



NEWS

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MKMRS is associated with:

**The Chiltern Model Railway Association - The Model Railway
Club - The World War 11 Study Group**

Working within the Bletchley Park Museum

The renaissance of the OO range was, however, short-lived and by 1981, production had ceased mainly due to the emergence of the Mainline and Airfix ranges, which allowed Farish to concentrate its resources on the expanding N gauge market. Many of these items can still be found on the second hand shelves today.

N gauge matters

Although 1973 was to be quite a year for Graham Farish, the year started quietly with reviews in the January magazines of the new N gauge Super Liveway point. Available in both left and right-hand turnouts, these were available from dealers for 96p.

The Model Railway Constructor in its January issue also reviewed the remainder of the improved wagon range. Released in printed liveries following the introduction of Tempo printing equipment (see Part 2 for other details), the reviewer welcomes the introduction of newer, freer running chassis with improved wheels and couplings. The same issue incidentally, mentions the appointment of Rovex (Hornby) as the new distributors of the Minitrix N gauge range.

Farish again exhibited at the Brighton Toy Fair. Whilst the model press journalists used the reintroduction of the OO models as their chief reporting angle, a number of pre-production models for introduction later in the year were on show.

The N gauge mainline coaches were reviewed in the February Model Railway Constructor. Produced in LMS, GWR and Southern liveries, these coaches were not, according to the reviewer, "of any particular prototype". He states "the prototypes have not been accurately identified, but the GWR coach is very similar to the 57' standard corridor corridor of the 1929-29 period". The SR version gave a good representation of the Maunsell stock of the early 1930's, whilst the LMS coach could be linked with the former Midland Railway 57'6" corridor third or later LMS period all corridor thirds. Each coach cost 99p and according to the Model Railway Constructor represented good value.

The May magazines carried advertising for two new locomotive types. There were for the GWR Hall Class 4-6-0 and a (freelance) general purpose tank locomotive in LMS and SR liveries. For the advert illustrations, it would appear that reliveried versions of the GER Holden Tank (LNER J69) were used.

The next mention of the Farish range is in the September Model Railway Constructor, which again refers to the "Paint your wagon competition" by stating that "Grafar have now produced all the prize-winning entries and many others from the competition as well". The reviewer promised to look at some of these during the next few months. Three 7 plank wagons were reviewed in that issue, Parker & Probert (Birmingham), S.C. Pritchard (Wolverhampton) and South Leicester (Coalville). The reviewer is careful to point out that the "S.C. Pritchard wagon has no connection with another firm in Devon" [PECO]! The three wagons were available from stockists at 48p each.

MILTON KEYNES MODEL RAILWAY SOCIETY FOUNDED 1969

"Back again"

First of all apologies for the late delivery of the March - April and this issue of the magazine. This is due to the workload of the Editor at the time, who in addition to his own job is also covering another. I trust that I shall now be able to recover the production schedules. Apologies also that this issue falls short in the artwork department but trust to return to normal service as soon as possible.

The Leisure Centre has once again returned to national status in the model railway exhibition world. The G Scale Society held an excellent Sunday event at the centre during April and well done to all those who assisted Steve and the society on the day. There was certainly plenty to see and although my own visit was limited timewise, the visitors all seemed to be enjoying the event and the stream of large boxes leaving the hall was particularly impressive.

The EM Society also returned in May and again put on an impressive exhibition. A number of our EM members were on duty and it was good to meet up with our former member "Big John" who has now returned his native Dublin, but still has a house in Leighton Buzzard. John visited Bletchley Park on the Sunday and was impressed with developments since his last visit.

The N gauge Society are also due to return in September for their 35th Anniversary Exhibition on 14th/15th September. Full details available from Geoff Mathie.

It is good to see the Leisure Centre again attracting quality national organisation events. It only remains to be seen if they are permanent attractions or will move to elsewhere. Certainly car parking was an issue at the EM event, with the local traffic wardens showing little compassion for visitors confused by local parking restrictions.



Dennis Lovett
Chairman

Club Notice Board

2002 Woughton Swapmeets

The Swapmeet will take place between 1100 – 1500 at Woughton Campus on:

15 September

15 December

Admission is £1 Adults, 50p concessions, children under 18 free

CORONATION FUND

Thank you for your contributions - the good news is that we have now raised the £2000 required to secure the models from the executor.

RAILWAY CORRESPONDENCE & TRAVEL SOCIETY

The RCTS meets on the first Thursday of the month at the C.I.U. Working Mens Club, London Road, Stony Stratford at 1930 hours. Our long standing friend Bob Ballard is the Chairman. *Further details from Bob Ballard on 01908 562195*

5th September – “The Work of The Railway Heritage Trust” by Jim Cornell, Executive Director

3rd October – “Channel Tunnel Rail Link” by Bernard Gambrill, Head of Public Affairs, Union Railways

7th November – “LMS Calvacade” the slides of Hugh Ballantyne

5th December – “Branch Christmas Evening” – the members entertain

cattle wagon and a flat tar tank wagon. A number of OO gauge items were also released including the reintroduction of the suburban coach kits.

Farish announced through the model press, the availability of spare parts as aids to scratchbuilders. Items available included the J69 chassis (complete), passenger coach bogies and motors. Spares were available through the network of dealers or direct from the factory (the fully finished ready to run items have never been available direct).

Adverts placed in the September magazines focussed on the introduction of the “Superstock” range. The former unpainted, self-coloured plastic wagons were replaced by painted and lettered versions. The suburban and main line coaches were available in LMS maroon, GWR chocolate & cream and SR green. The 5 plank, 7 plank, single ventilated box van, twin ventilated box van, fish van, cattle wagon and toad brake van were similarly available, some of them in a number of company and livery options. As a result of the improved product, there was a slight price increase, the coaches selling fully finished for 99p.

The Model Railway Constructor for November 1972, announced that Farish were to produce private owner wagons, some based on the entries from the “Paint Your Wagon” competition. The announcement makes reference to a new process, which enabled the lettering to penetrate into the grooves of the planking, thus avoiding the stencil effect, found on some models. This I believe to be the Tampon printing process, now in widespread use in the Holton Heath factory (see ModelRail video No. 2 for details of this process).

The following month the first wagons were reviewed. These include the Wood & Co (Kings X) and Bernard T. Frost (Witney) wagons referred to earlier in the competition section. These models were fitted with improved couplings and were priced at 50p each.

1973 – N success leads to renaissance of Farish OO range

The success of the N gauge models resulted in raising the profile of the Graham Farish name amongst railway modellers significantly. The advertising and reviews coupled with investment in the plant at Holtgn Heath lead to a remarkable revamp and expansion of the OO range. This enabled a new generation of OO modellers to familiarise themselves with Farish products for the first time. Many of these items can still be found on the second hand market today.

The suburban coach kits were reworked to provide a range of ready to run models in 1973 and the former ready to run Pullman coaches emerged upgraded to make superb coaches. A new wagon range emerged at the same time, again using many of the items upgraded to modern standards from earlier products. To compliment these, the 94xx GWR Pannier Tank was upgraded to become the only available ready to run locomotive to be retained.

By 1870 the 2 ft railways serving the quarry were being worked by steam locomotives and many carried the names of the quarry owners race horses, such as Cackler, now preserved at Thursford in Norfolk. A large number of these locomotives have survived in preservation and work on various narrow gauge railways.

After the Second World War, diesel locomotives began to infiltrate the narrow gauge system.

The Padarn Railway itself survived until 1961, when the line was lifted and the locomotives, with the notable exception of Fire Queen, were scrapped. By the 1960s demand for slate was dropping, with the use of roof tiles replacing becoming commonplace. The end for the quarry and its 2ft system came in 1969 when the quarry company became bankrupt and the remaining 350 staff were forced into redundancy. At the time of closure just three steam locomotives, together with a number of diesel locomotives were available for traffic.

This was not, however, the end of the story. We shall look at the Llanberis Lake Railway in a later edition.

Graham Farish, The N Gauge Story – Part 3

By Dennis Lovett

Reviews of the GER Holden loco and the 4 wheel coaches appeared in the January 1972 edition of Model Railway Constructor. Early versions of this loco carried the Great Eastern Railway's distinctive blue livery, although the reviewer does mention that the cab roof should be white, but looked wrong when applied to this particular model.

The coach review mentions that there appeared to be no real prototype on which the 4 wheel coaches were based, although it does mention their similarity to the GNR 4 wheel coaches featured in their issue for March 1940. The GER loco was priced at £5.45 and the coaches (three versions) at 75p each.

The issue of the Model Railway Constructor for February 1972 featured a new power controller produced by SNAP Ltd, specifically for the Farish N gauge range, Farish being the sole distributors. The power controller was priced at £2.45 and gave much finer control than other controller types then on the market. In the same issue, the Newsdesk featured a paragraph announcing that Farish would be introducing bogie coaches at a later date.

Farish exhibited at the 1972 Brighton Toy Fair, which according to the report in the March MRC was "the first time that had been seen at the Brighton Toy Fair for a large number of years". The big news for N gauge modellers on the stand was the immediate release of bogie suburban coaches which consisted of a compartment 1st / 3rd Composite and a brake end. Both coaches were priced at 95p. Also announced for release later in the year, were 57' main line coaches, a container wagon, bolster wagon, tarpaulin wagon,

Bletchley Park Roster

Please note: If you are unable to cover any particular date – please arrange a swoop on the roster in the club room – Chris Hughes

UNROSTERED PEOPLE ARE WELCOME AT ANY TIME

Saturday 1 June	Ken Wiggins, Ted Mellor, Tony Winn
Sunday 2 June	Ken Sharpe, Mick Clements, Ken Ranns
Monday 3 June	Eric Bowman, Brian Barnes, Stan Pennington
Saturday 8 June	Martin Shenton, Tracey Broyd
Sunday 9 June	Les Wood, Geoff Blackwell
Saturday 15 June	Geoff Bell, Mike Maidment
Sunday 16 June	Ken Sharpe, Roy Cobb
Saturday 22 June	John Hatton, Ken Ranns, Alan Thompson
Sunday 23 June	Chris Hughes, Robert Smith, Chris Symonds
Saturday 29 June	Mark Agnew, (VACANT)
Sunday 30 June	Bruce Garwood, Ken Wiggins
Saturday 6 July	Tim Davey, Tony Winn
Sunday 7 July	(Dennis Lovett), Matt Rainer
Saturday 13 July	Eric Bowman, Eric Preston
Sunday 14 July	Ken James, Fred Fox
Saturday 20 July	Gordon Shrimpton, Alan Thompson
Sunday 21 July	Chris Hughes, (VACANT)
Saturday 27 July	Chris Lester, John Darby
Sunday 28 July	Les Wood, Mike Maidment
Saturday 3 August	Tim Davey, Robin Rowles
Sunday 4 August	Ken Sharpe, Roy Cobb
Saturday 10 August	Matt Rainer, Ted Mellor
Sunday 11 August	Gareth Homersley, Bernard Worden
Saturday 17 August	John Hatton, Geoff Blackwell
Sunday 18 August	Ken Ranns, (VACANT)

Saturday 24 August Geoff Bell, Tony Winn, Robert Smith
Sunday 25 August Martin Shenton, Tracey Broyd, Gareth Homersley
Monday 26 August Dennis Lovett, Brian Barnes, Stan Pennington

Saturday 31 August Ken Ranns, (VACANT)
Sunday 1 September Bruce Garwood, Ken Wiggins

Saturday 7 September Eric Bowman, Fred Fox
Sunday 8 September Chris Hughes, (VACANT)

Saturday 14 Sept Gordon Shrimpton, Eric Preston
Sunday 15 September

Saturday 21 Sept Ken Sharpe, Robin Rowles
Sunday 22 September Ian Smith, Matt Rainer

Saturday 28 Sept Mark Agnew, (VACANT)
Sunday 29 Sept Tim Davey, Mick Clements

Saturday 5 October Martin Shenton, Tracey Broyd
Sunday 6 October John Hatton, Geoff Blackwell

OTHER DATES WILL FOLLOW IN FUTURE ISSUES

MKMRS
SWEATSHIRTS & POLO SHIRTS
- NEW PRICES

Sweatshirts (Maroon with MKMRS logo) £
Polo shirts (Maroon with MKMRS logo) £

*Both can be personalised with your name for
£3 extra.

Please see Gordon Shrimpton

MKMRS NEWS – Don't Forget

The next issue of MKMRS NEWS will be published at the end of July and will cover
July / August
Contributions always welcome

On the Narrow Gauge No: 5 – THE PADARN RAILWAY

The Padarn Railway ran for 9 miles from the slate quarries from the Dinorwic Slate Quarries at Llanberis to the sea for onward shipping to England. This railway was built to an unusual gauge of 4 ft, so it just about scrapes into the narrow gauge category!

Slate was extracted from the Elidir mountain, high above Llanberis for centuries before mass transportation became an issue. However, by the early 1800s, slate was becoming commercial, driven by the use of cut slate for roofing on houses, much favoured by the Victorians in England.

By 1824, a primitive railway opened from Allt Ddu to Y Felinheli, a privately built port on the Menai straits between Bangor and Cardiff. Y Felinheli subsequently became known as Port Dinorwic.

At Llanberis the quarried Slate was split into slates, to produce a thin roof tile. This requires great skill and can still be seen being carried out at the museum at Llanberis, although no longer on the commercial lines of the past. It was the finished slates that required transshipment, initially to the port and then to the customers in England by ship. At its peak, 3000 people were employed in the Dinorwic slate quarries.

By 1840 the primitive railway was struggling to cope with the demand. Some 60 tons of slate a day were being worked by a mixture of horse power and natural gravity. The real alternative was to build a new line on a new alignment with less gradients, running for the first two miles along the shore of Llyn Padarn (Lake Padarn), allowing the original line to be abandoned.

In 1848 the railway acquired two steam locomotives. One of these Fire Queen was built in Northfleet, Kent and somehow managed to survive, eventually being preserved at Penryhn Castle Museum, on the outskirts of Bangor. In addition to hauling slate a number of trains were operated to carry the quarry workers to and from work.

In 1852, the Bangor & Camarvon Railway opened a station at Port Dinorwic, the intention to capture much of the slate traffic for onward rail transport rather than sea. The interchange was not successful and in 1856, the company built a branch from the standard gauge line (later part of the LNWR) down to the quayside, thus allowing much easier transfer between the two rail networks.

To feed the slate works and indeed the Padarn railway, an impressive 2ft gauge system was established on the sides of the mountain. These worked a series of galleries, steps cut into the mountain side and worked wagons between the various galleries. Extensive use of inclines was also made, to enable the loaded wagons to reach the works and the Padarn Railway.