

## New OO Gauge outdoor layout takes shape

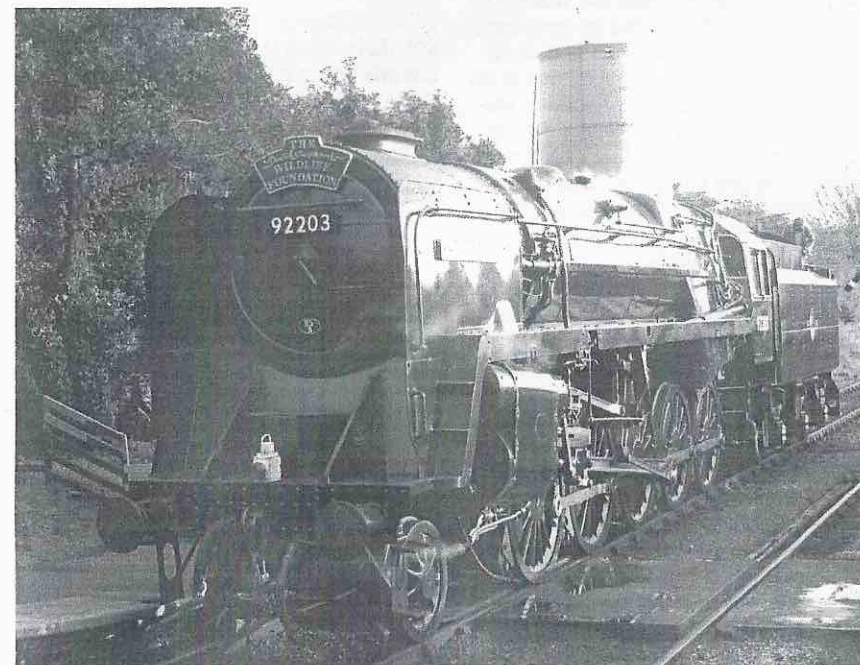
Photographs by Chris Dixon



## NEWS

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**Milton Keynes Model Railway Society is associated with:**  
The Chiltern Model Railway Association, The Model Railway Club, The World War  
11 Study Group

**MILTON KEYNES MODEL  
RAILWAY SOCIETY  
FOUNDED 1969**

**KEEPING UP**

Debate is raging around various model railway clubs about the onslaught of DCC operation, live steam and a whole host of other lively subjects. Needless to say there is considerable resistance to some of the new developments.

We at MKMRS have always risen to the challenge. Our strength is that we have moved with the times and attempted to encompass the many changes that have taken place over the past few years. Our club is a broad church and encompasses model railways in all shapes and sizes and if we had room, we would love to do more. As it is we have continued to utilise more club space for layouts, as the DCC room and new outdoor OO layout testify. They are part of continued commitment to Bletchley Park and to ensuring that we attract new members through our enhanced facilities.

Not everyone is enthralled by the new DCC technology but many are. If we are to survive to reach our 40th year and beyond, then it is essential that we provide such facilities. There are model railway clubs tearing themselves apart debating it, analysing it and in many cases rejecting it. If the hobby is to survive then it needs to encompass the latest technology and attract new recruits. DCC does this but it is not compulsory. There is room for all power combinations in MKMRS from clockwork to computers.

Long may it continue!

Dennis Lovett  
Chairman

**Club Notice Board**

**2006 Woughton Swapmeets**

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

**10th December 2006**

Admission is £1 Adults, 80p concessions, children under 18 free

**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**

**Club Sweatshirts and Polo Shirts**

Ken Ranns will be happy to take your orders for club sweatshirts and polo shirts.

**HMRS**

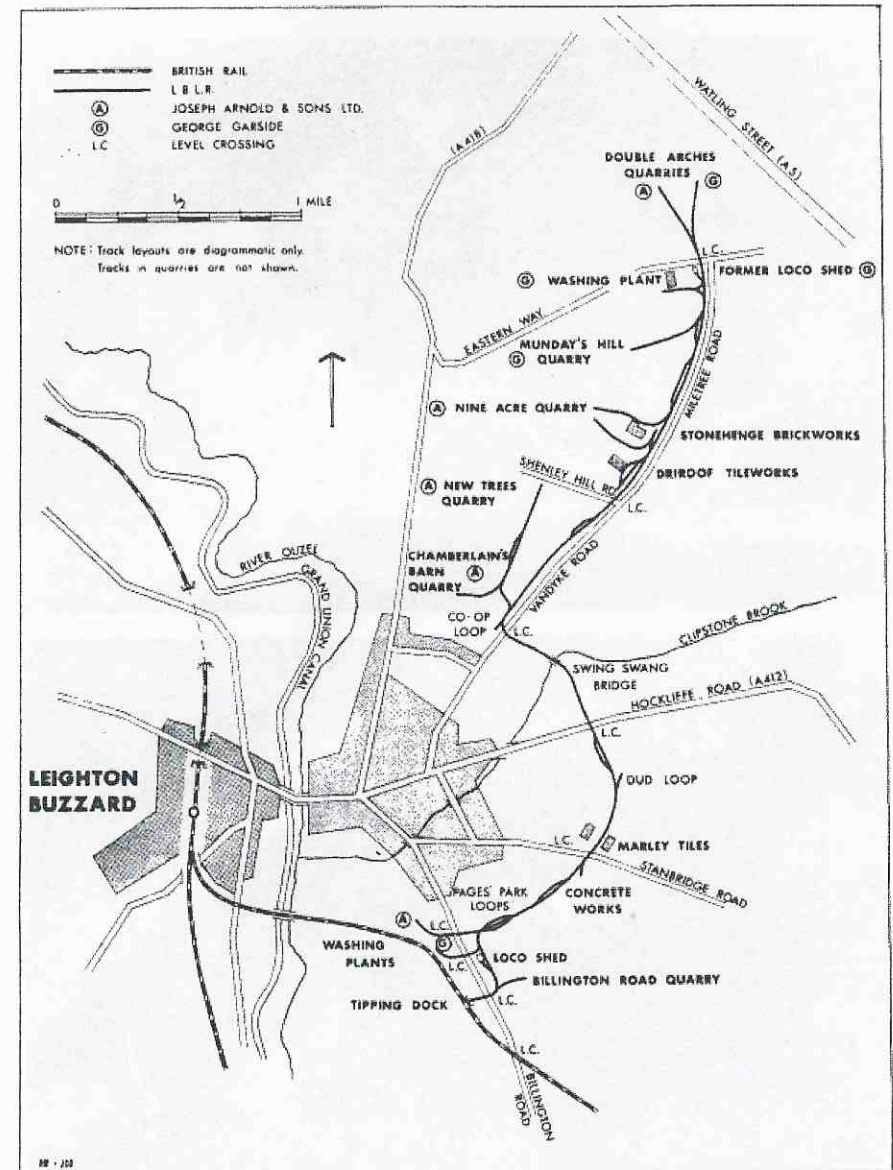
Forthcoming meetings of the HMRS are;

- 25 Oct: Soldering Workshop at MKMRS Club room
- 22 Nov: Rectory Cottages  
Speaker to be advised

Further details can be obtained from Eric Bowman our Treasurer.

MKMRS members can attend

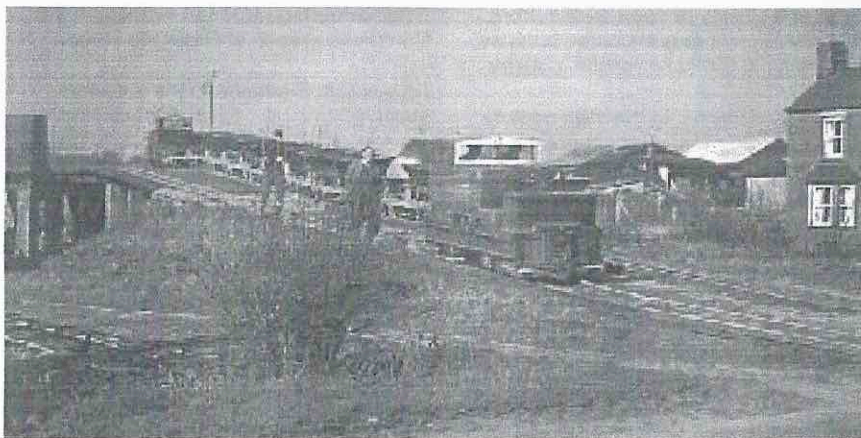
**Map of the Leighton Buzzard  
Narrow Gauge Railway circa 1964**



Using mostly surplus materials and equipment from the War Department Light Railways (WDLR), which had operated the supply lines to the battle zones, it was built to 2 foot (610 mm) gauge, and was just over 3.5 miles (5.6 km) long. Additional to this was a network of quarry branches, plus sidings serving the industries which set up alongside the line.

The LBLR's original steam locomotives lasted less than 2 years, being replaced in 1921 by ex-WDLR armoured "Simplex" petrol locomotives, built locally at Bedford. This almost certainly made it the first railway in Britain (or even the world?) to convert entirely to internal-combustion traction. It may also explain the line's low public profile for much of its working life!

The peak period for traffic on the LBLR was in the late 1940s and early 1950s, when 20 train loads of sand were regularly dispatched each day—a phenomenal performance for a single-track railway, taking into account the return empty workings.



The end of the line for the Leighton Buzzard Light Railway was the yard at Billington Road, a short distance from today's Page's Park station, where the sand was tipped into standard-gauge wagons on the Dunstable branch. This site is now occupied by the roundabout leading to Chartmoor Road industrial estate.

Thereafter, road competition, and the rationalisation of the main-line railway system, took away much of the traffic, and through trains to Billington Road ended in 1969. The last quarry railway, feeding the sand processing plant at Double Arches, closed in 1981.

Just in time, a group of railway enthusiasts received permission to run passenger trains over the LBLR "main line", starting with a series of "fan trip" specials, on 3rd March 1968. This was the beginning of the Leighton Buzzard Narrow Gauge Railway Society, the non-profit body whose members still operate the railway as volunteers.

For details of current operations a visit to Pages Park station, Leighton Buzzard is recommended.

## Bletchley Park Roster

### **Saturday 14 October**

Terry Winn / Ted Mellor

### **Sunday 15 October**

Chris Hughes / Les Duncan

### **Saturday 21 October**

Eric Bowman / Eric Preston

### **Sunday 22 October**

Derek Hart / Geoff Blackwell

### **Saturday 28 October**

Chris Lester / Tony Winn

### **Sunday 29 October**

Paul James / Vacant\*

### **Saturday 4 November**

Bruce Garwood / John Hatton

### **Sunday 5 November**

Bruce Garwood / John Hatton

### **Saturday 11 November**

Derek Hart / Cyril Bourne

### **Sunday 12 November**

Bill Ball / Pete Ball

### **Saturday 18 November**

John Forman / David Ramsey

### **Sunday 19 November**

Brian Barnes / Mick Clements

### **Saturday 25 November**

Chris Wardale / Alan Thompson

### **Sunday 26 November**

Gareth Homersley / Bernard Worden

### **Saturday 2 December**

Colin Goodenough / Vacant\*

### **Sunday 3 December**

Fred Collins / Phil Wood

### **Saturday 9 December**

Robin Rowles / Neil Dewar

### **Sunday 10 December**

Geoff Blackwell / Ken Sharpe

### **Saturday 16 December**

Tony Winn / Vacant\*

### **Sunday 17 December**

Chris Hughes / Daniel Deathe

### **Saturday 23 December / Sunday 24 December**

### **Saturday 30 December / Sunday 31 December**

### **CLOSED**

*\*If you are able to assist on these days please let Chris Hughes know. Thanks*



**2007**

### **MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITION**



**Saturday 24th February 2007  
10:30 am—5:00 pm**

**Over 15 working Layouts, Trade Stands,  
& Demonstrations**

**Wyvern First School, Aylesbury Street,  
Wolverton, Milton Keynes MK12 5HU**

**Admission: Adults £3  
Children & Senior Citizens £1.50  
Family Ticket (2+2) £7.50**

**"We would advise that access to the upper floor is only  
accessible by stairs**

**[www.mkMrs.com](http://www.mkMrs.com)**

## **The Leighton Buzzard Narrow Gauge Railway**



Leighton Buzzard and the surrounding villages are built on sand--thick seams of very pure sand laid down in prehistoric times, and since covered by layers of clay. This is a very valuable material, which is still quarried in large quantities.

Because of its purity, and its range of colours from white to dark brown, it is used in a variety of applications, from foundry moulds to golf-course bunkers, as well as in the construction industry.

The early quarries, in the 19th century, were mostly on the west side of the town, near the transport arteries of the Grand Union Canal and the London (Euston) to Birmingham railway. The coming of the Leighton Buzzard-Dunstable branch line, in 1848, opened up new areas for exploitation.

The thick seams of sand in the hills of the Greensand Ridge to the north, towards Heath & Reach village and what is now the A5 road, remained largely untouched. The cost of transport would have made them uncompetitive with

cheap imports from Europe.

The outbreak of the First World War, in 1914, changed all that. Industrial demand soared, while supplies from the cheap overseas competitors were eliminated. Wartime regulations allowed sand to be transported by road--horse-drawn carts, and later steam lorries--from the new northern quarries to sidings on the Dunstable branch at Billington Road.

As a result, the roads in the area suffered enormously. Once the war was over, the quarry owners were told that they would be responsible for repairing any future damage, and this led quickly to the formation of Leighton Buzzard Light Railway Ltd.

Owned by the two main quarry operators in the area--Joseph Arnold & Sons Ltd and George Garside (Sand) Ltd--the railway company had its line built, from the Billington Road sidings to Double Arches, near Heath & Reach, and in service by the end of 1919.