

ON SHED

The Journal of the 8D Association

Volume 7 Number 3 – September 2017



Liverpool Lime Street

Night time at Liverpool Lime Street station on 4 June 1967. To the left, standing at platform 4, is an AL6 (class 86) locomotive, and to the right at platform 3, is BR Standard Class 5 locomotive number 73142 of Patricroft Shed. An example of the old and the new. **Photo by John Gahan**

The Journal of the 8D Association

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Editor



Left: The Wirral Railway Circle 'Liverpool Exchange Farewell' rail tour at Southport Chapel Street on 9 September 1977. Photo by Reg Dobson

This year sees a number of significant anniversaries for our area of interest. Forty years ago, on 30 April 1977 Liverpool Exchange station closed, and on 3 May 1977 the underground loop and link lines opened.

Warrington Dallam Locomotive Shed lost its allocation of steam locomotives 50 years ago in September 1967 (closing completely on 11 August 1968) and Birkenhead Woodside station closed completely on 5 November 1967 (having lost its main line services on 5 March 1967). To mark this 50-year anniversary there is a feature in this edition of On Shed about Birkenhead Woodside. There will be a Dallam feature put together by two former employees of the depot Roy Dixon and Colin Turton in the December edition.

Another significant closure from 50 years ago was that of the Halewood Triangle sidings which closed on 14 May 1967. Thankfully in the 21st Century things have improved with the opening of a new railway works at Widnes (see page 6).

Paul Wright



Members of the 8D Association during their visit to the Birkenhead and Wallasey docks on 22 July 2017. Photo by Paul Wright

The 2017 Summer Events programme

As usual the 8D association has enjoyed a varied and interesting summer programme of events. In 2017 members have visited the Mersey Gateway Bridge, the site of Liverpool Exchange station, The GCR Wigan Junction Railway, the Liverpool Docks railway, the GC and MR Widnes branch, the Birkenhead and Wallasey Docks railway, the Windmill Animal Farm Miniature Railway, and the West Cheshire Junction – Mouldsworth Junction branch. We have also taken a trip over the Middlewich branch on a diverted passenger working. There is more to look forward to including a visit to the Halton Miniature Railway, and to Fiddlers Ferry Power station to see a rail tour pass through (see events on back page).

We strive to put on an interesting a varied programme of events, but remember this is your society so if you have any ideas for events or activities please do let us know.

New Members

Welcome to our latest member **Mike Turner** of Mossley Hill, Liverpool.

Siver Jubilee Road bridge over Ditton – Warrington line demolished

A road bridge that formed part of the 1977 Silver Jubilee Bridge approach road and Ditton Road flyover was demolished over 7 days starting on 22 July 2017. The bridge was at the site of the former Desoto Road bridge that had been demolished in 1960. It was also close to the site of Widnes West Deviation signal box. The bridge was demolished as part of the Mersey Gateway Bridge works. A protective covering was placed over the running lines to enable the Bridge girders to be lowered on to it, before they were taken away for scrap.

New Garston Aggregate Train

A new aggregate train working has started. Operated by Freightliner heavy haul it runs each weekday between Tunstead and Garston for local distribution. The train leaves Tunstead at 09.56 arriving in Garston just after mid-day, the return working departs overnight at 23.56 arriving in the early hours of the following morning at Tunstead.

Liverpool Norwich Trains face the axe

Details of the East Midlands Franchise operation which is out to bidding, have revealed that the Liverpool Lime Street to Norwich service is facing the axe. Under the Department of Transport proposals, the service will be transferred to the Trans-Pennine Express Franchise and will operate only between Liverpool Lime Street and either Sheffield or Nottingham. East Midlands would continue to operate a service from either Sheffield or Nottingham to Norwich, and would receive the Birmingham New Street to Stansted Airport service as compensation which would to be transferred from Cross-Country trains.

Middlewich Branch Passenger Diversions



***Left: Diverted passenger services at Middlewich on 16 May 2014.
Photo by W Watfam***

Over the weekends of the 5/6 and 12/13 August 2017, the Virgin West Coast service between London Euston and Holyhead were diverted from Crewe to Chester via Sandbach, Middlewich, Hartford CLC and Mouldsworth. This was due to engineering work on the normal route via Beeston

Castle. These were the only trains do go via this route all other trains between Crewe and Chester were replaced by buses. On Saturday 12 August 2017, a group of 8D

members boarded 1D22 the 09.54 Holyhead service at Crewe in order to sample the delights of the Middlewich branch. The service departed from Crewe at 10.10, 16 minutes late. It made time up at the Middlewich loop (where it had been booked for a 15 minute stop to allow a southbound service to pass) only to lose it again arriving in Chester 9 minutes late.

Halton Curve Ghost Extended

On Saturday 29 July, the North Cheshire Rail Users Association arranged with Northern Rail to extend 2F80 the 07.53 Chester to Runcorn through to Liverpool South Parkway, and call at Helsby and Frodsham to pick up and set down passengers. This will probably be the penultimate year of this Parliamentary train service, as a regular hourly Chester to Liverpool Lime Street service is set to be introduced from December 2018 as part of the Wales and Borders franchise. Work to reinstate the Halton curve to bi-directional running officially began in July. Over £15 million will be spent on upgrading track and installing crossovers at Halton and Frodsham junctions.

Sunday Working to Foundry Lane

On Sunday the 23 July 2017 due to an operating incident in Belgium, the Neuss to Ditton Aluminium train made a rare Sunday Northbound journey from Dollands Moor where it departed at 07.00, arriving in Ditton Foundry Lane at 17.00. As the Southbound Sunday working had been loaded, it was decided to let this train depart 2 hours early in order to free up space in the sidings for the Northbound train to be unloaded. The following day this service departed at 11.00 on its return run to Neuss, followed later in the evening by the normal Southbound working, resulting in two trains from Ditton to Germany on the same day for the first time ever.

Rail Tours



Left: The class 40 hauled rail tour of 10 June 2017 is seen at Frodsham on 10 June 2017.
Photo by Doug Birmingham

Several Rail tours have passed through the 8D area in the past few months. On Saturday 10 June 2017, preserved Class 40 40145 appeared at Warrington Bank Quay, hauling a special from the East Lancashire Railway at Rawtenstall to Holyhead and return. The previous day, the same locomotive had worked the empty stock as a special train from Carnforth to Bury via Wigan North Western, Warrington Bank Quay, Chester, Shrewsbury, Wolverhampton Bushbury Jct, Stafford, Crewe, Warrington Bank Quay and Manchester Victoria.

On Thursday 17 June 2017, the Branch Line Society ran a special from Stafford to Liverpool Lime Street top and tailed by Direct Rail Services 68026 and 66432. The

special traversed both the Preston to Ormskirk line and the Preston Docks branch. Upon return of the train at Liverpool Lime Street, it proceeded empty stock to Crewe, where it was then used to carry the participants who were competing in the three peaks challenge event.

On Saturday 24 June 2017 when the 8D Association were the guests of Peel Holdings at the Liverpool Dock complex, UK Railtours ran a special from Swindon into the Port. Top and Tailed by DB Cargo UK locomotives 66100 and 66177, the train traversed both the Bootle Branch, and later in the afternoon, the Low Level line from Ditton Junction to Arpley Junction.

On Saturday 22 July 2017, 46233 Duchess of Sutherland was used on the Cumbrian Mountain Express from Liverpool Lime Street to Carlisle and return. The train was diesel hauled to and from Crewe where it started with the Duchess on the rear. The following day, the same procedure was adopted for the North Wales Coast Express from Liverpool Lime Street to Holyhead which was hauled by Jubilee Class 45690 Leander.



The UK Railtours special is seen arriving at Liverpool Docks on Saturday 24 June 2017. Photo by Doug Birmingham

Rainhill Accolade

The American Society of Civil Engineers and American Society of Mechanical Engineers have presented a plaque which is in the Rainhill Museum, granting Rainhill station the status of a Historical Civil Engineering Landmark. This accolade places the station on a par with the Brooklyn Bridge in New York, and it is planned at a later stage to move the plaque, to a suitable location on the station.

Chris Hollins

Alstom Transport Technology Centre and Regional Training Academy - by Sally McDonald



The Halton Borough Council team at the Alstom Transport Technology Centre on 29 June 2017. Left to right Cllr Rob Polhill (Leader of Halton Borough Council), Cllr Mike Wharton, Cllr Eddie Jones, Cllr Ron Hignett, The Mayor of Halton Cllr Alan Lowe and the Mayor's consort Cllr Joan Lowe. Photo from Alstom

An important piece of railway history was made on 29 June 2017 when Alstom opened the biggest and most sophisticated centre for train modernisation ever seen in the UK, at Halebank, Widnes. In a major boost to the rail industry, this new facility was officially opened by Lord Prior of Brampton – Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, and some of Alstom's newest apprentices and graduates.

The town of Widnes was born out of railways in the 19th Century and went on to become an important railway centre in its own right. At one time, it had 9 passenger stations, 2 large goods stations, a locomotive shed and many miles of privately owned industrial lines. By the mid-1980s that had all changed and railways seemed to be a thing of the past. However, in recent years that has all changed and the opening of the Alstom works shows that Widnes is still very much on the railway map.

How has all of this come about?

Since 1974 Widnes has been part of the Borough of Halton (which also included Runcorn). The newly formed Halton Borough Council was faced with a number of

challenges which included declining industries, vast areas of contaminated land and a generally negative image that was not attractive to modern businesses. Over a thirty-year period, major projects were carried out to change this. New roads, public parks, housing and business areas were all developed and by the 21st century the area's fortunes started to change.



Looking west towards the Alstom Transport Technology Centre on 22 June 2017. The line between Ditton and the centre was receiving finishing touches and it can be seen to the left. The section of line to the right is the connection for the HBC sidings.
Photo by Paul Wright

In 2000 the Mersey Freight Study highlighted the strategic importance of the Ditton area, and the opportunity with respect to intermodal rail freight it offered as part of a developing freight network for Merseyside.

The Revised Regional Economic Strategy (RES) for the North West was launched on 27 March 2003, to provide the economic development framework for the region. The RES identified 25 strategic regional sites, including Ditton, as critical to the effective implementation of the Strategy. It stated, "Ditton is a potential major intermodal freight terminal serving Merseyside, North Cheshire, and the Port of Liverpool."

The Ditton Strategic Rail Freight Interchange Masterplan was adopted by Halton Borough Council in December 2004, this was a partnership document supported by two logistics operators based on the site, and the Northwest Development Agency. It included several linked sites, all of which were (or had been) rail connected around the Ditton sidings.



A sleeper marked HBC. This is the point from which the HBC sidings spur commences. In the future there could be up to 5 sidings capable of taking a full length intermodal train. Photo by Paul Wright

Halton's Unitary Development Plan process commenced in 1999, was

consulted on extensively, and was adopted in April 2005. The site that subsequently became known as Halton Fields, was identified as a development opportunity. The UDP Inspector concluded, "Through a rare combination of advantages, the Rail Freight Park is accepted to be a project of exceptional worth." As a direct result, land was removed from the greenbelt to facilitate rail connected warehousing.

The project originally known as Ditton Strategic Rail Freight Interchange, needed a distinctive brand, and 3MG (Mersey Multimodal Gateway) emerged. Taking the name from the Mersey Gateway bridge crossing would enable us to start building 3MG as a location. 3MG was launched at the Rail Freight Group Annual Conference in June 2006 and the Council started engaging with land owners and stakeholders to start raising its profile.

Mott McDonald produced an options study for Network Rail in 2007, and after discussion there was an agreement on the preferred approach, this involved severing the western end connection of siding 1 at Ditton Sidings and using it as the means of accessing several new long sidings, each of which would be long enough to hold a full length intermodal train. In this way the intermodal terminal, now operated by Eddie Stobart, would be able to hold trains before and after they had been handled, expanding the capacity of 3MG's core facility (the terminal) to serve both an expanded warehousing complex and the wider regional market.

Planning consent was granted for 5 new rail sidings in 2007; Atkins Rail was commissioned by the Council to provide the detailed design for the rail sidings and navigate its way through the GRIP process. Atkins completed GRIP stage 3. Costs became prohibitive and the scheme was put on hold.

The planning consent was extended in 2010 for a further 3 years and the Council began work on site in 2012. In January 2013 Waterman's were appointed as the project managers to progress the rail project, further changes were made and a new planning permission was granted in 2016.

The Council engaged a developer in 2009 for Halton Fields, and secured planning



Looking east towards Ditton from the HBC siding spur line on 22 June 2017. The line to the right forms the connection to the Alstom works. Photo by Paul Wright

permission for a 1msqft Amazon warehouse. Following representations by the local community, the permission was quashed and the planning process was rerun.

Planning consent was granted in 2014 by which time the end user had gone elsewhere.

There was a real danger that the project might stall so the Council took the initiative during this time to construct a £7million road to open up the site from the A562/ A5300 and over the main line. This involved working closely with Knowsley MBC and Network Rail.

In 2014 following further marketing, the Council received interest from Alstom. It wasn't long before Alstom narrowed their search and selected the Widnes site. Rail connectivity close to the site was fundamental to their decision, as the first contract would be the repaint of the entire Pendolino fleet. In 2015 work began on a new planning application, this time for an Alstom Transport Technology Centre and Regional Training Academy.

Planning permission was granted in May 2016 and work began on site in the summer. Alstom managed the construction of their facility and the rail connection works on behalf on the Council, working closely with Network Rail ensuring completion in time for the new paint contract. The rail connection provides the crucial link from the Weaver Junction - Liverpool line into the Alstom facility. In addition, the

Council has invested in two spurs running parallel with the mainline, where in the future up to 5 rail sidings can be constructed.

With over 13,000 square metres of space, Widnes will be the largest rolling stock modernisation facility in the UK. Its vast size makes it ideal for work on intercity trains. Alstom has now started to work on the €28 million contract to re-paint the 56-strong fleet of Class 390 'tilting' Pendolino trains, which are used by Virgin on the West Coast Main Line.

Alstom is committed to recruiting from the local area, and the majority of the team being assembled for the painting contract have come from the Liverpool City Region and other local areas such as Warrington. The repainting team is 80-strong and includes five new apprentices who will work on the project, demonstrating Alstom's commitment to developing skills locally.

Alstom will develop out the site in phases as they secure further contracts; the longer term aspiration is for train assembly to take place at the facility, providing the new trains for the future and the creation of up to 600 jobs.

The first Pendolino train to be repainted at the works is 390 010. The approach lines are electrified which allows the trains to run up to the doors of the centre under their own power. They are then pushed into the works by an 08 shunting locomotive.

Should Alstom be successful in winning some orders to build trains it will extend its facility at Halebank threefold. Widnes is set to become a railway engineering centre for the 21st Century something that would have been unimaginable 30 years ago.



The end of the line. The western end of the shed at the Alstom Transport and Technology Centre seen on 29 June 2017. Photo from Alstom

Birkenhead Woodside station – 50 Years Since Closure.

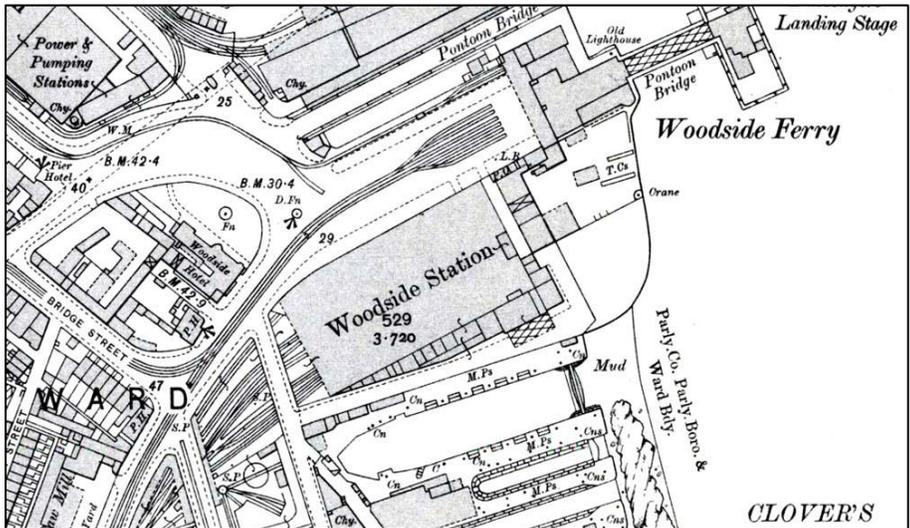


Birkenhead Woodside station s on 30 August 1967. This was the period when the station had lost its main line services and had only its Chester and Helsby locals. The number of passengers who have just disembarked from the Park Royal DMU show that the station was still popular. Photo by Geoff Dowling

Birkenhead Woodside was opened on 3 March 1878 by the Birkenhead Joint Railway a joint company of the Great Western Railway (GWR) and the London & North Western Railway (LNWR). It replaced a smaller terminus at Monks Ferry that had opened in 1844. The station was the northern terminus of the GWRs trunk route from Paddington to the north and great importance was placed upon it. The LNWR also valued Birkenhead Woodside and they ran a direct service to Euston from it.

Situated on the bank of the River Mersey adjacent to the Liverpool Ferry terminal at Birkenhead the station was seen as a facility that served Liverpool. This was especially true for the GWR who had no lines in the important port city. They offered through tickets to Liverpool via the ferry (and after June 1891 via the Mersey Railway) and they showed arrival and departure times at Liverpool Landing Stage in their timetables.

The station had five platforms. There was a double arched trussed roof of glass and steel, booking, parcels and refreshment facilities. Woodside also had excellent connectivity with other transport modes, there being both a tram and a ferry terminus adjacent to it.



Birkenhead Woodside shown on a 25-inch scale map from 1908. The proximity to the River Mersey is clearly illustrated. Also of note are the tram lines and the ferry landing stage.

As well as main line services Woodside was served by a number of local routes that were popular with commuters.

At the turn of the 20th century the station was very busy indeed. The GWR regarded their Birkenhead – Paddington trains as amongst the most important on their network. The service was the first to benefit from corridor coaches, the first to have a restaurant car and the GWR even introduced one of its first sleeper train services onto the route.

Little changed at Woodside through the ‘grouping’ and on into nationalisation. During the 1950s the station enjoyed traffic levels that were as heavy as at any time since it had opened. Although it was in the BR London Midland Region it still enjoyed its Paddington expresses. That was all set to change though following the *Reshaping of British Railways* report of 1963 (the Beeching Report).

Reshaping British Railways regarded the main line services from Birkenhead Woodside to both Euston and Paddington as duplicating other routes and it recommended their withdrawal. It recommended modification of the other services and complete closure of Woodside station.

The proposals were not put into effect immediately though because of the effect of another part of the report. That was that key routes should be modernised. The main line between Liverpool Lime Street and Euston had been electrified in part by 1963

and it was recommended that the work should continue (as part of the West Coast Main Line electrification project). That work would however be disruptive so whilst it was ongoing the Birkenhead – Paddington service would continue to run.

In 1965 Woodside still enjoyed 6 direct services to Paddington with the same number in the other direction. Even on Sundays there were 2 trains to and 3 trains from Paddington. A sleeper train service also still ran. There was a departure for Paddington at 8.55pm Monday-to-Saturday and at 9.15pm on Sundays. Passengers could return to Birkenhead by sleeper there being a 12.15am departure from Paddington (berths being ready for occupation by 11.30pm).

There were also long distance services to Birmingham, Ramsgate and North-Wales. Local services ran to Chester, Helsby and Wrexham.

By 1967 the west coast electrification scheme was nearing completion and the writing was on the wall for Woodside. The big changes came on 6 March 1967 when a new timetable came into effect. With the introduction of the timetable, no main line services ran any further north than Chester, and even from there Paddington could no longer be reached by a direct train.

Enthusiasts turned out in force to watch the last through trains to Woodside during the weekend of 4 and 5 March 1967. A special was run on the Sunday, it ran from Birmingham Snow Hill as 1Z65 and an ex-GWR Castle Class locomotive in GWR livery, number 7029 'Clun Castle' was used to haul it.

The withdrawal of the main line services left Birkenhead Woodside with only local services to and from Chester or Helsby.



Left: 1Z65 a rail tour from Birmingham Snow Hill pulls into Birkenhead Woodside on Sunday 5 March 1967. At the head of the train is GWR Castle Class locomotive number 7029 'Clun Castle'. Photo by Bevan Price

The British Rail London Midland Region timetable of 6 March 1967 listed 43 departures from Woodside Monday-to-Friday. Only 2 of those departures went any further than Chester or Helsby and one of those, the 10.10 to Rhyl, did so only between 12 June and 2 September. The other train was a service for Liverpool Lime Street which departed at 07.35. On Saturdays, there were 41 departures and on Sundays 19.

There were 44 arrivals Monday-to-Friday, 42 on Saturdays and 20 on Sundays. Only two trains originated from stations other than Helsby or Chester, the 07.46 arrival which had originated from Ditton Junction and the 09.03 arrival from Llandudno.

During this period work was undertaken at Rock Ferry station to make it the northern terminus for passenger trains on the Birkenhead and Chester line. The former Mersey Railway linked Rock Ferry to Liverpool Central Low Level and that is why it had been chosen as the Chester line terminus. Passengers would easily be able to change trains there to reach Birkenhead Hamilton Square or to travel on towards Liverpool.



Twilight at Birkenhead Woodside. All is quiet on Saturday 4 March 1967 on the penultimate day for main line services. Photo by Keith Holt

Passengers were notified that Birkenhead Woodside would close with effect from 6 November 1967. From that date, all Chester and Helsby services would run to and from Rock Ferry.

The last trains ran on Sunday 5 November 1967 when a normal Sunday service was operated. The last train to visit Birkenhead Woodside was an arrival from Chester. It departed Chester at 23.08 and arrived at Woodside at 23.35. The train was a two-car

Metro Cammel DMU. After the passengers had disembarked the train departed as an empty stock working for Birkenhead Mollington Street depot. After 99 years Birkenhead Woodside fell quiet.



The steam locomotives and the station were both on borrowed time when this view was taken at Birkenhead Woodside on Sunday 5 March 1967. Photo by Chris Coulter

The track was lifted shortly after closure and the station stood empty and

derelict until after September 1968 when it was demolished. During a visit made by 8D Association member Les Fifoot in September 1968 the running in board signs were still present.

For many years the site remained vacant but it was partly developed with office blocks in the 1990s. A sad end for a once great station. **Paul Wright**

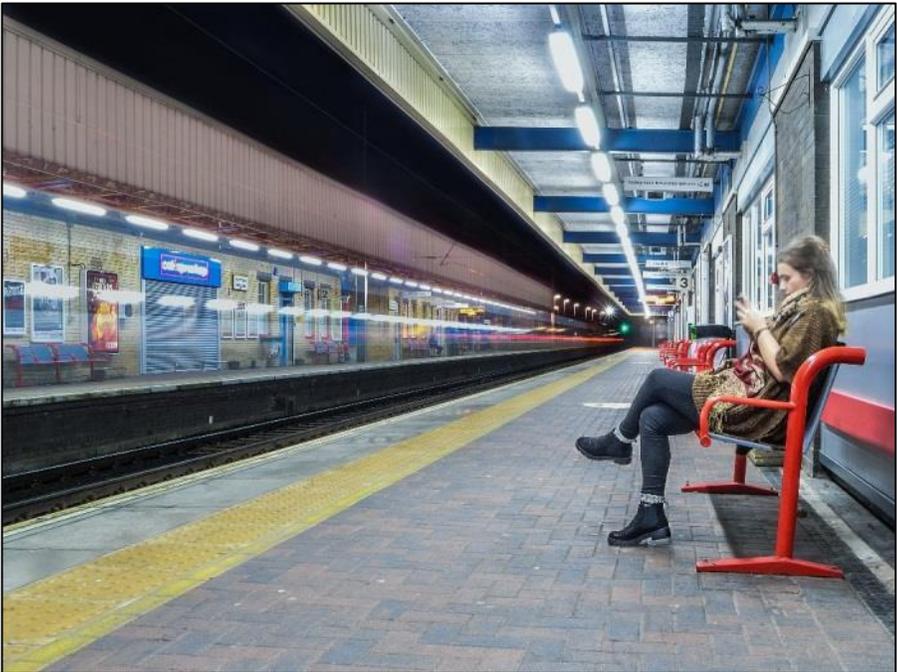


The very last departure from Birkenhead Woodside on Sunday 5 November 1967 is seen heading out of the station on its journey to Birkenhead Mollington Street depot. Photo by Chris Coulter

The 8D Association Photographic Competition

Unfortunately, the Photo Competition attracted little support. That said, the standard of the relatively few photographs that were submitted for consideration by an external judge, was extremely high. It was particularly encouraging to see entries from 2 of our junior members (Robert and Jamie Callaghan), as well as from their dad, Terry. The only other entrant was John Wilson, whose occupation as a driver affords him access to railway places and property that most of us can only dream about! All of the photographs submitted were rendered anonymous and forwarded to a freelance professional photographer who, at an early stage, had been persuaded to adjudicate. Without specifying which of the 2 junior members had taken which photograph, I pointed out to the judge which photographs had been taken by the boys. The lengthy delay has occurred because our adjudicator has been, and remains, particularly unwell. As a result of the illness, he now has ongoing difficulties with his business.

Given the small number of entrants, it came as no great surprise that the judge informed me that he was reluctant to award 'placings', but rather indicated which of the images he felt were *"especially worthy of publication"*. I had previously notified him that the intention was to publish the 'winning' photographs in the Association's journal. I offer my own congratulations to the 4 photographers, and in particular to the junior members who submitted some really superb images.



Oblivious - by Jamie Callaghan



Something Old Something New – by Jamie Callaghan



Above. Surprise Steam – by Robert Callaghan *Below. Wasteland – by Terry Callaghan*





Allerton Shed – by John Wilson



Mersey Crossings – by Terry Callaghan

Well done to Terry, Robert and Jamie Callaghan and also to John Wilson. I am sure members will agree that all of the photos are excellent and will enjoy looking at them.

Tony Foster

The Wirral Railway Circle – Liverpool Exchange Farewell Rail Tour Of Saturday 9 April 1977



The Wirral Railway Circle 'Liverpool Exchange Farewell Rail Tour' is seen at Liverpool Exchange station on 9 April 1977. The tour was hauled throughout by class 25 locomotive number 25 066 of Wigan Springs Branch depot. Photo by 54A South Dock

It has been 40 years since the Lyr terminus at Liverpool Exchange closed. The station closed for good on 30 April 1977. Unlike closures from the previous decade the closure of Exchange did not represent a railway system disappearing off the map. Basically, it was replaced by another station, Moorfields, which was part of a new underground system that revolutionised the railway network in Liverpool bringing great benefits to passengers.

Although nobody could argue that the Merseyrail underground system was not an improvement for enthusiasts it was still sad to see Exchange close.

In recognition of the importance of the station the Wirral Railway Circle ran a rail tour from the station on Saturday 9 April 1977. Present on the tour was 8D Association member Reg Dobson and he took a number of photographs some of which accompany this article.

The tour started from Exchange and on its first leg it ran to Manchester Victoria via Wigan Wallgate and the 1888 direct line via Pemberton. The Lyr had run 45 minute expresses over this route which competed with the timings of the LNWR and the CLC. This was impressive considering that the Lyr route was longer than that of the other two companies.



Bury Bolton Street was the sixth scheduled stop of the tour after leaving Liverpool Exchange. At that time, this station rarely saw locomotive hauled passenger trains. Like Exchange this was another station that had benefited from an LYR electrification scheme. Unlike Exchange, which had 650 volt DC live rails, the line between Manchester Victoria and Bury used a 1200 volt DC system. It was also the only system in Great Britain that used the side contact method of current collection. Photo by Reg Dobson

From Manchester Victoria, the tour ran up the Manchester & Leeds railway route as far as Rochdale. From Rochdale, it went onto the Oldham Loop and returned to Manchester Victoria. It then ran up to Bury Bolton Street on the 1879 route via Whitefield. This line had been electrified in 1916, and in 1977 it saw only EMUs of the 504 class.

The train returned to Manchester and then went up to Blackburn via Bolton. From Blackburn the tour went to Blackpool North. It then ran to Bolton via Preston.

A journey was then made from Bolton to Southport via Wigan Wallgate. Southport Chapel street station was well served by trains from Liverpool Exchange there being a 15 minute interval service for most of the day. In 1977 that service was operated by ex-LMS EMUs of the 502 class. They dated from 1939 and were showing their age by 1977. Passengers could also travel between Southport and Liverpool Lime Street at this time there being six services in each direction. The service had replaced the running of through coaches between Southport and London Euston in 1966. To reach Lime Street the former LNWR Bootle branch was used.



Towards the end of the day the tour called at Southport (Chapel Street). It is seen here waiting to depart on the final leg of its journey which was a run between Southport and Liverpool Lime Street via the Bootle Branch. That particular journey could still be done by an ordinary passenger train at that time. Photo by Reg Dobson

The 'Liverpool Exchange Farewell' rail tour followed the route of the Liverpool Lime Street service for the final leg of the tour. It was very unusual to see a locomotive hauled passenger train on the LYR line between Southport and Bootle in 1977. The last time locomotives had been seen regularly on passenger services had been in 1966 when the through coaches last ran.

The Bootle branch was an interesting and steeply graded route that had lost its local passenger service (between Liverpool Lime street and Alexandra Dock) in 1948.

The tour finished at Liverpool Lime Street less than a mile away from its Liverpool Exchange starting point.

The 'Liverpool Exchange Farewell' rail tour was not the last locomotive hauled passenger train to run from the LYR terminus. BR ran a special for enthusiasts on Friday 29 April 1977. It departed from Liverpool Exchange at 23.42 and ran to Liverpool Lime Street via Wigan Wallgate, Lowton and Earlestown.

Arrival at Lime Street was at 01.11 on Saturday 30 April 1977. **Paul Wright**

From the Archive



In the late evening of 4 September 1967, the 21.37 Manchester Victoria parcels service is loaded at Liverpool Lime Street platform 8. Photo by John Gahan



An electric hauled mixed freight is seen near to Pigue Lane, Edge Hill during the winter of 1967. Photo by John Gahan

Events Programme

10.00 – Saturday 16 September 2017 – Visit to the Halton Miniature Railway – Another chance to see this fascinating miniature railway at Runcorn Town Park. The line has gone from strength to strength over the last few years. For our visit, there will be two steam engines present. **Meet at the Halton Miniature Railway, Stockham Lane, Palacefields, Runcorn.**

10.00 – Saturday 7 October 2017 – Hooton to Hadlow Road Guided Walk – A guided walk from Hooton to Hadlow Road and back looking at the BJR West Kirby branch. **Meet at the entrance of Hooton station.** *Easy/Medium distance*

10.00 – Saturday 28 October 2017 – Visit to Fiddlers Ferry Power Station to view a visiting rail tour – An opportunity to see a rail tour pass through Fiddlers Ferry Power Station. Numbers are limited so please book your place by phoning Richard Mercer on 0151 378 9908

19.00 – Thursday 23 November 2017 – The Death of a Railway (The Widnes – St Helens line 1966 to 1982). – An illustrated talk by Paul Wright. **Select Security Stadium (Widnes Rugby Ground), Lowerhouse lane, Widnes.**

19:00 – Thursday 14 December 2017 – Eight Countries in 5 days by Train – An illustrated talk by Paul Wright. **Select Security Stadium (Widnes Rugby Ground), Lowerhouse lane, Widnes.**

Where is This Competition



'Where is this' competition? (Answers to pwright964@btinternet.com) Photo by Alan Robinson. The March competition was correctly guessed by Arthur Turner and Mike Delamar. The location was Sandhills, Liverpool.

NEXT JOURNAL PUBLISHED 1 DECEMBER 2017