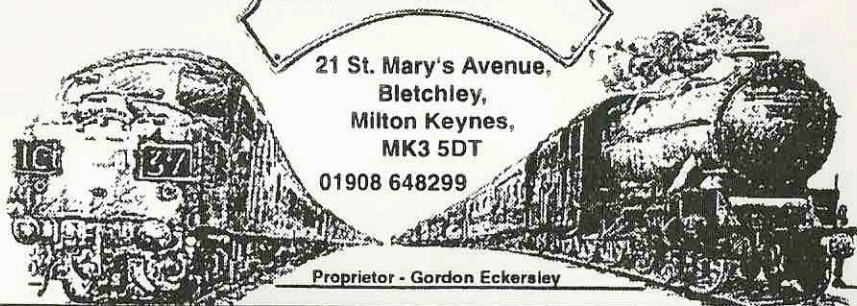


## BLETCHLEY RAILWAYANA

21 St. Mary's Avenue,  
Bletchley,  
Milton Keynes,  
MK3 5DT  
01908 648299



Proprietor - Gordon Eckersley

### Model Railways, Railway books, Ephemera and Relics BOUGHT AND SOLD

We buy or part exchange unbuild or part built kits

#### MODELS

**Gauge O** - Try a kit or ready to run model - we stock both. The following O gauge ranges are in stock: Slaters, RJH,

Janick, Mendip Models, Parkside Dundas, Connoisseur, Mikes Models, Oakville, Pocket Money Kits, Scorpio, Alan Gibson, Westdale.

**OO gauge** models by: Lima, Bachmann, Dapol, Ratio, Hornby, Slaters, Peco.

**N Gauge** models by: Graham Farish, Minatrix, Ratio, Peco, Slaters, KRS.

We also stock - paints by Humbrol and Railmatch, transfers by Fox, Howes and Woodhead. Nameplates from CGW and Jackson Evans. Electrical items by Seep and Gaugemaster. Try us for tools, drills, cutting mats, soldering irons, flux, glues and sundela board.

Mail order service available.

#### BOOKS

A good selection of new and secondhand books and magazines always in stock. We can also order books for you.

#### PAINTINGS

Commissioned railway paintings. Original oil paintings, drawings, pastels, watercolours, prints and acrylics. Picture framing service.

#### RAILWAYANA

Locomotive name and numberplates, lineside and station signs, signalling, handlamps, station lamps, railway silverware, station furniture, glass and china, uniforms, buttons, badges and clocks - bought and sold.

Telephone for details.

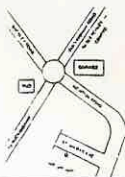
#### PRINTS

Photographic prints and post-cards always in stock to please the collector.

#### WANTED

Commercially made trains in all gauges, clockwork, steam and electric by Hornby (Dublo & O), Bassett Lowke, Trix, Bing, Marklin etc. Also early brass, tinplate, wood or cast iron trains, stations and accessories. Also required more recent models by Airfix, Lima, Mainline etc. American & Continental also purchased.

Where to find us



**Open 6 days a week**

Mondays	1000 - 1730
Tuesdays	1000 - 1730
Wednesdays	Closed
Thursdays	1000 - 1730
Fridays	1000 - 1730
Saturdays	1000 - 1730
Sundays	1000 - 1300

Free parking outside shop.



# MKMRS NEWS

No. 51

JUNE 1996



A track machine stands at Berwick-Upon-Tweed in August 1990  
Photo : Dennis Lovett

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

Telephone 01908 376750



Line Number Two will not affect the city area as it runs from Wolverhampton to Dudley via Walsall.

Line Number Three promises to be the most exciting as this will break entirely new ground. It will begin at Five Ways in the city's West End and run underground via the city centre, with stations at the International Convention Centre, Victoria Square, New Street to a new interchange station planned with the Central Line. It will then continue below and overground to the Airport and National Exhibition Centre.

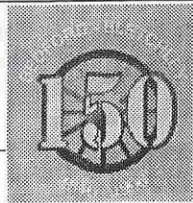
The Central Line is a short link that will leave the Number One Line North of Snow Hill to a

new station at Colmore Circus and the interchange station at Bull Street to terminate at a rebuilt Bull Ring.

All of this is no 'Pie in the Sky'. A 20 year strategy has been published. This envisages relief for some bus bound corridors. It is a far cry from the days when trams and buses run by the various local authorities were not allowed to cross boundaries which were jealously guarded. Only the two independent tramway companies were allowed to cross into Birmingham territory. At the boundary the trams came to a halt and the conductor solemnly called out "Boundary" which precipitated a vexed fumbling in pockets and handbags for coins as the conductor collected fares anew and issued tickets afresh.

## Bedford -Bletchley 150

By Colin Jamieson



### Diary of Events

<b>21st May</b>	<b>12th October - 4th November</b>
Talk - Bedfords Railway Age at Bedford U3A Group	Bletchley - Bedford 150 Exhibition Bedford Museum
<b>1st July</b>	<b>October</b>
Talk - Bedfords Railway Age at Bedford U3A Group	Special Trains on the line (provisional)
<b>Saturday 21st September</b>	<b>16th November</b>
Model Railway Exhibition Fulbrook School, Woburn Sands Of importance to our club, is the model railway exhibition at Woburn Sands on Saturday 21st September, 1996, which MKMRS will be organising on behalf of the celebration committee.	<b>BBRUA Rail Day</b> Civic Theatre, Bedford <b>John Huntley Film Show</b> Civic Theatre, Bedford
<b>30th September - 12th October</b>	<b>Saturday 16th November (provisional)</b>
Bletchley - Bedford 150 Exhibition Bedford Library	Re-enactment of the Opening Ceremony
	<b>Sunday 17th November (provisional)</b>
	Special Train to Civic Service etc at St Pauls Church, Bedford.

## MILTON KEYNES MODEL RAILWAY SOCIETY

### Founded 1969

President	Jim Wood	Committee	Geoff Bell
Vice Presidents	Les Wood		Chris Garner
	Gordon Etherington		Chris Lester
Chairman	Dennis Lovett		Colin Jamieson
Vice Chairman	Fred Collins	Librarian	Mark Wilson
Secretary	Chris Hughes	Museum Co-ord.	John Hatton
Treasurer	Eric Bowman	CMRA Rep.	Chris Lester

### The Swapmeet

Most of us love a bargain and setting off for a swapmeet is often the sort of adventure that bargain hunters relish.

I go too, but more often than not come home with my money firmly in my pocket. Selling prices are never cheap and eavesdropping someone trying to sell something to a trader is usually an illuminating experience. At the last MK swapmeet I witnessed a trader offer £10 for three locomotives - not surprisingly the potential seller disappeared quickly, for just one of them was on sale for considerably more at the other end of the stand.

What ever happened to swapping! I am waiting for the day the Trades Description Act catches up with the organisers on that one!

Some people are lucky and can find the real bargain. I am no different to anyone else and yes I have found the odd one too. Models are now seen as "INVESTMENTS" first and the collecting element has forced up prices which is not good for most of the hobby. This has resulted in the nonsense surrounding the prices quoted for Wrenn products that leaves me astounded. I cannot understand why anyone would want to pay ridiculous sums for a Wrenn loco when they can by a Hornby-Dublo version, made incidently when the tools were in a better state, for a 10th of the price!

In this type of market place it is all too easy to buy without rational thinking. I for one, will never buy a locomotive from such a gathering.

Experience shows that they rarely run properly and there is no chance to try them out. Rolling stock too, has to be checked to make sure that buffers and couplings are all attached and that the wheels are what they should be and not spoked or disc in coaches!!!

In comparison, modellers who prefer the continental scene can pick up some excellent bargains, mainly I suspect because they are in the minority and the masses would rather buy battered Triang or boxed Wrenn.

I am not against swapmeets as such, I wouldn't go otherwise would I! I do, however, have some concerns about what they have done to many of our specialist model shops over the years and how they have been instrumental in the closure of many exhibitions. In the old days many traders at exhibitions had cheap boxes to remove stock that could not be sold in the conventional way and this was all part of the benefit from going to exhibitions. With swapmeets, it is now rare to find bargains at exhibitions because out of date models are now highly prized collectors items. Take a look at the price quoted for a Lima Class 33 in NSE livery (Ashford) - £130! You use to get them for £15! So the exhibition market has declined as a result and we have some recent experience of that ourselves.

As for bargains -I'm still looking and I probably will be for some considerable time to come.

  
Dennis Lovett, Chairman



## Club Notices

### Swapmeet dates

A swapmeet will take place at Woughton Campus on the following dates during 1996;

**7th July**  
**13th October**  
**8th December**

Opening times are 1100 - 1500. Admission is 70p, child/senior citizens 30p

### ExpoEM

This event is being held at the Leisure Centre during the weekend 18/19 May.

### Gauge O Guild - Spring Convention 8th March 1997

The Gauge O Guild will be returning to Bletchley Leisure Centre after a gap of a couple of years for their Spring Convention - next March.

We have almost a years notice to round up volunteers for stewarding etc. We have also been asked to provide catering and to assist with the setting up on the Friday evening (7th March 1997).

Please book these dates in your diary a.s.a.p Please note this is a **one day show** (mainly trade with some supporting layouts).

Gordon Etherington, Vice President

### Paintings for Sale

Any member interested in obtaining the following items can do so by contacting the sellers: Mr & Mrs Redford at Irthlingborough on 01933 652245. They are:

A painting on canvas by G. Coulson of a GWR express at speed leaving a viaduct. Size 3ft x 2ft. **Cost £15.**

A 50" x 27" canvas backed carpet in full colour and almost new of a GWR express at speed by G. Wilson. **Cost £20.**

### Congratulations

To member Tim Davey on his recent marriage to Carol.

### CMRA Convention

Details can be found elsewhere in this newsletter about the CMRA Convention being held on the 22nd June at Beaconsfield. Interested members should contact Chris Lester for further details.

### QGM

The next QGM is scheduled for Tuesday July 30th at 8pm in the club room. Further details will appear in due course.

### MKMRS News

Thanks to all those who have contributed articles for this issue. It is useful to have some items in hand ready to type in when there is a couple of minutes to spare. It is only by doing this we can get the magazine out on time. any further items will be welcomed for future issues.

Dennis Lovett, Chairman

**The Bletchley Park duty roster now appears on Page 3. Your support is greatly appreciated. John Hatton will explain the procedures and how to operate layouts.**

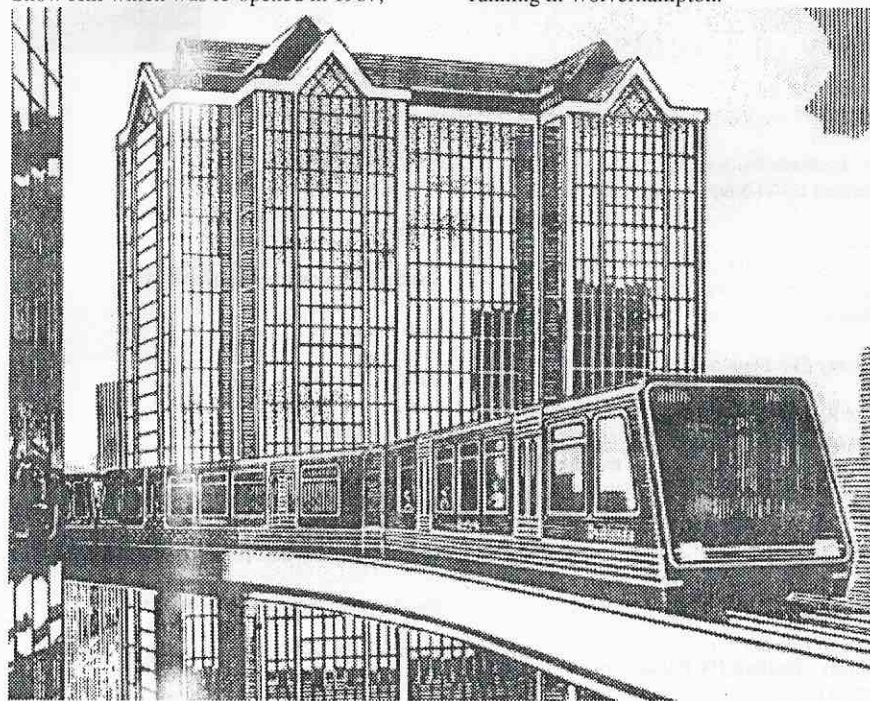
## The Jewellery Line by Don Pigott

Most people have heard of the Jubilee Line in London but how many know about the Jewellery Line in Birmingham? The Jewellery line is so called because it runs through the heart of the city's Jewellery Quarter now being promoted as a tourist attraction. It is the first phase of rejuvenation and expansion of the railways around the city: Midland Metro. At present the Jewellery Line is only a 4 mile extension of a line already in existence to the south of the city and runs from Snow Hill as far as Smethwick where it crosses the former L&NWR Birmingham - Wolverhampton line. A new station has been built here on two levels to facilitate exchange between the two lines. Eventually it will be extended in the Stourbridge direction and replace the line running into Birmingham New Street where much needed platform space will be released. The Jewellery Line follows the original Great Western main line northwards out of a rebuilt Snow Hill which was re-opened in 1987,

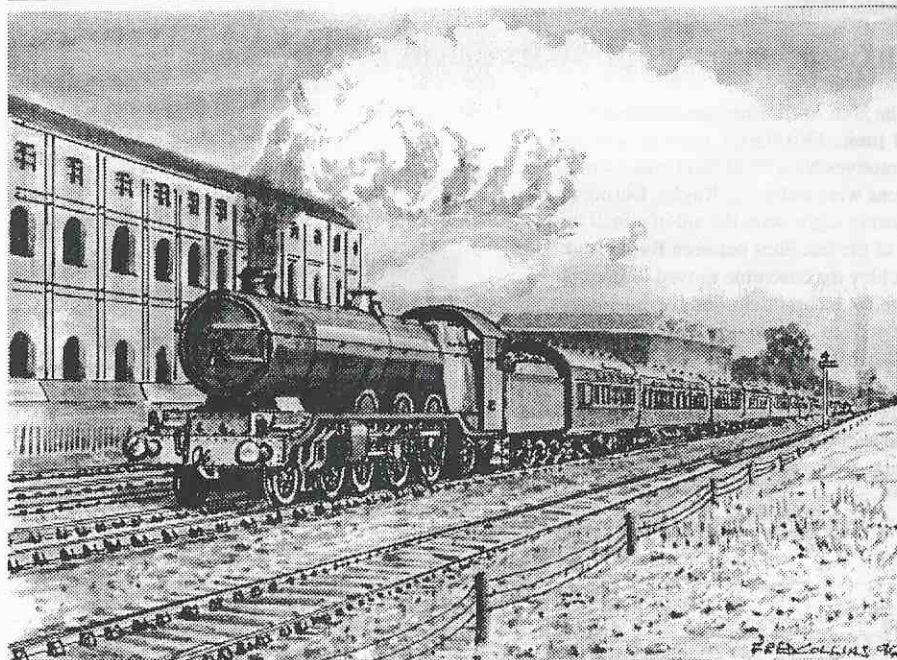
although on a much reduced scale compared with lavish steam days when it was the pride of the GWR and 'Kings' and 'Castles' roared in theatrically from the tunnel with a full head of steam and a quarter of a mile ahead.

Birmingham is the only city of comparable size that has to rely on buses. Over the forthcoming years Midland Metro should rectify this. The Jewellery Line is already connected underground via a refurbished tunnel to Moor Street station and onwards to Leamington, Solihull and Stratford-Upon-Avon.

Number One Metro Line already under construction runs parallel with the Jewellery Line for the first three miles of its 13 mile length to Wolverhampton, which makes use of the former Great Western line. There are interchange stations with the Jewellery Line, new stations on the old alignment and some street running in Wolverhampton.







## The British Pacific Locomotives

### No 1: The Great Bear by Fred Collins

Cylinders: 4 x 15"  
 Boiler Pressure: 225 p.s.i.  
 Length over buffers: 71' 2"  
 Weight incl. tender: 143 tons

Built in 1908 and designed by G. J. Churchward, "The Great Bear" was the first locomotive with the Pacific wheel arrangement to be built in Great Britain.

It was introduced when the GWR was already well served by the 'Star' Class 4-6-0s. The "Stars" were more than capable of handling the biggest trains that could be accommodated in the Paddington platforms and seemed to manage the schedules of the time with power to spare. In fact, they were probably 10 years in advance of anything running on any British railway at that time. It is difficult to understand why the GWR thought they needed a Pacific!

It was restricted by its weight to running between London and Bristol at which it showed no improvement over the "Stars". The "Star" Class name

quite reflected the locomotives that bore them for they were indeed the stars of their time. "The Great Bear" could quite aptly have been named the "The Great White Elephant".

Whether Churchward was pushed by his Board of Directors or whether he built the Pacific to show how good the "Stars" were is a matter of speculation. It is believed he had no love of the engine and is rumoured to have said when he heard of Gresley's proposals "I don't know why the young man is building one, we could have sold him ours!". The experiment (if that is what it was) was never repeated by the GWR. All future development was to be of the 4-6-0 4 cylinder type.

In 1924, when due for heavy repair, "The Great Bear" was supposedly rebuilt as a "Castle" but very little of the original locomotive survived the rebuild.

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Another Pacific next month

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# Bletchley Park Roster Board

By the Chief Roster Clerk

## 1996 Open Days and staff arrangements

January 13th: JH, Fred Collins, Ernie Johnson	July 13th: JH, Don Pigott, Eric Preston
January 14th: JH, Ray/Richard Cousins, John Tennant	July 14th: JH, Roger Blackburn
January 27th: JH, Richard Cousins	July 27th: Colin Jamieson & Peter Moore
January 28th: JH, John Tennant	July 28th: TBA
February 10th: Bruce Garwood, Ken James	August 10th: JH, Tim Davey
February 11th: JH, Chris & Nick Hughes	August 11th: Dennis Lovett, Les Wood
February 24th: JH, Dennis Lovett, John Tennant	August 24th: Chris Lester
February 25th: Chris Garner, Ken James	August 25th: TBA      Bletchley Park show
March 9th: JH, Geoff Bell	August 26th: TBA
March 10th: JH, Dennis Lovett	September 7th: JH, Ernie Johnson
March 23rd: Tim Davey, Ken James	September 8th: JH, Bernard Worden
March 24th: Chris Hughes	September 21st: Woburn Sands Event (not opening)
April 6th: JH, Ernie Johnson	September 22nd: Dennis Lovett, Les Wood
April 7th: JH, Bernard Worden	October 5th: JH, Tony Winn
April 20th: Eric Bowman, Gordon Shrimpton	October 6th: Ray & Richard Cousins
April 21st: Richard & Ray Cousins	October 19th: Eric Bowman, Colin Underwood
May 4th: John Tennant, Chris Hughes	October 20th: JH, Gordon Shrimpton
May 5th: John Tennant, Roger Blackburn      Tattoo	November 2nd: Geoff Bell, Colin Jamieson
May 6th: John Tennant, Chris Lester      Weekend	November 3rd: JH, Fred Collins
May 18th: Bruce Garwood & Ken Wiggins	November 16th: Ken James
May 19th: JH, Fred Collins, John Tennant	November 17th: Chris Hughes
June 1st: Tony Winn	November 30th: Ken James
June 2nd: Dennis Lovett	December 1st: Don Pigott, Eric Preston
June 8th: Jim Wood, Eric Preston	December 14th: Chris Lester, Phil Gilbert
June 9th: Dennis Lovett, Les Wood      Military 96	December 15th: Chris Garner, Ken Wiggins
June 15th: Gordon Shrimpton, Les Wood	<b>JH = John Hatton (Museum co-ordinator).</b>
June 16th: Chris Hughes, John Tennant	If you are unable to work the day allocated please arrange a "swop" with another
June 29th: Richard & Ray Cousins      Boat Club	
June 30th: Chris Garner, John Tennant	





# CONVENTION '96

22nd June - The Beaconsfield School  
Wattleton Road, Beaconsfield

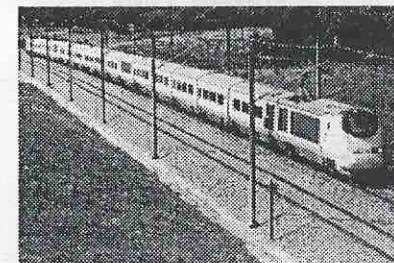
The event at which CMRA clubs and individuals show others what they are doing. All the enjoyment of a modellers' exhibition but with few completed layouts and no crowd! Demonstrations talks, and some trade. Tickets, tables or space must be booked by 15th June from Steve Brayshaw (01707 264824) Only £3.00 - including lunch! Bar. Convention open 10am to 5pm, setting up from 9am.

## Eurostar arrives at Wolverton by David Lean

On the 20th April, Eurostar North of London Set 1 (units 3301/3302), together with pilot locomotives No.s 37607/611 and 2 barrier wagons were stabled at Rugby. During the following night, with the aid of a total possession of the fast lines between Rugby and Bletchley the ensemble moved to Bletchley where the locomotives and barrier wagons were stabled, leaving the Eurostar to run up and down as required.

At about 0650 on the Sunday morning, walking to Wolverton to catch the replacement bus, I heard an unusual noise as I arrived at Wolverton. I thought initially that it was a Tamping machine, but to my surprise it was

the said Eurostar on the Down Fast Line. It departed shortly afterwards going north and was last heard of going round the reverse curves at Weedon.



A Eurostar in action in France

## The British Pacific Locomotive

### An Introduction by Fred Collins

It all started when I happen to talk to the Chairman about one of our publications. I didn't think a lot of the illustration on the cover and was silly enough to say that I could do better. You know the Chairman's persuasive talents as well as I do, so you can imagine what came next. The result was an invitation to get on with it so that it could appear on the pages of this august journal. Little does he know, that I had been planning to do it anyway, as I have always been interested in sketching and painting, particularly railway scenes, but I hadn't done any for years.

So I made up my mind to make a comeback and set off in search some materials. Snag 1 - the art shop in CMK had closed down! I remembered that the architects suppliers at Lloyds Court had started to stock artists materials, so I duly purchased a Rotoring pen, 2 good brushes, a supply of ink and a pack of Bristol Board. I toyed with the idea of buying a Rotoring ellipse stencil, until I found out they were £11 each for a small piece of plastic, so I

set off to W. H. Smith's and bought something similar for £1.35!

About this time, I received a present of "British Pacific Locomotives" by C.J. Allen and this was the starting place. My two favourite locomotives are "Duchesses" and "Britannias". I started work full of misgivings (what had I let myself in for?). Would line and wash drawings reproduce in print? Dennis assured me they would, but was my work good enough? I had a quick answer to that one - NO! The first three drawings of "The Great Bear" hit the rubbish bin, I hadn't realised how out of practise I was. Eventually I managed to produce a drawing which would just about pass.

I present the result of my efforts and feel that they are improving as they go on. I have leaned heavily on Mr Allen for the text which accompanies the illustrations and added some comments of my own, which you may or may not agree with. So let's get the show on the road with article No. 1 - "The Great Bear".



In 1995, the group commissioned transport consultants, TransNet, to prepare a report on the line and its future potential. One of the many recommendations was a new name to give real focus to the line which had been known as the Bletchley - Bedford line and Bedford - Bletchley line depending at which end you lived! The suggested name, "The Marston Vale Line", has subsequently been adopted.

Already some improvements have been made to stations and rolling stock replacement is seen as a priority issue.

**The Leisure industry**

In recent years there has been a tremendous growth in the leisure industry. Two developments affect the line and these were reinforced by the TransNet report. They are:

The Marston Vale Community Forest

Bletchley Park

The Marston Vale Community Forest is an exciting development which will transform the derelict brickwork sites and the areas used for landfill. These will form a major recreational facility to the south-west of Bedford and provide opportunities for walking, cycling, water sports etc. The Forest is easily accessible by the line from the stations of Ridgmont, Lidlington, Millbrook, Stewartby and Kempston Hardwick. Both organisations will promote the others' activities in future.

Bletchley Park was used during the war to break enemy codes and became the most important of the Allies Intelligence Centres. Through this work they developed the worlds first electronic programmable computer "Colossus". In recent times it has been transformed into an important museum, with major developments planned. The Park is

located opposite Bletchley Station and the entrance is a short walk from the station entrance. This complex should attract additional users to the line.

**150 not out!**

In 1994, a committee was set up to promote the 150th Anniversary of the line. A wide range of activities are planned for the year, culminating in major events on the weekend of the 16th/17th November, 1996, the actual 150th anniversary weekend.

Details of events are included in this pack.

**The future**

Over the past few years, there has been a growing desire to reopen parts of the former east - west route and re-establish a cross country route which avoids the need to travel via London. A consortium of 25 local authorities commissioned consultants to look at the feasibility of establishing such a route, the middle section of which utilised the Bletchley - Bedford and Bletchley - Oxford routes.

The cost of rebuilding is estimated at £90m. If the scheme progresses, then the Marston Vale Line will be integral to that scheme.

150 years of operating services between Bletchley and Bedford is no mean achievement. The businessmen of Bedford will be delighted that their legacy is still undertaking the role that they required all those years ago.

The end.



# The Marston Vale Line -Bletchley to Bedford 150 years of serving the community

## Part 2

By Dennis Lovett

**Expansion of the brick making industry**

As already mentioned, bricks were being made at Woburn Sands when the line opened. In 1897, the Forders Company built a new works near Wootton Pillinge, which would later develop and become known as Stewartby. The new works used the "Fletton" mechanised process.

Marston Valley brick works opened in 1930 and was provided with direct access three years later. The London Brick Company opened its works at Ridgmont in the same year.

**Wartime traffic (1939-45)**

The orbital route from Oxford to Cambridge was vital to the war effort. In order to improve traffic flows, wartime connections were provided with the various radial routes at Yarnton (near Oxford), Claydon (a link to the line through Calvert), Bletchley (from the Oxford Line south to the main line) and at Sandy (from the Bedford line north to the main line).

The route was used for conveying both troops and equipment in large quantities and was a strategic route to avoid London. At Cambridge it linked into the many East Anglian airfields. Near to the line of route were major military establishments at Bicester (RAF and Army), Horwood (RAF), Cardington (RAF) and Henlow (RAF).

Bletchley Park, adjacent to Bletchley station was acquired by the Government for "Top Secret" war time work, decoding messages sent by the enemy. One of the main reasons Bletchley Park was chosen, for its now famous wartime role, was due

to it lying approximately half way between the great university cities of Oxford and Cambridge with a direct railway line linking the two. It was realised that a great many intellectual and mathematical types would be required to help break the Enigma machine codes. Most of the mathematicians were brought in from Cambridge, and many used to commute between the two locations.

Several thousand were employed on this work at Bletchley Park. Bletchley was a small railway town and simply could not accommodate all those employed there, so many were billeted in the surrounding viallages and towns, some as far away as Bedford. In the morning up to 5 special trains ran from Bedford to Bletchley bringing in the 'Parkees' to work. Amongst their number was Roy Jenkins, now Lord Jenkins of Hillhead, who lived close by the 'Old Swan' in the centre of Bedford.

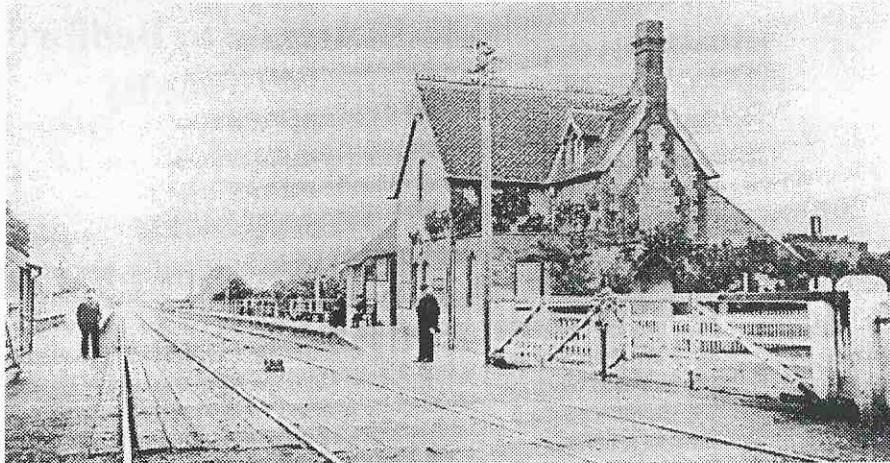
The work undertaken at Bletchley Park shortened the war by three years.

Wartime travel restrictions did result in the closure of many lightly used stations across the nation. The halts at Husborne Crawley, Wootton Broadmead and Kempston & Elstow all fall into this category. They never reopened and were officially closed in 1949.

**Nationalisation**

Following the passing of the Railways Act 1947, the four main railway companies were nationalised and passed from private ownership into the public sector. They became part of the British Transport Commission and traded under the name





An early view of Lidlington station

British Railways (BR). In 1965 this name was shortened to British Rail (BR).

**Under threat**

Closure of the line was mooted in May, 1959 and was vigorously contested. As a result new diesel multiple units were introduced in November 1959 and similar units have been used on passenger trains ever since.

Further closures were announced in 1963, when the famous "Beeching Report" showed the closure of some intermediate passenger stations on the line, although the track was retained for through passenger and freight use. In February 1964 total closure was announced. The whole line was scheduled, despite major outcry, for closure from the 31st December 1967. The sections from Bletchley to Oxford and from Bedford to Cambridge duly closed on that date, although the original section of line from Bletchley to Bedford was reprieved until alternative bus services could be provided.

All goods yards on the line closed in the summer of 1967 with the exception of Bedford St. Johns which survived until

1970.

The Bletchley - Bedford section was again threatened with closure in 1971. Closure was agreed at the end of 1973 and averted at the last minute, due to the proposed replacement bus services not being agreed.

There have been no closure threats since.

In 1980 the Bedford to Bletchley Rail Users Association was formed to look after users interests and to lobby against any future attempts at closure.

**Schools traffic**

The line has been used by school children and students going to and from the schools in Bedford for many years. In recent times this has given the line much needed income and continues to do so today.

**Containerised brick traffic**

Container facilities were installed in 1972 and containers provided for the remaining brick traffic from Forders Sidings. These trains were branded "Fletliner" and ran

until 1985. Trains ran daily to London, Liverpool and Manchester and each train carried the equivalent of 45 lorry loads (lorries were much smaller in 1972).

**New freight traffic**

The decline of the brick industry would result in the railway attracting new traffic - waste material from domestic rubbish bins for landfill. The first trains with waste from the Greater London Council (GLC) ran in April 1974 and have continued to run to the various sites since. These use containers which are unloaded at the site previously used for the "Fletliner" brick trains.

**The Network SouthEast era**

On 10th June 1986 Network SouthEast sector of British Rail was formed and the line transferred to that organisation. At one stage the line was proposed for modernisation and electrification but this was not achieved before reorganisation on 31st March 1994 saw Network SouthEast

split into several train operating companies, of which North London Railways was one.

**Problems and solutions**

In October 1994 the newly formed North London Railways was suffering from staff shortages. Following reorganisation of the railways, some of the staff who had previously operated trains on the line had left to join other emerging operators. A period of mixed bus / train operation could not be avoided but it did cause major concern.

As a result, Bedfordshire County Council in conjunction with Buckinghamshire County Council, Milton Keynes Borough Council, Mid Bedfordshire District Council and Bedford Borough Council, set up a steering group to look at the potential of the line and to ensure its long term security. In addition to the local authorities, other interested parties joined the steering group.

