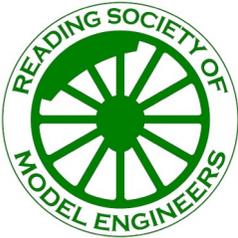


Reading Society of Model  
Engineers  
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Charity Number 1163244

# The Prospectus

October 2020



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Free to members



A Fowler 6 furrow steam plough and land press at work in Warwickshire on 12 September 2020. The engines were a pair of Fowler Z7s repatriated from Mozambique in 1976. Photo John Billard

**LATEST FROM THE CHAIR  
MASS RUST REMOVAL  
A HOCKEY SPECIAL  
SAND SEA AND SAUSAGES  
A LIFETIME INTEREST**

## **A VIEW FROM THE CHAIR**

**John Billard**

We continue to do our best to operate for members but the continuing changes in Covid 19 rules are a challenge. I would like to thank Stuart Kidd for his analysis of these and particularly Peter Harrison for providing the opportunity for members to have a run at our tracks albeit on a very limited basis. In the meantime these rules are allowing us to do required work on the site including painting and maintenance. This is making a big difference. We are however having to limit the social aspects of these days for reasons members will understand.

We are undertaking the clubhouse rewiring and we are pleased with the progress and the help members have given in preparation including the temporary removal of the 00 gauge layout and clearance work in the loft. The presence of the electrician requires supervision and trustees have stepped up this. I won't name names for fear of leaving someone out but all the trustees have come out in force doing the job you have elected them to do.

At present it is difficult to predict the future with the upsurge of Covid 19 cases nationally. We shall do our best to keep RSME running and look forward to better times ahead whenever that might be.

I was pleased to have a call yesterday from our president Les Dawson. He is keeping well and is able to cope with the restrictions imposed on all of us. He sends his best wishes and says we will be hearing from him soon.

## **WHAT HAVE I GOT INTO NOW?**

**by David Scott**

**The further tales of mass rust removal from various machines  
And what a coat of paint can achieve.**

At least the flypress moved. Well double meaning as it was still living in the car and the ram went up and down as it was well oiled. Visited the track in that state as well! My first task was to clear all the mess then give daily doses of easing oil to the various patients. Weeks passed and slowly by taking gib strips and bars under the two saddles off, we got movement. I did little jobs like the chuck. The four jaw has gone from being impossible and abandoned to lets try.

A visit to the Myford shop on their website gave me a Great Caring approach to getting things off. Yes they can be replaced but at what price. WORTH MORE in bits and in little bags! The saddle clamp about the size of a 10p, £15?

The cross slide has taken the most hours but can be tackled at the end of the day as mortar or concrete is setting for the workshop extension. A wonderful Catch 22 as the mixing machine cannot be got past the stuff in the garage. And the stuff in the garage can't be moved until the workshop extension is built. Next door gets to borrow it as he is doing his driveway.

I do about 10 minutes a night on the cross slide, or when feeling very bored, or it cools down enough outside, or it is too hot for mixing concrete. I

clamped 80 grit to the milling machine table and began grinding. Then kept track of progress using the other mills table. Up and down, diagonally one way then the other and back to up and down. I found the sanding stuff destined for rubbing down plaster to be very effective. It does not clog and stays very sharp. Clamped down to a surface plate would have the same effect. Useful is some black paint misted over to show progress. Result after going through 2 more grits is the photo enclosed. I could get it surface ground?

The saddle was next and prepared for painting. A look at my other saddle spurred me on to create a polished masterpiece. The front edge which is left polished metal was to be painted as well as all sorts of sanding was not going to get rid of the pitted bit. The other way with cast iron is to get quite under the outer skin and use the bare metal as the base. Angle grinding was reverted to followed by one of these circular flap wheels. A slight filling of dips more sanding and I was ready for etch filler primer. A try and match Myford grey resulted in a slightly greenish grey which looks very nice. Our first attempt is nicely going over the filing machine. Former resident of living below the waterfall poor thing! The saddle looks very nice sat upon the other Myford gaining polished bits as they are done. Having various wire brushes on rotating holders work wonders.

Well-practised with them I continue on Wednesdays on the footbridge and fencing at the track. Would Reading Society Green look good on the filing machine?

The filing machine is very substantially built and the base a work of art which would look lovely on a horizontal mill engine. Now that would be a lovely way of powering it? I reverted to the vicious wire brush on the angle grinder to get back to the top surface. I wanted to get rid of the build-up but not to dig in. Then do a couple of scrapes of filler in the masses of small holes left by the rust. Then sand back and spray as it is perfect weather for painting at the moment.

The other parts struggled to come free but they eventually did. I found that leaving a cold machine out in the hot sunshine managed to free itself. Again wire brushes of various sizes cleaned it up. Lighter fluid got rid of the last of the easing oil and all was well. Oh, just remembered to mask off the sliding bits! That was close. I am using cellulose which gives you such quick drying times you can turn bits over and do the other sides. Yes, it could sit in a box for the next few years waiting but so much better to get it back to making useful bits of locomotive. I heard that clock-makers find them incredibly useful. Cutting the bits from within their cogs or gears or wheels. The files being easy to fit through holes and re clamp.

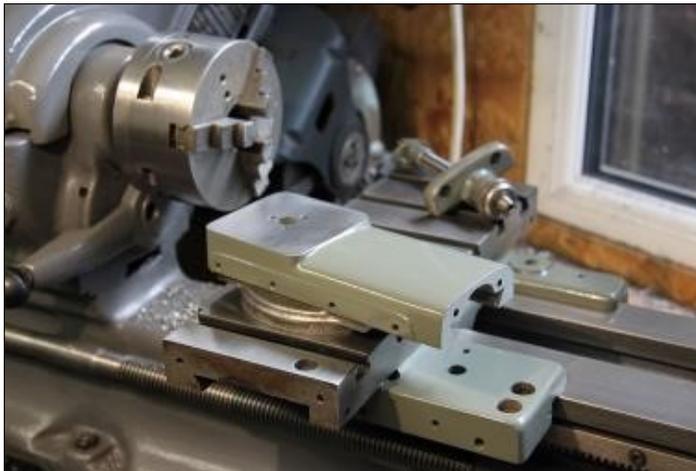
Just one more piece! And the topslide gets chosen for an afternoon of activity. As I am filing and smoothing I keep looking at the toolpost area. This has suffered so after a spread of filler gets to sit on the milling machine. Even 1 mm gives you more room to set slightly bigger tools.

Plus gets rid of the last of the rust. Yes we gave it extra special treatment for its photo but to compare the before and after side by side is staggering. The chuck is also looking great.



Topslide filed and filled.  
Photos David Scott

I could not resist machining more rust off.



Assembled and looking lovely.  
Just get the other bed to a similar condition.

## ANALYTICS

Where WP examines pictures taken by the editor

### Wembley Central 10<sup>th</sup> March 1962 34090 Sir Eustace Missenden, Southern Railway

The Women's Hockey International brought many foreign locomotives to Wembley from the London Midland Region and here is one with a train off the Southern.



The loco, Bulleid Pacific 34090, was built in January 1949 (under BR) at Brighton. It was withdrawn from 70D Eastleigh in July 1967 with the introduction of electric working between Waterloo and Bournemouth. Stored at 70E Salisbury from July 1967 until February 1968 and cut up at Cashmore's of Newport (Mon.) in May 1968.

The carriages can be seen to be Southern Region set 237 which, according to Longman consisted of the following vehicles (load 9) :-

Bulleid 2<sup>nd</sup> Brake            S3949S -built 9/49, Eastleigh or Lancing w/drawn  
12/65

BR MK 1 TSO                    S3926 - built Eastleigh 1949

BR MK 1 TSO                    S3927 - built Eastleigh 1949

BR MK 1 TSO                    S3932 - built Eastleigh 1949

Bulleid 1<sup>st</sup> corridor        S7640S- built 9/49, Eastleigh or Lancing w/drawn  
5/64

BR MK 1 TSO                    S3929 - built Eastleigh 1949

BR MK 1 TSO                    S3930 - built Eastleigh 1949

BR MK 1 TSO                    S3931 - built Eastleigh 1949

Bulleid 2<sup>nd</sup> Brake            S3961S -built 10/49, Eastleigh or Lancing w/drawn  
7/64

None of the above has survived.

The Bulleid Pacific disks on the front are shaped like an L i.e. one at the top, one directly underneath on the bufferbeam (carrying the number 1) and one to the right (rather grubby!). According to the Southern Region South Western Division Inter-regional Passenger Working this denoted, "Brighton and Salisbury via Eastleigh and Nine Elms and Brent via New Kew Junction" So the latter obviously applied in this case.

## An Update from Gramps Shed

by John Spokes

(Sand, Sea, Steam and Sausages)

The Shed has been deserted of late. I spent the latter part of August and all of September in Warsaw, apart from one week at a small seaside resort, Krynice Morska (pronounced Kri-nee-za Moor-scah and meaning Sea Spring) about 30 miles east of Gdansk on a very long and narrow sand spit, topped with gorse and wind-battered pines and bordered by the Baltic on the north side and a large freshwater lagoon on the other. I last visited this area 22 years ago, on my second visit to Poland, and, apart from a few recently constructed large hotels, it was surprisingly little changed; still reminiscent of some UK resorts in the 1950s - Kiss Me Quick Hats et al.

The normal population of the town is 1700, but in summer this expands ten-fold and the sun-seeking hordes arrive and leave by a narrow twisting road where double white lines are ignored and where an orderly stream of traffic is anathema to many. Poland has one of the worst RTA records in Europe and head-on collisions are common. Driving during the day with dipped headlights is now a legal requirement.

The sand spit leads, about an hour's cycle ride east, to the border with Russia. A desolate and wind-swept place, where rusting, but still lethal, razor wire protrudes from a dune and now replaced by a simple wire fence, which continues into the sea. A large red stop sign, atop a pole, counsels against further progress and, if that was not warning enough, there is a more friendly invocation in Polish and English informing that you are leaving the EU and Poland (note the order of precedence) and that crossing the fence is Trespass, the punishment for which (presumably if caught) is 5000 zwooty (about £1100) and up to 3 years in prison - a Polish one, I hasten to add.



Some RSME members will know that there is a substantial railway network in Poland; mass car ownership is a relatively new phenomenon (possibly a contributory factor to the bad driving practices). Some parts of the once extensive narrow gauge (750mm) system remain, either as a small number of preserved railways or just abandoned. The track can be seen usually following a road on a slightly raised embankment, either sinking into the sandy soil or disappearing into the undergrowth. But, I would not call Poland a "mecca" for rail enthusiasts. There is of course Wolstyn, but many other, what we would call Heritage Sites, are static exhibits where locomotives and

rolling stock were painted once and then left to rust and rot. I am not a fan of Polish steam engines, particularly standard gauge: functionality embodied with few aesthetics, a basic livery and at one extreme some very appalling attempts at streamlining.



Near Krynica, on the way from from Gdansk, one of the narrow-gauge railways has been resurrected with the efforts of the Pomeranian Iron Railway Society. It might have been there during my visit 22 years ago, buried in the grass, unseen and unused. It was abandoned in 1996. But now the railheads are shiny and it transpires this is a tourist attraction, most probably partly funded by EU coffers. It runs for a total of 36 km (22 miles) in the form of a letter T, joining two small towns with another tourist attraction, if it could be called that: the first concentration camp constructed by the Nazis at a small village called Stutthof, opening on the second day of WW2 to imprison the military and intellectual elite of Gdansk, Danzig, as it was then called, was where the opening shots of WW2 took place and, unbeknown to those initially incarcerated, their names had been on list prepared by the Nazis some years before the invasion of Poland which began on September 1st 1939. I went, in 1998, as “a tourist” to see the Stutthof barracks, the gas chambers and crematoria, added later when Stutthof was converted to an extermination camp, and, worst of all, a long glass-fronted ossuary, filled with bones and fragments of bones. I guess you need to see one of these places once, to impress upon you the significance, but I’ve no desire to revisit this or any of the other similar camps in Poland.

The railway has a steam loco and a diesel locomotive, but on most running days the train is a DMU consisting of two closed and two open carriages and similar in construction to the ubiquitous Sprinter. So nothing very exciting and in the context that the railway would have, 80 years ago, been used to transport victims to the Stutthof camp, I took a few photos and then moved on, as they say.

Of a much lighter and greater appeal is the Narrow Gauge Museum and Heritage line at Sochaczew (pron. So-ha-ch-eff) an hour’s drive west of Warsaw. I’d previously visited this museum in the summer of 2018 and wrote an article for Prospectus. There is a very large outdoor exhibit of locomotives, rolling stock and the weird and wonderful, such as cars and tractors that run on rails. It would appear these are not the “painted just once and then forgotten” variety and the condition of everything is generally very good. During

this visit we took the opportunity to take the steam train, which runs summer Saturdays and Sundays; a sort of “Picnic Special”.

The steam engine and its train are prepared in the sheds at Sochaczew, hidden from the public gaze by a high wall of rusty steel plating that runs the full width of the narrow site. After half an hour of heard but unseen activity, with the odd whistle and a few clouds of smoke and steam, a very narrow gate is opened in the steel wall and the loco with its train steams out, like a triumphant bride entering the church for her wedding.

The locomotive, an 0-8-0 of Type PX09, no 1704 of 1929 vintage, trailed 5 steel bodied coaches, painted in what appears to be army-surplus green and pulls up at a low concrete platform. We take our allocated seats (this is Poland and none dare do otherwise) and I notice that although COVID is still present in Poland it seems totally forgotten and there’s not a mask or any social distancing to be seen. Fortunately, it’s a hot day and the coaches have large drop-down windows so fresh air circulation is good. It wasn’t always like that as halfway down one wall of the coach is a small stove,



which

would, in the not so far-off Communistic days, when this was a working commuter railway, have in winter maintained a fire under the attentive care of a person specially employed to move from carriage to carriage for this purpose.

Our train sets off, this time through another set of steel gates, gates that are not at all apparent when one walks around the museum. Why - because the town seems to be immediately on the other side. And so it is - straight away we are alongside roads, amongst houses and small factories; sometimes on a central reservation, with a carriageway on both sides, then parallel to a road on our right, then on

our left, traversing many unmarked crossings, until we come to the end of the built-up area and the passage of a main road which makes a 90 degree bend at this point. This mandates a stop and we are flagged over by our guard.

Now we are in the Polish countryside, a flatland to every horizon, scrub, sandy tracks and the ubiquitous crop of maize until, after 40 minutes from our departure, we arrive at the edge of a forest where the anoraks onboard can alight, admire our steed and watch it’s replenishing and run-around in

preparation for the later return. To be honest, there are very few anoraks; most are families with small children, escaping the confines of Warsaw apartment life to spend a day in the open.

We eventually follow them into the forest to a small meadow where six or seven large charcoal fires have been set up. We are each given a pointed stick, some large chunks of *Kylbaski*, the most common type of Polish sausage, and a potato wrapped in foil. Oh, and of course some beer. Now we are



ready to cook. I soon discover why most people are sitting on the opposite side of the fire to me. I initially sit in a convenient space downwind and find my knees, hands and face are barbecuing faster than the sausage.

The downside of this bucolic adventure was that on our earlier departure from Sochaczew someone must have telegraphed ahead to announce my anticipated arrival to the mosquito flying corps that inhabit these leafy glades. I am particularly sensitive to the attentions of these little devils and although I use copious amounts of “Jungle Formula” it’s a challenge to effectively protect one’s face and neck. As a consequence, I’m concerned that when we do eventually arrive back at the Calais Eurotunnel Terminal, I will prove negative for the rudimentary COVID test, but will be taken aside as a suspected victim of Bubonic Plague.

## **A LIFETIME INTEREST IN RAILWAYS**

### **Part 5, conclusion, by Mike Jones**

In the early nineteen nighties Chris and I did five trips to China to film steam this was before many areas could not be visited but we managed to obtain special permission to visit remote areas in Mongolia and Northern China. In magnificent scenery we saw steam working hard in the heat of the Gobi Desert and deep snow in Northern China. We also filmed industrial steam in steel works and open cast coal mining. In these locations it was possible to see as many as eight locomotives working at any one time. The locations in remote parts of Mongolia had not seen a European and had no television or cinemas so we were curiosities we were referred to as long noses. The accommodation was very primitive and the food indescribable we lost weight as a result of the food and the heat but the films and pictures we got were well worth the hardships!

Another of our trips was on The Trans Siberia Railway it was an all steam occasion using 41 locomotives from Moscow to Irkutsk. This six day journey behind steam was used by The Russian State Railway to test its Strategic

Reserve Fleet. The Russians retained these locomotives in case there was an interruption to their oil supplies. This was before they discovered vast oil deposits in Siberia. When we were in Irkutsk we had a trip by Hydrofoil on Lake Baikal this freshwater lake is the deepest and largest by volume in the world.

After my retirement I had to decide what I should do with my spare time. I had many years ago started to build a Simplex as it was described in Model Engineer so I finished it little realising the impact it would have on my life. It became an all consuming hobby. I initially joined High Wycombe Model Engineering Club they have a raised track with 3 1/2" 5" and 7 1/4" lines.

During one of my visits to South Africa we were browsing around an antique shop when I saw a model locomotive covered in dust under a bench. I asked the owner if it had a tender and he said he thought it had could we come back the next day? The following morning when we entered the shop on the bench was a magnificent exhibition standard South African Railways class 15CA 4-8-2 in 3 1/2 gauge at 1"=1 What a bargain he said he had it for many years would I give him £700 for it. I had it shipped to the UK with some minor repair it ran well. I thought that was the end of the story and then out of the blue I received a telephone call from the antique shop owner saying he had another engine for sale was I interested? He sent me details of the model, a class 15F 4-8-2 that had won a Gold Medal at the 1955 Olympia Exhibition built by the well known model engineer Ron Etter. I purchased the engine and on my next visit I went to see him which started a long friendship resulting in the Baldwins we have today.

While all this was going on I was still with the Wycombe club running my Simplex very successfully but needed something more powerful. I decided to take the Bull by the Horns and build a 5" GWR King class this took me 5 years it was ideal for passenger hauling on our raised track. During this period I bought a 7 1/4 Schools Class engine I soon realised it was not suitable for a raised track it was not safe!

About twenty years ago we had an invitation to the Reading Club and I got talking to The Chairman as the building of the Ground Level Track was almost complete we decided to join the club. Initially we ran the Simplex and the 5" King on the raised track but when the ground level was completed we transferred them to the new track. For the first year these two engines did a lot of the work on Public Running days. The Simplex coped very well with the fully loaded heavier riding trucks however by this time I had acquired a Winson Britannia 7 1/4 kit. This had many quality and design faults I spent many hours remaking and redesigning parts and eventually finished up with an engine which has done a great deal of Public Running. Before the arrival of the Baldwins for many years it was the mainstay of Ground Level operations. Having got the Britannia running successfully I embarked on a much more ambitious project constructing a 7 1/4 Great Western King. I knew

from my experience in building the 5" version that at my age I would not complete the locomotive eventually four of us completed the project. At this time Modelworks produced their 7 1/4" A4 which Chris built.

When I am driving the King up the bank on the Reading track with the GWR coaches fully loaded behind it often takes me back seventy five years when as a young train spotter I used to see the Kings working hard up Saunderton Bank with the two hour Birmingham Expresses.

The A4 arriving at our station also takes me back down memory lane when I used to watch them emerge from the tunnel at Kings Cross with expresses from the north.

Those were the days!

*Right*  
China Rail Class QJ  
at Yebaishu



Jingpen Pass oil train

Class QJ Jingpen Pass

Photos Mike Jones



**Saturday                      DIARY                      Club Running**  
**3rd October**

**Restrictions apply.**  
**Please contact Peter Harrison for details**

**Comments by RSME members on any subject appearing in  
Prospectus are welcomed by the editor.**

Opinions expressed in PROSPECTUS are the personal views of the contributor and cannot be taken as reflecting the views of the club committee or editor.

**The deadline for the November issue is 18 October This is the final date.**

Contributions may be submitted in hard or soft copy to the editor.

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