

STOVEPIPE

Magazine of the Urie Locomotive Society



Contents

Page

2	Contents	14	Where Do All The Steam Engines Come From?
2	Website Revamp	17	Fabrication Report
3	Honorary President's Statement	19	In Memorium
3	Chairman's Statement	19	Donations
6	Engineering Report	19	Wanted
10	Newspaper Article, 13 May 1976	19	... and finally!
13	My Early Membership Efforts		

Website Revamp

Following the re-style of 'Stovepipe' in January, we have continued with the same colour scheme and theme and completely redesigned the Urie Locomotive Society website.

It is still very much 'work in progress' while each page is updated with new photographs and information so please bear with us during this transition.

Membership leaflets and membership cards are also being revised to reflect the new design and these should be in use in the next few months.



Lynda Pedley

Cover Photo - After 2 days on the road, 506 arrives safely at Alresford Station, April 1976. Photo © ULS.

Honorary President's Statement

My first visit to Alresford was on 26 August 1987, in response to a very kind invitation to attend the unveiling of 506 which had been restored to a magnificent condition by the restoration gang.

As many of you will remember, it was a very significant day for the Mid-Hants Railway as Swanage was also being returned to service after restoration. Two significant dates were reported in the press - Swanage built in 1950 and 506 built in 1920.

The superb condition of 506 was exceptional and the effort required to achieve that condition must have been sustained over many years of painstaking work. That effort is still in evidence today and the progress that is being made both with 506 and 499 is a tremendous tribute to everyone who is working so hard to return both locomotives to train service condition.



Robert Urie (Grandson of Robert W Urie)

Chairman's Statement

This year marks the 40th anniversary of 506's arrival at the Mid-Hants Railway. It's frightening to think that all those years ago, as the Wynns Transport tractor units were pulling into Alresford station car park loaded with loco and tender, I was frantically revising for my 'O' levels. Fast forward 40 years and here I am back on the railway, heavily involved with the ULS ...and planning ahead for my retirement! In this issue of Stovepipe we look back at April 1976 and take a small wander down memory lane with some of Peter Rolfe's recollections from the 'Barry days'.

Move to the present day and after 11 years of restoration work, 14 years steaming in preservation and 15 years of heavy overhaul, the pressure is now on to return 506 to traffic. Why? First and foremost, she will be an extremely useful and wanted addition to the MHR running fleet. Secondly, 2017 will be the 40th anniversary of the re-opening of the MHR from Alresford to Ropley; it will be a very special moment to see the only locomotive on the railway since April 1977 still there today and back in steam for the celebrations. Next year

is not far away and we still have a tremendous amount of work to do if we are to achieve that goal. There again you all know me by now; once I've set my mind on something I usually find a way to make it happen!!

I do not intend to dwell on the engineering side of things as that is covered comprehensively in Barry's report. I do, however, want to take this opportunity to yet again discuss Society finances vs the work we are currently undertaking. As I write this piece the ULS has just over £100,000 in liquid resources. Sounds a lot but with rapid progress being made on both locomotives we will soon be spending big. The next major job is riveting. I'm told we have something like 500 rivets to do in total. At an average cost of £3.50 each the material alone is going to cost in the order of £2,000. On top of that, whilst we have some of the necessary tools to do the job, we do need more and I am indebted to John Barrowdale for stepping forward with an offer to buy a rivet gun for us. The question now is whether any kind souls would be prepared to fund the cost of a few rivets, however small a quantity. Every little we receive towards jobs like these means an equivalent amount remains in the 'coffers' to fund the bigger projects of 499's boiler and motion, and another new tender tank.

That brings me neatly to my old chestnut of the 499 Appeal! If you are prepared to help financially with bits and pieces, is perhaps now the time to sign up to the Appeal? It will cost just £8/month for 5 years and entitle you to be part of a once-in-a-lifetime event; the first train in preservation to be double-headed by 499 and 506 will be run solely for those who have signed up to the Appeal. If we can sell 300 'seats' and fill the train, that will give us all the funding we need to complete the project sometime in 2020. Think what a party that will be ...and you can be part of it. I am well aware that my constant ramblings about funding can get somewhat repetitive, but I'm afraid it's a reality of preservation life that without the money we won't be able to realise the dream.

On the subject of funding, we have taken the decision to increase our membership fees after many years without change (see page 5). I hope you will agree that the new rates still represent good value for money, particularly with work on both locomotives progressing rapidly. Obviously some administrative costs are unavoidable - printing, insurance and audit spring to mind - but whenever possible we will do things ourselves to ensure the maximum proportion possible from your fees and donations goes into materials and specialist works for the locomotives, NOT costs to run the Society.

New Membership rates (NB Life Membership discontinued)

CATEGORY	ANNUAL RATE	5-YEAR RATE
Adult	£15.00	£60.00
Junior	£10.00	£40.00
Senior (65+)	£10.00	£40.00
Joint (husband & wife)	£25.00	£100.00
Joint Senior (65+)	£15.00	£60.00

The rebuilding of your committee is now complete with the appointment of Steve Gault and Roger Burt as trustees. Steve, as you all know, is our tame fabricator and has made many new components both on site and away at his business premises for free and in doing so, has saved the ULS many £'000's. An article from Steve is featured later in Stovepipe; I'm sure you will be impressed by his skills. Roger is a Patent Attorney and a recent past President of the Chartered Institute of Patent Attorneys. He has experience of trusteeship in other charities and with a wealth of legal knowledge I'm sure he will be a great asset to the ULS. Please join me in welcoming them to the team.

On June 18th we are holding our first Open Day at Ropley, see enclosed flier. The whole team will be available to answer your questions along with Andy Netherwood, the MHR boilershop foreman, and Paul Stone who welded the frames on both engines. With unrestricted access to the loco's, photo boards, a large sales-stand and other displays, I hope you will be able to come along and join us for a couple of hours. I'm beginning to recognise some of you on paper, it would be great to put faces to the names.

Before I sign off, we have one last 40th to look forward to. According to all the forecasts, this Summer is likely to be the hottest for 40 years, since 1976 and 506's arrival on MHR metals. I would certainly not want to complain about the heat, but as you sit in your gardens or down on the beach, spare a thought for your engineering team in boiler suits and safety gear knocking in all those rivets. I sometimes think it might be easier sitting 'O' levels!!

Mark Pedley

Engineering Report

30499

With the welding of the frames completed, work on the leading set of driving wheel hornblocks has now reached the point where both are fitted to the frames, all holes drilled, reamed to 26mm diameter and countersunk. The bolting up will be carried out sometime in the future as final work will be required to remove burrs and swarf.



The motion bracket on the left hand side was test fitted and looked good. The motion bracket stretcher had to be removed to gain access to the leading spring hanger which enabled us to bore the holes in the frames through the bracket ready for the riveting to take place.



We had already done some remedial work but with the stretcher fully removed we took the opportunity to build up holes that were oversized and out of true with weld and re-drill.



499's new buffer beam. Photo © ULS

A new buffer beam has been made and fitted with many of the angles supporting the running plate etc being replaced, or at least refurbished. To align the buffer beam the old smokebox platform has been temporarily refitted to check that both the buffer beam and loco frames are in alignment. Also the draw hook requires some refurbishment prior to its refitting.

Two new back plates for the buffers have been purchased but we will need to obtain material to totally refurbish the buffer heads and stocks.

30506

Work on the frames continues with all the holes to fit the cylinder drilled, reamed and, where necessary, countersunk.



506's frames drilled, reamed and countersunk. Photo © ULS



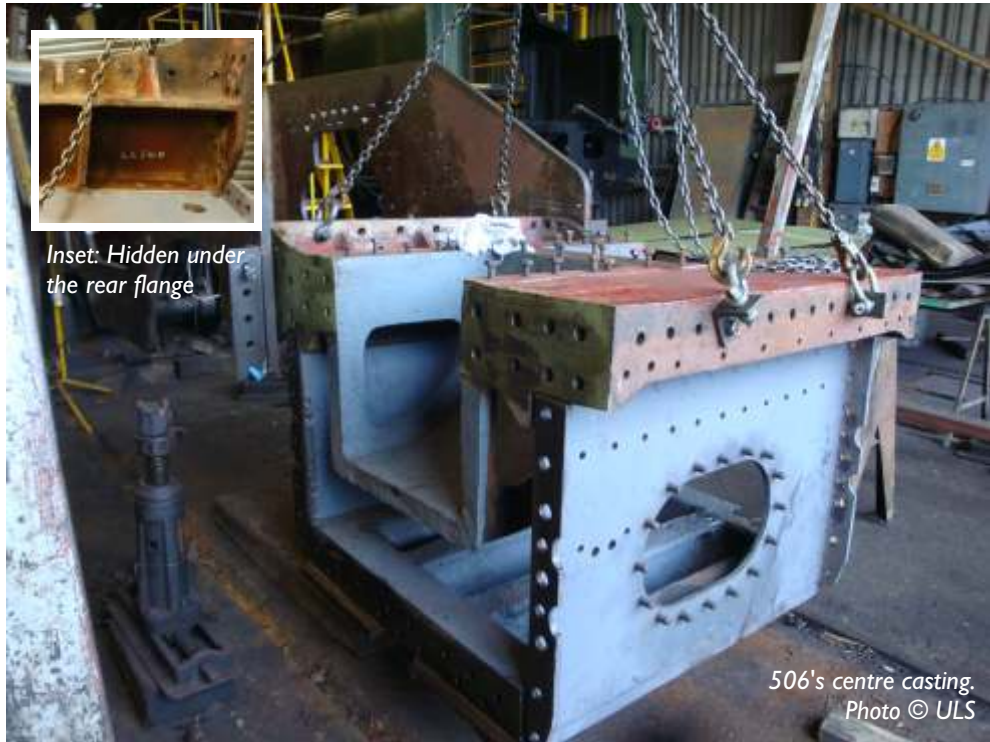
L/H cylinder block, in lifting cradle, temporarily fitted to 506. Photo © ULS

Restricted working space in the shed has meant only one cylinder casting at a time could be fitted to the frames. The removal of the carbon within the exhaust passages is nearly finished. The new drain cock flanges have been test-fitted and the stud holes marked out and both the old feed water heater take-offs have been blanked off with specially made plugs. The main centre casting has seen many hours of work to remedy the corrosion but it has finally been drilled and reamed to all the fixing holes.



*New drain
cock flanges.
Photo © ULS*

The last task has been to remove the centre casting so it could be faced up to the frames and fitted, ready to rivet up.



Inset: Hidden under the rear flange

*506's centre casting.
Photo © ULS*

We have finally been able to purchase a gas cutting machine and track via Ebay. Over the years we have been able to borrow the railway's cutter but it is much



*Now that's what we call a straight line!
Photo © ULS*

more convenient to have our own. With the arrival of the pneumatic riveting equipment from the USA we now have most of our own tools; however, we are still looking for additional items and need to work out our requirements for the future. In all, a very good few months and a great deal achieved with a small team of around 6 people.

We are hoping that as many members as possible will be able to make it to our open day (see enclosed leaflet) so we can show you how well both the engines are progressing.

Barry Stratton

Newspaper Article, 13 May 1976

Peter Rolfe, life member No. 371, recently sent us an amazing piece of history in the form of a page from the Hampshire Telegraph dated Thursday 13 May 1976 which featured an article on page 24 entitled 'Old S15 takes to the road and gets in early'. The report, written by Bob Harvey, is reproduced below:



There are no late trains on the Watercress Line. The S15 class 4-6-0 locomotive pictured here arrived at Alresford Station one day ahead of schedule after its journey from Barry, South Wales - by road.

It was one of three locomotives at Barry destined for use on the Mid-Hants Watercress Line.

The move from Wales cost £2,295, said Mr Ian Crowder, publicity officer for the Winchester and Alton Railway Limited.

The locomotive was loaded on to two lorries at Barry and the route included the M50, M5 and M4 motorways to Reading, avoiding the Severn Bridge because of the weight limit.

It was taken by A roads to Alresford, avoiding low bridges and other restrictions.

One of 20

“We had a police escort accompanying the locomotive since the height of the road was only millimetres below the height restriction of the motorway bridges.” said Mr Crowder.

Mr Crowder said the journey was estimated to take three days, “But everything went without a hitch and the locomotive arrived at Alresford a day ahead of schedule.” The locomotive, numbered 30506, is by far the largest yet to appear on the Watercress Line since its closure three years ago by British Rail.

It was built at Eastleigh in 1920 and was one of a class of 20 designed by Robert Urie for the London and SouthWestern Railway.

Although designed primarily for heavy freight trains from London to Hampshire, it was occasionally used on passenger trains - particularly at peak holiday periods on the heavy Southampton boat trains, said Mr Crowder.

Restoration

Following withdrawal from service in 1964, it was sent to Woodham Brothers' scrapyard at Barry to be broken up. “However, in company

with about 200 other locomotives sent to this yard, it has enjoyed a lengthy stay of execution.” said Mr Crowder.

“In 1973 it was purchased for £4,000 by a group of enthusiasts who, a year earlier, had set up the Urie S15 Preservation Group with the aim of restoring the locomotive to working order.”

Some restoration work was carried out at Barry by the group, which now has 640 members from all parts of the world, but the main task was finding a suitable home for the locomotive.

“At around the time of the second Winchester and Alton Railway Limited share issue last November, a ballot was held among members of the group to decide on the final location,” said Mr Crowder.

“The Mid-Hants Watercress Line was the clear winner, and 30506 will be restored and eventually operated on the line.”

The move from Wales, which cost the group £2,295, including VAT, began on Monday April 26, when the locomotive and tender were loaded on to two lorries at Barry. Heavy haulage specialists - Wynn's of Newport, Gwent - undertook the move.

“Their location near the Barry scrapyard has made them experts in this field.” said Mr Crowder. “They have already delivered one

locomotive to the Watercress Line, and several others for other preservation projects.”

“The cost of the transport will be money well spent,” said Geoffrey Styles, public relations officer for the group.

“All being well, 30506 will be working passenger trains in three years’ time. The engine is in basically fine condition and should see many more years of active service once we have

completed the full overhaul.”

The 30506 was one of three locomotives at Barry destined for use on the Mid-Hants line. The others are: U Class 2-6-0 locomotive 31806, owned by two directors of the Winchester and Alton Railway Limited and West Country class Pacific 34105 “Swanage” - purchase of which was announced last week.

These two locomotives will also be moved to Alresford by road.



Triumphant members of Winchester and Alton Railway with locomotive number 30506, S15 class, the latest - and largest - addition to the rolling stock of the Watercress Line

(Apologies for the poor quality of the images)

My Early Membership Efforts

It was whilst I was at Alresford Station in 1973 that I got into conversation with a gentleman who explained that they had plans to rescue 30506 from the scrap yard at Barry and would I like to join them. Having been very interested in railways since the mid 50's, I thought this was something I could get involved in.

The result was several trips to Barry, either with my wife and infant son or with my brother. Along with the other members, I was soon put to work applying a protective coat of paint to the engine to keep the worst of the ravages at bay. Two particular jobs I was involved with come to mind. As I was then slim, I volunteered to start on the inside of the tender. Many hours were spent just by the light of a torch, chipping away the corrosion, removing the crud and then giving the inside a coat of red oxide. That was nearly my undoing as no thought had been given to ventilation and the fumes from the paint made me



very unwell! Luckily, my brother was there to help me clamber over the cross-braces and out into the fresh air.



The second job was to undo the large nut on the draw-bar connecting the loco to the tender. Despite all attempts it refused to budge, so I had to have an engineering firm cut a ring spanner from plate steel. Even then the nut only finally gave in when a long bar was

positioned on the spanner and this was then jacked against the frame of a diesel parked on the adjacent track!

Also to raise funds for 30506's move to Alresford, I was one of the participants in the sponsored cycle ride



along the route to be followed by the Wynn's heavy haulage tractor units. My other claim to fame is that I made the long banners which were attached to the boiler during the journey from Barry to Alresford.

Peter Rolfe (371)

Where Do All The Steam Engines Come From?

I have often been asked where all the steam engines come from, used on all the preservation lines around the country. Apart from the few that were bought straight from British Rail and a comparative handful that were kept for the National Collection of Historical Vehicles, the remainder were saved from scrapping by a quirk of fate.

In 1955, the Railways Modernisation Plan envisaged the reduction of the freight wagon fleet from 1.25 million (yes, million) wagons to 600,000 and the scrapping of 16,000 steam locomotives to be replaced by diesel and electric powered locomotives. In the beginning, only wagons were sold to scrap merchants as the railway workshops coped with the scrapping of locomotives. However, by 1958, the pace of steam locomotive withdrawal outstripped the workshop capability to handle them, forcing BR to sell to scrap merchants. This created a bonanza for a number of scrap merchants around the country, who had the capability to receive and store large numbers of wagons and locomotives. These were largely in the vicinity of the steel works then working in South Wales, Scotland, the North East and Sheffield areas.



Barry Scrapyard, August 1968.

Photo © Tom Curtis,

www.tomcurtisrailgallery.weebly.com

Most locomotives and wagons were cut up quite quickly. However, one scrap merchant in Barry, South Wales - Dai Woodhams - was able to lease a large area of redundant sidings outside Barry Docks very cheaply. He bought nearly 300 steam locomotives over the ten years between 1958 and 1968. He was also buying large quantities of railway

wagons during the same period. Wagons were much easier to cut up quickly than steam locomotives, so he concentrated on these rather than the locomotives, which he decided to keep for a rainy day. The supply of wagons continued for a number of years after the end of steam working on BR in 1968, so over 200 of the locomotives just stayed in the storage sidings rusting away.

The railway preservation movement gathered momentum in the early 1970's and the search for steam locomotives to run on them intensified. Early preserved railways such as the Bluebell and the Worth Valley were lucky in being able to buy locomotives direct from BR mostly in working order. It wasn't long before the rusting hulks at Barry became common knowledge. Dai Woodham was very happy to sell on his locomotives which he did at current scrap prices, but had to add the premium demanded by BR in the original sale contract if the locomotives were sold on in one piece. Thus 213 steam locomotives left Barry between 1968 and 1987 for preservation, most of them rusted away after up to twenty years in the salty atmosphere at Barry. Of these, approximately 100 have been restored to working order. Many are still hulks in an appalling state of repair - but nothing is impossible in railway preservation!

On the Watercress Line, 8 locomotives are awaiting or are under restoration having originated from Woodhams at Barry, including, of course, our own 499 and 506. It's a long and slow process. After all, you can't nip down to B&Q and pick up a new cylinder block off the shelf when you need one.

Most of the engines currently in working order also originated from Barry. If it were not for the lucky set of circumstances in South Wales, the Watercress Line along with many other preserved lines could not operate as they do now - giving much pleasure to the sound of steam engines!

Ian Coward



*Barry Scrapyard, lower yard looking East, October 1968.
Photo © David Sallery, www.penmorfa.com.*



John Bell and Peter Beckett with the sales stand at the N Devon RPS Easter Exhibition at Ilfracombe, possibly 1976. Photo © M J Beckett



40 years later, the ULS sales stand with Crawford Wright and Ian Coward at the Southampton Model Railway Society Exhibition, Barton Peveril College, Eastleigh, January 2016. Photo © ULS

Fabrication Report

Over the last few years I've had the opportunity to fabricate and machine various parts for both 499 and 506 away from the railway. I'm a co-owner of a small fabrication company in Chichester and although generally it's nice to get away from the dirt and noise at the end of the day, the challenge of trying to re-create some genuine LSWR components has kept me back for lots of late evenings. Part of the 'fun' is often trying to make a welded fabrication look like a component that was originally a casting. When the LSWR were turning out relatively large numbers of locomotives with many standard parts it was economic to produce patterns and have pieces cast, but where we are only wanting one or two items on a limited budget, re-casting lots of parts would be prohibitively expensive, hence the welded fabrications.

Due to an unfortunate jacking accident a few years ago, 506 was in need of a pair of new axle oil feed trays, the original fairly substantial brass castings having been somewhat bent out of shape. While these parts are rarely seen by anyone other than someone working directly underneath the locomotive, it was satisfying to produce in



New and old axle oil feed trays. Photo © S Gault

steel a pair of replacements that bore a good resemblance to the originals. Hopefully, once the engine is back in traffic and everything starts to bear a good coat of grime, no-one will ever know!



Expansion link cover. Photo © S Gault

The expansion link cover on 499 was another, this time more readily visible, example of trying to re-create something looking like a casting. There are two expansion link covers on 499, one for each side. When withdrawn, 499 had one original cast item, but the other was a later fabricated item.

Due to cast material generally having a much better resistance to corrosion than steel, plate one had survive but the other had succumbed to the salt-laden air of Barry. With the aid of the oxy-acetelene to bend the base ring material and a hydraulic press to bend the thick plate forming the top of the cover, a fairly good mirror image of the surviving cover was made.

Some of the most recent components have been new lids for the sandboxes. A well-timed visit of the T9 to the Mid-Hants Railway allowed me to closely inspect some original items and, in conjunction with a dimensioned drawing supplied by John Fry, I had all the information I needed. This time, rather than welding parts together to form the finished item, it seemed a better proposition to turn the parts on a lathe from a solid billet. Very satisfying, but there was a lot of material removal required, creating what seemed like wheelbarrows-full of swarf, and eating away hours of time. Like a lot of these jobs, I'd start off intending to do a quick half hour after work and then arrive home at 10 o'clock for a very late dinner and bath. Showing the finished part to my wife didn't always elicit quite the same enthusiasm as I felt myself!



As 499 continues to come together I'm sure there will be lots of other items that I'll be able to make. There is something infinitely more worthwhile about producing a part for a locomotive that will soon come together into a working, breathing machine and hopefully continue to run ad infinitum into the future, than the normal day-to-day, bread and butter work of a fabrication company.

Steve Gault

In Memorium

The sad news reached us in March of the passing of Gerald Hutson (ULS member 194). Our condolences to Gerald's family and friends, and grateful thanks to Mrs Hutson for kindly donating £50 to the society. In the January edition of Stovepipe we reported the passing of Anthony Betteridge (647). We have since received a very generous bequest of £500 from his Estate for which we are extremely grateful.

Donations

Grateful thanks go to the following for their generous donation of books, magazines and other articles:

Martin Buckle

Alan Slack

Bob Waterman

Barry Eagles

Harvey Saunders

John Butcher (*apologies for incorrect surname in Issue 1*)

WANTED

We still desperately need more items for the sales stand such as model railway equipment, any railway items such as timetables, badges etc and magazines pre-1950 (especially bound volumes).

If you are able to make a donation to the Society, please contact Ian Coward on urieloco.sales@hotmail.com

... and finally

Part of your committee's remit is succession planning. Steve Gault has taken this to the extreme ...meet Richie, our fabricator of the future!!



Photo © S Gault

'Stovepipe' is published three times a year in January, May and September.

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