand. My recollections of the day are very clear. Amongst those rail employees involved with the bridge replacement, high visibility vests / jackets were very few and far between. Similarly, hard hats weren't in evidence, although something resembling a trilby identified the various foremen! How things have changed.

Several of the photographs that I took at the time are included with this text.



A close up view of one of the steam cranes at work on 13 January 1980. Photo by Tony Foster

Steam breakdown crane RS1015/50 was built for the LMS Railway in 1931 by



Craven Brothers Ltd of Manchester. Originally based at the nearby Newton Heath engine shed, 1015 was uprated (from 36 tons) in 1938 to be capable of lifting a maximum of 50 tons, and moved to Willesden in London. During the Second World War the crane was one of three requisitioned to help with the installation of the coastal-defence heavy gun batteries near Dover on the south coast. These guns were hurriedly installed to protect against the risk of invasion after the fall of France in 1940. Following the War, RS1015/50 was used to

assist with the clearance of some of the country's most serious railway accidents such as the Bourne End incident in September 1945, and the Harrow and Wealdstone double collision in 1952, where there were 112 fatalities.

RS1015/50 spent most of its career as part of Willesden's breakdown train. It went to Derby in 1962, returning to Willesden in 1965 until it finally moved onto Allerton, Liverpool, in 1972. After 50 years of railway service the crane, now identified as ADM1015/50, was considered surplus to requirements, and was sold in 1981 to members of the Bahamas Locomotive Society for their Dinting Railway Centre museum in Derbyshire. The purchase cost was £9775 (including VAT). This sum was considered well spent, for the crane provided the means to assist with the overhaul of the Society's 'Jubilee' class 4-6-0 No.45596 Bahamas at that time, and thus avoid hire charges for road cranes that would otherwise have been necessary. Its purchase also proved to be an interesting addition to the Society's collection.



Left: Bridge No. 18 seen in 2015. Photo by Tony Foster

The crane has continued to be maintained in working order and remains an essential 'tool' when any lifting operations are required at the Society's museum and workshop facility at Ingrow, to where the Society's collection moved in

1990.

Coincidentally, the crane at the east side of the bridge (RS1005/50) is also to be

found in Keighley & Worth Valley territory. Current out of service, the crane is based at Haworth and it is hoped to restore it to working order in the not too distant future.



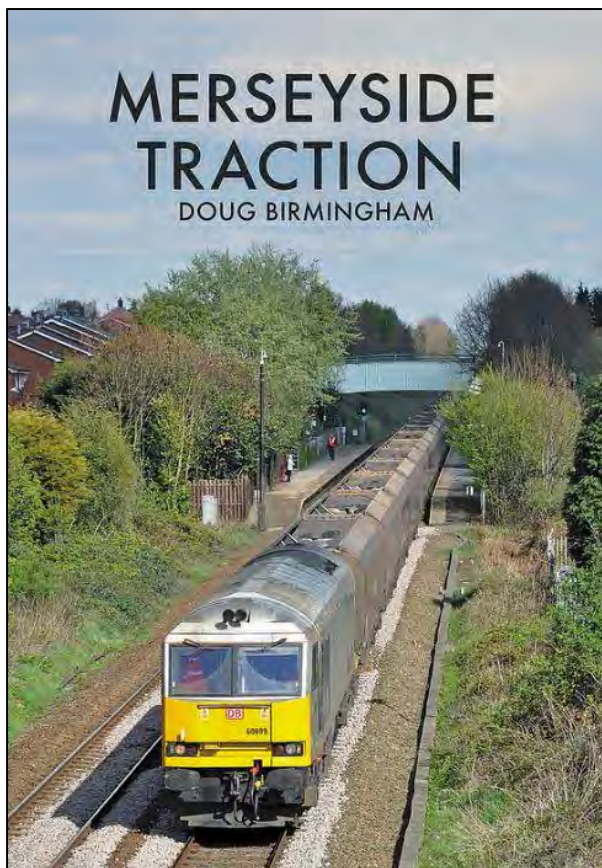
Looking north at the work site at the River Aln on 13 January 1980. Steam crane RS1015/50 is to the left. Photo by Tony Foster

January		1980
13 Sun	0300 1200	
25284 Item 3 Aintree		
No 18 Bridge Aln		
14 Mon	REST DAY	week 3

Acknowledgements.

I am grateful to Rodney Dixon for assisting with additional detail of the event in 1980, and to the Bahamas Locomotive Society for their invaluable assistance in providing information concerning the working life of RS1015/50.

Book Review – Merseyside Traction by Doug Birmingham



A new book '**Merseyside Traction**' showcasing the 8D Area has recently been released by Doug Birmingham an 8D Association Member.

The county of Merseyside immediately conjures images of The Beatles, Liver Birds, Football and the city of Liverpool! From a railway perspective, some people will think of the extensive 3rd rail Merseyrail commuter system, although prominent in the whole county and beyond, the area surprisingly is regularly served by seven TOC's and three FOC's which certainly with freight, tends to get overlooked by other people around the UK.

The images in the book give a brief insight over the last 20 years of the variety of passenger and freight trains including

motive power that have travelled in and out of Merseyside. The area in this book covers all the main lines including LNWR, L&M, CLC routes and yes surprisingly a section of the WCML too. Other lines feature too, including both the Northern and Wirral lines of the extensive Merseyrail system, along with the Bootle Branch line which serves Liverpool Docks, as well as the Prescot / St Helens Central / Ravenhead lines.

Born in 1956, Doug has always had an interest in Railways but it was not until 1980, when he purchased his first 35mm SLR camera, and coincided with the Liverpool & Manchester 150th Celebrations that he finally took an active interest in both the local railway and preserved steam scene's. Since then, has had many images published in various railway publications and since about 2001 has mainly concentrated recording the local everyday passenger and freight services using his own extensive knowledge as well as the many locations in and around Merseyside.

'**Merseyside Traction**' is published by Amberley Publishing and is available from all good bookshops and a variety of online websites.

From the Archive



*West Bank
Dock
Estate
locomotive
'Lucy' is
seen on the
dock lines
at Widnes
in the
1960s.
Photo by
Paul Wilks*



In the summer of 1959 a Liverpool Central to Aintree Central service is seen passing Hunts Cross East Junction and heading onto the Halewood West Curve. The train would call at all stations along the line. North of Gateacre the service was very infrequent at this time. Photo by Jim Peden

Where is This Competition



'Where is this' competition? Two clues this time. One photo at track level and one at street level (Answers to pwright964@btinternet.com) **The March competition was correctly guessed by Rod Dixon and Arthur Turner. The location was Brunswick.**

Events Programme

10.00 – Saturday 23 June 2018 – The CLC between Hunts Cross and Liverpool Central – A guided tour of the line by train. By purchasing a £5 Merseytravel Saverway ticket members will be able to take a ride between Hunts Cross and Liverpool Central . Stops will be made at various stations along the way so that points of interest can be observed. Lunch will be in Ormskirk. Pail Wright will lead the tour. **Meet at the Hunts Cross station entrance.**

18.00 – Tuesday 10 July 2018 – Dingle LOR Station and Tunnel – An opportunity to visit the southern terminus of the famous Liverpool Overhead Railway and hear about its fascinating history. There will also be an opportunity for those that wish to walk the length of the Dingle tunnel. Hard hats are required and sturdy footwear and torches are recommended. Numbers are limited to 20 so please book a place by calling or emailing Paul Wright on 0151 630 5132 or pwright964@btinternet.com . **Meet on Park Road (the A561) at the junction of Kedleston Street, Liverpool (opposite the Toxteth Chapel).** Medium effort/Medium distance in the station area Hard/medium distance in the tunnel.



Saturday 4 August 2018 – 8D Association visit to Churnet Valley Railway. This trip will be by heritage bus using a Warrington Corporation Bristol RE of 1976 vintage. Pick up points will be **Warrington Bank Quay station at 09:00** and **Widnes Victoria Square (opposite the library) at 09:20**. The bus trip will be part subsidised by the association but there will be £5.00 charge per member payable at the time of booking.

There are still places left if you want to come along please contact **Neil Wilson** on either neilwilson1560@gmail.com or 07714 789803 to make a booking.

19.00 – Tuesday 14 August 2018 – The CLC Winsford & Over branch - A guided walk led by Paul Wright along part of the course of the CLC Winsford & Over branch . **Meet at Whitgate station, Clay Lane, Whitegate.** Easy/medium distance

11.00 – Sunday 2 September 2018 – Visit to Warrington & District Model Engineering Society – Another opportunity to visit the fantastic miniature railway of the Warrington Model Engineers at Daresbury. The society will have a number of live steam locomotives in operation and 8D members will get the opportunity to be hauled by them. **Access is via a farm gate on the Chester Road in Daresbury Village. The gate is on the east side of the road to the south of Daresbury primary school.**

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