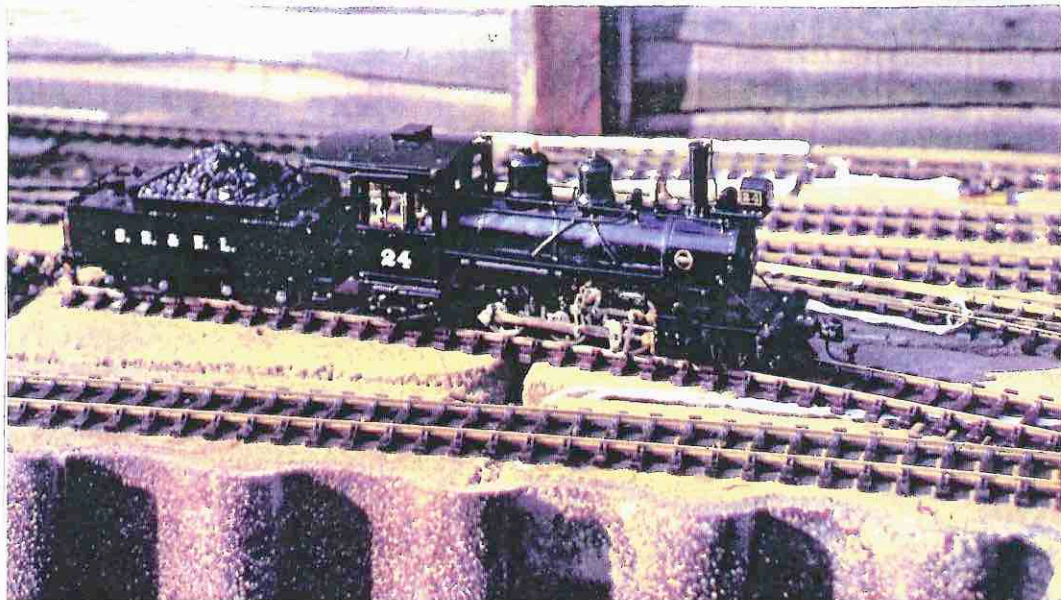




Steve Dennison controls his live steam American locomotive whilst MKMRS visitors look on. Below - Steve's impressive live steam G scale locomotive.



MILTON KEYNES MODEL RAILWAY SOCIETY NEWS

No. 8

NOVEMBER 1992



Steam returns to Towcester - see page 3

Published by Dennis Lovett, Chairman, Milton Keynes Model Railway Society
c/o 4 Browning Crescent, Bletchley, Milton Keynes MK3 5AU.
Telephone: 0908 376750.



SPALDING MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITION



at
SPRINGFIELDS EXHIBITION CENTRE
SPALDING · LINCOLNSHIRE

SATURDAY & SUNDAY
7th & 8th NOVEMBER, 1992
(10 am - 5 pm daily)

- Over 30 layouts (special layouts including Scotland, Siding & Engine)
- Trade Stands, Demonstrations
- FREE video film show
- FREE to enter children's competitions with prizes
- FREE programme (as available)
- FREE children's entertainment
- "Have-a-go Layout"
- Take a ride on "Thomas the Tank Engine"
- FREE car parking - AA suggested
- Licensed Restaurant



Admission: Adults: £2.00, Senior Citizens & Children: £1.50,
Family Ticket: £5.00 (max 2 adults, 2 children)

Organised by: Spalding Model Railway Club & Springfield

For further details contact:
Springfields, Camargate, Spalding, Lincs., PE12 8ET
Telephone: 0776 724862
(check correct to date of publication)

EXHIBITION DIARY

TOLWORTH Showtrain

MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITION
of Hampton Court Model Railway Society



TOLWORTH RECREATION CENTRE
Fullers Way North,
Tolworth, Surrey

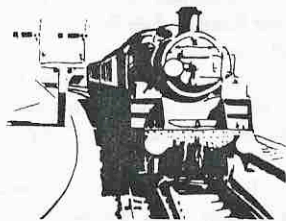
NOVEMBER 14th-15th 1992

Saturday 14th 10am - 5pm / Sunday 15th 10am - 5pm
Adults £2.25 Children £1.50
Family Ticket (2 Adults + 2 Children) £4.00
Senior Citizens £1.50

LAYOUTS INCLUDE:
Quilford O Gauge
Port Victoria (O Gauge)
Swinage (N)
Morpeth (O Gauge)
Hokcombe (O Gauge)
Wentworth Camp (O Gauge)
Hartford Down (O Gauge)
John A Gatty (N Gauge)
Dorset & Dorchester (OO H0)
The Railway (N Gauge)
Waltham Parkway (N Gauge)
Suffolk (OO Gauge)
Romsey (OO Gauge) (N Gauge)

Trade Includes:
Core Modelling Products
Chivers Fineline
Cone Models
Engle Street
Presting Railway
Pat Brindley
Engwood Models
LNER Models
LMS Models
Hornby
Robby Modelling
Tameson Publishing
J & D Models
Steam Age

MANCHESTER MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITION



FRIDAY, 4th DECEMBER, 1992
SATURDAY, 5th DECEMBER, 1992
SUNDAY, 6th DECEMBER, 1992

NEW CENTURY HALL
CORPORATION STREET
MANCHESTER
Near Victoria Station

MANCHESTER MODEL RAILWAY SOCIETY



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	Secretary: Chris Hughes	Committee: Geoff Bell
Vice President: Les Wood	Treasurer: Gordon Etherington	Fred Collins
Chairman: Dennis Lovett	CMRA Rep: Eric Bowman	Phil Gilbert
Vice Chairman: John Symons	Librarian: Mark Wilson	Colin Catley

Is our hobby getting too serious?

The September issue of Scale Model Trains includes an article showing beginners and younger modellers how to make the important step change from train set to something more in keeping with the prototype. The early part of the article includes a statement from a well known modeller who dismisses anyone and anything which falls short of his own exacting standards. If models do not meet them - then they are in his mind, failures. It is used to illustrate a point - it is not seen as the best way of encouraging newcomers!

The SMT article shows how to recreate certain prototype locations using Hornby track components. It does not set out however, to create a layout to Model Railway Journal specification in one fell swoop.

Most of us progressed from train sets of one sort or another. In my case, the train set was Triang (Rovex) and the grey base track, short coaches and locomotives bore some closeness to the prototype. My Princess locomotive was only about half the scale length! On reflection did it really matter. It gave me hours of enjoyment and sustained my interest through my teenage years, so that when a local model railway club was formed, I wished to find out more. Only then did my education begin and no one in the club dismissed my own humble efforts - they simply encouraged me to move into the next stage.

I recently attended a very serious event, where people spent hours peering into boxes and commenting about rivets and the like. There was a brisk trade in components such as chimneys and domes, many being purchased to replace bits from kits, because the builder considered the kit ones to be inferior! Whilst the individuals concerned are perfectly entitled to do what they want, I overheard several of these serious modellers condemning models on layouts because they fell short of their required standards.

At the same gathering many of the operators looked as if they had just survived the morning peak in Clapham 'A' box. Such was the pressure that this event was putting them under. In contrast, those running the Hornby Tinplate looked very relaxed and were clearly enjoying themselves. Perhaps there is a significance there.

There is clearly a need in both the model press and in exhibitions to cater for all interests in the hobby. We must never let the hobby get too serious and to allow "rivet counters" to dictate policy. The beginners need to be encouraged, after all we were all beginners once!

Dennis Lovett
Chairman



BanRail 92

A reminder that the club O gauge layout will be attending the event at Banbury on Sunday 15 November. It is a one day show - SUNDAY only.

QGM

A short QGM will be held on 27 October. This will take place at 8pm in the club room and will be followed by an illustrated talk (see below).

27 October (following QGM)
NO SPEAKER THIS MONTH -
ALVERTON TO BE PUT UP TO ALLOW
DRIVER TRAINING FOR BANBURY.

24 NOVEMBER 8PM
Narrow Gauge Railways - Illustrated
Peter Jarvis

Exhibition Diary

The following exhibitions are scheduled for November;

- 7 Oxford MRC
- 7 Dunstable MRC
- 14 Railex, Aylesbury
- 14/15 Hampton Court
- 15 Banbury (MKMRS attending)
- 21/22 Watford
- 28 ExpoEM, Portsmouth
- 28 Royston
- 28 Letchworth
- 28 High Wycombe

Club Diary

Forthcoming events are;

- 24 Nov ILLUSTRATED TALK
NARROW GAUGE - PETER JARVIS
- 22 Dec Christmas Quiz
- 26 Jan 1993 AGM + Competition
- 23 Feb To be advised
- 30 Mar WORLD STEAM, Mike
Hedderley. Illustrated (slides)

Now is the time to start completing your models for the club competition at the end of January. Full details and rules will be given in the next issue of news. Notices of the AGM will also appear in the December issue.

Library News

With this issue you will find a list of all the magazines that we are MISSING from our library. Please check your loft or garage to see if you have any of the missing issues that you would like to donate (or place on permanent loan!).

The cataloguing has kept us busy for the past umpteen weeks. We now know what we need. Can you help to fill the gaps.

Mark Wilson awaits your deliveries!

layout in 4mm/16.5, as there was already an N gauge layout, attending school open days, going to exhibitions as far away as Spalding and Enfield and generally putting railway modelling in Leighton Buzzard on the map.

1980 saw some of us going to Rainhill for the Rocket 150 celebrations. The club was also represented at all sorts of exhibitions. There was an approach from the library for some sort of club activity for local clubs and societies show there in September. We also became involved in moving chickens at a local farm (the manager was a member and had to do this job from time to time); well, it helped funds!

The winter 1980/81 session saw a member's slide evening, a quiz and a talk from Peter Jarvis on the Wolverton-Stony Stratford Tramway. Club layouts progressed amid the usual discussions on track/wheel standards etc. By 1984 we had listened to Arthur Grigg, Hugh Ramsay, Les Wood and Austin Daly; we had been to the Severn Valley Railway; we had seen numerous slides; we had affiliated to the MRC; we had been to a number of exhibitions and been active in CMRA.

But the writing was beginning to appear on the wall. Some members moved away because of their jobs but we were not able to replace them. So, the club had a steady nucleus of about 15 members, although not all of them turned up at the same time. Progress on the layouts slowed; baseboards warped; the trains did not run. The hut was cold and damp; not the best conditions for modelling. In 1984 the

subscriptions were increased, club layouts simplified and a survey conducted on the most appropriate night to meet.

We were invited to attend the library local clubs exhibition in September and the Wolverton Methodist Church exhibition in October. The layout (Downcombe, a typical Great Western line in Somerset) performed well, although supported on paste tables.



However, the committee was concerned about the membership numbers and finances. There were only 2 or 3 members who were not also on the committee. We struggled through 1985 but there was no improvement. We could not attract any new members in spite of extensive local advertising. The 1986 AGM was the last. The committee now comprised all club members. The subscriptions would have had to be increased beyond economic levels in order to pay our way. The existing layouts, which had never been finished nor properly run, needed replacing. The hut needed work done to it to make it really suitable for railway modelling.

We bit the bullet and went into suspended animation. I doubt there will be another MRC in Leighton Buzzard for many reasons. Looking back, in spite of everything, it was fun while it lasted.

Leighton Buzzard MRC
July 1979 to February 1986

R.I.P.

Railway Modelling in Leighton Buzzard

Eric Bowman

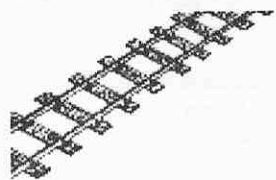
I suppose there have always been people in Leighton Buzzard interested in railway matters ever since the London and Birmingham Railway built its tracks through the empty fields to the west of the canal and town in 1837. An added excitement at the time must have been the tunnel through the sandstone ridge near the hamlet of Linslade. People were now travelling faster than a horse for the first time in history.

I doubt we shall ever know the identity of the first railway modellers. However, in 1978 three members of MKMRS who lived in Leighton Buzzard though it was about time the modellers in the town came out into the open. The proprietor of one of the local ironmongery shops was also a modeller and had a large section of his shop devoted to model railways. An inaugural meeting was set for July 1979. After local publicity in the shop, the library and the railway modelling magazines in the newsagents, we awaited the response. Some 50 men turned up.

The result of the meeting was the formation of the Leighton Buzzard & District MRC. We found out that we were not the first model railway club in the town. Apparently there had been one in the mid to late 1960s which had folded up due to lack of support. Little did we know that history has a habit of repeating itself. However, this was some way in the future.

The steering committee busied itself with drawing up a constitution, negotiating with the local branch of the Salvation Army for the use of an old wooden Scout hut, establishing a club identity, opening a bank account and generally building a sound base for railway modelling activities.

The club officially met for the first time on Monday, 1 October 1979. The formal opening of the clubroom was set for 15 October by Jim Armstrong, then chairman of CMRA. This was duly performed and we were off on the giddy round of building a club



LEIGHTON BUZZARD & District M.R.C.

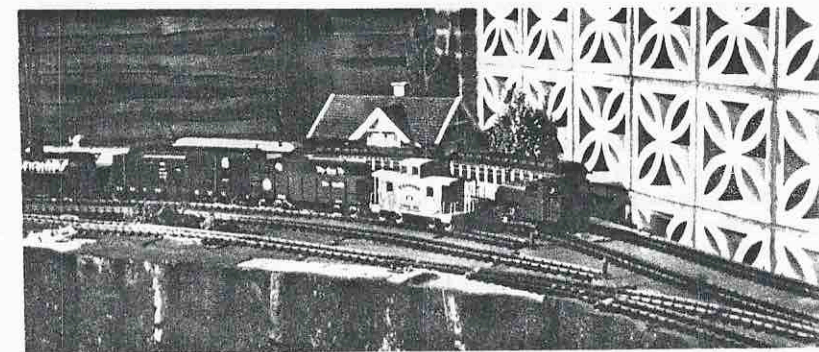
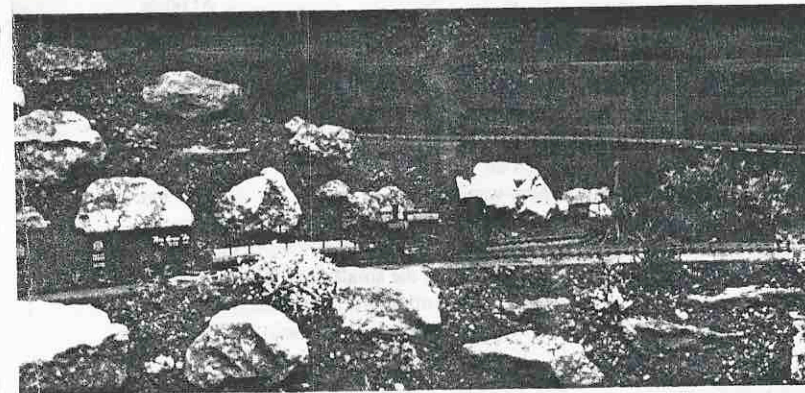
Steam returns to Towcester

Despite the wet weather, Geoff Bell, Colin Jamieson, Austin Daly, Gordon Eckersley, Tony Frazer, Chris Lester, Chris Holmes and Dennis Lovett assembled in the garden of Steve Dennison at Towcester for an afternoon running session on the new G scale garden layout.

Construction of the line is impressive and includes some good gradients for testing out the locomotives. A lot of hard work had been undertaken as Peggy's before and after photographs showed.

In addition to Steve's impressive collection of American rolling stock, Chris Holmes ran a Swiss electric locomotive (LGB) and Austin Daly steamed his Welsh narrow gauge locomotive. Along with Steve's own American steam locomotive, it could be the first case of steam in Towcester since the closure of the SMJ line in the early 1960's.

Our thanks to Steve & Peggy for inviting us. Steve will be reporting on the construction of the line in due course.



From the Booking Office

CASTLETHORPE

The Editor talks to Richard Prue

Richard Prue, joined the LMS in March 1942. During his railway career, he undertook a wide range of duties and retired in 1984 as Manager in charge of the Booking Office, Cash Office & Accounts Department at Euston. Although not a club member, he is often involved. One of the drawbacks, I suppose of your daughter being married to the Chairman.

Castlethorpe is a small village in North Bucks close to the Northants border. The main London - Birmingham railway passed through the village which was not considered important enough to have a station until 1882. Castlethorpe was a rural station and served the mainly agricultural community. In addition to a Station Master, the station staff consisted of a porter (2), booking clerk (1), part time goods clerk (1) and signalman (3). The SM also had responsibility for the signalman at nearby Hanslope box (3). The figures in brackets represent the total staff numbers required for shift working (eg 3 x signalman = 3 x 8 hour shifts).

Richard Prue was brought up on the farm, his father being a farm manager. They lived during the early years of the war at a farm near Yardley Gobion, not far from Castlethorpe. When he was due to leave Towcester Grammar School, his father was talking to the then Castlethorpe, Station Master, Less Gunn. He

had a vacancy for a Junior Booking Clerk and invited him to send his son along for an informal interview. He was given the job.

As a Junior Booking Clerk, he was required to work from 0800-1748 Monday to Friday and 0800-1200 on Saturdays. At other times the duty porter booked tickets.

The station had 4 platforms and an impressive signalbox, which stood high against the road picture on the island platform. To reach the top you had to negotiate 60 steps. There was a couple of sidings and a goods hut. The local coal merchants Gobbey & Bates (Castlethorpe) and Wiggins (Northampton) had facilities in the small yard. The station platforms had oil lamps for lighting, whilst the booking office boasted electricity! All ticket stock was Edmondson card tickets and the exchange of warrants from Hanslope Park was part of the war time workload.

Hanslope Park was the home of the Diplomatic Wireless Service and also His Majesty's Governments Communications Centre. A great deal of parcels and small goods traffic was generated and received at Castlethorpe as a result. A village carter carried out the local deliveries on behalf of the railway and its customers.

His job brings him into contact with many of the well known railway journalists and photographers. He also liaises with model manufacturers who require facilities for re-searching rolling stock etc.

In the early 1970's Dennis sold off all his OO stock and moved into N gauge. Reliability of locomotives was very disappointing and when he inherited a large collection of Hornby Dublo and Trix Twin he took the opportunity to move back into OO. During the next few years he busied himself with building up a collection of locomotives and rolling stock.

Marriage to Jenny in 1978 retained railway links. Jenny was born in a railway house at Claydon station and had lived for several years at Woburn Sands station. Father-in-law Richard was later to become his boss at Euston!

Dennis joined the committee of MKMRS in 1977 and apart from a short break to undertake the Cannon Street exhibition, has been Secretary, Exhibition Manager, Secretary and was appointed Chairman in 1988.

He is keen to see MKMRS retain it's position in the modelling world and has been keen to see the club move forward in improving facilities and moving into new projects. He believes in model railway clubs being open to both beginner and specialist and acknowledges that this will enable the specialist to pass on skills through working alongside each other. Although he works in O gauge, he has diversified into N gauge and has steered the N gauge project through the various committee stages.

With sons Darren and Simon now taking a keen interest in model railways, the next generation of MKMRS members are ready and waiting!

(Les Wood)

Historical Model Railway Society

Speaker to be advised

25 November 1992 at 8pm

MKMRS Club Room

Please note - All MKMRS members are invited to attend. We have free admission to their meetings in return for lending them our club rooms.

Other MKMRS Meetings
24 Feb, 28 April.

Oxford to Cambridge

Richard Crane visited us at the end of October and gave a very interesting talk on the Oxford to Cambridge line - then and now.

Richard is Chairman of the Bedford-Bletchley Rail Users Group and gave an insight into their activities,

In all a good evening. The only disappointment was the small turn out. These evenings are usually worth noting in your diary. Please see club diary on page 2.

(Dennis Lovett)

In the beginning (Part 6)

Newsletter No. 16 (November 1974), discusses experiences with N gauge. At that time N gauge was not all it was cracked up to be and loco performance from one leading British manufacturer, was not too good!. The Editor visited Gordon Etherington and described Gordon's GWR line. 49 locomotives were in service and the 50th, a King, was inspected in the erecting shops, under construction.

Dennis Lovett also described his layout which was a first attempt. Barrie Chapman was the subject of the profile and Editor, John Mann outlined his experiences of ordering goods by post.

The Secretary, John Symons, gave details of a film show planned for 17 December at Rectory Cottages. The water in the second basement was still giving cause for concern and this problem continued to frustrate the club officers. The multi-gauge test tracks were being put to good use and the club had exhibited at several shows during the past few months.

Newsletter No. 17 (May 1975) reported on the Chiltern Model Railway Associations Convention at Hatfield. During a discussion on exhibitions, the problem of finding new layouts for exhibitions was raised and gave Editor, John Mann, material for a good editorial on the subject.

Jim Wood invited members to build a locomotive, whilst Gordon Etherington opened a discussion on the proposed new club layout with the words "At the risk of

being expelled from the committee"! Gordon was defending the corner of those who felt unhappy that the new Victoria Road layout was not being built to universal track standards, despite the fact that all of Gordon's own stock was fitted with finescale wheels! As the argument raged, a compromise was reached. The layout was built to finescale standards with pointwork adjusted to take most makes of universal wheel. Only the coarsest Triang wheels came to grief!

John Mann produced an article "thoughts on ambition". Amazing isn't it how Editors get landed with writing most of the articles! The article described how modellers make really ambitious plans and then have to come to terms with reality!

Les Wood visited the Scottish exhibition in Glasgow. In his notes he concludes, "A good show but too many Triang-Hornby locomotives in existence". Now where have we heard that before (see June 1992 editorial!).

Our 2nd Exhibition took place at Bletchley Leisure Centre on 1 November 1975. Amongst the layouts on show were the Torrandor Valley 009 layout of Andy and Doreen Andrews, Catterick Bridge by Jim Armstrong and the famous Heckmondwike layout of the North London P4 Group. There was the usual mix of layout scales and included members layouts from Jem Wood, David Smith, Colin French and Brian Dudley. The OO and O gauges layout of the club were also in action. Bletchley NUR with local historian Arthur Grigg displayed their banners

Newsletter No. 18 (February 1976) outlines the search for new club premises, then taking place. The Editor, John Mann explained how fortunate we were to enjoy the Holne Chase facilities at reasonable rates, when many model railway clubs were having accomodation problems, according to reports in the model railway press. Chris Mann gave a report on the Leighton Buzzard Narrow Gauge Railway. Don Pigott produced an interesting articles on buildings and scenery "It is right, if it looks right!"

Colin French reported on his Brean Sands layout, which represented the club at many exhibitions. Colin was at pains to point out that the initials S & D stood for Swift and Delightful or Supreme and Distinguished, but never Slowly and Dirty as most club members thought!

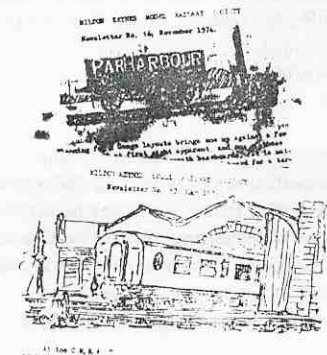
Newsletter No. 19 (May 1976) deals with the scale/gauge ratio problems that were causing many a 4mm modeller problems at that time. Brought home by the 21st Anniversary of the EM Gauge Society, the Editor asks "OO forever?". At that time continental manufacturers were entering the Briiish market with HO models (Lima and Fleischmann) and P4/S4 was also increasing in popularity.

Les Wood produced an article on the rise and fall of the GW/GC joint line. John Mann described his layout activities in "Slow line to Batley". An article on signalling and a book review completed the line up.

Club Diary outlined the layouts being shown on 15 May at Wellsmead School. Mr Bedser of Bedford was the speaker on 31 May on wagon construction. On 3 July the club exhibited at the Olney Flower Festival.

The club outing to the Severn Valley was scheduled for 11 July.

The QGM held on 27 April created much discussion on the search for new premises. Vice-Chairman Les Wood ran a club quiz and Colin French acted as timekeeper and referee!



Profile - Dennis Lovett Les Wood catches up with the Chairman

Dennis was born in Fenny Stratford into a local railway family. His father spent 49 years on the footplate, working from Bletchley Depot. Grandfather, began his railway career at Lords Bridge signalbox, near Cambridge and ended up as a controller at Bletchley during World War 2, not bad seeing he retired in 1939!

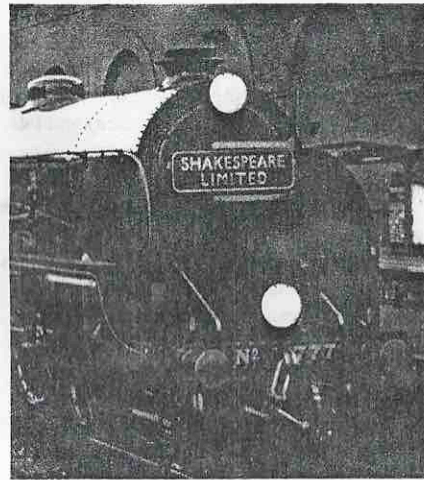
At the age of six weeks, the young Dennis travelled north by train to Galashiels on the Waverley Route, a journey he was to make many times during visits to his Grandmother. Relations also lived near Forfar and frequent rail trips along the now closed Strathmore line from Perth were enjoyed.

Railways played an important part in family life and at the age of 5 a Triang Princess set was obtained for Christmas. Over the years the trainset was added to and continued until 1969 when he registered his interest in the proposed Model Railway club then being discussed. On formation he became one of the first Associate Members, being only 15 at the time!

Trainspotting and later photography of trains was pursued, the latter gradually taking over. He attended the end of steam at Carnforth in August 1968.

On leaving school he joined BR at Euston and after two years left to work in magazine publishing. An activity which was to come in handy! Dennis worked for eight years for local publishing company and during the mid 1970s became a regular writer/photographer for both model and prototype railway journals.

When the publishing company closed, Dennis returned to British Rail in 1979 and is currently Communications Officer for Network SouthEast. He spent a number of years at Waterloo in the Southern Region Advertising Department and worked on many of the major campaigns including South Western Steam, East Grinstead Electrification and the launch of then Wessex Electrics. He was Joint Exhibition Manager of the 1986 Cannon Street event and much to the amusement of MKMRS members, was locked out after leaving the site to check on the crowds! A more notorious factor of the weekend was the need to be present to unload the van at 06.30 on the Saturday morning with breakfast not commencing until 07.00 back at Waterloo. Travelers Fare eventually opened up at 10.30 and never have bacon rolls tasted so good. To stop the moaning, guess who paid?



N0.777 at Cannon St, August 1986

Being an agricultural area, a great deal of business was done with local farmers, by the renting out of railway sacks. These would be hired on a weekly basis and they would be returned either empty or else full of grain for sending elsewhere. Cattle and poultry food was another commodity dealt with at the station, Levers having a store in the yard.

One of the most interesting workings was a train that left Bletchley around 0510 each weekday morning. Conveying goods wagons, milk vans and e.c.s. vehicles (empty coaching stock), the train was usually worked at this time by an ageing Cauliflower goods locomotive. After shunting, the locomotive then moved to the south end of the train and this then formed the 0820 Up train, popular with school children bound for Wolverton. By changing trains at Wolverton, passengers could pick up a semi-fast express to London, which gave an 0949 arrival at Euston.

There was a great deal of milk traffic and the farmer with local milk rounds often took additional milk supplies from farmers at

Banbury, the milk being moved via Bletchley. One of the porters tasks was to heave the churns up the stations steps to the booking office so the milkman could collect them! There was also a great deal of livestock movement and in season, sugar beet outwards.

Richard transferred to Roade later in 1942 but returned to Castlethorpe as Station Master in 1951, to cover a temporary vacancy. He was a Relief Station Master at that time working from Rugby. On his return to Castlethorpe, Harry Ward, a porter, Jesse Robinson and Len Harper (who had only one arm) from the signal box were still there from his earlier period. Within a few days a child fell from the Northbound Royal Scot and was killed, causing the new Station Master additional hassle.

The station was rebuilt during the modernisation of the WCML in the 1960's. Despite this expenditure, it closed for goods on 6 April 1964 and to passengers, on 7 September the same year.

A heavily retouched photograph of Castlethorpe during the early days of the century. The signalbox should be above the train, next to the bridge, but has been removed by an over enthusiastic retoucher! The station looked like this from opening until rebuilding, just before closure.

