

Make a note of this Weekend
**Saturday 1st July and
Sunday July 2nd 2000**



**Sandye Place School
Park Road, Sandy, Beds**



Model Railway Exhibition

30+ Layouts including;

Vintage Collectors' layouts from 1920's onwards

Trade Stands for the Modeller and Collector

National Collectors' Clubs and Society Stands

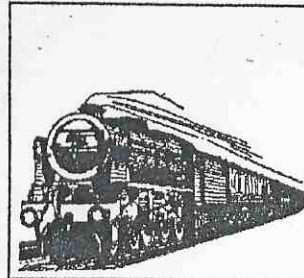
Book signings by well known authors

Saturday 10.30am to 5.30pm

Sunday 10.30am to 5.30pm

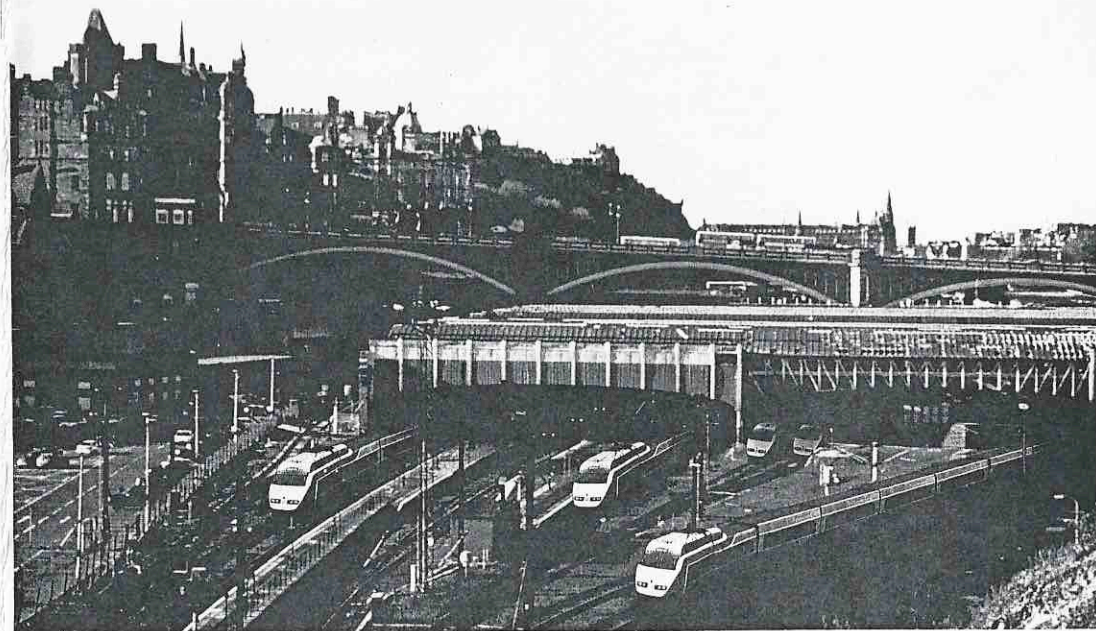
**Jointly organised by Sandye Place PTA
and the Train Collectors Society.**

Further information contact 01767 691401 or
WWW.traincs.demon.co.uk



Milton Keynes Model Railway Society

Newsletter No. 96 MARCH 2000



The MKMRS is associated with:

- The Chiltern Model Railway Association
- The Model Railway Club
- The World War II Railway Study Group

Working within the Blechley Park Museum

Whilst Continental or American wheel standards are perfect for meeting the wheel standard requirements, we ask operators of such stock to bear in mind the difference in loading gauge. Some stock hits the bridges, whilst others scrape the platforms doing damage to both structure and / or rolling stock. Please check with Chris or Gordon before running your Big Boy around!

Models made before 1980 are the ones which cause the most problems, unless of course they have finescale wheels. Most wheels available for kit locomotives etc. are to finescale standards.

If you are in any doubt, all we ask is for you to check first. It could save the layout and / or your stock requiring some major work.

Test Tracks (Wilton to Sherwood)

The test tracks, which like Topsy developed in our days at Bletchley Park, have had to be taken out of use, to allow;

- *Replacement of points which had been suffering from work plastic frogs
- *Rewiring
- *Construction of new control panels

This work is now progressing and Wilton is currently in "blockade" mode, whilst Tony and his helpers carry out some major engineering work (a touch of West Coast Main Line here - Ed).

Once the work has been completed at Wilton, then the engineers will be moving to the Sherwood end, so that the same process can be repeated.

The pointwork will no longer suffer from plastic frogs but will have live frogs, to enable smoother operation in future.

MKMRS SWEATSHIRTS & POLO SHIRTS - AT LAST YEARS PRICES

Sweatshirts (Maroon with MKMRS logo) £14.50

Polo shirts (Maroon with MKMRS logo) £12.50

*Both can be personalised with your name for £3 extra.

Orders please to Gordon Shrimpton

MILTON KEYNES MODEL RAILWAY SOCIETY FOUNDED 1969

Back on the footplate

You will be aware from the Editorial in the February issue of MKMRS NEWS, that John Dibben has decided to stand down as Editor. I would like to thank John for his work in ensuring that members received a copy each month.

This issue concludes our 8th year of publication and we are fast nearing the 100th issue mark. This magazine is the third such attempt to keep members informed of club activities and is by far the most successful of these publications. I know that John thought its days were numbered - I personally believe that there is still a need for such a publication and I have therefore decided that until a new Driver is appointed, I will return to the footplate for a few more runs!

Should there be a willing Editor waiting to relieve the crew at the next station stop, I would be delighted to hand over the regulator. Until that happens, then I am afraid that you are going to have to put up with me for the next few journey's.

A right carpeting!

Work continues to make our complex at Bletchley Park more professional. At the AGM, I announced the problems that we had experienced with the floor and thanks to Steve Dennison, we are now in receipt of a large quantity of industrial quality carpet tiles, which should enable us to improve both the floor and the ambience of the various rooms themselves. As the carpet in the tinplate room has proved, it is also a lot warmer on the feet!

Fred is now identifying the holes filled with rotten timber that can be removed and filled. Once done, then we will be in a position to start laying the tiles.

We were fortunate that Steve's factory was about to embark on replacing all its tiles and that Steve was able to transport them to Bletchley Park. Thanks to all those who helped unload and sort them.

It's a good job that your Chairman mentioned it at the AGM and that a positive has come out of a negative and that we have been able to keep the main club room open, when it looked like the deteriorating floor would cause a temporary closure.



Dennis Lovett
Chairman

Club Noticeboard

Historical Model Railway Society (Bedford Branch)

The HMRS will be using our club room for the last meeting of the current session. It will take place at 1930 on Wednesday April 26th, when Ian Forsyth will talk about "Modelling the London & Birmingham Railway". As this was the first company to serve Bletchley in 1838, it should be very interesting.

Woughton Swapmeet

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

May 14 September 17th December 3rd

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

Bletchley Park Roster

Saturday April 1: Eric Bowman / Eric Preston / Jim Wood
Sunday April 2: Gordon Shrimpton / Roger Blackburn / Ian Leigh

Saturday April 15: Dennis Lovett / Austin Daly / Ken James
Sunday April 16 Fred Collins / Bernard Worden / Phil Wood

Saturday April 29: Geoff Bell / Stephen Walker / John Dibben
Sunday April 30: Bruce Garwood / Ken Wiggins / Martin Shenton

Saturday 13 May: Colin Jamieson / Tony Winn / Jeff Mathie
Sunday 14 May: Chris Hughes / Nick Hughes / Steve Ellingham

Saturday 27 May: Chris Lester / Tim Davey / Phil Gilbert
Sunday 28 May: Les Wood / Mark Wilson / Paul Wakeley
Monday 29 May: Volunteers required please

Saturday 10 June: Eric Bowman / Jeff Mathie / Austin Daly
Sunday 11 June: Gordon Shrimpton / Dave Ruck / Stephen Walker

Saturday 24 June: Dennis Lovett / Ken James / John Dibben
Sunday 25 June: Bruce Garwood / Ken Wiggins / Tony Winn

Please note that John Hatton / John Tennant and Ken Ramms are not rostered as they attend most weekends.

Verney Junction

I would like to use space within MKMRS NEWS to clear up any misunderstanding that may have arisen over the type of stock which can be operated on Verney Junction.

It is worth reminding ourselves that the layout was built some 25 years ago during the mid 1970s as the club's principal exhibition layout. The first club layout Buckingham Road had been generously donated and was initially operated as an L shape layout before being extended to a continuous run. Verney Junction was, therefore, our very first layout to be built from a blank sheet of paper.

It was built in FINESCALE OO, as EM or P4 were not as common as they are today and the OO modellers, of which was the vast majority of the club at that stage decided to work to finer standards than the normally accepted universal OO, such as Peco. The decision was made easier because of the lack of funding available to do anything apart from scratchbuilding the pointwork and using SMP flexible track.

After several years in retirement the layout, has been brought back into use and is doing a pretty good job. Only the scenic work remains to be tackled and this will take a good while longer to complete. The new section which carries the Buckingham / Banbury branch is now progressing towards completion and has visibly improved the layout considerably.

The generous donation of stock by Ernie has answered two prayers. Firstly it is of the right vintage and prototype for a local line and secondly, it reduces the need to us stock from other sources (eg you the members!).

For those who do wish to operate their own stock, be it on a club night or operating weekend, it has been necessary for us to ensure that we do not cause irreparable damage to the trackwork. Because the layout is finescale there is a need to restrict the use of stock which has less than wheels of a finescale standard. This has been caused by using stock that has coarse wheels or where the back to back wheel arrangements have not been suitably adjusted. The latter course of action can be easily rectified, by borrowing a wheel back to back gauge from either Chris Hughes or Gordon Shrimpton. Both are more than willing to show you how to adjust wheels, which is easier to do than to write about it!!

Many of the replacement wheels sold over the past 20 years cause no problems. Those produced by Gibson, Romford, Jackson, K's and others are manufactured to finescale standards. Ready to run stock, such as that produced by Triang, Triang-Hornby etc. are the ones which cause the damage. Some of the early models from Margate, do not like operating on either Peco track or the current track distributed from the same factory which made the early products! Advances have, however, been made in recent years, which have resulted in BACHMANN stock, for instance, operating without modification or rewheeling on Verney Junction.

Virgin reveals 200 m/h (330 km/h) railway for the East Coast Main Line

Virgin Rail Group has revealed proposals for the East Coast franchise, following its formal submission to the shadow Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) on 21st February. Invited to consider a 20-year replacement franchise by the SRA, Virgin has pinpointed capacity as the key problem and the creation of a new high-speed line as the solution.

The radical new plan is designed to double available capacity while avoiding the massive disruption, which a purely line-of-route upgrade entails. The building of a new high speed line releases capacity on the existing east coast main line for the expansion plans of other passenger and freight operators in the corridor.

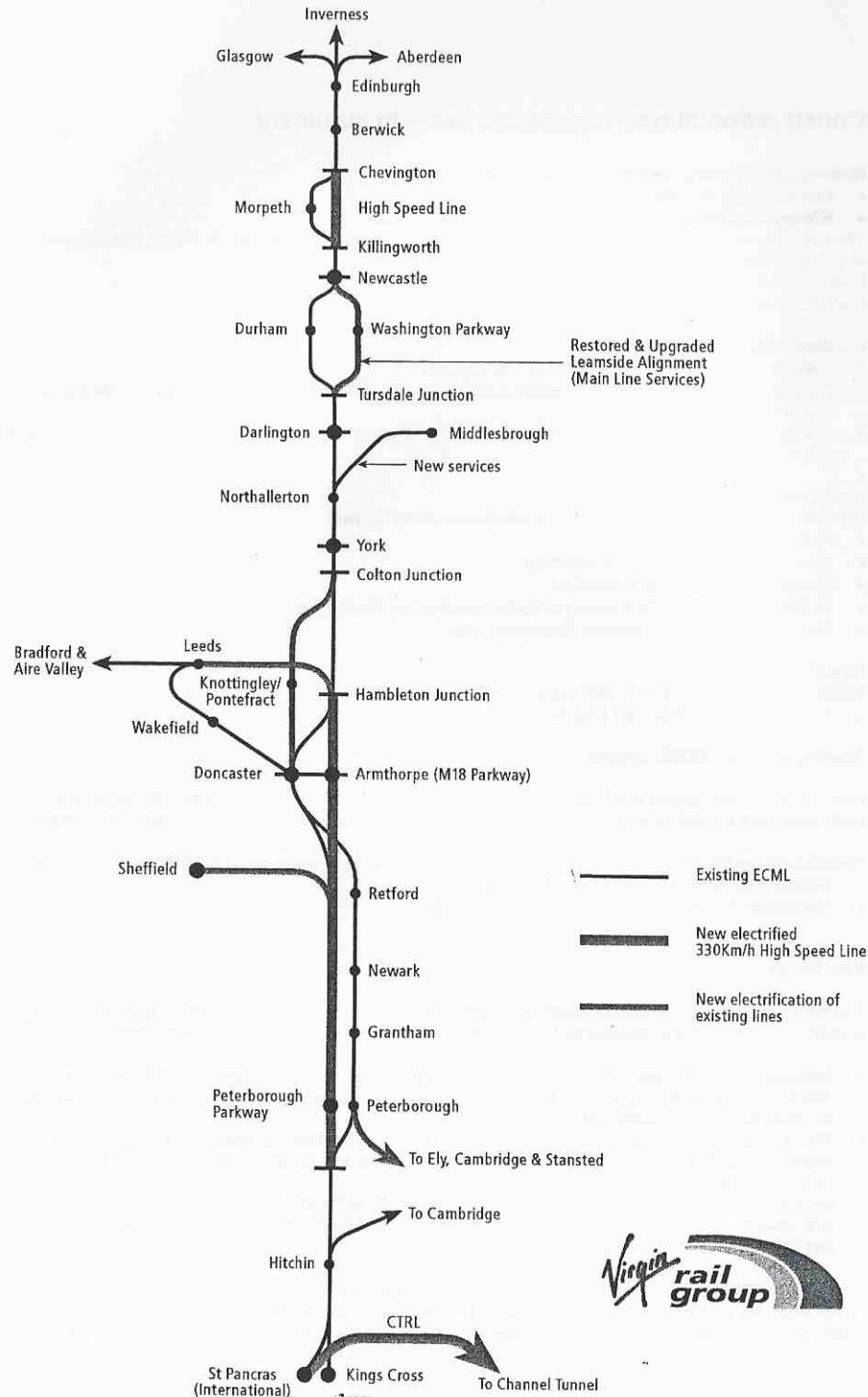
The proposals envisage new means to bring fresh private sector investment into the railway, as has been repeatedly called for by Shadow SRA Chairman, Sir Alastair Morton. Virgin has teamed up with Bechtel, a world leader in major project implementation to deliver the new infrastructure. Railtrack will also have a central role and much of the already-developed East Coast upgrade, both north and south of the new high speed line will be needed to match the planned increase in line capacity.

Virgin plans to invest in a fleet of new high-speed trains (Virgin à Grand Vitesse: VGV), to be introduced over a period from 2005 through to 2009 when the new high-speed line will open. The trains will operate at existing line speeds (125 mile/h) and then, from 2009 at 205 mile/h (330 km/h, the new European 'standard' for high-speed lines) over the new line. The VGV fleet will be capable from the outset of operating not only over the new East Coast corridor, but also onwards via the Channel Tunnel to Paris, Amsterdam, Cologne and Brussels via the European high-speed rail networks.

The new high-speed services will be complemented by a much-improved service over the existing line, which meets the aim to ensure that all areas in the East Coast corridor get a share of the benefit. New services are planned to key centres such as Teesside and Lincoln, currently bereft of direct trains to London. The high-speed line also makes possible a new high-speed service to Sheffield.

The plan will bring not only substantial increases in comfort and service frequency, but also dramatic reductions in journey times:

London – Edinburgh	3h 15
London – Newcastle	2h 05
London – Leeds	1h 25
London – Sheffield	1h 15

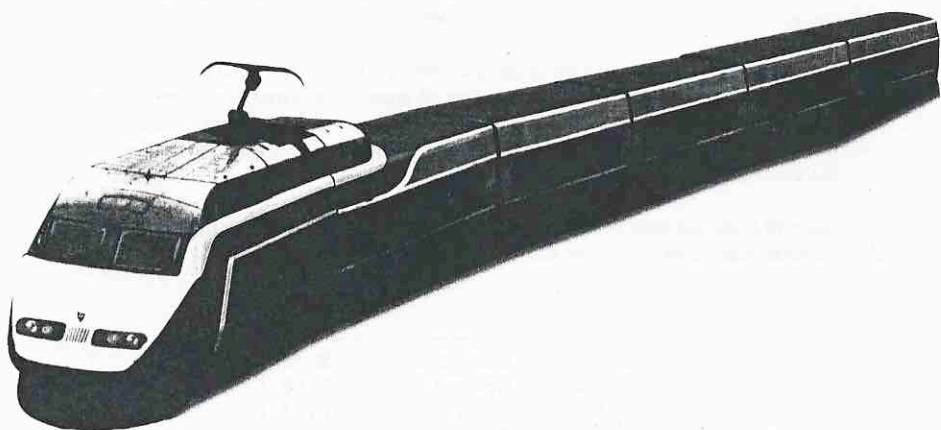


[Note: times shown are for high speed services with two intermediate stops, 2009]

High-speed trains north of Edinburgh are planned to be hauled by a small fleet of highly powered diesel locomotives so that Aberdeen, Dundee and Inverness can also share in the shorter journey times.

Passengers will not have to wait until 2009 to see improvements. As early as 2003, plans will be implemented to replace the 25 year old diesel HST fleet currently used on the east coast franchise with a new fleet of 125 mile/h tilting diesel trains. These will utilise a stretched version of the Super Voyager currently being built for use on the CrossCountry network. These trains will reduce journey times on the Anglo-Scottish routes between Aberdeen/Glasgow/Edinburgh/Inverness and London, and will also serve Harrogate and Middlesbrough. 2003 would also see the introduction of a direct service between Yorkshire and Cambridge/Stansted.

With the plans now on the table, it is now a straight fight between the existing franchise holder GNER and Virgin Rail. Railway journalists have identified that the GNER plan offers improvements based around the use of tilt technology. The Virgin bid is, however, revolutionary and has caused a great deal of excitement. Only time will tell what railway will emerge during the next few years.



Construction of new high speed line – in summary

Building a brand new 2 track high speed line between:

- Connington to Hambleton (105 miles).
- Killingworth to Chevington (14 miles) bypassing Morpeth.

The new line would be built to European Standards in association with Bechtel Ltd, Virgin Rail Group's development partner.

Line speed on the High Speed Lines would be 330 km / h.

High Speed Line to be constructed and open by 2009

Existing ECML

- Existing ECML retained and developed as "Classic" route.
- Duplication of routes between Tursdale Junction and Newcastle by upgrading the Leamside line to main line standards.
- Creation of a new electrified route between Doncaster and York, adding Pontefract/Knottingley to the long distance network.

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Additional Electrification

Our bid includes the extension of the electrified network as follows:

- Peterborough to Ely.
- Retford (High Speed Line) to Sheffield.
- Hambleton to Leeds via Micklegate.
- Shaftholme Junction (Doncaster) to Colton Junction via Knottingley.
- Tursdale Junction to Newcastle (Leamside Line).

New Parkway Stations

Building of three new Parkway stations at / near:

- Peterborough / Doncaster / Washington (Sunderland)

Existing Railtrack ECML Upgrade Proposals

Creating a new high speed line is complementary to Railtrack's current upgrade plans but avoids the need for the most expensive components and those which will bring major disruption during the modernisation period.

Retention of the Railtrack plans north and south of the high speed line including the following components:

- Widening of Welwyn viaduct from 2 tracks to 4.
- Installation of grade separated junctions at Hitchin.

New Trains

The bid encompasses substantial investment in new trains. The company is currently in discussion with a number of manufacturers who are experienced in the provision of high speed trains for the international market.

- Between 55 and 60 new "VGV" trainsets by 2010 (with 15 of them introduced in 2005), which are capable of 330 km / h operation and are built to CTRL / Channel Tunnel standards, allowing the introduction of through services to / from the continent.
- Provision of stretched 10 car Super Voyager high speed diesel trains to replace the existing HST fleet. These could be available by 2003 for use on non-electrified routes and for tilt operation on cross border (Anglo-Scottish) routes.
- Provision of 5+ 4,500 hp diesel locomotives for hauling "VGV" services beyond Edinburgh to both Aberdeen and Inverness. These would be dedicated locomotives and have couplings fully compatible with those fitted to the "VGV" sets.

Existing Trains - A large proportion of the Class 91 locomotives and Mk 4 train sets will be retained and fully refurbished for use on "Classic" route services. The remaining sets will be offered to other operators and could be utilised for example, on Cambridge - London services (Prism Rail); this will help optimise network utilisation and spread the benefits of the plan.