

MILTON KEYNES MODEL RAILWAY SOCIETY

23rd FEB 2002



CLUB OPEN DAY

OPEN FROM 10.30AM TO 5.00PM

12+ LAYOUTS IN GAUGES 'N' TO 'G'

PLUS TRADE SUPPORT

REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE

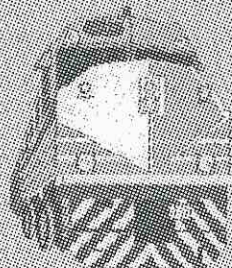
FREE CAR PARKING

VINTAGE BUS SERVICE WILL OPERATE
BETWEEN BLETCHLEY TRAIN STATION
AND THE SHOW

THE CHURCH CENTRE

WATER EATON

BLETCHLEY

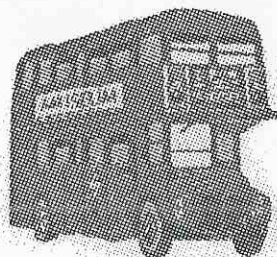


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KRS MODEL RAILWAYS
email: jmathie.krs@virgin.net



ADULTS: £2.00
CHILDREN: £1.00 (under 16)
OAP's: £1.00

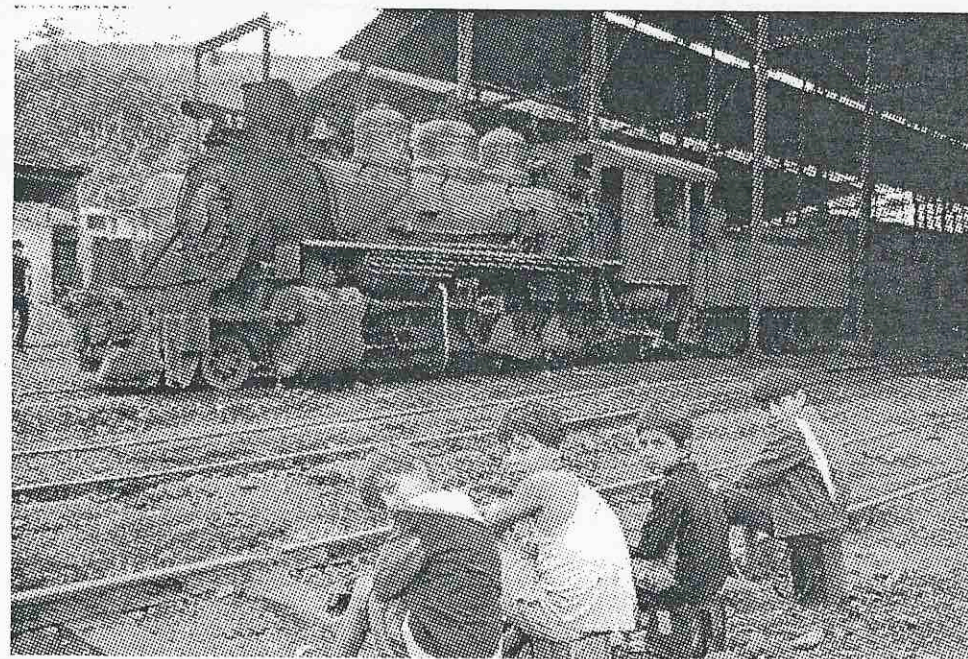


C. Avs.



No. 115

November / December 2001



The MKMRS is associated with:
The Chiltern Model Railway Association - The Model Railway Club
The World War II Railway Study Group

Working within the Bletchley Park Museum

The 56XX Class 0-6-2T

Denis Lovett Traces the History of this Great Western Railway Locomotive Designed for Heavy Freight Haulage

The 56xx Class 0-6-2 tank locomotives were built by the Great Western Railway (GWR), soon after its formation, at its own workshops in Swindon. The 200 locomotives, which formed the Class, were constructed between 1924 and 1928.

The Grouping of the Railways under the 1922 Transport Act, took effect from 1st January 1923. Under the Grouping arrangements, the Great Western Railway absorbed most of the companies that served the highly industrialised areas of South Wales. With many coal mines, steel works and heavy engineering providing plenty of freight traffic, the various pre-Grouping companies such as the Taff Vale had developed heavy freight locomotives to haul this vital traffic. Many of these locomotives were tank locomotives, which had the 0-6-2 wheel arrangement.

Although not initially keen to continue the tradition of using tank locomotives on these trains, the GWR opted for the 0-6-2 tank itself. Designated 56xx Class, No. 5600 emerged from Swindon in 1924. Over the next four years, a total of 200 locomotives were constructed. These were numbered 5600 - 5699 and 6600 - 6699.

Employed mainly on heavy freight work they were also utilised away from South Wales at other industrial centres such as London, Bristol and Wolverhampton. They could, however, be found on passenger

duties from time to time, notably on the Valley lines around Cardiff. They were true mixed traffic types, although most who remember them in traffic, will recall them on freight workings.

Initially painted in Great Western Railway unlined green, they passed into British Railways ownership in 1948, where they were eventually painted in unlined black. Later some appeared in both lined green and lined black.

All were withdrawn in 1966 and being located mainly in South Wales, a number were sent to Barry scrap yard where fortunately, nine of the class survived to be rescued by preservationists for use on heritage lines.

When Bachmann's parent company Kayder Industries produced the Mainline range for Palitoy, Mainline introduced its OO model in 1984. It was one of the last locomotive models to be introduced before the demise of the Mainline range. The model has not been available for many years and Bachmann enthusiasts will welcome its reintroduction. Over the past few years, Bachmann have had a number of requests to reintroduce this model. It has not simply been a case of cleaning up the moulds, the staff at Bachmann have brought the model up to Blue Riband standards. A whole new generation of modellers will find the long wait has been well worthwhile.

MILTON KEYNES MODEL RAILWAY SOCIETY
FOUNDED 1969

"Here's One I Made Earlier"



Those familiar with the BBC Children's TV programme "Blue Peter" will recognise the above words. At the 2000 Warley National Model Railway Exhibition, Dapol and Virgin Trains announced their intention to produce a OO scale Pendolino model. Little did I realise what a roller coaster ride I was letting myself in for.

The three main manufacturers, Bachmann, Hornby and Lima had all said "no thanks" to the production of another electric multiple unit. Electric trains are not good sellers. Bachmann opted for the Class 220 Voyager model, which is a diesel unit produced for CrossCountry and now infiltrating that network between Aberdeen and Penzance. At the time of writing, 25 out of 34 units are in traffic, and the first unit was only delivered on 6 December 2000 in Brugge, an early Christmas present for Sir Richard.

The Pendolino was not attracting any takers, despite the prospect of a healthy order for promotional models from the train company. At the point where I was about to give up - I received a phone call from George Smith at Dapol. The company were now on the way back after a few years of struggling and wished to discuss the project further. A few weeks later we sat at the press conference table watching the jaws of well known model railway journalists drop, when we announced that we would be back at Warley with both the finished model and the real thing!

So off we went, George knocking loudly on Alstom's door, whilst I set the wheels in motion. I confess there have been highs and lows. I now know why model companies produce models of steam locomotives that were built years ago. Building a model of a unit still being designed and then modified during manufacture is not for the faint hearted.

But return we did and with the biggest model at Warley borrowed from the production line at Washwood Heath for the weekend, we launched the OO models. Not one was left with the dealers by the end of Sunday and large numbers of plastic bags containing the Dapol model were seen in close proximity to the Virgin stand during the show.

The model has captured the imagination of the young (and not so young) and can at least look back over my years involved in the hobby and know that I have had a little involvement in one of the models on sale today. Now I have the Voyager to contend with. As someone once said "to do it once is foolish, to do it twice downright stupid". So off we go again, I have a feeling that another roller coaster awaits. Looks like another press conference to organise for Warley 2002!!

Club Notice Board

Club Exhibition 2002:

Could members planning to exhibit layouts at this event please let Jeff Mathie have a layout plan and a few lines of text for the exhibition guide as soon as possible. This is getting increasingly urgent!

Historical Model Railway Society

The following meetings are open to MKMRS members free of charge (tea / coffee available at small fee). Meetings commence at 19:30 and further details are available from Eric Bowman. Meetings below are held in The following subject will be covered:

Bletchley Park Meetings:

Wednesday 27 February Railways around Shrewsbury (Alan Rhodes)
Wednesday 24 April St Pancras Division of the Midland Main Line in the 1950s

Bedford Meetings:

Wednesday 30 January Railway films by David Barker
Wednesday 27 March Loctite glues
Wednesday 15 May The Midland Main Line by Bob Essery and Bob Moore

Further details available from Eric Bowman.

Christmas and New Year

Please note that the clubrooms will not be open on Tuesday 25th December, Friday 28th December and Tuesday 1st January 2002. May we take this opportunity to wish all members and their families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Railway Correspondence & Travel Society

The RCTS meets on the first Thursday of the month at the C.I.U. Working Mens Club in Stony Stratford at 1930 hours. Our long standing friend Bob Ballard is the Chairman.

6 December Members Christmas Evening
Further details from Bob Ballard on 01908 562195

Recent Outings

Our Fenny Stratford layout attended the **Bedford - Bletchley Rail Users Association Railday** at the WOBURN SANDS MEMORIAL HALL on Saturday 13 October. Thanks to Roy and his son, Ray and Richard Cousins who along with Colin Jamieson kept the trains moving during the day.

with four goals :

- 1) to preserve what remained of the line
- 2) to research its history
- 3) to open a museum to display relics and photographs
- 4) to look into the possibility of reopening a section of the original route to passengers.

Visible signs of their activity came with the opening of the first stage of the Corris Railway Museum in 1970, using the remaining buildings of Corris Station. A "demonstration track" was laid at the south end of the Station Yard, adjacent to the Museum, in 1971, but bureaucratic obstacles prevented it reaching more than a few hundred yards. In 1981, Maespoeth engine shed and yard (about three-quarters of a mile from Corris) was returned to the Railway after being used by the Forestry Commission, and the Society has transformed it back into a well-equipped engine shed and workshop. Approval for reinstatement of track to connect Corris and Maespoeth was finally received in 1984, and in 1985 the Society celebrated by running the "First Train Back To Corris" after a break of thirty-seven years.

The "First Train" ran over lightly-laid construction track, and following the acquisition of heavier rail from a number of sources, plus the necessary sleepers and ballast, the line has been upgraded to passenger standards, and also extended a short distance south of Maespoeth to provide storage space for rolling stock. Maespoeth yard has been transformed, with the clearance of the Forestry Commission's access ramp providing further much-needed siding space, and the installation of a platform for the first time ever - it had not previously been used as a passenger station.

While the railway was physically re-

appearing, the Society had a long and tortuous struggle with the local planning authorities to achieve agreement on the reconstruction of a sufficient length of line to provide long-term viability. Happily most of the outstanding issues have now been resolved, and the railway is moving steadily towards achieving the necessary legal documents, in the form of a Transport & Works Order, to permit the reintroduction of passenger services and the extension of the line a further one-and-a-half miles to the proposed new southern terminus at Tan-y-Coed.

The Corris Railway Company Limited, formed by the Society to operate the new Railway, is seeking to reinstate some two and a half miles of the old line, from Corris to Tan-y-Coed. Tan-y-Coed, about midway between the original stations at Esgairgeiliog and Llwyngwern, is the site of the Forestry Commission's picnic site and Forest Trails, and is within walking distance of the Centre for Alternative Technology in Llwyngwern Quarry. Once the railway has recommenced passenger services between Corris and Maespoeth, attention will turn to extending the line southwards. The only serious physical obstruction on this section of line has been caused by road improvements at Pont-y-Goedwig, below Maespoeth, where the trackbed formation has been breached. The Company has acquired the land necessary to construct a deviation around this obstacle, but work is not expected to commence until the first section of line is operational. In the meantime, the Society has been involved in the restoration of Esgairgeiliog Station, now serving the local people as a bus shelter. It awaits the day when it will once again be used to sell tickets for trains to Corris!

On the Narrow Gauge Part 2: The Corris Railway

The Corris Railway is a narrow gauge (2' 3") railway whose origins date back to the 1850's. It was incorporated as the Corris, Machynlleth & River Dovey Tramroad in 1858 and opened a year later. The line stretched from Machynlleth towards the quarries around Aberllefenni, some 6.5 miles away. The line was initially built as a horse-and-gravity-worked tramroad to carry slate from the quarries of Corris Uchaf and Aberllefenni in southern Merionethshire to the nearest navigable point at Quay Ward on the Afon Dyfi (River Dovey), 4.5 miles west of Machynlleth. Three short branch lines fed into the main line connecting Aberllefenni to Aberllefenni quarries (0.5 miles), Maespoeth to Upper Corris (2.0 miles) and Aberllefenni to Ratgoed (2m). Slate was loaded into ships and carried to its diverse destinations. In the 1860's the line ceased to deliver direct to shipping, and instead transhipped its slate to the standard gauge railway at Machynlleth, in western Montgomeryshire. The line between Machynlleth and Quay Ward being abandoned at this point. A semi-official passenger service, using adapted wagons, flourished in the early 1870s.

In 1878 the line was acquired by a London company, Imperial Tramways Ltd, and three steam locomotives and ten purpose-built passenger carriages were introduced, although due to a dispute with the quarry owners, passenger services were suspended until 1883. For the rest of the nineteenth century the Railway was very prosperous, developing a substantial tourist traffic. From 1892, Imperial Tramways was based

in Bristol, sharing offices and management with the Bristol Tramways firm.

The twentieth century brought with it a decline in the slate industry, followed by increasing competition from road transport. The railway ran its own successful bus services, using vehicles provided from Bristol, and it was probably more from a desire to control these services than to acquire the Corris Railway itself that led to the Great Western Railway purchasing the line from Imperial Tramways in 1930. Soon afterwards passenger services were withdrawn. The Upper Corris branch closed in 1945, the Ratgoed branch until 1952 and the line between the quarries and Aberllefenni survived until the mid 1950s. The line continued in use for goods only until 1948, when it became one of the first to be closed by the newly-nationalised British Railways. The line was dismantled soon after closure, the surviving locomotives and rolling stock finding a new life on the nearby Talylyn Railway, where they are still to be seen in operation.

By the mid-1960s, most of the Corris route had disappeared under a tangle of undergrowth, there were no rails remaining in situ, the surviving buildings had been put to other uses, and the remaining rolling stock had left the valley. The Corris was effectively finished and remained only through the pages of railway books and in the memories of local people.

In December 1966, however, a group of Talylyn Railway Preservation Society members from the East Midlands formed what became The Corris Railway Society,

Library News

Following last month's report, Fred Collins has agreed to take over the library. Please bear with us as we try to clear the backlog of recently donated magazines.

Coronation Fund:

Over £1000 has been raised so far.

Thank you for your contributions - please keep up the good work.

Bletchley Park Roster

Please Note: if you are unable to cover any particular date, please arrange a swap on the roster in the club room - Chris Hughes.

Unrostered people are welcome at any time, thanks.

Please note that John Hatton and Ken Ranns are not rostered as they attend most weekends.

Roster until end of year - there are still a few gaps available.

Saturday	08-Dec	Geoff Bell	Tim Davey	
Sunday	09-Dec	Chris Hughes	Les Wood	Craig Shaw

The museum closes 9 December until February 2002

Exact reopening dates to be advised when known.

MKMRS NEWS - Don't Forget

The next issue of MKMRS NEWS will be published at the end of January and will cover January / February.

Contributions always welcome.

John Hughes

The Model Maker Who Knew All About Full Size Locomotives

There have been a number of occasions lately when we have mentioned John Hughes. John unfortunately died last summer and through his widow Janet, we have assisted in the disposal of some of John's models, books and dismantled his garden railway. We still have a full size signal to remove to Bletchley Park when weather permits, the project being delayed because of a problem with bees in the semaphore pole! Here is the background to a remarkable character, who although not a member of MKMRS was kept fully aware of our activities.

John Hughes was a professional railwayman who began his career on the footplate at Stewarts Lane MPD in South East London and progressed through the ranks to become Public Relations Officer for the old South Eastern Division of the Southern Region.

John for many years lived in Bletchley and commuted with your Chairman (who also worked for SR public affairs between 1983-88) for a number of years, prior to John retiring. John had an excellent collection of models, all of them built to the very highest standards by the likes of Beeson, Green and Leakey.

John made the transition from Shovel to PRO by joining the model making section of the British Railways Board. The BRB at that time employed a team of model mak-

ers who also looked after a large O gauge exhibition layout which was taken around the country as part of the company's public relations activities. Your Chairman remembers this being exhibited at the Schoolboys and Schoolgirls Exhibition at Olympia on a number of occasions.

After this section was closed down, John transferred to the Press Desk of the London Midland Region and progressed to the Southern Region, where he first looked after South Central and later South Eastern interests.

John was the man behind the famous Cannon Street Exhibition in association the joint exhibition managers Dennis Lovett and John Forbes who assembled the exhibits. The show was a tremendous success and resulted in 48,000 visitors viewing locomotives of all sizes. It was John who managed to persuade the General Manager of the Southern Region at that time, one Gordon Pettit, to allow the return of a steam locomotive on to Southern metals and into a London terminus for the first time for many years.

Back in 1964, John made a comeback from model maker to fireman. At that time, John lived in Basingstoke and was travelling home from work on the 1800 from Waterloo. At Wimbledon the train came to a halt after the fireman had been hit by fly-

ing glass from an open door on a train travelling in the opposite direction. John went out to investigate and found the fireman in no condition to carry on. As no relief fireman was immediately to hand, John revealed his former employment as a fireman and the driver after clearing it with his depot, handed John the shovel.

John's exploits did not go unnoticed. The photograph on this page was taken by the Hants & Berks Gazette and appeared with a story on 27 November 1964.

In addition to his interest in O gauge, John owned two 5" gauge locomotives. Thanks to Janet, Mark and I have secured them for Bletchley Park, where we hope they will continue to give countless pleasure to visitors for years to come. We are now negotiating for some track on which to run them eventually!

