

About Shed 5A



WHAT?

Shed 5A is an independent website created and maintained by Professor Martin Ashley for the benefit of any young people sufficiently interested in railways to consider a career in the industry, volunteering on heritage or miniature lines, or maybe developing serious, adult rail interests in other ways. Shed 5A is primarily a portal to relevant other sites and there are many links that will repay the serious attention of the earnest enquirer.

WHY?

Though growing up in the 50s and 60s when many of his peers were chasing steam engines in short trousers (the peers, that is) Martin was the offspring of parents who couldn't have been less interested, and the victim of hopeless careers advice at school (he probably wouldn't have listened anyway). Despite that, he's never assumed a victim mentality and has been an endless opportunity seeker. He'd just like today's teenagers to be better informed and make fewer mistakes!



Martin taught in schools for seventeen years, then a further seventeen in higher education where he led programmes up to professional doctorate level whilst developing his research career. He's also been involved in a variety of other types of youth work from foster caring and young offender mentoring to scouts and choir directing, so he probably knows a bit about young people. Now, in "retirement" he "works" for the Heritage Railway Association as a member of the Member Services, Training and Development Committee with the education and youth brief.

He's had a long railway volunteering career, beginning on the Kent and East Sussex Railway when it was nothing more than an overgrown siding near Rolvenden, doing most of the jobs over the years from TTI on the NYMR to Training, Development and Safety Manager on the South Tynedale Railway. He's done rash things, like persuade Mrs Yeoman (she of Foster Yeoman) to give him a diesel loco. He's finally settled down as a signaller on the East Lancashire Railway (with a 6 month covid stint for Network Rail), but still finds time for smaller trains –5" gauge (he's a member of the Ground Level Five Association, builds wagons and buys, sells and attempts to mend engines) and even smaller ones (he's a member of the Carlisle and District 0 Gauge Group and makes working signals). So, you could say he knows the pitfalls waiting to ensnare the unsuspecting teenager!