Heyside update – See pages 4 – 6
Rochdale recollections – See pages 12 – 14
Walkden Signal Box – See pages 20 & 21
The Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Society

The Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Society is devoted to the dissemination of information about the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway throughout its 75 years of existence and beyond. The Society established an ongoing, permanent record of its findings through its publications, which are widely available from the website exhibitions and specialist bookstores. It works closely with the National Railway Museum, Manchester Archives and other relevant bodies to ensure that original artefacts and records, and other materials are professionally preserved and made accessible to all.

Editorial
Welcome to Magazine 258. In this edition we continue our recollections theme with further reminiscences from Bill Tonge and Dave Carter. We also feature two excellent model railway articles – one in 7mm scale and the other in 3mm scale! I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all our new members and wish you enjoyment of your membership of this great Society.

Railway modelling
Ken has recently done an analysis of Society members' interests which makes interesting reading. At the time we had 806 members of whom 622 (77 per cent) said they were railway modellers. Of those, 43 model in 2mm scale (7%), 59 in 4mm scale (8%), 144 model in 7mm scale (22%) and 44 in other gauges (7%). It is interesting to see how many members work in the different scales and, wearing my hat as Editor of Magazine, I would like to reflect this in our coverage of modelling activities. We have some very prolific and enthusiastic modellers working in 7mm scale who regularly contribute articles, but it would be good to have more material from people working in 2mm and 4mm scales. If you work in either of those scales please consider writing an article or sending in some photographs of your models.

NRM project
Three members have come forward to assist Mike Fiton, our Photographic driver who used to work on the loop line, with his photography project. In our new project to help catalogue and digitise the official collection of L&YR photos held by the National Railway Museum. However it would be better if more members were able to help. If you feel you could spare the time to get involved in this exciting new venture, please contact Mike on m.fiton@lyrs.org.uk

Looking ahead
This year is the 175th anniversary of the opening of the Manchester to Littleborough section of The Manchester and Leeds Railway (which became part of the L&YR in 1839). To mark the occasion we will be having a Lanky Day Out following the route on Sunday 6 July; full details will be available in the Society’s magazine.

Publications Team
The Publications Team produces seven editions of Magazine. If you feel you could spare the time to get involved in this exciting new venture, please contact the Publications Officer, Roger Mellor at editor@lyrs.org.uk or by phone on 01706 849188.

Front cover: Network Rail is rebuilding the badly distorted Todmorden Portal of Holme Tunnel so that the railway will go to the between Burnley and Todmorden. The line will be closed from 30 March 2014. AMPCR Rail

Modelling Meeting plans announced
This year’s Society spring event will take the form of a Modelling Meeting. Our Events Officer NIGEL THORNEY has the details...

Ordsall Chord
The Society has lodged an objection to the proposed route of a new railway line in Manchester as our Secretary MARTIN NIELD explains...

Network Rail is planning to build a new section of line in Manchester, known as the Ordsall Chord, which will connect Ordsall Chord Station to Manchester Piccadilly. Unfortunately the proposed route of the chord will sever the railway connection to the Museum of Science and Industry (MOSI) which includes Liverpool Road station, the terminus of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, the first steam-hauled passenger railway in the world. It would also remove or damage four listed structures.

The Society supports the objective of building the Ordsall Chord, which is an important part of the Northern Hub project, and will improve rail connectivity across Manchester. However we object to the proposed route of the chord and have lodged our objection with the Department for Transport and Network Rail. There are alternative routes available and one of our members, Sam Kenyon, has come up with his own version which is currently being evaluated. There will be a public local inquiry into the scheme in April or May at which it is likely that the Society will have to be represented. We will keep members informed of developments.
Heyside signals and locomotives

Since the article on the 7mm scale layout Heyside in Magazine 251 there have been continuing developments, both on the signalling side and in additions to the locomotive fleet, as its owner RICHARD LAMBERT, who also took the layout photographs, explains...

The main impetus for this work was the Aylesbury Railtex exhibition in May 2013, as I wished to present as complete a picture as possible. There were two important signal items I had to build, those on the footbridge and the gantry, and I particularly wanted to get the saddle tank finished as an iconic L&YR locomotive.

The footbridge signals

The layout initially had a steel plate footbridge with just the one signal on it. With the creation of a goods loop on the Up Main, there was need for a second home (albeit short arm) and if I could build a lattice footbridge, then it could be modelled very closely on the footbridge and signals at Werneth. In an afternoon, Cynric Williams and I designed a lattice and signals at Werneth. In an afternoon, Cynric Williams and I designed a lattice and signals at Werneth. In an afternoon, Cynric Williams and I designed a lattice

The inspiration for the model. British Railways (LMR) photograph

Top: The signal gantry. The middle doll signals a route that assumes a crossover beyond the bridge. Only one person has expressed confusion so far! Above: The inspiration for the gantry, that on the left of the picture, at Manchester Victoria East Junction. Tom Wray LYRS Collection 9533 Below: The radial tank, weathered but in good running order.

sections. Cynric did the CAD work, and a short while later, I was presented with three etched brass footbridge kits.

The footbridge made up exactly as intended, fitting the space perfectly, and providing a sound base to mount the signals. The signals themselves are made from wood, with etched and cast components from Scale Signal Supply for the fittings. The decking was made of copper-clad strip, stanchions from nickel-coated brass lace pins and the various brackets and smoke shields from brass sheet. The operating wire is 0.4mm nickel silver and the operation is by servos mounted under the baseboard.

The gantry

This was felt to be the signature piece of the layout with five dolls and nine arms. It is based on the gantry outside Victoria East Junction signal box and illustrations in the Society’s Focus on Signalling (No 3). The legs are made of wood, with brass ‘X’ pieces, while the support for the decking is four strips of brass. The decking itself is made from 84 P4 copper-clad sleepers, while the spandrels were commissioned by me from Scale Signal Supply. The dolls and hardware were built as before, but it was in the operation of the signals that most thought had to be given.

One particular issue I needed to resolve was the fact that the operation was via pulley wheels, with cranks used only where the direction was changed at the very edge of the decking. Wheels as such were non-starters, as I could not see any practical way of making them drive back, so I had to come up with something that looked like a wheel, but operated as a crank. After a bit of experimentation, I came up with a cast wheel (C&L), with two pieces of brass strip soldered in to create a crank. I filed a slot on these ‘cranks’ and drilled a locating hole in the wheel to provide long-term strength and operational reliability. There is just enough movement in the cranks to enable the signals to work properly. I also had to provide guides for the horizontal runs as the 0.4mm nickel silver wire had a tendency to bow when being driven back, rather than operate the signal arm. In addition, we had to find space for nine servos under the one leg!

Aspinall Radial Tank

This was built by another member of the Heyside Group, Allen Hammett. A London Road Models kit now with Lanky Models, it was initially built to finescale standards, converted to SE, then back to fivescale in time for the Aylesbury exhibition. I bought it off Allen, added pickups to the pony and trailing wheels and weathered it. All wheels are sprung except the driven axle, and there is considerable sideplay on the pony and trailing wheels to allow it to negotiate model curves – it’s not a radial model! Powered by an RG7, it glides over the trackwork, and looks quite at home on Heyside. It’s due for a rebuild at some point to add the inside valve gear, probably at the same time as I build a further (long bunker) example.
The variations and the choices

BARRY C. LANE reviews the new 4mm scale Bachmann 2-4-2T and explains his part in its development...

I t was nearly two years ago that Bachmann approached me to assist with the design of a new locomotive for their 4mm range. The Aspinall 2-4-2 ‘radios’ tank engine was the project, influenced by the National Railway Museum who wanted a model of L&YR No.1008, as exhibited at York, in their own ‘Exclusive Range’ of models. Bachmann would produce the LMS and BR versions for the mass market.

So, following that first visit, Dapol safety valves, twisters, handrails on the back of the bunker and an accurate representation of the 1889 livery.

The prototype at the NRM should have the hexagonal boiler washout plug covers (polished gun metal) and the shallow ‘dished’ smokebox door for the ‘original’ period but as it does not, the model doesn’t have them either.

In several ways, No.1008 is inaccurate for the 1889 condition and I have always felt that it would only be absolutely accurate if the wooden, slightly tapered chimney was changed for the standard parallel ‘Horwich’ chimney introduced in 1891 with the side tanks lettered. That is the way the class spent just about all their Pre-Grouping years. The salesman Link inside valve gear came acquired rivet heads around the face of the smokebox when renewal was necessary. Others had rivets on the sides of the smokebox. Some had rivets on both faces! Many had the bunker renewed after 1920 with the prominent snap-head rivets on the side but some had them on the rear too. We went for the lesser riveted examples as the others presented more complications. A host of ‘heavy duty’ buffers by the 1930s and most had the smokebox door fastened by ‘dog’ clamps so that choice was simple. Much research went into finding prototypes that could give an appropriate running number for the plain black LMS version and two BR versions with a common rivet arrangement. We settled for the examples that had the rivets on the faces of the smokebox only and ‘pop’ safety valves. The LMS model would be No.10695, the pristine BR one No.50636 and a slightly weathered version would be No.50795.

I suggested that one in the early LMS livery of crimson with large gold numbers on the side tanks and the LMS company crest on the bunker might make a popular product, but economics forbade yet another variation.

The example made especially for the NRM is an excellent representation of the preserved No.1008. There will be a limited run of them as a premium ‘collectors’ price in line with previous products in the NRM range. It differs from the standard Bachmann models in having the correct Aspinall period buffers, a smokebox door fastened by a daisy, Dapol safety valves, twisters, handrails on the back of the bunker and an accurate representation of the 1889 livery.

The eagerly awaited package turned up and initial inspection impressed me. The next job was to check it out alongside the drawing by Tom Derbyshire to compare dimensions and it’s pretty good. A table of dimensions is available from me (modelling4mm@lyrs.org.uk) on request.

The body comprises a heavy metal casting forming the footplate, to which the side tanks, bunker, cab and boiler are fitted. The footplate is solid between the frames, although there are representations of the Joy valve gear and valve rods. The detail on the leading sandboxes and operating gear is very good as is the rerailing jack, cab and roof details, etc. The L&YR model is supplied as built, which is the condition in which it is preserved at Horwich. Full instructions are also supplied.

Modelling Co-ordinator for 4mm scale, DAVID CARTER adds his comments on this excellent model...

The variations and the choices
Holcombe Brook and Tottington

PETER CRICHTON, of The Lancashire & Yorkshire DCC Model Railway Group, describes this 4mm scale 00 gauge layout of a well-known L&YR branchline.

In February 2011 I visited the Pontefract exhibition and was very impressed by a layout based on the Bury to Holcombe Brook branch line exhibited by the East Riding Finescale Group. I enquired about it attending our own exhibition, then in Rawtenstall, but unfortunately it was up for sale so I expressed an interest. No sooner had I walked away when I was approached by Neil Ripley from the group and after a brief discussion I was the prospective owner of a layout based on a very interesting L&YR branch line that was local to our clubrooms in Haslingden.

The layout

The layout was originally built in the early 1990s by Dave Akerman and John Benson from Marlow. They chose Holcombe Brook as it would be a compact layout that presented an operationally challenging prototype with an interesting and varied history.

Originally it consisted of the 12 foot Holcombe Brook station section with a 4 foot fiddle yard. The track was hand built using phosphor bronze on copperclad sleepers. The prototype track layout was not followed slavishly for operational reasons, but incorporated all the major features. Dave scratchbuilt all the structures, using wood for the timber goods shed in order to get the correct look. Assistance with the wiring and the control panel came from Peter Noyce and Andy Wells.

The layout was operated early EMS period locomotives and stock. It was then extended with another 8 foot section of Tottington station with a central fiddle yard. This was quickly replaced with a representation of the Tottington viaduct. Again, Dave scratchbuilt the Tottington structures, plus - due to the sad demise of John some time earlier - he also constructed the permanent way. Peter Noyce built the viaduct and assisted with electrics and scenery.

The building of the layout and its extensions took place over a decade or more and before its retirement it had attended many exhibitions in the South East and had a couple of visits up north to Blackburn. The layout had been in store for a number of years and Dave wanted to dispose of it, so in 2007 he offered it to one of the original operating team, Steve Grantham, who had now moved up north and was a member of the ERFG.

The ERFG set about a major refurbishment of the layout, the main work being done on the scenery. The original linear layout was changed to an L shape configuration with two new short 45 degree scenic breaks between each of the three sections. The inspiration for this came after a visit by Neil to a French model railway exhibition in Sedan where there were several layouts using this method. They also undertook a simplification of the wiring with the aim of making it DCC friendly. ERFG operated the layout in a ‘what if’ 1960s scenario, in which the urban sprawl had happened some 20 years earlier and the former L&YR branch was due to there being a railway!

Under new ownership

I took possession of the layout at the Shipley show in September 2011 but due to limited space at our clubrooms work did not start until we moved to a larger unit in the January 2012. All points were manually operated, but those on the Tottington section had been motorised but converted back to manual by ERFG. I re-wired these points using slow motion point motors but left the Holcombe Brook section points manually operated at least for the time being. The first exhibition under my ownership was at our own FXR Model Railway Exhibition at the Museum of Transport Manchester in May 2012. Work was still needed to make it suitable for DCC operation, so with the help of fellow club member, Wayne Merridew, we completely replaced all the wiring. Power management modules were installed on each board; these prevent a short on one section affecting another section. A Frog Jucier was installed to trap potential shorts on the diagonal crossing, this instantly detects a potential short and switches automatically to the correct polarity. These were later added to all points on the Holcombe Brook section as the original micro switches proved unreliable.

The two platform signals were originally operated with a very sophisticated electronic mechanism which provided a bounce, we couldn’t get them to operate using DCC, they were replaced with servos which could be programmed to bounce. There was also a non-working plastic home signal with a calling on arm. This was replaced with a hand built brass signal made from a standard kit and various spare pieces of brass. Both these signals were also motorised.

The layout attended several exhibitions including Hartlepool in 2012, and then Tottington High School (a stone’s throw from the original Tottington Station), Stockport and Wigan in 2013.

It became apparent the steel track on the Tottington section was unreliable for DCC operation - years of storage had taken its toll - so after the Wigan exhibition we completely re-railed the Tottington section with nickel silver rail before its next showing at the Halifax show in September. This was no easy task as it has wooden sleepers with plastic chairs, so in effect I was building new track, which was not easy in situ doing delicate scenery and buildings.

The work was completed in time for an appearance at an open day in Greenmount Village on 7 September to celebrate the official opening of the landscaping of the original Greenmount Station sidings. The layout had now made two appearances at venues near to the original branch line! The running on the Tottington section was completely transformed and was well worth the effort and it worked perfectly at Halifax.

We operate the layout using an iPhone App called ‘TouchCAB’ which links wirelessly to an ESU Ecos DCC command station. This allows great freedom to walk around the layout controlling the trains, signals and the points all from the one handset. Having initially resisted the temptation to motorise the points on the Holcombe Brook section with the ease of operation using TouchCAB I have decided they will be motorised this year.

Stock

I use the original ERFG stock but I continue to operate the layout in the same ‘what if’ early 1960s scenario, so I have built up some appropriate stock which includes a Class 504, converted using a Bachmann 2EPB and a DC Kins Class 504 kit. There are various steam locomotives renewed and weathered to represent those operated from Bury or other local sheds, including an 00 Works L&YR Barton Wright 0-6-0ST currently numbered 51381. Recent additions are all the current Bachmann Radial Tanks including 1008. All locos and units are fitted with sound including the Radial Tanks using recordings from the preserved L&YR line.

The future

It has been a real pleasure continuing the refurbishment of the layout and updating it for DCC operation and it is testament to Dave and the original team for their craftsmanship and modelling skills that it has stood the test of time. I have learnt a lot of new skills over the last couple of years including track and signal building and so I am planning on building a new section based on Woolfoot station on the branch line I was hoping to build as a passing loop and I hope to start work soon.

In 2014 the layout is currently booked to be exhibited at the Heywood Model Rail Group Exhibition in Middleton on 15 & 16 March; the Rail Road Exhibition in Dukinfield on 5 & 6 April and the Hendy Magnets Great Electric Train Show at the Heritage Motor Centre Gaydon on 11 & 12 October.
Goods yard cranes

In Magazine 256, Derek King asked for details of L&YR goods yards to help him construct a small shunting layout. In Magazine 257, we covered goods yard entrances and loading banks; in this edition, we focus on goods yard cranes and in the next edition, we will look at weighbridges and weighbridge huts. The photographs were all taken by Eric Blakey in the 1960s and come from the Society’s photographic collection. The introduction and captions are by Noel Coates.

Cranes came in different sizes for lifting different items: the simplest were built to take a 30cwt load so only small items were expected at the goods yard. One or two at larger yards would bear heavier items, as at Hebden Bridge. As much as the thickness of the (wooden) jib, part of the capacity was down to the gears and gearing and the wire hawser used. Most cranes seem to have sat on a spindle and the wire rope/chain has gone. Eric Blakey suggests it can lift up to two tons. Only the cast iron brackets and the straight jib look like it is a sturdier replacement either side of the goods shed demolished of two cranes at Facit (there was one of around five tons; Eric’s photo is not quite clear enough to show the figure. Presumably the iron materials coming for the local works needed this heavier provision. This photo was taken on 10 June 1963. (LYRS Collection 6442)

Low Moor

Photograph 6 The crane at Low Moor is a much more solid affair with two girders for a jib and a thick chain for lifting loads of around five tons. Eric’s photo is not quite clear enough to show the figure. Presumably the iron materials coming for the local works needed this heavier provision. This photo was taken on 10 June 1963. (LYRS Collection 6442)

Photograph 5 Details of the gearing. All cranes were numbered and a register of details kept. (LYRS Collection 6442)

Shepley and Shelley

Photograph 5 The crane at Low Moor is one of those examples where the siting of the crane suits a model perfectly. It was placed between the goods shed line and the central lurry road so lifting from one mode of transport to the other was a simple job. (Clayton West has the crane over by a straightforward siding. Denby Dale was between two sidings, one with boards between the rails for parking a lurry). Eric Blakey took this on 14 June 1963. (LYRS Collection 6614)

Luddendenfoot

Photograph 6 The second crane at Luddendenfoot was on the loading bank and looks like it is a sturdier replacement of an older one. The gearing is within the cast iron brackets and the straight jib suggests it can lift up to two tons. Only the wire rope/chain has gone. Eric Blakey took several detail views of this machine on 21 July 1963. (LYRS Collection 6081)

Facit

Photograph 8 This is the more northerly of two cranes at Facit (there was one either side of the goods shed demolished to right) and is placed for 10 Tons capacity even though it looks nowhere near as strong as the one at Hebden Bridge. The reason for this higher capacity was the stone traffic being shipped out from the station. There were a couple of inclined planes to get the stone down from the quarries using private owner wagons which the Company would not allow on to its metals beyond a couple of sidings, so transhipment was necessary. The quarries were abandoned before World War II but, in earlier days, quite substantial size (and weight!) blocks would need moving from one wagon to another. In the background is the second (1904) cotton mill which gave the locality its name. It was demolished in March 2012. Eric Blakey took this (and many other detail shots of this crane) on June 13th 1964. (LYRS Collection 7345)
BILL TONGE continues his recollections of working on steam locos in the Rochdale area in the 1960s...

The diagram of Number 2 pilot

The Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway

Night turn

The night turn for the No.2 pilot was mostly at Bury L&Y Sidings, shunting and making up loads for trains calling in the night for the Up or Down sidings. We were also banking trains up Broadfield Bank. When required we would go from Rochdale, before walking up to the station and catching the 9.20am train to Bolton as far as Bury Knowsley Street, then walk back to Rochdale, report to the Foreman’s office, and then go on to the sidings where the train road our engine was on, then start to prepare the engine for work.

Once the driver had done his bit he would draw the engine outside to fill the tender with water for the working for the next days. We would then go to the Broadfield Bank sidings to the buffer stops, the next one down was for going onto the Up main line) where a telephony was placed for the crews to inform the Bobby at Bury Loco junction to inform the driver to work. When the driver would tell the signalman on the disposal road and report to the Foreman’s office. The driver would make out a repair or no repair, and then we would make our way back to Rochdale via Bury Knowsley Street for a passenger train and back again.

The Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Society
The beginning of the end

By the end of 1963 steam was on its way out. The Edge Hill loco coal train, with best steam coal for the long passenger work in special hopper wagons from out of Yorkshire, which had been a daily run into Liverpool Road, had now stopped running. Bury Loco Shed closed and our locos were transferred to Bolton. In the meantime work for the No. 2 Pilot was becoming less and less. Joe Taylor, the coal merchant at Whitworth, was still having wagons delivered, but Facit yard had closed. Wardleworth yard was still having coal and condemned wagons for breaking up, while Turner Bros Asbestos Company was still having deliveries, so this kept the branch open for the next two years or so.

No. 1 pilot’s work was also declining and the evening run to Mosnon by No. 2 pilot had now stopped running. By now the 1962 was open, fewer trains came in from York, Giffnock, Back Cropper and Goole fish, fruit and vegetable trains for Manchester Old Trafford were less frequent. Freight was all starting to go by road and as soon as has their contracts with British Railways where up for renewal they were not renewed.

The No.2 pilot after working the branch in the afternoon would now travel to Castleton Up Goods Yard and pick up vans of Cadbury’s products for delivery to their Cold Storage Depot at Broadfield. Then we would shunt the Up and Down yard as required and bring wagons out of the MOD RAF yard (all of which was top priority green arrow freight) and make up our train for Mosnon yard. We would leave with our train after the tea break. Sometimes we would have to call in at Heywood Goods Yard to pick up low loader wagons with narrow gauge wagons on them for Zamburbas which had been made by Heywood Wagon Works Co.

After parting with our train at Mosnon Exchange Sidings we would travel Light Engine to Bolton Shed via Manchester Victoria, Salford and Clifton Junction. On one occasion there was a problem at Cheesman Hill Junction and they sent us by Irk Valley Junction onto the Bury Electric Line, then we crossed over onto the through road through the station controlled by Victoria East Box. (I had a ride on the tram from Victoria to Oldham via Irk Valley Junction once again recently – around 50 years between the runs!).

The six drivers and the three passed fireman at Rochdale would be acquainted with the route via Manchester Victoria because they had to know all the different routes to go to Bury Loco Shed via Clifton Junction, Ringley Road and Radcliffe North Junction; via Bolton, Burnden Junction and Rose Hill station, then Bradley Fold Junction to Radcliffe West and North Junction; or Radcliffe Black Lane to Knowley Street station, then draw clear of the crossover points on the Up Fast to the Down Fast, then whistle Bury West body. He would give a green flag when the points were set to draw up to the starter for the East Fork to Bolton Street station and we would stop at the south end of the station behind a signal post containing three calling on signals. The top one was for Radcliffe direction, the other two for Knowley Street Station. We would whistle when we were clear, then down to the shed past Buckley Wells Crossing and down to Loco Junction Box, then onto the shed. The other way was up to Bury Loop Junction, clear the up Fast points to cross over onto the Bury Loop Line towards Radcliffe, then up to Loco Junction and onto the shed. If the turntable was out of order, this is the way they turned the engines round.

When fireman had passed their driving examination they would be given a Route Availability Card so they could write on it the routes that they were familiar with and then put their signature on the card to confirm this. It meant that when extra work was given to a shed by the Locomotive Control Department at Manchester the Foreman could then check who was available to do the work and check that he was familiar with the route. Every so often they would have to reaffirm the card and data in sign is again.

Closures begin

The work to warrant two locomotives at Rochdale was declining fast. Bolton shed was about to close as were Bury L&YR Sidings. Rochdale’s Down Sidings were receiving less coal for the marching band as it was mostly coming by road. Only Joe Taylor of Whitworth was getting coal delivered by rail. Rochdale No.3 pilot was abolished. The junior drivers and firemen either went to Newton Heath or Longsight morning. This only lasted for twelve months. The night shift was cancelled and another set of men went to Longsight shed. Rochdale pilot was now allocated a 400hp 0-6-0 diesel shunter working just two shifts. The engine was housed overnight in the overhead electric hoist shed. Within six months the late shift was abolished; the driver went Newton Heath Loco Shed and the fireman took the money.

So now I was the last fireman on the books at what was left of Bury Loco Shed. Drivers who still signing on there for the electric cars running the Manchester Victoria service. British Railways had started to negotiate with the union to do without the second man on diesels.

The work at Rochdale Up sidings in 1967 was down to two to three hours a day. We signed on at 10am until finish. British Railways was trying to close the branch, but Turner Bros. wanted it kept open. I believe that they offered to pay all the expenses to keep it open but it was not to be. My driver Clifford Stanfield and I were the last up the branch with a diesel shunter to shunt Whitworth sidings, bring back all the empties and to call in at Shawclough and Wardleworth and back to Rochdale Up sidings. The Down sidings were now closed. In October that year I gave in my notice as I could not live off my wages. I had a wife who was expecting our second child in January 1968 and a mortgage to pay.

I have no regrets about leaving the railways. In the last few years of steam locos the engines were badly maintained, mainly with steam blowing from the cylinders. With shunting in damp weather we had difficulty in seeing the hand signals from the shunter. The yard crew would complain, you would ask for a replacement, but you would be given the same story no improvements. You have to manage or shut down the yard.

The one thing I did gain was experience in using your initiative and the respect of responsibility that I had gained in the ten years as a British Railways employee in the Motive Power Department has help me to advance in my future employments.

The last official trip to Whitworth was worked by an 08 shunter on 19 August 1967. From left the crew are; British Railways Area Manager, name not known, Joe Taylor coal merchant, shunter name not known, Terry Harson who ran a boys’ boxing school, Driver Clifford Stanfield and Fireman Bill Tonge. Richard Greenwood

Miles Platting revisited

Inspired by an article in a Society publication, FRED HARTLEY explores the Miles Platting area of Manchester...
Healey Mills Diesel Depot

DAVE CARTER concludes his article about his experiences working at Healey Mills Diesel Depot...

Locusote tales

English Electric 350hp diesel electric shunters were put on the yard long before the depot opened. For servicing they had been running up to Hammerton Street depot in Bradford. The six BR-built Drewry shunters (Class 03s) didn’t work in the yard, but covered out stations such as Huddersfield station, Wakefield wagon shops, etc.

They had Gardner 8LJ B-cylinder in-line engines which were a delight to work on; everything was highly finished, no rough edges and the parts were smaller and lighter than the English Electric items. These locomotives were part of the 1953 Modernisation Plan but, sadly, their jobs were disappearing as quickly as they were being built. The main line locomotives were all English Electric:

- Either Type 3, 1,750hp Ce/Ce, of which we had 20; or
- The Type 4, 2,000hp ICo/Co1s of which we had 34.

D343-D349 had disc head codes and gangway doors (which were never used and caused droughts). The latter 27 Type 3s were all of the last batch with one piece head code boxes, which I thought looked better.

The Type 3s came up to us second hand from South Wales. They had odd lamp brackets designed for lamps that had the slot on the side. These had to be warmed up and bent through 90 degrees to take normal lamps. A blue spot on the side denoted their Western Region route availability. Some of them had the GWR type ATP equipment on the Number 2 bogie; this was stripped up, but had to be removed before they went into service. The fitters’ mates concocted a special brew of luce sand and paraffin to grind embedded dirt from the windscreen and other windows.

The English Electric locos were a good introduction to diesel traction. The electrical components were well made: the relays were as big as a man’s fist; you could see them operate and if they didn’t; an awkward three-phase drive could be in trouble. They were strapping up, but had to be done up, too. Modern traction everything is geared and encapsulated; you couldn’t see anything move, it’s just a component with a lead and plug.

In addition to the loco fleet Healey Mills had 24 Diesel Brake Tenders. Ours had Gresley bogies from scrapped coaches with a low body on top (so it didn’t obstruct the driver’s view) containing the vacuum brake cylinders and ballast weight. These were usually propelled in front of the loco to provide extra braking effect when dealing with unlisted freight going down gradients. The leaf springs inside the bogie frame were very2 thirsty to get out when changing a spring.

Since leaving the shop floor and moving into training I have worked in many depots and most staff believe that their locomotives are better than anyone else’s. I have experienced the strange phenomenon when stock is transferred from depot A to depot B that at some point between the two places the locomotives turn into the biggest pile of junk ever to run on rails! If told to transfer locomotives, sheds don’t send their best machines.

As an example, some of our drivers were a picky lot and would complain about trivial problems. The easy cure was to offer them a loco from another depot: “Take another one”. I can remember being sent up to Newton Heath, Longsight or Edge Hill one. They usually decided that the windscreen wiper was wiping fast enough and that they could manage after all.

The Type 3s did have faults: the bogies, inspired by Bulleid, the ex-Southern chap, were constant sources of trouble. The frame plates had to be checked for cylinder explosions! A side effect of the low engine coolant temperature occurred in the cabs. The cab heaters were two small radiators, one under each seat, and an electric fan to blow the ‘heat’ round the cab. The water was never more than lukewarm and the drivers complained bitterly. Every time it was filled with water which boiled like a giant electric kettle. I was the fitter one day, George Holland was the spark. He had been a Petty Officer in the Navy during WW2. Three technicians had come out from York HQ to do a full power test on a Class 47. George pointed out to them that the tank would need filling up fully and all the plates coupled up, but they were in a hurry and overrode George who said: “Fine, we’ll watch it from the free end, Dave”. As the engine power rose the voltage was rising too, well above the design rating. The technician flashed over – this is when the voltage is able to jump from one brush box to the next, a bit like a giant catherine wheel. The engine room filled with smoke and ozone, the engine shut down and the lights went out. The three technicians baled out and vanished; we never saw them again. George was still nonchalantly propped there, with his roll up stuck to his lip! “Nothing much seems to faze you George”, I said. “When you have had seven years of people actually trying to kill you, this is but ‘er all’,” was his reply.

Fleet additions

Later additions to the fleet included Brush Type 2i (Class 31) and Brush Type 4s (Class 47) which came to run the merry-go-round coal trains to power stations. These were superseded by Class 56 2,500hp locomotives. The Class 56s were basically a Class 47 body with a Ruston (English Electric) 716 power unit shrouded into it – physically, the world’s biggest diesel traction engine, plus ancillary items such as filters, oil coolers, fan drive pumps, etc. This meant that there was precious little room left in the cabs. Generally, unaccomplished compartment would have been the ideal worker on these locos. There wasn’t enough room at floor level to turn your boots around, this meant going to the end to turn round and then walking Egyptian style, with both feet pointing to the same side. The first 30 Class 56s were assembled in Romania. Most of their workmanship left much to be desired, very little was standard, not much could be ‘robbied’ and used on another loco. The drivers liked them, they were on top of the job, but maintenance staff had other views.

Conclusion

The first time I worked for the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway was the first time I realized I was good at it, but as a teenager you don’t fully appreciate Mr Mason’s comments. As a fitter you had to try to understand that the staff in the design office had a different perspective on the problems that inhabited by rude mechanics. In so many cases, a pipe joint moved six inches either way would drastically make a job easier and save time, but draughtsmen never get their hands dirty. After four years working as a fitter, I too was working at a drawing board and I always did think that staff rate of wage was on another planet.

Healey Mills yard never achieved its full potential throughput of wagons per day; the coal trade was the main source of traffic and the 1948/49 coal strike was the final straw. The rapid run down of the coal trade was the main source of traffic and the 1948/49 coal strike was the final straw. The rapid run down of the coal trade was the main source of traffic and the 1948/49 coal strike was the final straw. The rapid run down of the coal trade was the main source of traffic and the 1948/49 coal strike was the final straw. The rapid run down of the coal trade was the main source of traffic and the 1948/49 coal strike was the final straw. The rapid run down of the coal trade was the main source of traffic and the 1948/49 coal strike was the final straw. The rapid run down of the coal trade was the main source of traffic and the 1948/49 coal strike was the final straw.

DAVE CARTER concludes his article about his experiences working at Healey Mills Diesel Depot...
Manchester Victoria electrification

Station was closed during the Christmas holiday...

Manchester Victoria station was closed after the last services on Christmas Eve until Thursday 2 January allowing Network Rail to do major preparatory works for the electrification of the line to Liverpool.

Engineers installed 74 foundations and some of the steel work for the overhead line equipment. Inside the station the engineers installed 42 fixtures to hold the overhead wires to the station roof.

400 metres of track was removed under Cheetham Hill road bridges at the east of the station to allow the track to be lowered by up to 17cm to create the headroom required for overhead lines. 1330 tonnes of spoil were removed before the track was relaid with almost 1000 tonnes of new ballast.

Brierfield signal box

Councillors have been asked to block the planned demolition of the redundant signal box and incorporate it into the adjacent £25 million Brierfield Mills redevelopment.

Daisyfield signal box

The signal box built by Saxby & Farmer for the L&YR at Daisyfield Junction has been given Grade Two listed status. Other signal boxes on the former L&YR to be given listed status are Birkdale, Hadwen Bridge and Henall.

Moss Side station

Network Rail are extending the single platform to take longer trains. At present it isn’t possible to run 4-car Class 142s or even 3 carriage Class 155 or Class 150s on the Preston to Blackpool South single track branch as Moss Side platform is too short.

Oldham Metrolink line

The Metrolink line to Oldham town centre is due to open Monday 27 January. The line will have four new stops – Wastwood, Oldham King Street, Oldham Central and Oldham Mumps, with the latter providing a new park and ride site for Metrolink passengers.

The existing temporary route between the former railway station at Werneth and Oldham Mumps will be decommissioned. The platforms, platform equipment, ramps, overhead power lines, rails and sleepers will be removed and, where appropriate, retained for use elsewhere on the network.

Penistone line doubling

The user group for the Huddersfield – Penistone – Sheffield line has called for it to be doubled and turned into a more strategic route. The line was built as double track, most of the track bed is still available and only three stations – Berry Brow, Silkstone Common and Dodworth – would need new platforms.

The group says doubling the track would enable a half-hourly frequency and allow the introduction of a through service to London; Huddersfield is currently the largest town in West Yorkshire without one.

Skelmersdale

A new rail link to Skelmersdale is proposed in the West Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan which was published in draft form recently. The £100 million link from the Wigan – Kirkby line would include a parkway station near the town centre and a new bus interchange.

The Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Society

News Digest

Approval to electrify this former L&YR line announced by the Department for Transport...

The line from Wigan North Western to Lostock Junction, Bolton is to be electrified by December 2017 at a cost of £37 million. This project is in addition to the existing plans to electrify the Manchester – Liverpool; Liverpool – Wigan and Manchester – Preston – Blackpool routes. It will enable the conversion of the busy Wigan to Manchester Victoria and Wigan to Manchester Airport services from older Pacer diesel trains to more modern and higher capacity electric trains.

The first part of the North West electrification project was completed in December when the line between Cheadle Junction outside Manchester Piccadilly and Newton-Le-Willows was energised. This will allow First Trans-Pennine Express to divert its Manchester to Glasgow services, using new Class 350 electric trains, via this route. However that will mean a poorer service for people on its existing route through Bolton until that line is electrified.

Wigan – Bolton line to be electrified

The group says doubling the track would enable a half-hourly frequency and allow the introduction of a through service to London; Huddersfield is currently the largest town in West Yorkshire without one.

Manchester Victoria was closed after the last services on Christmas Eve until Thursday 2 January allowing Network Rail to do major preparatory works for the electrification of the line to Liverpool.

At the same time a new GRP deck was installed on the footbridge linking the ticket office with the platforms to provide a level access across both footbridges.

Trade erection of the replacement steel ribs. AMCO Rail

Councillors have been asked to block the planned demolition of the redundant signal box and incorporate it into the adjacent £25 million Brierfield Mills redevelopment.

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Walkden Signal Box 1888 - 2013

This summer another iconic former L&YR signal box disappeared from the Network Rail landscape. Society Signalling Steward CHRIS LITTLEWORTH laments its passing...

Walkden Signal Box (and its Up Home signal) in the final months of its life, photographed on 13th March 2013. Re-chalking and re-windowing had by this time drastically changed its appearance. Harry Gardner

At 01.02 hours on 28 July 2013 Walkden Signal Box, along with its younger neighbours at Atherton Goods Yard and Crow Nest Junction, was officially closed; thus another long-lived fragment of Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Signalling passed into history. Walkden Signal Box was of significant interest as it had been built and opened in 1887 and 1889. The box opened in July 1887 and 1889. The line which it signalled, the fast lines were goods yard connections to both the L&YR lines at the time, there were no ground or shunting signals reading from or between the running lines, but such signals were provided for exit moves from the sidings. The cantilevered bracket signals were a LMS or early BR period alteration; the earlier arrangements would have probably utilised individual posts. Again conforming to the conventions of the time, all signal levers (running and shunt) relating to movements in the Up direction are grouped at the left-hand end of the frame, followed by spares, then all the point levers, more spares and finally the levers for the Down direction signals at the right-hand end.

When built, the Up Slow line would have had a stop signal protecting the platform – it is probable that lever 6 fulfilled this function originally; apart from this and some other relatively minor changes, very little seems to have altered at Walkden for the first 75 years or so of its existence. In 1963, however, the goods yard closed and its connections and associated signals were subsequently recovered. Then, on 21 November 1963, the Fast lines were taken out of use, presumably due to declining traffic levels over the line and the post-Beeching rationalisation of infrastructure. Although the track layout here then seems to have remained the same until the box closed, during this period.

Finally, on 22 April 1989 Windsor Bridge box was abolished, and the box became a ‘buffer box’ to Manchester Piccadilly panel; levers 14 to 18 were removed from the frame and Train Description equipment was installed in the gap, being positioned on boards placed directly on the frame top plates. During the 1990s, due to much reduced traffic over the line, Atherton Goods Yard was ‘switched out’; Walkden and Crow Nest Junctions were then run by Automatic Block. By this time the site of the erstwhile Fast lines was fast disappearing under the water supply tend to freeze up in winter, and unfortunately the box suffered from anti-social behaviour and vandalism from time to time, even though signalmen were on duty. As a result of the latter, the box was equipped with a reinforced door and heavy duty wire mesh (to protect the windows) in the 1990s.

In 2002-3 Walkden box was re-windowed and reclad using uPVC materials; this unfortunately removed much of the remaining evidence of the box’s Railway Signal Company heritage. The survival of the three mechanical boxes – Walkden, Atherton Goods Yard and Crow Nest junction – working a short section of Absolute Block controlled line between two power boxes (Manchester Piccadilly and Warrington) working Track Circuit Block – was an anachronism which could not continue for ever. With the future of the Atherton line seemingly assured it was sadly inevitable that eventually money would be found to re-signal this section of the route. It was decided in 2006 that the Walkden box’s area of control would be extended and the three boxes closed. This was originally scheduled for 2010, but the work was delayed, the end finally coming during the early hours of Sunday July 28 last year. It is a shame that such an iconic box could not be preserved, but given the difficulties of access to it and the alterations which had been carried out to the structure in recent times it is perhaps not surprising that this did not happen. It has now been demolished (as has Atherton Goods Yard, although at the time of writing – November 2013 – Crow Nest junction box remains) and so yet another piece of L&YR heritage has, sadly, been consigned to history. The author would like to thank Harry Gardner for his great help with the preparation of this article and for permissions to use photographs, and Mike Addison, Fred Collinge and Tony Graham for providing information. The interior of Walkden Signal Box in 1987, before part of the Railway Signal Company frame was removed to make way for train description equipment. The block instrument to Atherton Goods Yard and the train description bell to Windsor Bridge can be seen on the blockshelf. Harry Gardner
Write to reply...

**What’s On**

The Society stand will be at the venues marked * on the dates shown. Details are also available on our website.

Go to [www.lyr.org.uk](http://www.lyr.org.uk) and follow the links

**Fleetwood**

Falling our AGM and Members’ Day in Fleetwood in October, Michael Hughes sent us the following notes and photographs. Editor.

In the park near to the North Euston Hotel there is a small piece of Fleetwood station. The carved stone coat of arms looks well-maintained, but you can see how close we were to a piece of L&YR history.

Further away from the hotel there is a more modern reminder of the railway history of Fleetwood. The poster is sited near to the ‘shelter’ built alongside the tramlines.

Michael Hughes, Sally Oak

Right: The railway history poster referred to in Michael Hughes’ letter. Below: Close up of the carved stone coat of arms

Bottom: The proximity of the carved stone to the North Euston Hotel.

**What’s On**

1878  Derek Read, 9 The Close, Drighlington, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD19 4DL
1877  Sean Alexander, 34 Alma Street, Eccles, Manchester M30 0EX
1876  Ken Rutherford, 104 Two Bridges Road, Newhey, Rochdale, Lancashire OL14 3SR
1875  Birgitza Hoffmann, 53 Broudmill, Wilsom, Cheshire SK8 5PF
1874  Chris Quarmby, Ruffhead Lane, Grange Over Sands, Cumbria LA15 6BN
1873  Jonathan Hunt, 23 Moorside Drive, Carlston Grange, Carlisle, Cumbria CA1 3TE
1872  Jack Parker, 4 Morrison Street, Saratoga, New South Wales, Australia
1871  Roger Bailey, 5 Moorland Road, Paulton-le-Fylde, Lancashire FY6 7UE
1870  Graham Ray, 6a Almon Road, Dogbotherpe, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE1 4LT
1869  Ian Butler, 7 Fernsdale Grove, East Boldon, Tyne & Wear NE36 0TG
1868  Andrew Mathewman, 24 Lowther Hall Road, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD5 0AZ
1867  Allison Taylora 12 Hillcrest Avenue, Haxby, East Yorkshire HU13 0NQ
1866  Laurence Bell, 151 Luck Lane, Paddock, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD1 4QZ
1865  Derek Coombes, 11 Woodthorpe Drive, Sandal, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF1 6HT
1864  Alan Lewin, 72 Nipper Lane, Whitefield, Manchester M45 7RF
1863  Gerald Pollard, 7 Sunny Bank Grove, Mirfield, West Yorkshire WF14 0PF
1862  David Elliott, P.O. Box 649, Mundaring, 6073, Western Australia
1861  Martin Hill, 80 The Street, Blundeston, Lowestoft, Norfolk NR32 2AB
1860  Paul Waldron, Stonecliff, Old Vicarage Lane, Ramble, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 6BB
1859  Ken Gray, 1 Raphael Place, Old Toulousebridge, NSW 2146, Australia
1858  David Edmundson, 3 Quakers View, Brierfield, Nelson, Lancashire BB9 5PU
1857  and the following re-joining members...
1856  2322

**Membership News**

Fenby would like to apologise for the lateness of the membership renewal forms and 2014 membership cards which was due to a printing error. Also next year we will be back to a picture membership card as usual. This year I just thought the crest looked too good to pass up. I would like to welcome our many new members to the Society. I hope you enjoy being a member and our officers are happy to help you with any enquiries you may have. I am pleased to tell you that this was a good year for membership recruitment and there was a good increase on 2012’s membership total.

On another note, the other day I glanced through a 1902 copy of Bats Own Annual when I came across an article about a model railway. You may not think this was unusual given the interest by boys of my generation who have grown up with Hornby Dublo and train spotting. The model had been totally hand-built taking many hours and went around the garden and of course was steam driven. There were no other articles about model railways which was not surprising as the model railway industry was just starting. Looking at what is available today and the recent excellent model of the L&YR 3-4-2T at 4mm shows just how far our interest in model railways has come in the last 111 years.

A warm welcome to the following new members...

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**Membership News**

The committee met at Ken Carter’s house in Nottingham on Saturday 11 January 2014.

Those present were: Ron Tinker (Chairman), Noel Coates (Vice-Chairman and Treasurer), Martin Naid (Secretary), Roger Mellor (Publications Officer), Ken Carter (Membership Officer), Chris Leah (Information Officer), David Carter (Modelling Co-ordinator 4mm scale), Nigel Thornley (Events Officer), Mike Fitzon (Photographer) and Graham Smith (Exhibitions Co-ordinator).

The main points were:
- Martin reported on his meeting with Network Rail about the Ordsall Chord and on the forthcoming public inquiry.
- Arrangements for the Modelling Meeting Meeting were discussed. It was agreed to hold the Lady Day Day Out at Oldham Road Goods, Manchester and Littleborough. The AGM and Members’ Day will be in Yorkshire.
- On the day of the meeting the Society had £16,499 in the Business Reserve and £747 in the Current Account. The latter included money from the sale of model locomotives to members which will shortly be paid to the NRM. A total of 127 Bachmann 2-4-2T locos had been purchased by members and the accounts for this will be reported separately from the main Society accounts.
- At 31 December 2013 we had 834 members which is a record. At the date of the committee meeting we had 554 members and renewals were continuing to come in briskly.
- Chris Leah said he would take on the role of Drawings Officer in addition to his existing responsibilities.
- Manchester Archives will re-open on 21 March and work will resume cataloguing the remaining drawings in our collection.
- Roger said the next publication will be L&YR Line and Lineside. This will be followed by the second part of Chris Littleworth’s signal books and then Focus 76.
- The Society will produce an information panel to go alongside the L&YR War Memorial at Manchester Victoria. It will also have a significant presence at the 2014 Remembrance Service to commemorate the centenary of the start of the Great War.
The very first train to work over the recently re-laid Todmorden Curve on 27 October 2013 was this ballast train headed by a Class 66 locomotive. The photograph is of the train returning over the crossover installed at the east end of Todmorden station, having had the locomotive and first three or four wagons in the up platform. The scene was captured by our Northern Exhibition Stand Manager Peter Wood who lives nearby. The new curve will enable trains to run direct from Burnley to Manchester via Rochdale rather than the lengthy journey via Blackburn and Bolton – if Northern Rail can find any rolling stock that is. Peter Wood