



Issue 198

Summer 2019

## **CHAIRMAN'S NEWS**

Welcome to the Summer edition of the newsletter; we did not produce a Spring edition due to lack of articles being submitted so if you want the newsletter to continue, please write something that you think fellow members would be interested in and send it to the Editor.

Since my last Chairman's Notes in the Autumn 2018 edition I have made some progress with my long awaited layout. I bought sufficient helix kits from Model Railway Solutions in Poole to make the three spirals needed to facilitate my multi level track plan. I did however need to purchase additional parts because initially I did not realise that as supplied, the entry and exit points of the helix are in the same direction and I needed them to be either at 90 or 180 degrees. Using the Anyrail software I have printed out full size lengths of Radius 3 and Radius 4 track to use as a template for Flexitrack rather than use the far more expensive Set-track on the helices (or should that be helices?).

I have finalised my track plan but was a little disappointed that owing to the large radius curves required for realism, even my 16' 6" cabin will only permit a 4-coach platform length in the station. It does however permit a short loco holding spur at each end of the platform as I intend to emulate Euro City trains which require a change of loco; for example, a Czech train will arrive and go forward behind a German

loco and vice versa. The spurs allow relevant locos to be stabled in readiness as they are in real situations at Nürnberg.

The layout is to be called Lindorf Neustadt – Dorf being the German word for village and Neustadt meaning New Town. Lindorf is an anagram of Linford where I live, which itself is the new part of the original Great Linford village. The station building will be a replica of Neustadt Weinstrasse, from the Faller range, which runs to over 2000 parts and features a modern all glass footbridge with lifts. After a trial run with a Czech-made point motor, which although very neat, I have decided to use the DCC Concepts surface mounted motors in the fiddle yard as the Czech ones seem to be in short supply and their long-term reliability is unknown.

Now several days after beginning these notes I have taken delivery of the motors and modified the Peco live frog points ready for installation. Each DCC Concepts point controller activates two points and changes frog polarity automatically. It will also drive LED's and has provision for switched rather than DCC operation if required.

Although progress is rather slow as Grandson minding twice a week is not conducive to layout building, I hope to have trains running before publication of the next Newsletter

Chris Hughes  
Chairman



The MKMRS Newsletter will only survive with your help, we need you to provide articles -

- ❖ These can be write-ups on exhibitions you have attended, modeling titbits, or anything that you think other members would find interesting.
- ❖ If you would like to be included in our "Meet the Members" articles in a future Newsletter, please send in your notes for inclusion.
- ❖ The articles need to be sent in by email to [Newsletter@MKMRS.org.uk](mailto:Newsletter@MKMRS.org.uk) they need to be the words that you want to appear, include any pictures that you want in the article. All can be sent to the above email address for inclusion.
- ❖ Hoping for lots of copy for the newsletter.

**Deadline for articles for the Winter Edition is the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2019 with the Newsletter being published by the 6<sup>th</sup> December 2019.**

## Club News

The downside of a financially successful exhibition is the requirement to pay 20% Corporation Tax on the profits. Since we became a limited company we have paid substantial amounts of tax on these profits to HMRC despite everyone claiming for their stewarding time and travel expenses.

It appears, however, there is a way to remove this tax liability and following helpful advice from Paul Jones of the Warley Club your Committee has decided to follow the Warley model and separate the exhibition from the day-to-day running of the Club. MKMRS did in fact have a separate exhibition account up until the mid 1990's when we stopped holding regular exhibitions.

Following changes to legislation regarding charities, there is now something called a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) for which we are eligible to become. As this seems a sensible way forward to maximise the clubs' income, it is intended to establish Milton Keynes Model Railway Trust with a target date of 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 to coincide with our current financial year end.

Once established part of our existing bank balance will be transferred over to the Trust and the remainder left in MKMRS Ltd for upfront exhibition expenditure such as hotel accommodation, publicity, table and venue hire. Any surplus from future exhibitions will be transferred to the Trust as a donation thus negating the liability to pay corporation tax and the need to complete our own expense forms.

Membership fees will be paid into the Trust's bank account to fund premises rent, layout construction and general expenses as now.

The existing Directors of MKMRS Ltd are also permitted to be Trustees of MKMRS Trust and there may be a need for professional audit of the Trust's accounts but other than this it will be more or less business as usual.

### Ceynix - Scale Model Railway Trees



30% discount on all trees for MKMRS members, email or at shows just produce your membership card when you see me at an exhibition.

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## Member Updates

Please join us in welcoming the following new members to the club. If you see them in the clubroom please introduce yourself.



James Woodley



Paul Wright

Peter Youlton

## Making a Scene last Christmas

“At the Bedford Vintage Train Group meeting on 12th December Tim Byrne, Terry Silver and Dennis Lovett decided to bring some Christmas cheer to the gathering (along with considerable Christmas noise!). We were aided and abetted by Roger White who brought along his own Christmas set. Some of the Christmas trains owned by Dennis that we used at Bletchley Park several years ago – Kenn Ranns and John Hatton used to come up with something seasonal each December – were pulled out of storage, tested and put back into traffic. Others were supplied by Tim.



Most of the attendees appreciated our efforts on the floor of the stage. If we get invited back next year, we will be sourcing even more Christmas themed trains to entertain them!!

Have we created a new group within MKMRS – Tacky Trains? We were asked many times who made them and where they could be obtained. The answer to the first was just about every Chinese toy factory and for the second, Bargain stores, garden centres and cheap shops! Two sheets created the alpine scene which were draped over

This technology was completely alien to me but with the help of Gareth Homersley, who knew a little more about DCC we set about compiling a proposal to build a layout to run digital models, after much deliberation by the Club's Committee the proposal was accepted.

Building was started in earnest in one of the rooms at Bletchley Park using redundant 18mm thick plywood provide by another club member, re-usable standard code 100 track was used and club members had to provide their own digital equipment to operate the layout. By the time of the basic layout construction was completed a number of club members had converted to DCC and gradually other people joined the club in order to run their models.

Eventually, a second layout was built because the initial one was now of insufficient capacity to accommodate the number of members now running digital models.

This second layout was more accommodating and it was installed in another room adjacent to the initial layout which had been cannibalised for as many parts to reduce costs.

Again, space was a factor in the second room, there not being enough for more than three members at any one time.

A request to move out of this second location into one of the larger rooms at Bletchley Park, with ample space was granted and a twelve-foot extension was made for the layout when it went out on the Exhibition circuit.

The layout moved with the club to Barton Road and performed reasonably well in the climatic condition of the premises for the three-year tenancy, eventually being purchased by a club member.

From being introduced in 2003/4 the acceptance and use of digital control in the club has outstripped all conception that it was a passing fancy and would not last. So much for history.



# **The Advent of Digital Railways in the MKMRS.**

**By Bernard Worden**

It all started in mid 2003, I was dabbling in “0” gauge at that time having built a couple of Clan locomotives from kits, when I came across an advert for an American 4-6-0 loco with DCC and sound at a very competitive price.

It just so happened that my daughter and her husband were visiting his uncle in California for a holiday and I asked her to see if she could purchase this loco for me knowing nothing about Digital Control.

Armed with the cut out leaflet of the loco my daughter went to The Original Whistle Stop Inc. shop in Pasadena, California. This store is reputed to be the oldest model railway shop in America.

Presenting the leaflet to the shop assistant my daughter was informed that the loco was not available for another 3/4 months and had to be pre ordered.

However, after some questioning by the assistant it was established that I was running mainly “00” (HO) gauge models at home. The assistant said he could convert a 4-6-0 HO loco of the same model to DCC with sound and could my daughter call back in 8/10 day’s time to collect the model.

Returning to the shop my daughter was shown the converted model but the assistant was reluctant to sell it as he did not like the performance and said your father would probably not like it and it would be too much to return it if anything went wrong.

He did however offer my daughter another loco at a reduced cost which after a number of texts I accepted the loco offered had been voted the best overall model in America for 2003/4 being a 4-6-4 JIE Hudson by Broadway Industries Limited complete with sound and DCC capable of operating in analogue or digital.

three chairs. We will need more sheets if we do it again. We even had a Postman Pat train delivering Christmas Cards!

Setting up was stressful as we worked against the clock and none of us had done it before! We however, scraped home with seconds to spare and set the trains off in fine style. We had to request a couple of minutes to turn them all off before Roger gathered the assembly together for the notices and to wish everyone a Merry Christmas.

Unlike some exhibition layouts there was lots of movement and plenty of non-digital sound. One attendee requested we play Silent Night on them all!!!”

## A station with no passengers closes

**Dennis Lovett makes the journey North to become a station's only passenger.**

On December 8<sup>th</sup>, ScotRail services ceased to call at IBM, a small station on the Wemyss Bay line some 25 miles west of Glasgow Central. The station sits between Inverkip and Branchton.



The station then known as IBM halt opened on 9<sup>th</sup> May 1978, five years later it lost its halt suffix. It was opened to serve a large industrial complex in Spango Valley, where IBM (International Business Machines) employed 4,000 people. The Spango is a burn in Scotland and would be a river south of the Border.



Many travelled to and from work by train as did many visitors. Passenger usage figures in recent years have declined as the site closed.



Half of the buildings were demolished as early as 2009 and the site completely closed in 2017 after attempts to turn it into a business park failed. The last IBM employees left in October 2016.



The station was not initially open to anyone but those visiting or working at the site, access was controlled by a security gate and security staff in their sentry box!



The official user figures clearly illustrate the decline over what is a relatively short period.

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| 2012/13 | 0.123 million passenger journeys per year |
| 2013/14 | 71,128                                    |
| 2014/15 | 47,376                                    |
| 2015/16 | 22,016                                    |
| 2016/17 | 6,032                                     |

The site is now bereft of any structures and only the former floor indicated where once IBM stood. With trees now starting to take root it may not be for long. This has attracted some anti-social behaviour. Until such time as the site is redeveloped (if at all) then the station has seen its last train.



Fortunately, I visited it (needless to say, I was the only passenger) on 29<sup>th</sup> November, the rain managed to stop lashing down to allow me to record it for posterity before I re-joined the returning train from Wemyss Bay. Once again, the rain returned and the journey back to Milton Keynes was delayed by the weather causing havoc with flooding and wind howling against the catenary causing speed restrictions to be enforced.



I understand that the access to and from the station has now been closed off and unless any significant development takes place – then it is likely the last ever train has called there. It certainly has for the time being!