



Issue 203

Spring 2021

CHAIRMAN'S NEWS

Welcome to the Spring edition of the Newsletter, although as I write these notes it is snowing outside.

By the time you read this, we would normally be winding down after a hectic exhibition weekend and analysing the results. Who would have thought that a year on we, like every other organisation in the Land are unable to hold any events? As things turned out we were extremely lucky to hold the 2020 exhibition, which fortunately was a success and left us on a sound financial footing. An exhibition at Stantonbury would probably not have been possible this year anyway due to ongoing massive building works and the car park being taken over as the contractor's compound.

Membership of the club has now fallen to 53 paying members, which means we will have to subsidise the rent from reserves for the time being. Hopefully we will be able to attract new members in due course.

I have received no comments on the recently issued AGM newsletter, apart from a formal acceptance from Dennis Lovett, so I assume everyone was happy with the reports.

The East-West Rail project seems to be progressing well around Bletchley, but further west at Steeple Claydon both E/W Rail and HS2 are causing havoc for the local residents. Contractors are closing roads to suit themselves with little regard for how people are supposed to access the village and there are daily complaints on social media about the speed of lorries through the village. There was recently a stand-off in Steeple Claydon because contractors are trying to fell several mature trees from the centre of a triangular road junction in the village so their vehicles do not have to slow down!

Now that the Covid vaccination programme is well under way hopefully you will all either have had your jabs already or be expecting them very soon. Until we can all meet in the clubroom again, keep safe and happy modelling.

Chris Hughes
Chairman

Note from the Editor

I would like to thank all of the members who have provide me with some lovely articles describing what they have been up to during Lock Down.

We need more of these, so put your pen to paper, snap off a few photographs and send them in to MKMRSNewsletter@courtmk.co.uk. The more I get the better as they can always be used in later editions.

Many Thanks

Bigbury on Sea & Ivybridge

By Austin Daly

If I may introduce myself; my name is Austin Daly and a life member of the club. I left Bletchley in 2001 after living there for twenty-two and a half years, having been made redundant. My wife Joan and I returned to our native North East and the club kindly made me a life member. I think after this length of time, it will only the older club members who may remember me. Fortunately, I have been able to effectively keep in touch through the club magazine as well as meeting members at the O Gauge Guildex exhibition in Telford.



I have finally finished my “retirement layout” after about 12 years (If any layout can really ever be finished), I thought I would send some pictures for the Newsletter.

It is an O gauge Great Western based terminus to terminus “U” shaped layout permanently housed in an 18ft by 14ft 6 in garden shed. The concept is taken from an article in a Railway Modeler on a fictitious branch from Ivybridge to Bigbury on Sea in Devon. I have managed to find the original magazine in my “Archive” and it was in fact the January 1975 edition of the Railway Modeler and the author was Mr N. J. Pocock. In my version the branch was closed in the “Beaching” cuts and has now emerged as a preserved line called the East Devon Railway.

All of the points and track are Peco with the only motor operated points being in the loco shed yard. All of the main line points are mechanically operated by rodding from a lever frame. The only electrically operated signals are the two platform starters at Ivybridge; all the other signals are mechanically operated through wires at the side of the track from the lever frames using small springs to facilitate the signal returning to danger. Ivybridge is controlled from a 10-lever frame for which I still have

to make and install the interlocking tray; Bigbury is controlled by an 8-lever frame which is fully mechanically interlocked.

All of the signals are illuminated as are the station lamps and posts.

Bigbury On Sea



The end of the line at Bigbury. Railway Terrace is in the background.



Bigbury Station. Station Road with the “Railway Hotel” and the “Chippy” are in the background.



Bigbury lever frame and locking tray.



Bigbury on Sea
signalling diagram and
block shelf; the signal
repeaters do work.



Bigbury up platform
starter. The
Restaurant Car acts as
the station café
(Cribbed from the
Severn Valley Railway).



The yard clock in the
engine shed does work
so you can see what
time of day I took the
photograph.



General View of Ivybridge showing the up-home signal and mechanical route indicator displaying platform 2.



Ivybridge tunnel scenic break showing down advanced starter and Bigbury fixed distant underneath.



Ivybridge signalling diagram and block shelf.

After this awful period we are currently enduring is over, it would be good to pay a visit on a club night to see you all again, both older and newer club members.

Lockdown Project - Triang Coach Re wheeling

By Peter Hoare

During Lockdown. I decided to have a go at Re Wheeling 2 Triang B R Suburban coaches. These coaches are rather old and due to the Plastic Wheels and metal Axles never ran that well. I thought if I make a mess of re wheeling it wouldn't be a worry.

I did watch a U Tube Video on how to replace old Triang wheels for finer scale wheels using Pin Point Bearings so I could see how it was done.

My first task was to remove the Old Wheels and Axle by using a suitable size 2mm drift to push the Axles out from the wheels, pushing the Axle out through wheel that's fixed to Axle and through the open Axle box, easier said than done. But I managed it, only having to cut through I very stubborn Axle with a small needle File. Think sometime I will buy a Dremmel drill /cutter.

I have an assortment of Hornby 12.6mm metal tyred Disk wheels from goods wagons I had re wheeled. These wheels were the same diameter as the Triang wheels and look so much better. Also, the coach couplings should line up with My other rolling stock.

The 2mm Pin Point bearings I purchased fitted straight in the Bogie Axle Box holes. The Shouldered bearing went in first held in place by a pin head size of Blu Tack, then putting the new wheel Axle into the bearing. Next eased the other end of the Axle into the vacant axle box. The tricky part is dropping the Plain Pinpoint Bearing over the end of the axle using Tweezers. Once in position the bearing is held in place with another pin head size bit of Blu tack

Next task, was to line up and centre the new axle in the Bogie allowing for slight radial play to allow wheels to spin freely. This was done by gently pushing with a drift both bearings and Blu tack towards the axles pin points. checking that the wheels spun freely. Once everything is in place I levelled off the Blu Tack to the level of the end of the Axle box. A drop of super Glue on the Blu Tack then fixes it and bearings solidly in place.

I just carried on doing the same with the other Bogies and Axles Took me a while to do both Coaches. Once the Blu Tack had completely set Just a final

file smooth off and a Paint touch up Job done. Coaches now run so freely.
Now to Re Wheel My other Triang Coaches New wheels on order.



As you can see the photos were taken before the final smoothing off of the Blue Tack and paint touch up.

I have now made a simple Jig to support the Bogies while the Triang axles are pushed out from the wheels



A brief escape from lockdown

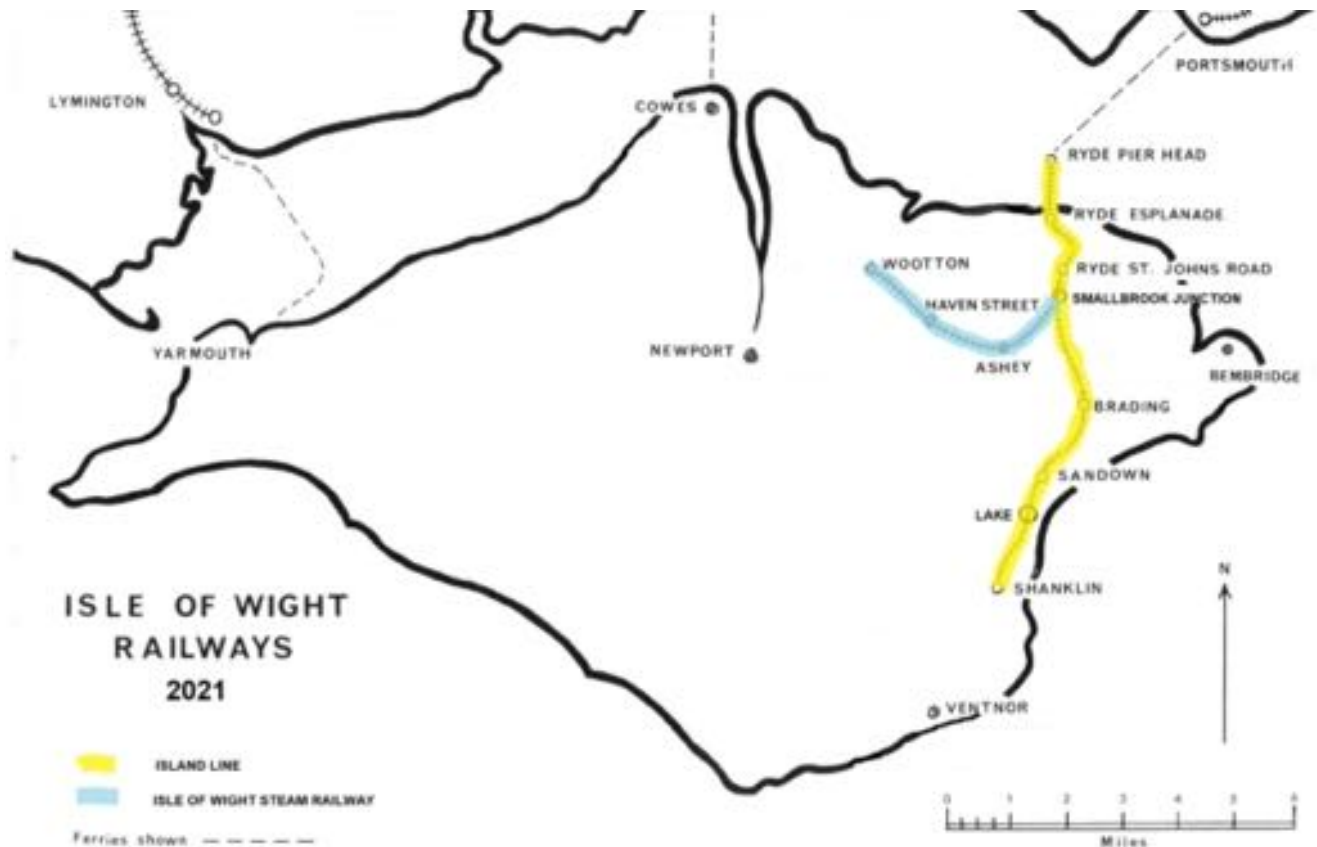
Dennis Lovett takes to the rails for a Trip to the Isle of Wight

At our AGM in January 2020, somewhat ironically, I mentioned that the recent fire which caused considerable damage to part of the building we rent during one Friday night in December had resulted in us missing both the club and our social contact with each other. Little did I realise that just a few weeks after our 2020 Exhibition, the club rooms would be under lockdown as the country tried to come to terms with Covid-19. Apart from a few weeks when we could meet up in small groups of six or less, much of the year has been written off with staying at home and catching up on all the jobs we should have done years ago but never had the time.

My travels were almost non-existent in 2020, apart from a 24-hour period on the 12th / 13th October where I was able to escape to the Isle of Wight to capture the last days of the Class 483 trains (or 1938 Tube Stock if you prefer) before they were replaced by the next generation of former London Underground stock in the form of the Vivarail conversions to D (or D78) stock, currently being delivered to the island aboard the car ferry!

I knew that this was a once off opportunity as restrictions had been relaxed a little and providing masks were worn, travel by train was once again possible. A socially distanced Premier Inn at Lake was booked as it was running at 1/3 capacity before setting off.

Catching a Southern train from Bletchley to Clapham Junction, where a change for Portsmouth Harbour was made. Thence by the Wight Link SuperCat to Ryde Pier Head which provided 24 hours of photography before returning home by the same route.



The islands railways in 2021.

There were once 35 stations across the island. The Isle of Wight system today is known as Island Line. It comprises seven stations on the eastern side of the island. The eighth, Smallbrook Junction, was created to allow interchange with the IOW Steam Railway, the track being reinstated during Network SouthEast days along with the interchange station. Island Line trains only stop there when the steam railway is operational. Although it was the junction for the line to Newport, there was no station, the trains previously operating in and out of Ryde.

The line was electrified in 1967, although at the time BR was hell-bent on closing all the islands lines aided and abetted by the Department of Transport. By 1966 the system had been reduced to the Ryde – Newport – Cowes line and the Ryde – Shanklin – Ventnor line. Whilst campaigners failed to keep the Ryde – Cowes line open, they did manage to save the line down the eastern side of the island which served the popular seaside resorts of Ryde, Sandown and Shanklin. However, BR dropped the bombshell and closed the line between Shanklin and Ventnor, lifting the tracks whilst the county council was negotiating to keep it open. In the end it cost more to provide a bus service than it would have done to keep the line open and part of the national network. It proved devastating to the Ventnor economy and

even today, with the track bed now a footpath, there are repeated calls for it to be reinstated.

The infrastructure includes the difficult tunnel under Ryde Esplanade, which is prone to flooding, being below sea level, so that when there are rough seas it floods. To combat this the track level had been raised and this restricted the type of rolling stock that could be used, and any existing 3rd Rail EMUs could not be used. BR, thinking that only a needed a short-term fix before traffic levels allowed the line to be closed by the mid-1970s, turned to London Underground for a solution. The, first trains were bought at scrap value and consisted of Standard (S) Stock with 43 vehicles being acquired for use on the island. Introduced between 1923 and 1931 a total of 1,460 vehicles were built by six different manufacturers for use on the Northern, Bakerloo and Piccadilly lines. They later saw service on the Central line after the Northern line received the 1938 stock built either side of the Second World War. By the early 1960s the Standard stock was being withdrawn following the introduction of new trains formed of 1959 stock.

In Southern Region tradition, the 4 car units were known as 4-VEC units and the 3 car units as 3-TIS after the island which the Roman's named Vectis. Initially there were 6 four car units (Nos 041-6) and 6 three car units (Nos 031-6), with one spare motor vehicle. These were converted to three rail operation from the LUL fourth rail system at Eastleigh before transferring to the island.

By the mid-1980s the old units were kept running on a song and a prayer by the dedicated staff at Ryde Works and BR's Network SouthEast sector again looked to London Underground for a replacement fleet.

The identified replacements were known as 1938 stock, then in the process of being withdrawn in favour of new stock.

The 1938 stock had been first purchased that year when London Transport embarked on a New Works Programme which included the replacement of older tube rolling stock. Prototype trains had been developed in 1935 and entered service in 1936 to test their suitability. In 1938 construction began following modification to the original design and was the first train for London Transport to have the electrical equipment mounted below the floor, all previous designs having had electrical compartments behind the

driver's cabs. Collectively known as 38 stock (they continued to be built until 1953), 1,297 cars were built (some rebuilt from older cars) for service on the Northern, Bakerloo, Piccadilly and Central lines. By the 1980s they were confined to the Northern line and were in the process of being withdrawn and replaced by 1972 stock.

Withdrawal from LUL allowed Network SouthEast to acquire 20 cars in 1988 for conversion to three rail operation for use on the IOW line. These cars were from the 1939 / 1940 builds and were refurbished for their new role between 1989 and 1992. Two of the cars did not enter traffic but were used by Ryde Works as a source of spares but the other 18 were formed into 9 two car sets which were numbered 483001 – 483009. They were delivered in Network SouthEast livery.

Privatisation saw Island Line activities pass to Stagecoach. Three sets were scrapped (483001 / 3 / 5) in the early part of the century. The six remaining units were outshopped in a new 'Dinosaur' livery which publicised the islands Jurassic past. This livery lasted until 2007, when they were painted red, reflecting their London Transport roots, although they now carried a yellow end panel, something not necessary on the underground network. The Island Line franchise was merged with the South West Trains franchise in 2007, both of which had been operated by Stagecoach since privatisation in 1996. In August 2017, the franchise passed to First Group who took over the franchise from Stagecoach and operates it today as South Western Railway. On the island, the name 'Island Line' continued to be carried by the trains but with the addition of the SWR logo.

With spares becoming an issue, No. 483002 became the depot "Christmas Tree" providing spares as required to keep the rest running, recalling the situation which resulted in the former Class 485/6 vehicles having to be scrapped. No. 483004 was the next to be withdrawn in 2019, again to provide spares whilst 483009 became the depot shunter after being taken out of service in 2016.

During 2020, services were run by No's 483006 and 483008 whilst No. 483007 underwent overhaul, being released into traffic for the last few weeks service before the line closed for rebuilding prior to the introduction of the new generation of former London Underground trains. Two of these units are earmarked for preservation with one going to the IOW Steam Railway

museum and the other to the Epping & Ongar Railway, itself a former London Underground electrified line which was once at the end of the Central Line until the section beyond Epping which closed in 1994.

The new trains currently replacing the 1938 stock are from D (D78) stock which has been totally rebuilt by VivaRail at Long Marston, Warwickshire. Designated as Class 484 on the island these are visually like the Class 230 diesel versions which were introduced on to the Bletchley – Bedford line a couple of years back.

Should we get released from lockdown sometime in 2021, a return visit is planned to photograph the new trains and to see the infrastructure improvements.



Unit No. 483008 leaves Ryde Pier Head for Shanklin on 13th October 2020



With a container ship and a Wight Link car ferry at work on the Solent, unit No. 483006 pauses at Ryde Esplanade before departing for Shanklin on 13th October 2020.



Unit No. 483008 takes the Down line through the twin tunnel's under Ryde Esplanade with a train for Shanklin. This shows the limited clearances and why main line stock cannot be used on the island.



This gives an impression of the new trains although it was taken a bit nearer home

Class 203 No. 230005 stands at Bletchley on 19th May 2019 ready to depart for Bedford. This is the diesel version of the train which has been converted from former LUL D Stock.

Dunston Update

Part II by Dave Court

In the Summer 2020 Newsletter I first introduced you to my fictional layout Dunston. At that time, I was still working on building the houses and public house for my town scene. Thanks to lockdowns 2 and 3 I have completed these buildings and they have been placed on the layout and the gardens for each property completed, each of the properties have had lights installed and the road also working street lights. Across the road from the houses I have built a park with children playing while their parents have a chat.



Behind the houses on Station Approach Road stands the 'Court Engineering Co Ltd' factory (yes it really did exist in years gone by!!). The factory was scratch built in low relief and is fitted with internal lights and lights to illuminate the name board.

I then completed the scenery on the corner behind the houses and completed the dressing of the station.



My next lockdown project was to replace the cardboard Goods Shed from Scalescenes with a scratch built one from Plastikard. Once again, the Goods Shed and office are both fitted with lighting. The following pictures are the before and after.



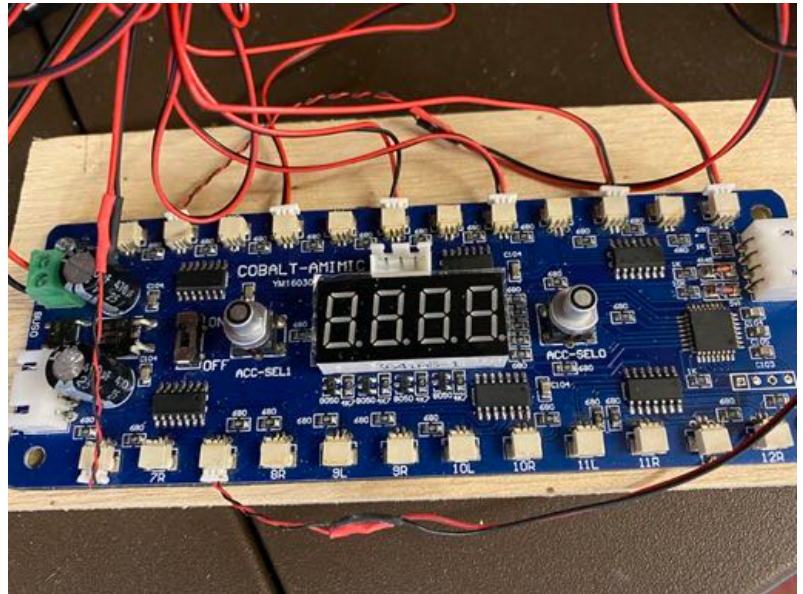
The one thing missing from my layout was signals. I have to admit that I did not understand the concepts of railway signalling, I therefore turned to my good friend and partner in crime Peter Ellis who had volunteered work out what was required. I gave Peter my AnyRail plan for the layout and he returned the plan with all of the signals that are required marked on the plan. Peter determined that for the layout required a single distant signal, 5 single home/starter signals, 2 dual bracket starter signals and 8 ground signals. My original plan was to use Dapol starter signals but these are currently out of production and there is no date when they will be available. The two dual bracket signals I had decided to use Ratio 476 LMS round post kits, with the Dapol signals not being available I will use these Ratio kits for all signals.

For the ground signals I used the DCConcepts 3 aspect steam era signals. These are beautiful pieces of kit, unfortunately, I misread instructions, I thought that I could simply connect the signals to my Cobalt Digital point motors and power them from my DC bus. Oh, was I wrong...!!



After a lot research I decided that the best approach was to use a DCCConcepts Alpha Mimic controller, as this just needs a connection to the DCC bus and then each ground signal are connected to the controller.

Each of the outputs can be assigned a accessory code, however when you assign the accessory code to the first output channel the controller then assigns the next accessory code to the next channel in sequence. For example if the first channel was assigned to 10 then it would go 11, 12 etc.



I found this approach a little strange, as I expected to be able to assign a different accessory codes to each channel. After a lot head scratching I gave up and rang DCCConcepts technical support, they accepted this was a flaw in the design and that later this year they are bringing out one that you will be able to do just that. However, this did not work for me, this is where the tech guy came to the rescue. I explained that I use an NCE Power Pro with a control panels controlling the points and routes utilising NCE mini panels. So the answer was to assign the ground signals accessory codes starting at 301 (well away from current accessory codes), then re-program the mini panel so that when you hit a button on the panel to operate a point the relevant ground signal operates. Much to my pleasure this strategy worked perfectly.

My next projects are to start building my semaphore signals which I will control using servo's and a Megapoints controller. This will be a challenge...!!

I also am thinking about using the DCCConcepts Mimic Controller to operate an illuminated mimic panel showing the status of each point. Just need to justify the spend to myself.

So look out for further articles on how these projects progress in future Newsletters. Of course that will depend on how long lockdown lasts and other jobs that Pauline finds for me to do...!!!

FUN OF BUYING FOREIGN MODELS

By Chris Hughes

Back in 2014 whilst on a Christmas Markets rail tour to Germany I saw a model of the Class BR65 2-8-4 tank locomotive in a model shop near Dresden. As it was a type of loco I had been pulled by on my first German trip in 2011 and rarely made by its manufacturer, Gützold I duly made the purchase. It was DCC ready but without a decoder fitted. Apart from a couple of circuits of the Clubroom test track the loco has remained in its box in my cupboard ever since.

As the weather has been bad recently I decided to get around to installing sound decoders into a few of my tank locos – oddly referred to as Tenderloks in Germany. The German decoder manufacturer ESU produces sound files for most European motive power which are freely downloadable from their website so I am able to install sound into my stock using my ESU Lokprogrammer.

This however has not been without some difficulty; the first one I started on, a Fleischmann 2-10-2T, although a large loco had very little room inside for the decoder. I had previously tried to install sound in this a couple of years ago and managed to cook the €100 decoder when the speaker shorted out on the chassis during reassembly. However, I persevered this time and by milling out the lower edge of the cab back head managed to get everything to fit and now have a BR95 with sound.

Next, I turned to a BR94 0-10-0T, again a fairly large loco but because it is an early Fleischmann model it still has their old pancake motor which completely fills all the available space. Reluctantly I gave up with adding sound but as the loco has been sitting unused in the cupboard in analogue condition since 2012, I decided to rob the necessary 6-pin ordinary decoder from my Kernow model of loW Class 02 tank. This fitted so at least I can run the BR94 on my layout now.

Next, I brought out the diminutive Fleischmann BR98 0-8-0T from the back of the cupboard. This is so small there was no point in even trying to install sound but what disappointed me was due to the position of the decoder socket a normal 6-pin decoder will not fit either. In order to convert this one to DCC I shall need to purchase a 6-pin decoder on a harness so the

decoder can be moved down into the coal bunker and not stick out sideways so as to prevent refitting of the body.

Now on to the reason for writing this article – today's project the BR65. I have had a supply of sound chips in stock for a while and had already loaded up the appropriate sound file for this one but again it had been sitting in its packet and the loco left in the cupboard on the too difficult pile as I couldn't readily see how to get inside it.

It doesn't help that instructions for Gützold models are wholly written in German and although there is an exploded diagram included it makes little sense of how to get into the model. This morning with the help of Herr Google I managed to get a translation, which is reproduced literally below because I thought was amusing.

Disappear the locomotive

- 1. Pull the tender section back (watch the ladder)*
- 2. Spread the drivers house to underground and pull it up*
- 3. Pull the smoke cage forward*
- 4. Put the kettle shaft on top, take the boiler upstairs*
- 5. Power head with lamp plate up*
- 6. Locked and pulled the ropes from below with a screw twister*
- 7. Free screw-up and take off the feather package*

Assembly is in reverse order

- Basically it means slide back the coal bunker and lift out the driver's cab
- Remove the smoke box door and lift the boiler section
- Remove the rear light mounting plate

I like the term 'screw twister' but have no idea what the *ropes* or *feather package* are.

And finally,...

As a result of Brexit, HMRC seem to be applying heavy surcharges to items shipped in from the EU. It's a case of wait and see at the moment but from what I have seen in the Press and TV it looks like the end of my German model purchases.

From the Archive

John 'Mr Trix' Hatton



John 'Mr Trix' Hatton seen here at the BRM Exhibition at Doncaster when he and Gordon Shrimpton represented the club with John's Trix Twin display, which was one of the layout's in regular operation during our Bletchley Park days.

Trix Twin could be challenging! John rebuilt them, replaced parts, bought scrappers and built up a massive collection. They could run red hot and the joke amongst those who helped John was that the locomotives were always the last to be packed away at an exhibition – the layout could be loaded but the locomotives had to cool down for fear of setting fire to everything else! John was our first curator at Bletchley Park and passed-away a few years ago. He was a great character who had originally been a member of West Bletchley Model Railway Club, which closed in the 1970s with several members including the late Fred Collins and John Tennant transferring to MKMRS at that time.

R.I.P.



JOHN FORMAN

John was not just a train collector but an operator too and was one of the first to attend local exhibitions with vintage tinsplate, long before it became a 'must have' at such events. He was well known on the exhibition circuit with his displays of both Hornby O Gauge tinsplate and his Lego layouts which always proved popular with trains and monorails operating amongst the buildings he had built from thousands of the legendary coloured bricks. His 'loose lay' layouts were seen at many exhibitions across the home counties as well as HRCA and TCS events at which he was ably supported by his wife Pauline. John's planning for such events was meticulous, he knew where every scenic accessory had to be placed to ensure that there was plenty for visitors to see and discuss.

John edited the MKMRS Newsletter for many years and regularly took turns running our displays at Bletchley Park.



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 MKMRSNewsletter@courtmk.co.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 Summer Edition is the 23rd May 2021 with the Newsletter being published by the 31st May 2021.