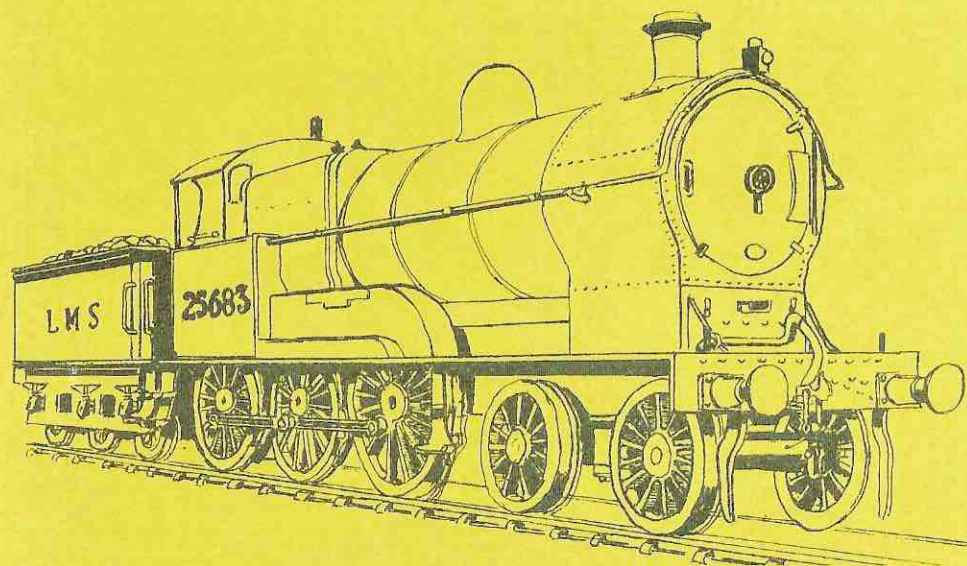




Eleventh Model Railway Exhibition



The Leisure Centre, Bletchley

Saturday 30 October 1993

10.30 - 6pm

Sunday 31 October 1993

10.30 - 5pm

20+ working layouts in all the popular scales.

Well supported by trade and other stands.

Live steam rides. Refreshments

Day membership £2, Family (2+2) £5, Children & Senior Citizens £1.

Bletchley Leisure Centre is 10 minutes walk from Bletchley Station (Euston-Northampton line) and has an adjacent multi-storey car park (free).



No 19

October 1993



N Gauge debut at Stacey Hill Museum

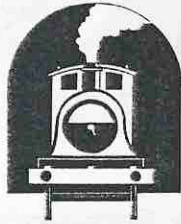
Published by Dennis Lovett, Chairman, Milton Keynes Model Railway Society
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SCALE MODELLING

MILTON KEYNES MODEL RAILWAY SOCIETY

The club was formed in 1969 and is an Associate Member of The Model Railway Club and a Member of The Chiltern Model Railway Association.

President: Jim Wood
Vice President: Les Wood
Chairman: Dennis Lovett

Secretary: Chris Hughes
Treasurer: Gordon Etherington
CMRA Rep: Eric Bowman
Librarian: Mark Wilson

Committee: Geoff Bell
Fred Collins
Colin Catley
Chris Garner

Permanent Exhibitions

There was a time when it seemed that every seaside town and major tourist attraction boasted a large permanent model railway exhibition. Some were good, others were pretty awful and most disappeared. Now it would appear that they are making something of a comeback and have little in common with those in the past.

During our holiday in the West Country, the Lovett family visited two permanent exhibition layouts. The first was at the South Devon Railway at Buckfastleigh and was a good sized, well detailed Great Western layout with plenty of activity. The second was at Trago Mills, Newton Abbot and was by far the best I have seen of its type.

The statistics of the Trago Mills layout make interesting reading. The layout is 88'x 17' and has 32 trains running on over 2,500' of track. There is 3.5 miles of wiring, 4,000 trees and a population of over 5,000 people. A large harbour has real water and some fine ship models. There is a canal system and other attractions to look out for including a building on fire etc.

There was plenty to see and the layouts both performed well. Talking to one of the operators I discovered why. The layouts whilst built in sections are not portable. They do not suffer from transport damage. The wiring is permanent and the track across baseboard joints is soldered to give good running. A lot of the points are dummy, they are set for one road, wired accordingly and thus avoid many of the problems one would normally associate with a large layout. They do however create an illusion of complexity and that is part of the trick. The trains whilst mainly modern image at Trago Mills are serviced daily and a team of technicians kept everything operating without difficulties.

Whilst we do not enjoy the comfort of a permanent exhibition hall, we do compete for the same public. They expect to see plenty of action and the first appearance of our N gauge layout (see elsewhere in this issue) kept the attention of those watching. It does not matter whether a layout is permanent or not. The secret is to keep it simple, create illusions and keep the trains running. It is expected at places like Trago Mills and it is what our paying public will expect to see at our own show. I am confident that they will not be disappointed.


Dennis Lovett
Chairman

MKMRS NEWS

Due to the production of the Exhibition Guide, this issue is again limited to eight pages. The next issue (November) is due for publication in early October and will contain full details about our Exhibition.

MKMRS EXHIBITION

The MKMRS Exhibition takes place on October 30/31. Publicity material is now available. Assistance with Catering is appreciated and Fred Collins will be pleased to hear from volunteers. Chris and Geoff Bell will also be contacting members not involved with layouts to assist with stewarding duties.

QGM

A QGM will be held on Tuesday 26 October at 8pm in the club room. This will be the last chance for us to get together to discuss arrangements before the Exhibition the following weekend. Please do your best to be there.

STEAM IN TOWCESTER

Apologies to Steve Dennison for getting the date and telephone number wrong. Fortunately we were able to amend the September issue by hand before it was distributed. The date is Sunday 12 September and the correct phone number is 0327 52036.

Milton Keynes Swapmeet

The next Swapmeet at Woughton Campus is scheduled for Sunday September 12th. The swapmeet is open from 1100 until 1530. Admission is 60p Adult and 30p Child/OAP.

Guildex 93

The Gauge O Guild Convention is being held on 4/5 September at Telford Exhibition Centre. Our members Les Wood, Gordon Etherington and Geoff Bell will be undertaking their GOG duties there and we wish them well. Les will continue as President of the Guild for 12 more months.

RAIL EXHIBITION

The modern image exhibition which has been held previously in St. Albans (twice) and Manchester (once) is moving to Bletchley Leisure Centre and will take place on 16/17 April next. We have been asked to assist and this will fill a gap in the exhibition diary. The Gauge O Guild will not be in Milton Keynes next year, but the EM Gauge Society are planning to return in May, although we have no direct involvement with their show. Further details on the Rail event will be published once they are known.

WOLVERTON WORKS OPEN DAY

We understand that there is an Open Day at Wolverton Works during September. Please see the local press for further information.

HISTORICAL MODEL RAILWAY SOCIETY

Wednesday 29 Sept @ 1930 in the club room. Subject - The Lynton & Barnstable Railway.

Steam in Towcester

Sunday 12 September 1993

Steve Dennison is holding a special open afternoon on his G Scale garden line. This was most successful last year and MKMRS members only are welcome to attend.

Steve and Peggy live at 10 Swinneyford Road,
Towcester. Telephone 0327 52036 for further information.

In the beginning (Part 17)

On the 1st July 1984, the club's old O gauge layout (Ayot) and Dave Fearn's Watlington layout attended the Wellsmead School Fete. The July QGM was held on the 31st July at the club room. Fred Collins reported that work was progressing well on our first N gauge venture and at minimal cost. 35 members and 6 associates had paid their subs, but a further 20 had yet to rejoin or pay. At least one of the 20 produced his cheque book later in the evening.

The August committee meeting reluctantly agreed to cancel the proposed outing to Kent to The Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch and Kent & East Sussex Railways due to lack of support (we eventually managed to get to the latter on our 1991 excursion - Ed.).

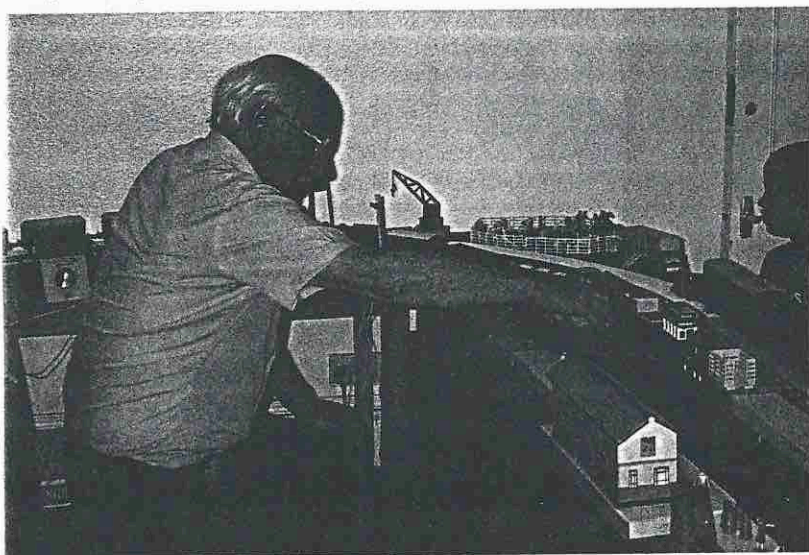
On the 14/15 September the club had a stand at the Leisure & Learning Exhibition at Middleton Hall, Central Milton Keynes. The largest event in September was the arrival of the first Gauge O Guild Convention in town. It was the first time that the Guild had used such a large venue and ironically, it is now too small for the Guilds Annual Convention - such has been the growth in O gauge modelling since 1984! Gordon Eckersley, the Guilds Trade Liaison Officer at the time and the first MKMRS member to hold GOG Office, looked after the planning and co-ordinated our involvement in the event. Fred and his catering team were called in to undertake the mammoth task of feeding the troops, the first time it had done so for a non MKMRS Exhibition. We paraded almost our full membership in stewarding, catering and other duties and the organisers were quick to see that we knew a little about organising exhibitions, particularly in our own venue! Within days we had received letters of thanks from Doug Moorcroft, the Events Officer and from Colin Horn, President. Since then we have benefitted in many ways from our involvement with the GOG and they have used the venue regularly since, the last being the Spring Convention earlier this year./ To be continued.

N Gauge debut at Stacey Hill Museum

The club's N gauge layout made its debut at Stacey Hill Museum in August and performed well. A few minor modifications were needed on its return to the club room and work is progressing to finish the scenery before our own exhibition.



Brian and Stan also represented the club and were busy with their joint Vintage tinplate layout. They will also be exhibiting at our own show in October.



John Symons 1923 - 1993

It is with regret that I have to inform members of the sad loss of our Vice - Chairman, John Symons, who died after a long illness during a visit to Cornwall on Sunday 29 August 1993, aged 70 years.

John was instrumental in setting up the club back in 1969. It was John who "persuaded" some local railway modellers to put on a display at Bletchley Arts & Crafts Exhibition on June 5th which led to the formation of MKMRS in October of the same year. A profile of John appeared in MKMRS NEWS No.4 in July 1992.

John was an excellent ambassador for the club and served on the steering committee as Secretary, a post which he held until 1980 when he succeeded Colin French as Vice - Chairman, following Colin's move to Suffolk. John was well known in Historical Model Railway Society, Gauge O Guild and Chiltern Model Railway Association circles. He was also active in the Cornish Railway Society and the Cornish Group of the Gauge O Guild. John owned property in Cornwall and after Barbara's retirement, they divided their time between Penzance and Bletchley.

John was the only finescale O gauge modeller in the club when it was formed and only Fred Clow worked in the same scale, albeit to coarse scale standards. After working on many of our early 4mm projects, John began work almost single handed on the first O gauge layout, "persuading" others to join in. The fact we have so many 7mm modellers in our ranks today, stems from John's enthusiasm for the scale, which resulted in a gradual transfer of members towards O Gauge. He recruited many to the ranks of the Gauge O Guild and at the time of his death was Area Organiser for Milton Keynes.

The club was represented at the funeral at Truro on 6 September. A memorial service is taking place at St. Mary's Church, Church Green Road, Bletchley on Friday 24 September at 3pm, when I hope many members will be present.

The family requested family flowers only and nominated The Royal National Lifeboat Institution which John supported for many years. The club has made a sizeable donation whilst some members have also expressed an interest in donating as individuals. Any donations can be handed to either Gordon or myself and they will be handed over together.

We have lost one of the foundation stones on which our club has been built. We have lost not only our Vice - Chairman but a good friend. Our deepest sympathy has been extended to Barbara, Johnathon, Joanna and their families as we share their loss with them.

Dennis Lovett

Profile

Brian Barnes

Brian Barnes earliest recollections of railways are falling to sleep to the sound of steam locomotives hauling heavy coal trains up Sharnbrook Bank, three miles away from his home in Rushden. The old folk of Rushden would say in those days "you can here the trains plainly tonight, there will be rain afore morning". Brian remembers being taken up the steps to Rushden station (on the Wellingborough - Higham Ferrers branch) and seeing the old 0-4-4-T still wearing its old Midland Railway livery, and still remembers the disgust he felt when it was taken away and replaced with one in more sombre LMS black.

Saturdays would sometimes provide a shopping trip to Wellingborough and on grand occasions, changing trains from the branchline to the bay platforms at the Midland Station to catch a train onwards to Northampton St. Johns. On the return journey there was always a long wait at Wellingborough as a double headed train of empty private owner wagons obeyed a signal chech as it headed north. The loose couplings would clank and snatch and Brian would sometimes have bad dreams imagining himself as the guard on one of these long trains being buffeted about with only his stove for comfort. In later years the two 0-6-0's were replaced by a Beyer-Garrat and Brian considers it a privilege to have seen these handsome beasts in action.

Much too young Brian was given a Bing Table Top Train set and he still cringes to think how its mistreated remains were actually consigned to the ashcan. Come Christmas each year he would be found with his nose against the plate glass window of a shop in Church Street, Rushden, where amongst the normal stock of industrial sewing machines, a circle of electric Hornby O gauge track could be found on which a Metropolitan Electric locomotive was hauling half a dozen assorted wagons around. All the boys knew that this was an incorrect formation which only increased their determination to own a set of their own! They wanted to do it right and eventually Brian was given a black LMS No.1 tank locomotive and four good wagons. More stock would be added as birthdays came around, sometime Hornby, sometimes what Brian now calls "lesser makes", from Charlie Robinsons toy shop in High Street.

None of Brian's collection survived the move to Stony Stratford, nor were there any more journeys by train after the family acquired a car. Railway interest was maintained however by staring out of an upstairs class room window at Towcester Grammar School where the SMJ lines converged at the bottom of the playing fields before crossing the A5 and entering Towcester station. It took Brian sometime to work out you sometimes saw two trains on adjoining tracks going in the same direction!

Brian spent 4 years in the RAF, all in England, and gave him the chance to travel on lines of all 4 pre-Nationalisation companies. He was delighted to watch the ancient little trains of the Fairford branch as they skirted around Brize Norton airfield and also recalls having to bring home a defunct motorbike from Earls Colne, via the Colne Valley line to Cambridge, then to Bletchley and change for Wolverton, then on to Stony.

After the war with marriage, family and long hours spent in his restaurant business, there was little time for railways. There was a brief, unsatisfactory excursion into OO, but the real breakthrough came when a customer gave him an electric Hornby Scot and a few wagons. These were displayed on a shelf in the restaurant and before long, other donations came in. More shelves were constructed and quite a collection appeared. Brian visited the Hornby agents in Stony, Wolverton and Buckingham and relieved them of their last bits of stock - the static collection grew.

Retirement dictated a move to a smaller house, carefully chosen for its large attic and at last Brian reached his goal of a continuous run of three rail track, so that once more he could enjoy the sound of tinsplate wheels.

Brian claims that he never had the skill, patience or dedication to become a real railway modeller, but he derives great pleasure from bodging up mutilated toys so that they can run again. He operates at the occasional exhibition with Stan Pennington and they are rewarded when dewy eyed spectators approach them saying "I had one like that".

Brians son now works in Germany, which has provided the excuse to travel on trains on the continent. His current interest is collecting continental Marklin but that Brian tells me is another story. At the recent Stacey Hill open day, he had a Czech two rail tinsplate trainset - and that is an even better story!

Brian, along with Stan, performs a great service on our behalf. There is a growing interest in old vintage trains, they are popular with the public at exhibitions and our own show has expanded to accomodate these this year. It is noticeable that the high standard finescale layouts which take years to build can rarely compete with the rattle, shake and roll of a Hornby tinsplate train at full speed. Long may they continue.

Another victim next month

**WOLVERTON RAIL/SAFETY DAY****SATURDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 1993****1000 TO 1700 HOURS (last admission 1600 hours)**

AN OPPORTUNITY TO SEE (subject to availability):

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- * WORK DEMONSTRATIONS
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Tickets - ADULTS £2.50

FAMILY £6.00 (2 x Adults, 2 x Children)

OAP/CHILDREN/UB40 £1.00

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION TELEPHONE WOLVERTON 0908 224591/224410