



Quarterly Newsletter

Issue 208

Autumn 2022

CHAIRMAN'S NEWS

Welcome to the Autumn Newsletter, the Editor has managed to produce another issue but we still require more articles from members to ensure its future. You can write about anything you think other members would like to read about; your latest modelling project, any particular skill you could pass on to help others, write about yourself and how you came into the hobby or describe a holiday with any rail content.

Sue and I have just had an enjoyable trip to Northern Germany where we travelled on several of the narrow gauge railways, notably the Mollibahn which is Germany's only 3ft gauge railway. It is well known for its street running where the train trundles through the main street of Bad Doberan, merely inches from pedestrians and tables outside numerous coffee shops. Another highlight of the trip was Miniatur Wunderland where we concentrated on the new sections as we only had 2 hours to look round. Since our previous visit Italy, Rome and Venice have been added complete with an erupting Mount Vesuvius which is very impressive. On the Germany section I spotted several of the buildings which I have on my own layout including my station, signal boxes and shop buildings. The only downside to the holiday was the severely overcrowded trains due to DB issuing the €9 ticket, valid for the whole of August on all but high speed trains. We had to stand with our luggage for almost two hours between Hamburg and Bremen jammed in the vestibule as it was impossible to get into the actual carriages despite them being double decked. As a result of the numbers of passengers getting on and off at each station all trains got later and later but at least it meant we did not miss any connections.

Since the last Newsletter we have held a successful exhibition, attended by just over 500 adults. As this was the first post lockdown exhibition attendance figures could not be guaranteed so we invited only local layouts to avoid accommodation and transport costs. Total cost of the exhibition was £3022, giving a net income of approximately £775, which made the hard work worthwhile. The new venue was well received by both visitors and traders and has been provisionally booked again for Saturday 10th June 2023.

The sale of Terry Silver's stock has so far raised £1200 with only a few items of rolling stock left but there are a number of 00 scale die cast vehicles to be offered in due course.

Finally, there are still some members paying their subscriptions to the old Barclays Bank account and some still paying the old rate of £11. It would be appreciated if everyone could please amend their Standing Orders as soon as convenient as follows to save the Treasurer having to move the payments into the correct account manually.

Lloyds Bank - sort code **30-98-97** Account No. **58101262** MK Model Railway **CLUB** (not MKMRS) Amount **£13/month** with your name and membership number as the reference please.

Chris Hughes
Chairman

Meet Our New Members

Aaron Glenister



Hi,

My name is Aaron Glenister I have recently become a member of the Milton Keynes Model Railway Society.

My hobby is model railways and from a young age I have been a Hornby fan since I was roughly 4 years old, I have lots of trains in my collection over the years.

I have once worked on the railway with Govia Thameslink Railway which I enjoyed I was there from 2014-2017

Meet Our New Members

Mike Biss



An interest in model railways has always been with me since a young lad, but it was only during the covid lockdown, when a serious clear-out was happening, that I saw an exhibition layout for sale on a well-known auction site, that things clicked into place and I had my first proper layout.

This is called Invercalley and is a 'what might have been' Scottish layout, built in N gauge. I am currently doing some redesign work on the turntable mechanism, automating the crossing gates and making a new station building.



Plus, there is plenty of other things to keep me busy updating wise.



My other interest is in motorsport, which I have been involved with from a 12-year-old, almost as long as my interest in railways. I'm still competing on events, but not as many as I should, as the main car is still in bits, several years after what should have been a winter upgrade!

Brinklow Goes on the 'Roade'

By Wayne Webb



Brinklow attained the Northampton model railway show at Roade on the 13th August. The exhibition was set in the Roade village hall, which is a nice little venue, which was well supported by the public and a few club members.

It was also nice to see Bachmann supporting a small show. The layout was well received and won best in show.

Many thanks to the operators John, Tim and Andy.

I would also like to thank Dennis for the photo. I think something has gone wrong at the other end of the layout because I seem to be the only one looking at the camera.

Fenny Stratford at the Silverfox Exhibition By David Court



Thanks to James Woodley for the picture of the crew

The invitation to take Fenny Stratford to the Silverfox Exhibition was first given to us in 2019, but then the pandemic hit and here we are at the exhibition in 2022. The exhibition was well attended with over 450 people coming through the door, it was very nice to see so many club members there as well.

Many thanks to Peter Ellis, Wayne Webb, Chris Read, Tim Byrne and Andy Culham for all of their help on the Friday for set up and then on Saturday.

The layout was very highly praised by many members of the public and even by the Silverfox club as we were awarded '**Best in Show**'.

This is the first time that Fenny has received this award at any of the exhibitions we have attended, so Peter and I are very pleased. The trophy is a bit over the top but a very nice.



Fenny's next trip out and most likely the last for 2022, is to the Stafford Model Railway Circle Exhibition 2022. This takes place on the 24th and 25th September at the Stafford County Showground in Bingley Hall. Check out their website for more details at –

<https://www.staffordrailwaycircle.org.uk/exhibition/>

This could well be the last exhibition with Peter and I at the helm, as we are looking to sell the layout, we will need to see if anyone is interested in purchasing it.

MKMRS Open Day

By Timothy Byrne

On Saturday 30th July, the club held our second open day of the year to the general public. The day was a success with roughly 30 people visiting and we gained at least one new member (see New Members). We had a vast array of trains running on Barnes Junction, Barton Crossing, Brinklow and Frimingham reflecting the diversity in regions, eras and even model age we all have across the club. Jacqui once again provided some superb modelling demonstrations with her trees which were enjoyed by both visitors and fellow members alike, and delicious homemade cakes complete with edible MKMRS toppers were brought in by Hazel Woodley-Jones (also known as James' Mum!).

Perhaps the longest travelled visitor to our open day was Jim Allen from Saint George, Utah in the USA. Jim was over here visiting his daughter in Bicester after a Covid inflicted gap of three years. Jim is an O Scale model railroader back home and is a member of two model railway organisations. He operates both vintage trains (Lionel etc) and attends a vintage train group. Jim is also a scale modeller operating first generation diesel locomotives. As he has recently moved home, he is about to start building a new layout.



Gerhard with Jim

Our next open day planned will be on a Saturday in October, date TBC.

Ashby House Care Home Visit

By Timothy Byrne

On July 28th, Dennis Lovett, James Woodley and I visited Ashby House Care Home to show the residents there some model trains and we gave a brief talk to them about the hobby. We brought a variety of trains, including some vintage Hornby O Gauge and Tri-ang, hoping to bring back some memories as several had owned similar train sets in their youth. We also took some famous locomotives such as Mallard, Coronation and City of Truro as well as a G Scale “Hogwarts Express”.

The visit started with Dennis giving a talk on the hobby and the club whilst trains ran round on four loose laid ovals of track. After that we spoke to a number of residents about their railway memories (both real and model) and found out that several of them were very much into railways with one couple having been former volunteers on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway. A few of the residents had a go running the “Hogwarts Express” and pressing the buttons to make the train whistle and play other sound effects. It was wonderful to see some of the faces light up from doing this and some were close to tears with the emotion this brought them.

Overall, the trip was a great success with residents and staff enjoying it. It was a pleasure to see their reactions to something that many of us take for granted.



Dennis Lovett Catches up with Les Wood



Ill health has resulted in our long-standing member, Les Wood being unable to attend the club since our Barton Road days (for newer members this was our home for three years before we moved to our current premises six years ago). Les is now a resident of a care home in Bletchley. Dennis Lovett has kept in contact with him over the past few years but was unable to visit him due to Covid restrictions, remained in telephone contact. In the interim, Les was moved from his home in Stony Stratford back to Bletchley as he is no longer able to look after himself, his wife, Joy, passing away a few years back. It took some months for us to track Les down to the care home but now we are in regular contact.

Les was not only a founding member back in 1969 but was on the steering committee that oversaw the establishing of the club. He later served as our first Exhibition Manager, Vice Chairman, Chairman, Vice President and President. Les also held the position of Chairman and President in the Gauge O Guild, the national O gauge organisation. A railway professional for his entire working life, Les was a bridge engineer and latterly responsible for all the Regional Railways sector bridges or as Les used to describe it Barmouth to Yarmouth and a lot of places in between. He wrote 'Bridges for Modellers' and was the joint author with Dennis of the 'Cade's Locomotive Guides'.

Les and Dennis (also a founding member) reminisce about club life as it was in the past and recall many of the members that are no longer with us but played a vital role in past activities. Les is always keen to find out how the current membership is progressing. Dennis has been able to show him pictures of our under-construction O gauge layout and our other club room activities.

Dennis leaves the latest issue of the Railway Modeller with Les as seen above. Les sends his best wishes to the club and regrets that he can no longer take an active part. Dennis will be able to show him pictures of our recent exhibition and open day on his next visit.

Where the Railway Revolution Began

By Dennis Lovett

During my three years working for Locomotion Models at the outpost of the National Railway Museum in Shildon, I had plenty of opportunities to explore the railways rich industrial heritage. All pictures are taken by me unless otherwise stated.

There have probably more words written about the Stockton & Darlington Railway (S&DR) than any other railway anywhere in the World. Many will be surprised to find that it did not run just between the two towns after which it takes its name. It was built to bring coal down to the River Tees from the Shildon area some 17 ½ miles away from where it could be loaded onto coastal shipping. The chosen title of the railway was down to who provided the most money, and it was the promoters from both towns who provided the bulk of it. Shildon at the time was little more than a village with the mining output in the area being modest and almost impossible to transport in anything but small quantities usually by panniers on horses.

It was not the first railway to be built or the first to have steam haulage. These were mostly confined to colliery or mineral lines and waggonways some of which could be traced back to the 17th Century in the North East. Where the Stockton & Darlington Railway differed, was that it was a public railway allowing anyone's goods or themselves to be transported from day one upon payment of the appropriate fees. It was this that kickstarted the railway revolution not just at home but across the World.



Shildon is proud of its railway heritage. The path on the left was once the line to the works and before that Witton Park Colliery five miles away. Now part of the town's heritage trail the blocks and rails behind the sign show some original blocks and fish belly rails.

Although its title may suggest a harmonious agreement between the two towns, the initial plans centred around the construction of a canal. Such a scheme had been promoted as early as 1813 when John Rennie surveyed the route and recommended its suitability for canal construction. Edward Pease, a Darlington mill owner counter-proposed that a railway should be built to bring the coal from the Shildon area to the river Tees and to ensure that the industry in Darlington benefitted from the reduction in coal prices that would result. Stockton wanted a similar route to the proposed canal on a more northerly route which by-passed both Darlington and Yarm. Not surprisingly business owners in both towns were not supportive and as much of the finance was being provided from those areas this was not an option that was considered satisfactory to them.

The proposed line was first surveyed by George Overton in 1818 but it was George Stephenson, already well known in the North East for his development of the colliery line at Killingworth and later the Hetton Colliery Railway, both of which were early users of steam locomotives, who carried out the final survey. It was Stephenson who persuaded Edward Pease and his co-Directors to opt for steam power rather than using horses to pull the trucks.

Having secured the parliamentary bill in 1821, construction began the same year following Stephenson's survey which was carried out in the company of his 18-year-old son Robert, who would become as well-known as his father in developing the early railway network and building steam locomotives through his Newcastle based company. It opened on 27th September 1825.



Locomotion No. 1 hauled the first train from Shildon to Stockton. It is seen here at the Head of Steam Museum located at North Road, Darlington. It has since moved to Locomotion at Shildon

As soon as the Stockton & Darlington Railway had opened on 27 September 1825 from Witton Park Colliery (5 miles beyond Shildon) to Stockton, it faced competition from a new line, the Clarence Railway, opened in 1833. The S&DR, however, fed this new railway at Simpasture and could charge a tariff for the transit of coal trucks over its own line, which made it more expensive to move traffic over the new line than by the S&DR route which was longer. The new route was just 11 ½ miles long and after the opening of the main line between Darlington and Newcastle in 1844 was not impaired by having to cross that new line on the level as the S&DR did, on a flat crossing ('S&D Crossing') at Darlington, the Clarence line being carried above it on an overbridge just north of Aycliffe.

The Stockton & Darlington Railway was a pioneering operation and could not draw on the experience of other such lines. As a coal carrier it gave little

thought initially to passenger traffic and franchised passenger operations to private stage coach operators who used horse-power to work a section of line allocated to them, the stage coaches being fitted with flanged wheels. Regular passenger services commenced between Stockton and Darlington on 10 October 1825 and over the Yarm branch from 16 October 1826, this latter mostly served by Stockton to Darlington trains making a detour along the branch and back. The S&DR eventually began to buy out the private operators from 7 September 1833 when it introduced steam hauled passenger services between Stockton and Darlington.



The former Masons Arms now a restaurant Cape to Cairo which provided Shildon's first ticket office and waiting room before proper stations were built. The car is standing on the former track bed which crossed the road by means of a level crossing to enter the works.

Stations were not provided initially, the coaches stopping at nearby inns which also provided limited passenger comforts in the form of waiting rooms and booking offices. Coaches could of course stop anywhere enroute to pick up or drop off passengers as dedicated station facilities which we take for granted today had yet to be conceived. The early stopping places were mostly where the line crossed roads, for example Masons Arms (Shildon), Heighington, North Road (Darlington), Fighting Cocks, Goosepool, Yarm (location of the present Allens West station) and at the terminus of the Yarm branch.

Fighting Cocks was served later by a nearby inn of the same name whilst in Stockton trains terminated at The Railway Tavern built by the Stockton & Darlington Railway. The company also built an inn at North Road in Darlington which is still in use as a public house today.

The North Eastern Railway (NER) was formed in 1854 by amalgamation of the Leeds & Thirsk Railway, Leeds Northern Railway, Malton & Driffield Junction Railway, York & North Midland Railway and the York, Newcastle & Berwick Railway. The NER took over the Stockton & Darlington Railway in 1863 by which time the latter company owned some 200 route miles, embracing routes over the Pennines to Tebay (Westmorland), Penrith (Cumberland) as well as across vast swathes of County Durham from Weardale to the east coast at Saltburn. This allowed some of the early depot's to be replaced by new facilities to meet the needs of an expanding NER empire.



Darlington Bank Top station with a Cross Country Voyager standing in the south end bay platforms on 28th October 2019. The East Coast Main Line platforms are on the far left and to the right by the signal. The station is about to undergo a major transformation in readiness for 2025

From 1st July 1887, passenger services over the former Stockton & Darlington Railway were re-routed through Darlington Bank Top station, opened on this date. Utilising a new line, from Oak Tree Junction to

Darlington South Junction which opened on the same day with Dinsdale station replacing Fighting Cocks on the original route which closed to passengers. At Oak Tree Junction goods trains left the original route which was retained to serve industry but also saw some excursion trains and diverted services. The new route provided interchange facilities with the East Coast Main Line (ECML) at Bank Top and avoided the need to cross the ECML on the level at Stockton & Darlington Crossing by taking the curve from North Road station (Albert Hill Junction) to Parkgate Junction, which had formed part of the original Stockton & Darlington route to Croft depot, south of Darlington, opened in 1829. Part of the Croft line was later used for the ECML, opened between York and Darlington by the Great North of England Railway (GNER) in 1841.

The NER became part of the London & North Eastern Railway (LNER) on 1st January 1923 and upon nationalisation on 1 January 1948 became part of British Railways North Eastern Region and subsequently, from 1st January 1967, British Rail Eastern Region. Following the passing of the Railways Act 1993, services were franchised to the private sector with the East Coast Main Line (ECML) through Darlington and the former Stockton & Darlington Railway line seeing several operators over the years. The ECML was electrified in 1991.

Today the former Stockton & Darlington route is known as the Tees Valley Line east of Darlington and as the Bishop Line between Darlington and Bishop Auckland through Shildon.



The exterior of North Road station which houses the Head of Steam Museum. In the lead up to 2025 work is being carried out to create a railway heritage quarter. This includes new facilities for the AI Steam Trust (owners of ‘Tornado’), Darlington Railway Preservation Society and the North Eastern Locomotive Preservation Group

Such was the importance of the Stockton & Darlington in railway history that large scale anniversary celebrations were held in 1875, 1925 and 1975. As we fast approach the 200-year mark, further celebrations are being planned for 2025. The line will once again be in the spotlight, just as it was when Locomotion No. 1 hauled the first train and ensured that Stockton and Darlington had started a railway revolution that would spread across the entire World.

Shildon – The first railway town

The colliery at Witton Park which stood on the edge of the Pennines. From the opening of the S&DR the areas coal mining activity greatly increased and other neighbouring mines soon had lines constructed to them.

From the colliery at Witton Park, coal trucks travelling towards Shildon were raised to the summit of the Etherley Incline and then lowered again using a steam powered engine house to haul trucks up and down the incline. This remained in use until 1843, rendered redundant and subsequently

abandoned, supplanted by the new line northwards through Shildon Tunnel to Bishop Auckland, opened the previous year.

Wagons were hauled to the foot of the incline nearest the colliery 1100 yards up the incline to reach the summit at 312 feet and then 2185 yards distance down the other side towards the Gaunless Bridge at 176ft above sea level.

The Gaunless Bridge

Between the two inclines lay the River Gaunless. The river was bridged by the first cast iron railway bridge. Designed by George Stephenson it was built by John & Issac Burrell at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, construction commencing in 1823 and was completed in time for the opening in 1825.

Following the construction of alternative routes which no longer required the use of the inclines the bridge remained in use on the level section between the inclines which was fed by a new line, the 'Tunnel Branch' from the north end of Shildon Tunnel (Tunnel Branch Junction) to Feildon Bridge Junction, via West Auckland to serve the Butterknowle line (previously known as the Haggerleases branch). This was opened on 13th September 1856 for goods and 13th October 1858 to passengers, bypassing the Brusselton inclines. It was subsequently replaced by a new bridge but because of its historical importance was dismantled and later exhibited at the old York Railway Museum in Queen Street after its opening by the LNER in 1928. It was subsequently re-erected in the grounds of the National Railway Museum at York following its opening in 1975.

As part of the expansion of Locomotion, Shildon, the bridge is being transferred to Shildon where it will be exhibited in time for the 200th Anniversary in 2025.

Brusselton Incline

On reaching the foot of the Brusselton Incline the wagons were connected to the winding house and ascend the line which was 1,960 yards long rising to 150ft to the summit. The wagons then descended on the eastern line some 880 yards with a fall of 90 feet.

The Brusselton Incline continued in use until 1856 after which it was served via the Tunnel Branch off the Bishop Auckland line. Today, all traces of the areas mining heritage have long since been removed.

It was at Shildon that Timothy Hackworth created the first railway town by establishing early facilities for the line. It was here that the steam locomotives were coupled to the wagons of coal to begin their journey to the River Tees at Stockton. Around it grew the locomotive works (which later became a major wagon works), engine sheds and extensive marshalling yards. Closure of the works in 1982 devastated the area with 2,600 people losing their jobs. With the area's railway engineering experience, Hitachi built a new facility at Newton Aycliffe to construct new trains for a growing customer base. Having built the IEP trains and multiple units for ScotRail, the works are now preparing to deliver the trains for HS2 and currently employs over 700 people. The complex includes a 25kV overhead electric test track, the Bishop Auckland line from Darlington not being electrified.



Locomotion at Shildon is currently undergoing major works in readiness for 2025. A second building diagonally opposite this one is due to start construction later this year

The importance of the railway town resulted in a new outpost of the National Railway Museum being built in 2003 and opening the following year. Located on the site of the former Down marshalling yard, which once stored wagons destined for the works the museum known as Locomotion, is about to see the addition of a second major building which along with developments elsewhere along the route will see major restoration and regeneration of the world's first public railway in time for the celebrations in 2025.

Still in business

The line through North Road and Shildon is now part of the Bishop Line with services running through Darlington Bank Top to Saltburn via Middlesbrough.



North Road station, Darlington seen here on 11th July 2014. The main museum complex is to the left of the fence and utilises the former Down platform. The current line uses the former Up platform although the roofed section is no longer in use. Major redevelopment is due to take place here.



Class 142 No. 142023 calls at Shildon station on 19th November 2019 showing the exit to the Locomotion complex

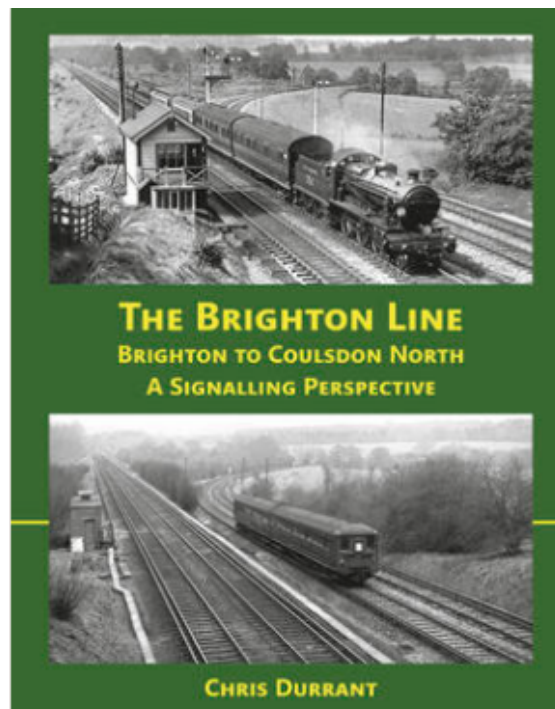
Members of MKMRS back in 1975 made the long journey by coach from Bletchley to Shildon to witness the Calvacade from the grandstands.

They are seen under construction in the lead up to the event itself with K&WVR Ivatt 2-6-2T No. 41241 working a shuttle service. The wagons are standing on what is now Locomotion. (Gavin Morrison).



HMRS Bletchley Area Group meeting: Wednesday 28th September 2022 ‘Brighton Line Signalling’

Chris Durrant is the author of a new book on Brighton line signalling: <https://lightmoor.co.uk/books/the-brighton-line-i-limited-editioni/L8962> - A fascinating talk by a knowledgeable and interesting railwayman.



Venue:

Whaddon Way Church Centre
Beaverbrook Court
West Bletchley
Milton Keynes
Buckinghamshire
MK3 7JS

Doors open at 7pm. Talk starts at 7:30pm.

All welcome.

More details from ag-bletchley@hmrs.org.uk

Member Updates

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



Aaron Glenister



Mike Biss



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@courtmark.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 Winter Edition is the 28th November 2022 with the Newsletter being published by the 1st December 2022.