

Reading Society of Model  
Engineers  
www.prospectpark  
railway.co.uk  
www.rsme.co.uk  
Charity Number 1163244



**President**

Les Dawson  
0118 969 4654

**Vice President**

John Sargeant  
01491 681520

**Treasurer**

Jim Brown  
0118 958 7247

**Secretary**

Peter Harrison  
07920 833546

**Editor**

John Billard  
0118 9340381  
john@jegbillard.plus  
.com

Free to members

# The Prospectus

September 2017



6023 King Edward II at Old Oak Common on 2 September after an absence of 55 years. Photo John Billard

**DAWSON'S DIARY  
A RESHUFFLE  
ENGINEMAN EXTRAORDINARY  
AN EXPEDITION WITH STANLEY  
GUNPOINT IN POLAND  
OLD OAK CELEBRATION**

## **DAWSON'S DIARY**

**kept by the President**

27 July 2017 was a rather momentous day for the RSME. Two events took place. Firstly, the members who have been working after the last 6 or 7 days over a period of two weeks have managed to replace over two hundred feet of the 7 ¼" ground level track with proper flat-bottomed rail. All this was done in extreme conditions very hot and very wet at times. Led by Mike Manners and Nigel Penford's team who have now joined up the rails one of the wettest days for some time ready for the next public running day with just some fettling to get the track ready for use.

The other event was Thursday Club Night Fish and Chip Night with a good number of members running their engines. Also with one of our members reaching the big 80<sup>th</sup> birthday on this day our Mike Burke had a big surprise waiting for him in the club house. His relations managed to keep it a secret to get the cake into the club the members had to use clandestine activities, when he was out of sight on the track, with one or two attempts to get the goodies inside. In the end the raid was a success!

The August public running was another busy time for the membership. We had a visitor from South Africa the gentlemen who built our club Baldwin, a Mr Brian Joyce and his family. Mike Jones and Chris had Brian Hadnam's GWR 0-6-0 working, Nigel Penford ran his Baldwin, with the club Baldwin out as well our visitor had a run with all three he had built. It was so nice to meet them all. I think that they had a good time at our track.

61249 is on holiday

## **A CABINET RESHUFFLE**

**by David Scott**

Every so often we indulge in a tidy up of our workshops usually after something goes missing or rolls under the bench after you drop it. We are almost there in some parts but look beyond the vice and the bench has become the dumping ground in the effort to achieve in other areas.

When I worked in a wood shop a huge stack of offcuts would or wood find themselves made into a mass of drawers and a cabinet for them. The system grew from needing a portable workshop during the Dawlish days and an eventual move into a maisonette in Kingsteignton complete with a Unimat 3. Six drawers look nice so five small and thin and a larger to take cylinder castings for example emerged. In a 1-foot high 1 ½ feet wide and 2 feet deep box. Upended they can become a seat, in stacks of 3 and 3 with a door on top becomes your bench! I built and built and lettered each one and the drawers to match. Q and Be happy introduced coloured ropes so two holes drilled for knotted handles helped identify what was within and stain assisted in bright colours. One of these is sat by the laid out cutting list. Who says that the

lawn needs cutting?

Their assistance appreciated? Yes, a move into Plymouth and an Edwardian house converted into flats needed access to the loft space. The tiny hatch was right in the middle of the landing and our tallest set of steps too short to reach. Stack the boxes into a tower of four loaded with metal became a perfect platform for enlarging and seeing what we had. Wow! Another job was replacing windows at the back where they once again became a tall platform at three and a half meters up and some boards on top.

Now in Tilehurst they all took up residence as the workshop grew and more floorboards got installed. I had several as flat packs and these got stuck together as and when needed.

Benches topped them off and all was well. This was until I fancied something more accurate in Red? Not Lily who loves red clothing but an Emco Compact 8. Possibly the most copied lathe on our planet. I had to smile in Axminster Power Tools the other day when it appeared that their tiny lathe was almost an exact copy of the Unimat 3. Almost? Yes, they have managed to cut 3 inches off the bed, missed the Vee for the milling attachment, and put the price up! And the compact 8? For another £600 you can have their version of course.

She dismantles into hundreds of parts for easy moving and the quality and toothed belted lead-screw drive amazes as does the poly vee belt variable drive in two ranges.

I organised a plank slide down onto my trolley for moving heavy stuff. Heavy! Far too heavy for the current bench so a forest of timbers made it to another shopping list. August this year became the rainy season and aghast at the wet muddy feet on the hastily laid floor began the extra spend on some covering. Not to mention the line of oil flung out by the white lathe!

Ikea have provided us with a modern version of the stately homes Long Gallery on rainy days. A place in the dry to walk and rest in convenient rooms. Now in a quiet kitchen section came for a £1.00 each, some trays for knives and forks. 11 were purchased and an expedition through the roadworks that cover a mere 33 weeks of the year planned. Now you know how the A33 got its number! Go with a cutting list starting with the strips at the top for the dividers in 6 mm MDF. Ply is far nicer if you don't mind the extra expense. Sticky floor covering at a reduced price was also discovered in a matching the OSB coloured walls, shade of planks.

The build of the new carcass is slow and steady, as it is best to go for accuracy starting with an L shape strengthened by the first spacer and the second shelf support. I found some room near the kitchen, and as some of the board has a curve some weights come in handy? 6 packs... No of beans or red soups in tins work out perfectly. Fill in with the second spacer glued. Return and stick the second outside in place, use weights and supports for supports. Think of houses of cards assisted with glue. Stand upright and 4 small clamps

assist with another pair of spacers. Then another support, load it down with the beans! Oh, the outer walls are bowing out? String tightened. Or belt clamps. The pictures saving a thousand words and inspiring!

My 11 trays are now full and a space for the new addition is ready. But news of the lack of flooring gets me clicking and collecting. Ah! It is in the title, and Farnborough is the closest with more floor. They also have a nice swimming pool for Lily and I know all the Chinese takeaways from previous visits.

We go for another carcass build and locate the board saw? Oh, they have changed the rules on cuts at 50 pence each. So, if I join the Club I can get unlimited cuts we establish. He deals with the others Boards & Queue while I fill in the form for this wonderful orange card.

You know you are getting old when you join the Slow Swimming Lane and just about keep up! It's like a day after you have done some serious filing or hacksawing with aching arms.

The day of rest, sees us moving things round like one of those puzzles so exposing patches of floor to clean, fill, sand down and paint with PVA. Lay the covering and cover with the Reshuffled Cabinets. This time I go for two less on top, and a space for a Hunslet chassis just under the bench. The area under the bench now resembling a pit propped mine! Sliding the other lathe to the end of the bench is next and enabling a slight propping up of the bulge!

While the floor is drying is back to the 6 packs to weigh down another glue together.

Some of the chipboard floor panels did not quite form a flat top. So out with the P38 car body filler and a feather skimmed in.

I hope I have inspired a few to have a go at simple wood working to achieve a tidy workshop.



The cutting list

Photos  
David Scott





Getting the bottom right



Our new lathe arrives

## An Expedition with Stanley

by Mike Manners

It had all been planned for Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> July and, as always with these things, it was raining.

Janet, James and I left home at 9:45 and headed for the local BP petrol station to top up the Golf and buy some bits for a picnic lunch. The first garage we called at had cones across the entrance and was shut. Oh well, on to the next one. Would you believe it, that one was also coned off and shut. It was third time lucky. We actually found a BP garage that was open and although there was quite a queue for fuel we soon bought our picnic bits and were on our way.

It was then an uneventful drive on the M40, M25 and a little bit of the M1 to get us around the North of St Albans and on to Wheathampstead. We arrived at John's house at 10:20. Not a bad run after the delays searching for an open petrol station.

When we arrived, John had a rather damp Stanley the steam car outside his garage with steam up, full of water and fuel and ready to go. As our Golf was to be a support vehicle, we then had some sorting out to do. Various tools, ratchet straps, pumps and other useful bits were loaded into the car and an amber warning beacon installed on the rear parcel shelf. Jan was going to drive the support car and James was elected as official photographer for the day. It was then on with warm and waterproof coats as, although Stanley had his canvas roof on, it can still be cold and damp at 40 mph in an open car on a rather damp day.

We set off and did a circuit of the village to check all was well. Stanley's boiler pressure was a little low so we parked up in a side road for John to clean some carbon out of the main burner jets. All now looked good so we headed West out of the village followed by Jan and James in the support car. I think Jan quite enjoyed driving along with the amber beacon flashing away. This was going to be quite an expedition.

John has owned Stanley for about 4 years and this was going to be the longest trip they had ever made together. Stanley is now 101 years old and had undergone some serious repair work over the winter. Late last year John had decided to have a good look at Stanley's engine as he seemed to be a bit short of breath and had a rather irregular exhaust beat. What started out as a look at the engine turned into major repair work. Stanley has a bar frame engine and one of the four bars had snapped. In his sump were the remains of some of his main bearing rollers and there were signs of significant wear and bad alignment of many of the engine components. John put in many hours of work over the winter repairing the bar frames, having new roller bearings made, having piston rods and valve rods overhauled, re-finishing the valves and ports and re-bushing and realigning many of the engine components. By late spring Stanley was back on the road again but another problem occurred

when the pilot burner regulator broke. More repair work for John and some very fine and fiddly lathe work.

Stanley had a boiler test a few weeks ago and has been to a couple of near-by steam rallies so now was the time to take him on a longer trip. Up to now he had only ever done outings within the range of his fuel and water in his tanks. This trip was going to be the first where he had to pick up water on the way and had a serious purpose. We were not just going on a sightseeing trip around the countryside. We were going to use Stanley to collect John's miniature traction engine from another model engineer called Mike in the village of Weston Turville. A steam car transporting a steam traction engine! Not something you see much these days if ever.

Our first destination was to be the town of Berkhamstead where we were planning to top up with water. After one wrong turning where we ended up in a golf club and a couple of stops to do more main burner cleaning we made it to the outskirts of Berkhamstead. We then had a very long and steep descent into the town. I was rather thankful that the previous year John had gone to the trouble of fitting disc brakes to Stanley's front wheels.

In Berkhamstead we turned off the main road into a car park alongside the Grand Union Canal where we managed to stop in a parking space right alongside the water. We had to extend a hose to reach the canal but once all was connected up it did not take Stanley long to refill his tank with the rather murky canal water. We had a filter to keep the fish and ducks out.

The rain had stopped for the next part of the journey out of Berkhamstead and on to Tring. This part of the journey had some good high speed runs on good roads but through the towns like Tring the numerous potholes, speed bumps and traffic calming measures caused Stanley to bottom out his suspension on several occasions. We would have to watch out for this on the way back when we were transporting a rather heavy miniature traction engine.

We arrived in Weston Turville without further incident and gave Mike, the engineer who had been working on the traction engine, a few blasts of Stanley's steam whistle. After some introductions we then had a tour around Mike's extensive workshop. He has a rather large spark eroder just inside his workshop door, lots of other interesting machinery and a collection of 7¼" gauge locos in various states of construction.

It was then the interesting job of loading the little traction engine in to the back of Stanley. John was well prepared for this but it was the first time he had attempted this sort of thing. John had borrowed a small winch from me and had bolted it to Stanley's floor and had constructed a scaffolding plank ramp that was all ready at Stanley's rear. That ramp looked very steep to me but it was as long as it could be and still be transported in Stanley. John had also brought a battery power drill to operate the winch. The little traction engine was backed up to the bottom of the ramp and the winch cable at-

tached to the rear axle. John started the power drill, the winch cable tightened and the little traction engine just glided up the ramp and into the back of Stanley. No fuss and no drama, you would have thought we had done it many times before. Stanley's water tank was in need of a top up so we used up some of the water that we had been carrying in big containers to lighten the load and Mike gave us some more from his tap. John gave Stanley a good check over to make sure all was well for the return journey.

Ratchet straps are a wonderful invention. It was only a matter of minutes and the engine was secured, the ramps reloaded and we were ready for the return journey. A good blast on the steam whistle to say goodbye to Mike and we were on our way again with Jan and James following along with amber light flashing. On the way over James had filled up John's camera with pictures and video so on the way back he was using my camera.

As it was getting late for lunch we soon stopped in a pub car park for some light refreshment and to eat our picnic lunch. While we were chatting around the cars an AA van came into the carpark. We amused ourselves for a minute or two imagining what the AA man would say if we asked him to have a look at Stanley's engine.

It was soon time to depart so we headed out of the car park and set off back towards Tring. What happened next was spectacular but not disastrous. John had noticed something was not right and steered Stanley to the side of the road. As we came to a halt we were enveloped in a huge white cloud of paraffin vapour. A naked flame at that point would have been spectacular. For some reason Stanley's pilot light had gone out so when the main burner had turned on there was nothing to ignite the paraffin vapour. It was a very visible demonstration of just how rapidly the fuel passes through the main burner. As is usual when these things happen, we had not stopped in the best of positions. We were right across a driveway and the owner was just getting into her car and wanted to depart. John busied himself sorting out Stanley and relighting his pilot light while I was directing traffic and seeing the trapped car out onto the main road.

Once Stanley's pilot light was going the main burner lit up and boiler pressure soon recovered. It was time for another attempt at the journey back. Thankfully the remainder of the drive back to Berkhamstead was uneventful but rather slow in places with us having to be very careful to dodge potholes and creep over speed bumps.

We were soon back at the car park by the Grand Union Canal but this time there were many more cars. Finding a space next to the water was a little more difficult but we still managed to find one at the far end of the carpark. Topping up Stanley's tanks was a repeat of the morning exercise but this time we attracted a little more attention with people chatting and taking pictures. We were soon on our way again and gave them a good blast on the steam whistle to say goodbye. James was amused at their rather startled expressions



but was not quick enough with the camera to capture the moment.

The next part of the journey I was rather anxious about. Once past the station we had the very steep hill out of Berkhamstead and I think both John and I were a little concerned as to how Stanley would cope with it. We turned out of station road and up the hill. Stanley seemed to hesitate a bit and then slowly got into his stride and accelerated determinedly up the hill. Worries over. Stanley was going well and as far as I remember we did not stop to clean Stanley's burners once on the way back to Wheathampstead. The remainder of the trip was uneventful other than one missed turning where Jan and James in the backup car thought we were going to top up with water at a village pond!

When we arrived back outside John's house in Wheathampstead we gave a good blast on the steam whistle to announce our return. John's wife and daughter came out to welcome us back and watch us park Stanley on John's very steep drive. Stanley was then turned around ready to be reversed into his garage so that we could unload the little traction engine. Once again a problem free exercise with the winch brake gently lowering the little engine down the ramps to the tarmac. John guided the engine to a parking space in the corner of his garage. It was time to pay Stanley some attention. We removed the canvas roof and frame so that John could reverse him into his marked space in the garage. His drip trays were then positioned and his boiler blown down. Always an impressive sight and a good way to clear leaves off the drive!

Well that was it, a great adventure, the little traction engine had been recovered (it actually weighs about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a ton), Stanley had completed a 50 mile round trip. The longest he had ever done in John's care and with no significant problems following his major surgery over the winter. We still don't know why his pilot light went out. Was it driver error or just Stanley having a little tantrum because he did not get a drink at the pub?

Now all we had to do was say our goodbyes to Stanley, John and his family. Thank them for including us in their adventure and plod back around the M25 and M40 to home.

What a great day!

Stanley the Steam Car with its owner John just before the expedition

All photos Mike Manners





Pulling up the steep hill out of Wheathampstead with plenty of steam showing up in the damp conditions and Stanley pulling hard.

Stanley topping up with water from the Grand Union canal.



Loading the traction engine



Stanley with traction engine on board negotiating the speed bumps in Tring high street.

Another top up with water from the Grand Union canal on the way back to Wheathampstead.



Pulling up on John's drive at the end of a successful trip.



## BILL HOOLE

by John Spokes

Although I must have encountered the name of Bill Hoole in various railway publications it only consciously registered with me when, about 5 years ago, I bought the somewhat cheesily titled CD, "Triumph of an A4 Pacific", which contains the highlights of the sound recording by Peter Handford (of Argo Transacord fame) of the May 1959 "Golden Jubilee Special", run to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Stephenson Locomotive Society.

Specials were relatively rare events at that time and required sponsorship by luminaries such as Alan Pegler and this particular run, using the Kylchap-fitted Sir Nigel Gresley from Kings Cross to Doncaster and back, was an attempt to establish a new post-war speed record for steam. In this context, this special also leant heavily on the involvement of the Eastern Region of British Railways, in the preparation of the loco and providing adequate pathing. The record was broken; a speed of 112mph was reached descending Stoke Bank. However, Hoole had in his mind an alternative agenda and that was to go for Mallard's record. The Civil Engineers had specified a maximum of 110 mph and at this point in the run, with 7 miles of racing track temptingly still ahead, Hoole reluctantly acknowledged a tap on the shoulder from Bert Dixon, the ER Chief Inspector; the signal to slow down. This was at the instigation of Alan Pegler who was also on the footplate and as a member of the Eastern Region Board had to give priority to the safety of the 400 passengers on board.

Stretching the boundary was typical of Bill, who had a reputation for speed and extracting the best from a locomotive through the skilled use of regulator and cut-off. There are numerous detailed timings of his exploits and it would appear that contemporary railway commentators particularly selected his work. One gets the impression that these performances often came at the expense of punishing the engine and there are numerous cases where en-route a rapid loco exchange took place. Although generally common to A4s, examples of hot boxes, ruined middle big-ends, failed connecting rods, a fallen arch, a broken piston appear in these records and there were also SPADs, due to leaving insufficient braking distances, and failures, through forgetfulness or otherwise, to halt at scheduled stops. On one occasion a raised rail joint, taken in excess of the speed limit, resulted in his locomotive, an A2, overturning and the fireman fatally injured.

Much of this detail and more can be got from Peter Semmen's biography, "Bill Hoole - Engineman Extraordinary". It was written in 1965 when Bill was 71 and although it outlines Bill's rise from message boy to Top Link Driver, of equal interest is the well-observed insight, as a result of the author's interviews with Bill, of the railways in the early part of the 20th century.

Bill was a Liverpoolian who in 1909 at the age of 13 joined the Midland Railway as a Messenger and Knock-up Boy for guards and drivers; many

trains in Liverpool operated on an uncertain schedule determined by the arrival and departure of ships. It is apparent that he was an ambitious person and decided that he wanted to become a driver which meant mounting the career ladder as a Cleaner. There were no local vacancies on the Midland and so in 1911 he transferred to the Great Central. Joining a railway usually involved some form of medical and Hoole notes that the Great Central's then test for colour blindness was the sorting and arranging, from a wool bundle, threads of the same hue.

Engine cleaning was one of those unpleasant and dirty railway jobs, but an accepted part of the slow progression in the firing-driving hierarchy. Engines, especially on express duties, would be immaculately turned-out and on the GC it was common for a crew and cleaner to be allocated to a particular locomotive - in the early 1900s this would most probably have been a Director or an Atlantic. Thus, when the driver and fireman came off-duty the cleaner would get to work. Cleaning in itself could become something of an art and some exponents took pride in rubbing a pattern, known as "gimp", into the final oily finish. Although Bill Hoole managed a few firing turns in Liverpool, mainly Aintree race specials, he became frustrated by the lack of promotion opportunities and arranged in 1913 a move to Neasden, the Great Central shed for Marylebone.

Bill's involvement in railways ceased during the Great War, when he volunteered and was sent to Flanders, and during the course of which he suffered gassing and shrapnel wounds. Following the Armistice he began full-time firing on the Great Central's London Extension and worked expresses to and from Manchester London Road over Woodhead. Here, as later the East Coast Main Line, such workings involved "lodging turns", not universally accepted by enginemen, but an advantage if one wanted to improve one's chances of climbing the ladder. The 1923 Grouping, of course, led to the amalgamation of the GC into the LNER and in 1927, when workings on the old GC began to reduce, Bill was asked to relocate or face redundancy. Although a number of options were available he offered no particular preference and was transferred, fortuitously as it transpired, to Kings Cross and it was here that he rose to prominence. He rapidly moved through the Links, firing and then driving suburban trains, eventually reaching the Top Link and by 1956 was one of 9 pair of drivers allocated to their own A4 at Top Shed.

I mentioned previously that Hoole was ambitious, but it's also evident that he was intelligent and probably possessed a very analytical mind which eventually gave him an innate understanding of how to get the best from a powerful locomotive, such as the A4 and A3. The effective use of regulator and valve gear to maintain speed and, just as important, how far one could go in what was called "Mortgaging the Boiler", i.e. over-using steam at one point with (hopefully) recovery of pressure later when the power required was less demanding. To this could be added Hoole's propensity for taking a bit of a risk. It is interesting to note in Hoole's biography, Semmens states that be-

cause of Hoole's undeniable "personable" character when dealing with all, from senior managers to train spotters, his retirement in July 1959 passed with the sense of the loss of a "friend", but at the same time "*met with a certain amount of relief in official circles at Kings Cross*". Make of that what you will, but apparently when told to slow down on his recent record run on Stoke Bank he showed particular annoyance.

One door closes and another opens and Bill not content to hang up his grease-top cap moved to Boston Lodge where he became one of the principal characters in the Ffestioniog revival, primarily as the driver on the England 0-4-0 ST "Prince". He died in 1979, aged 84 and is buried with his wife at Minffordd Cemetery where his gravestone records

**BILL HOOLE - ENGINEMAN EXTRAORDINARY**



Bill Hoole signing autographs at Doncaster prior to the record-breaking run back to Kings Cross, 23rd May 1959. Chief Inspector Bert Dixon looks on.

Photos courtesy JS



At the controls of Sir Nigel Gresley doing 80 mph

In the cab of the prototype Deltic a few months prior to his retirement.





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**Nigel Penford writes**

Hi John, I have just read the note I asked you to put in the August Prospectus which is slightly wrong, it was probably my fault I should have emailed you. It should have read from Mike Manners and myself thanking all the workers who worked so hard in the hottest days of this summer and rain, not forgetting the club members who provided the most necessary refreshments. If you think it would be nice to amend in the next copy, I will leave it up to you.

## **AUGUST TRUSTEE MEETING**

### **A brief report**

- John Billard was welcomed as an appointed trustee.
- New decals are being applied to the trollies
- Consideration was given to the coffee/tea bar trading accounts
- The buildings insurance has been renewed.
- Financial controls for charities were discussed
- It was decided to set up an audit sub committee
- Membership remains about the same at 140
- Congratulations were offered to all those involved in the ground level relaying.
- The last public running was busy and passenger loading was discussed.
- Tickets were being produced for the Santa Specials
- Attendance at the Old Oak Common Open day was confirmed.

**JB.**

## WOLVERTON PUG

### **Armed arrest and 1,150 miles behind steam in Poland**

Following on from previous trips to Poland, this year a group of us set off on 19<sup>th</sup> July for another 9 days in Germany and Poland. The Wolsztyn Experience which was set up towards the end of Polish steam in 1999 arranges steam loco driving holidays normally between Wolsztyn and Poznan or Lesno. They also arrange in conjunction with TurKol, (tourist train operating company similar to West Coast in this country), steam hauled specials on the main lines in Poland. On this occasion we were to enjoy 4 days of solid steam workings starting from Poznan on 21<sup>st</sup> and then from Olsztyn for three days.

Three of us set off two days earlier and flew to Berlin, where we stayed one night at the InterCity Hotel at the Ostbahnhof. This was the former main station in East Berlin. Today however the Ostbahnhof plays second fiddle to the vast new Hauptbahnhof opened in 2006 on the site of the Lehrterbahnhof S-Bahn station. Before the war it was the main station for Hamburg at a lower level.

The InterCity Hotels have a link with the German Railways (DB) and are normally to be found at their main stations. When you check in you are given a 'Fahrausweis' which allows you to travel free on all the local transport including buses, trams the S and U-Bahn and InterCity services within the city area. A very useful tool and even if only staying one night it is valid for two days.

So having arrived at Berlin Tegel Airport from Doncaster we caught the bus into the centre and alighted at Berlin Zoo S-Bahn station in order to travel to Berlin Ost. It was a hot 31 degrees leaving the UK and the same in Berlin. Nigel a former colleague of mine had worked out the best cheap flights and trains to get us to and from Poland via Germany. He also had a very useful APP on his iphone which could tell him where the nearest brewpub was located, wherever he was!

After checking into the InterCity Hotel and collecting our 'Fahrausweisen' we made our way to Ostkreuz, only two stops on the S-Bahn to find the Strassenbrau brewpub, which Nigel and I had been to before. It was closed; so out with the APP to find two more in the locality. Also closed. Final chance a brewpub shown as no 99 Revaler Strasse. We find the street, residential on the right and a heavily graffitied brick wall on the left with seemingly derelict railway buildings, warehouses etc on the on the other side of the wall adjacent to the Ringbahn just short of Warschauer Strasse Station. We walk past a less than inviting entrance leading to what appeared to be almost a squatter's camp in and around the old buildings, some of which were half demolished, which is nothing unusual in parts of former East Berlin. Unable to find number 99 on that side of the road despite it being clearly shown on my Google Map of the area, in we go down the old cobbled

entrance into what had obviously once been a large railway installation of goods sheds and seemingly an old locomotive or carriage works with a long disused traverser. Wandering amongst this eclectic mix of semi occupied shops cum nightclubs, Nigel spots the sign 'Schalander Hausbrau' i.e home-brew and we find the very small brewpub with a few people sitting outside. We do likewise and enjoy a couple of very tasty beers surrounded by dereliction and graffiti but obvious activity.

In the evening we eat at Lemke, a large brewpub next to Alexanderplatz S-Bahn station.

On Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> we board the 10.37 Berlin Lichtenberg to Kostrzyn, the first station in Poland after crossing the river Oder. Kostrzyn, formerly Küstrin in Germany is a huge affair and is on two levels similar to Tamworth. The building is magnificent as all the Prussian brickwork has been cleaned and the building looks new. The high level line on which we arrived is of course the old Ostbahn from Berlin to Königsburg. The low level is the line from Stettin to Wroclaw, so at one time a very important interchange. Here we go forward on the 12.48 to Zielona Góra and then leave the Wroclaw main line on the 15.40 to Poznan via Zbąszyn. However, at Sulechów where we are due a one minute stop at 16.00, We sit for several minutes. Suddenly a police car screeches to a halt in the station yard, the doors fly open and two policemen run across all the lines to where we are standing and disappear into the coach behind ours. We sit there for nearly half an hour with no sign of action. The traincrew are on the platform talking to the other passengers in our coach. Yes, they still have the full pull down opening windows in the corridor and the compartments. The discussion between the staff and passengers is obviously in Polish. The only hint we get is when the guard replies to a passenger at the same time doing a cocking a gun motion! By now we are really intrigued. Where is the army, helicopters, ambulance and staff to lead the rest of us to safety?

Eventually four policemen emerge from the coach escorting a well dressed man who had some difficulty walking (drink or drugs?) and a police woman carrying a handgun in an open cardboard box. We duly depart on our way to Poznan 40 minutes late.

Friday 21<sup>st</sup> July is our first day on the four coach special and our coach is a three- a- side former first class corridor coach immediately behind the locomotive Pt47-65 -2-8-2 Express passenger, built in Poland in 1949. The rest of the train consists of another ex first class corridor coach, a buffet car and a first class corridor coach. We should have had a restaurant car serving two sittings of dinner on what will be fairly long days. Unfortunately, the kitchen car was not available, so during the four days we made off-train arrangements for decent meals during the longer lunch stops. Again the plethora of participants with brew-pub APPs proved their worth.

We ran via Torun to Aleksandrów the former border station between Prussia and Russia with its huge semi derelict border control and customs buildings. Turning left after leaving the station we ran down the single line branch to Ciechocinek on the River Vistula. This branch is only used for a limited summer service. The engine ran round and we returned to Toruń tender first. Running round again we then ran chimney first via Jablanowa Pomorskie to Olsztyn. On this last section we pulled up in the middle of nowhere after a lot of metallic banging from the engine. The left hand footstep and connecting rod support bracket, had become detached. This was removed and we proceeded some 50 minutes late. A coach conveyed us to our first night at a new hotel from Olsztyn Główny station. We had a long wait for a meal at the hotel because they thought we would all have eaten in the restaurant car on the train!

On Saturday 22nd the coach takes us back to Olsztyn station and we depart 8 minutes late behind the 2-8-2 once more, towards Russia! The line is little used and not in very good fettle so it's slow progress to Braniewo which is approximately 4 miles from the Russian border on the Ostbahn route to Kaliningrad. From a railway point of view it's a very interesting place. No passenger service goes beyond Braniewo only freight. The Russian track gauge is 5 feet, so a separate line runs over the border. But more interesting is the fact that there are several factories and freight facilities south of Braniewo on the Ostbahn route. Most are on the west side of the route. They are served by a broad gauge (5ft) single line from the north and the standard gauge from the south. This broad gauge line runs parallel with the standard gauge which means of course standard gauge connections to these facilities have to cross the broad gauge line to reach the southbound standard gauge via a diamond crossover. The dual gauge lines used to run the 22 miles from Braniewo to Bogaczewo, but is out of use south of the freight facility at Chruściel about 8 miles from Braniewo.

In order to keep tender first running to the minimum we had left Olsztyn tender leading so that the engine could run round at Braniewo and run head on for the rest of the day. We ran on the Ostbahn via Elblag to Malbork, where we had an hour and twenty minutes. Immediately outside the station is the typical gaunt and massive brick and concrete water tower with glassless windows up it's side. This one looked even more sinister being surrounded by tall trees. However beneath it and partly in the old buildings at the base there exists a brew-pub!

*(To be continued)*

All photos WP



The old freight depot in East Berlin, now retail outlets etc

EP07-1033 enters Kostrzyn low level on 12.48 to Zelena Gora.jpg



Pt47-65 at Ciechocinek





The vast station buildings at the old Russian Prussian border Aleksandrow Kujowski

Local militia at Dobrze Miasto



Enginemen at work at Bogaczewo





At Malbork



Gdynia Chylonia

## RSME AT THE OLD OAK COMMON OPEN DAY the editor reports

RSME hosted a small exhibition at the Old Oak Common Open Day on 2 September. This was a special occasion as this was to be the last show before the depot closes next year after 111 years of service. Those attending from the club were Les Dawson, Rob Denton, Tony Giles, Nigel Penford, Charles Edwards, Jamie Giddings and John Billard.

The organisers, Great Western Railway, were rewarded by blue sky and big crowds. There was a very impressive line up of engines and carriages and many workshops were open to inspection. We were able to see the wheel lathe that was capable of dealing with a whole train at once, engines lifted to release bogies and high access to see inner workings.

Engines present included many Old Oak favourites, 6023 King Edward II at last on the main line, Britannia 70013, 7903, a modified Hall, and panniers 6430 and 1501. A1 60163 represented other regions. The Railmotor from Didcot offered rides.

Most impressive was a line up of no less than six Class 50s. Included were a North British Warship, Westerns, Class 08, Class 31, Class 37, Class 47, Class 57, Class 66, Class 14, Hymek, HST power cars (one of which was named for the occasion "Old Oak Common HST Depot 1976-2018"), Class 121, Class 180s and the new 800s.

Rob Denton and Tony Giles set up their two impressive various Warship models all audibly ticking over for the day. I was able to show my 7808 Cookham Manor. The full size engine operated from this shed when new in 1938.

Sadly there will be many redundancies when the end at The Oak comes next year. We wish all OOC staff the best for the future and thank them for a most memorable day.



Six Class  
50s

Photos  
John Billard



Left to right  
Warship  
Western  
Class 50  
HST  
Class 180  
Class 800

The Heavy  
Maintenance Shop



## DIARY

### September

Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup>	OO Gauge	
Saturday 9 <sup>th</sup>	Club Running	11:00 onwards
Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup>	Birthday Party	11:00 to 13:30
	Birthday Party	14:30 to 17:00
Monday 11 <sup>th</sup>	Trustees Meeting	19:30
Saturday 16 <sup>th</sup>	Birthday Party	11:00 to 13:30
	Birthday Party	14:30 to 17:00
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup>	Birthday Party	11:00 to 13:30
	Birthday Party	14:30 to 17:00
Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup>	OO gauge DCC	
Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Young Engineers	18:00 to 20:00
Saturday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Young Engineers	11:00 to 13:30
	Club Running	13:30 onwards
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup>	Birthday Party	11:00 to 13:30
	Birthday Party	14:30 to 7:00
Saturday 30 <sup>th</sup>	Birthday Party	11:00 to 13:30
	Birthday Party	14:30 to 17:00

### October

Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup>	Public Running	13.00
Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup>	OO Gauge	
Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup>	Club Running	11.00 onwards
Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup>	Birthday Party	11:00 to 13:30
	Birthday Party	14:30 to 17:00
Monday 9 <sup>th</sup>	Trustees Meeting	19.30
Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup>	Birthday Party	11:00 to 13:30
	Birthday Party	14:30 to 17:00
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup>	Birthday Party	11:00 to 13:30
Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup>	OO gauge DCC	
Friday 20 <sup>th</sup>	Young Engineers	18.00 to 20.00
Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup>	Young Engineers	11.00 to 13.30
	Club Running	13.30 onwards
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Birthday Party	11.00 to 13.30

**The usual editorial disclaimers apply to this September issue.  
COPY DEADLINE FOR OCTOBER IS 18 SEPTEMBER .....**

**DONT MISS IT!**