

Steve's Story

Hi, for those of you who don't know me, my name is Steve Cain. This is where my interest in locomotives and railways began, and how later in life lead, to volunteering at the Ribble Steam Railway.

I'm Preston born and bred, although my father disputed that as I was born in Sheroe Green Hospital, which is Fulwood, (not Preston) according to dad. I suppose my interest in trains and railways, was like most boys grew with time. I remember the trips from Preston Railway Station to Blackburn, to visit relatives and the train to Fleetwood, to get the ferry for a holiday in the Isle of Man.

When I was 5, my granddad passed away and we moved to his house at the corner of Havelock Street and Greenbank Street, which was only a few hundred yards away from where we lived in Aqueduct Street. This was done not with a removal van, but walking boxes and bag up our new house. The heavy stuff was moved with the aid of my baby brother's pram. This move was a bit of an epiphany for me and the railway. The local gang of lads I fell in with, (apart from other mischief) were into train spotting. There was a coal merchant at the bottom of the street, with sidings off the main northern line. Standing at the fence of this place, apart from seeing the coal wagons shunted in, you could get sight of the regular freight and express trains heading north and coming south into Preston.

Our gang's favourite place to go train spotting was the Red Reck at the top of Green Bank Street, (it's still there). We would sit on the fence, made of old railway sleepers and see all the trains going in and out of Preston. The next years, my interest of railways, (through the teens) was a model railway layout. Then beyond the teens, work, going out, holidays, working abroad and relationships stalled my involvement, but not my interest. I once caused a stir, dashing out of my hotel in Italy, because I'd been told by friends a steam loco was passing on the line that ran behind the hotel. (I saw it but don't ask me what the hell it was, but it was exciting)! Interested, but not involved.



(Steve and Brent clearing the permanent way of weeds and brambles).

Let's fast forward to March 2008 and my 50th birthday. My brothers bought me the Hornby model of the 'Flying Scotsman' and this rekindled my railway modelling interest. A year later, telling a colleague at work about my birthday present, he told me he was involved

with the Ribble Steam Railway. I had heard of it but never visited. So, around March 2009 I had my first visit to the RSR as a visitor. After relating the visit to my wife and she encouraged me to take up a membership.

So, during the course of the next few years, taken with work, family, (bring on the grandchildren, two of them) my visits were mainly Saturday's. Trips on the train, walks around the museum and workshops, oh and bacon barms.

In 2018, it was time, (after 43 years, man and boy) to finish at BAe. In the year or so before and numerous visits to the RSR, I'd made up my mind to apply to be a volunteer. Was it the bacon barms? Was it the people? Or was it the place? It was all these things that had encouraged me. I completed my volunteers form, a quick induction and welcomed by the Front of House Team. My first day as a volunteer at the RSR was Saturday 24th March 2018, helping another volunteer out on the buffet car.



(Steve training up a younger volunteer in shop pricing).

So that's it, this is where my interest in railways and locomotives comes from. I'm not an expert in the subject, (far

from it) but I'm an engineer with a natural interest in all things mechanical.



(Steve's 1st weekend as a fully qualified Guard).

Since my first day as a volunteer, my knowledge of locomotives, steam and diesel has greatly increased. I have been instructed in Front of House; duties, working on the front desk and in the buffet car on the train. I have trained and passed out as a guard and now have my own whistle and flag. I have even been an elf, helping out on the Santa Specials. But the most important thing, I have made new friends and acquaintances. Oh and don't forget the bacon barms.