



# CONVENTION '96

22nd June - The Beaconsfield School  
Wattleton Road, Beaconsfield

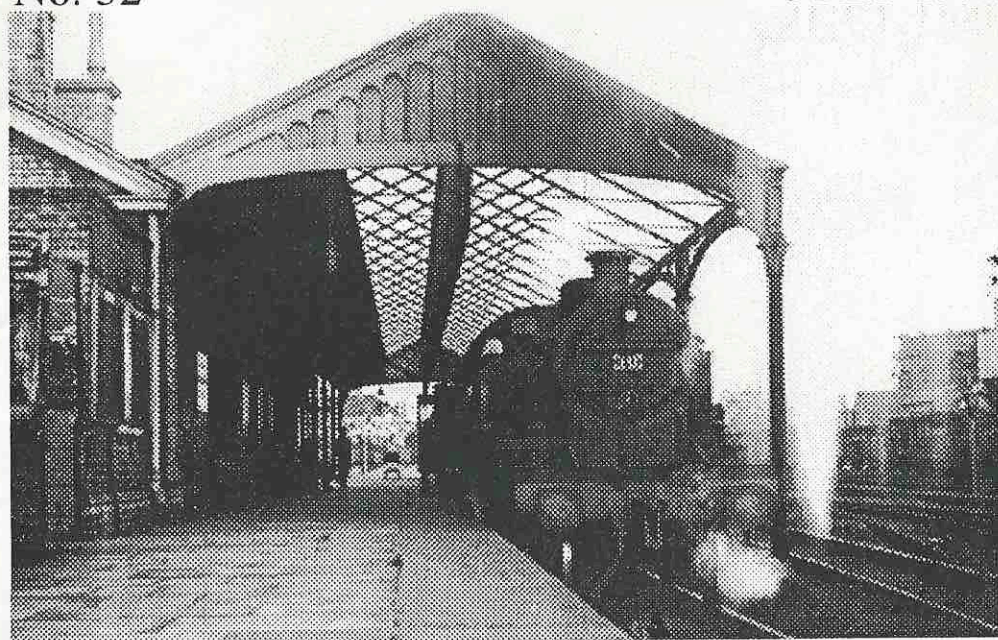
The event at which CMRA clubs and individuals show others what they are doing. All the enjoyment of a modellers' exhibition but with few completed layouts and no crowd! Demonstrations, talks, and some trade. Tickets, tables or space must be booked by 15th June from Steve Brayshaw (01707 264824) Only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



# MKMRS NEWS

No. 52

JULY 1996



A train arrives at St. Albans from Watford Junction in September, 1946. The first part of an article on the line appears inside. Photo : H.C.Casserley

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

## 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

### 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

### CMRA Convention

Details can be found elsewhere in this newsletter about the CMRA Convention being held on the 22nd June at Beaconsfield. Interested

**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.**

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.

### The Scale Show - 19th October

The S Scale Model Railway Society has invited MKMRS to provide 12 (or more) stewards at its 50th Anniversary event. The S Scale Society is a small organisation of talented scratchbuilders who work at 3/16 inch to 1 Foot. Our Honorary Member Ian Pusey, is also Chairman of the S Scale Society and it is important that we support Ian at this event, who after all has done us proud on many occasions in the past. The 2mm Association are also providing exhibits and they too are a specialist group, who scratchbuild many of their models.

This looks to be an excellent show and the organisers have promised not only free entry to those volunteering to Steward but lunch as well from the Leisure Centre caterers.

Volunteers please put your name on the list by the signing in book. Tim Davey has already volunteered and I look forward to supplying Ian with a long list in due course.

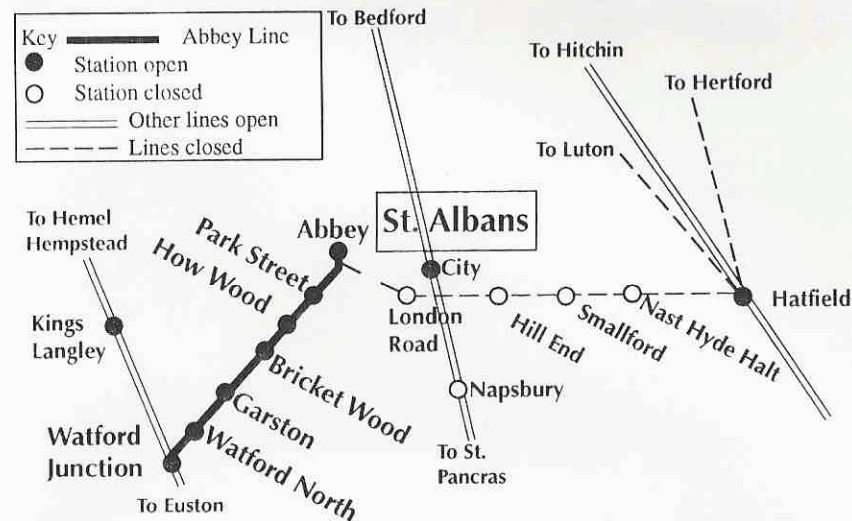
Dennis Lovett, Chairman

### N Gauge too

We understand that the N Gauge Society will be holding an Anniversary at Bletchley Leisure Centre in November 1997.

Further details will appear in this magazine in due course.

### Watford Junction to St. Albans Abbey



Henry VIII, in 1539, the area was owned by the Abbots from St. Albans Abbey.

Watford became a market town in the Middle Ages and was also a convenient stopping place for travellers going to and from London on the primitive roads.

Brewing was introduced in 1619 by Joseph Benskin and this is still undertaken today. Other local industries included agriculture, silk mills and weaving.

The arrival of the Grand Junction Canal and, later, the railway would result in dramatic development of the town.

### Canal proposals

Plans to link the two communities of Watford and St. Albans can be traced back to 1795 when the Grand Junction Canal Company proposed the cutting of a branch, or arm, from the canal at Watford which had first reached the town in 1798. For some reason the canal was never built and the residents of St. Albans had to travel between the city and the wharves at Boxmoor or Watford with their goods.

### A Place in Railway History?

It could well have been St. Albans that adorned the railway history books instead of the Stockton & Darlington Railway. Unfortunately, the proposals by the Canal Company to build a tram or waggonway similar to that found between Croydon and Wandsworth (see Railway History: General section) failed.

### Proposals for building a line between London and Birmingham

As early as 1823, proposals were being made to build a railway between England's two largest cities, London and Birmingham. The first survey was undertaken by Sir John Rennie a year later and recommended a route from Islington to Rickmansworth, Hemel Hempstead, Cheddington, Quainton, Brackley and Coventry. The scheme, like many others at that time, failed and it was not until 1829 that further suggestions were made, when two different companies were formed. One proposed using the route via Coventry whilst the other preferred a route via Oxford and Banbury. In 1830 the two companies joined forces.

## Watford Junction to St. Albans Abbey

by Dennis Lovett

### The City of St Albans

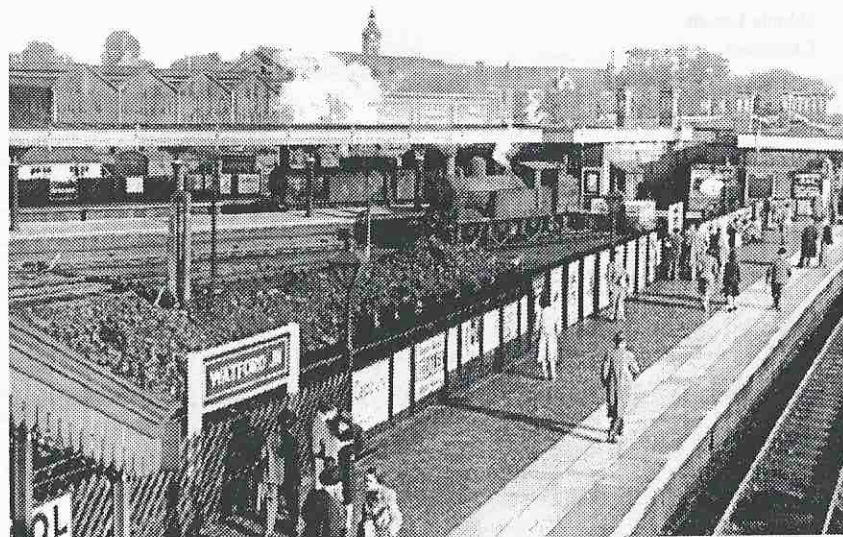
St Albans is an ancient and historic city that can trace its roots back to Roman times. It was the Romans who provided the main transport link through the area, the famous Watling Street, and this road was to be a major contributor to local commerce and the development of the city itself. Around this road grew a major coaching industry. These enterprises were strategically placed to provide refreshment and comfort to passengers and allow for the changing of horses. Prior to the coming of the railways this was the principal form of passenger transport, some 70 stagecoaches a day serving St. Albans. Many of the inns and hosteleries in the city were dependent on the trade to survive

### Watford Junction to St. Albans Abbey

and the coming of the railway resulted in a major downturn in the coaching business and had a devastating effect on the communities which relied upon it. Stagecoach travel was expensive, slow and dangerous, the conditions of the roads were appalling and, after heavy rain, the coaches often became stuck or damaged. Highwaymen were another risk factor and only those with considerable financial backing could travel on this form of transport. Other communities such as Redbourn, Dunstable, Fenny Stratford, Stony Stratford and Towcester were major coaching stations of the pre-railway stagecoach business.

### Watford

Watford's roots can be traced back to Saxon times. The "Wat" section of the name is derived from the Saxon word for hunting "wath", whilst the "ford" section is usually associated with the crossing of a river. In early times a settlement named Caishio existed along with the neighbouring manor of Watford. From the year 790 until the monasteries were dissolved by



Watford Junction station in 1946. St Albans platforms in background

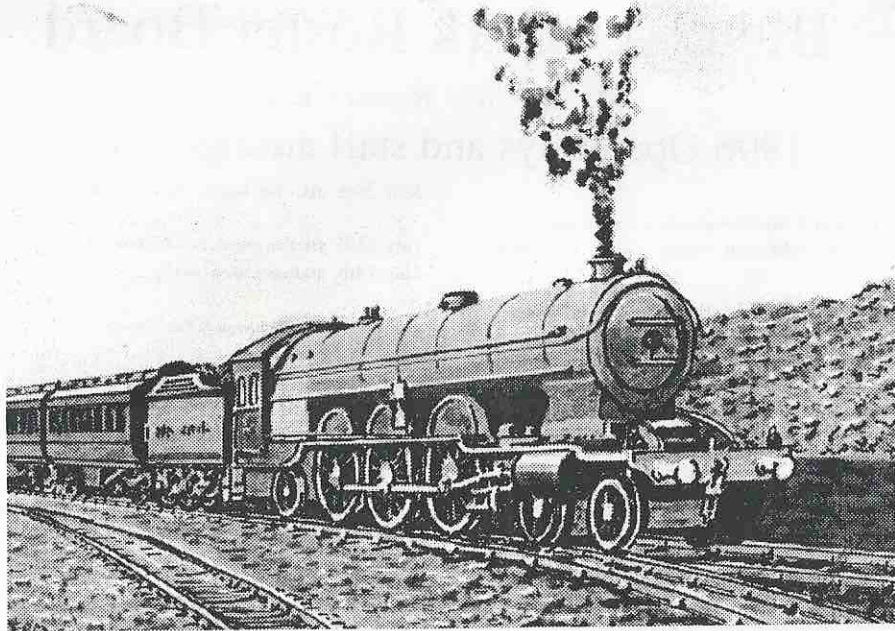
Photograph H. C. Casserley

## Bletchley Park Roster Board

By the Chief Roster Clerk

### 1996 Open Days and staff arrangements

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



## The British Pacific Locomotives No 2: The N.E. Raven Pacifics by Fred Collins

Cylinders: 3 x 19"  
Boiler Pressure: 200 p.s.i.  
Length over buffers: 72' 4.5"  
Weight incl. tender: 143 tons

Built in 1922, the Raven Pacific was actually the third of the Pacific locomotives to emerge (Gresley's was second), but as the Class were so short lived, it is more appropriate to the story to nominate it as No.2.

With amalgamation in the offing, there was rivalry between the Great Northern and North Eastern railways as to which would become the dominant force in the proposed L.N.E.R.

The Raven Pacific was, therefore, built in a hurry to compete with Gresley's Pacific and probably to focus attention on Sir Gilbert Raven becoming Chief Mechanical Engineer to the new organisation.

The strategy did not work on either count, as the Raven Pacific was no match for its Gresley counterpart and Gresley was appointed Chief Mechanical Engineer of the new L.N.E.R.

The N.E.R. Pacific was apparently evolved by stretching

the dimensions of the successful Atlantic class locomotives found on the railway, rather than designing a completely new engine. As with the "Great Bear", it turned out to be no better than the engine it evolved from and brought with it a new set of problems.

Stephenson's motion was used on all three cylinders and all were connected to the leading driving axle which made the front end rather congested.

At 6ft diameter, the boiler equalled the largest parallel boiler in the country at that time and gave the engines a truly massive appearance.

The flatters to deceive and were never outstanding in service. After absorption into the L.N.E.R. various attempts were made to improve their performance and to overcome their mechanical problems. It was apparently given up as a bad job, with scrapping taking place in the mid-1930s, as and when heavy repairs became due.

---

Another Pacific next month

---

## Frank Hewer

It is with regret that I have to inform members of the death of Frank Hewer at the age of 49. It was Frank who advised Les and I of the opportunities emerging at Bletchley Park some two years ago. Had he not done so, then it is unlikely that this organisation would have survived today.

Frank joined us in 1985 and in latter years was an enthusiastic O gauge modeller. He was found behind the Chairman's layout at the last exhibition. Frank had been unwell for some years and had been forced to retire from the railway, where he had worked as a movements inspector in recent years. Despite the illness he suffered, his death still came as a shock to us.

A profile of Frank appeared in issue 16 of the MKMRS NEWS. He first joined us in 1985 having been a former member of the Berkhamsted M.R.S. He was also found a member of Aylesbury BRSA M.R.C. (Frank spent 19 years working at Aylesbury). He was a Bedfordshire County Councillor from 1985 to 1989. Frank also had a love for old fire engines and his engines were early occupants at Bletchley Park. Hence his involvement with Bletchley Park, Frank, could until a few weeks ago, be found in either the club room or at the fire station where he was called Fireman Frank by many children that visited the site.

Frank will be missed. The club was represented at the funeral by the Chairman and the Treasurer. MKMRS has forwarded a donation to Imperial Cancer Research, the charity nominated by Janet and family, following the funeral.

Dennis Lovett  
Chairman



A DMU stands at Sudbury station in Essex with an afternoon departure for Colchester in 1988.

The old station buildings have a leisure centre for company which was built on the old trackbed. The station has now been moved.

Photo: D Lovett