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Contributions are welcome:

- (b) as e-mails or e-mail attachments;
- (b) a hard copy of a computer file;
- (c) a typed manuscript;
- (d) a hand-written manuscript, preferably with a contact telephone number so that any queries can be sorted out;
- (e) a CD/DVD;
- (f) a USB storage flash drive.

Any queries to the Editor, please.

The **NEXT ISSUE** will be dated March 2015, and contributions should get to the Editor as soon as possible, but at least before 1 February 2015.

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Copies of this magazine are also available to non-members: a cheque for £9 (payable to 'Barrowmore Model Railway Group') will provide the next four issues, delivered direct to your home. Send your details and cheque to the Editor at the above address.

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The cover illustration this quarter is of Alisdair Macdonald's EM gauge model of Whithorn station; an article on the model's first exhibition outing will be found later in this issue, and it is currently being extended and renovated.

Forthcoming events:

(2015)

17 Jan. 2015: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).

14 Mar. 2015: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).

30 Mar. 2015: "The Dee Bridge disaster" talk by author Peter Lewis; Grosvenor Museum, Chester 7.30pm.

4/5/6 Apr. 2015: York show ("Johnstown Road" is appearing).

25/26 Apr. 2015: Liverpool show.

23 May 2015: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).

30/31 May 2015: DEMU Showcase (2 sites), Burton-on-Trent.

13/14 Jun. 2015: Chatham show ("Whithorn" is appearing).

11 Jul. 2015: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).

22 Aug. 2015: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).

3 Sept. 2015: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).

14 Nov. 2015: 7mm running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details).

Notes of other railway-related events for this column are welcome

Class 1 27 Parcels DMU Conversions

by Eddie Knorn

Our esteemed Editor has an uncanny knack of turning up all manner of unusual railway books and documents. I was most surprised when he sent me an extract from a British Rail London Midland Region Traction Bulletin dated 1986 concerning the conversion of Class 127 DMU power cars into parcels vehicles. He asked me to add some narrative to this, and here it is.

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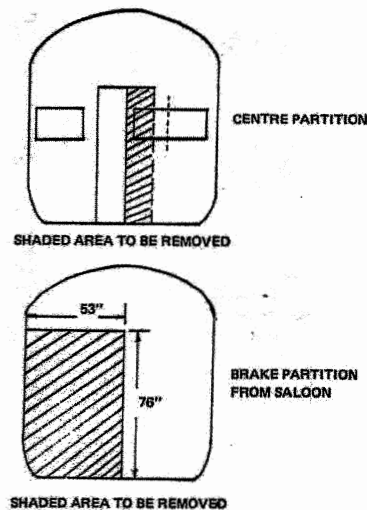


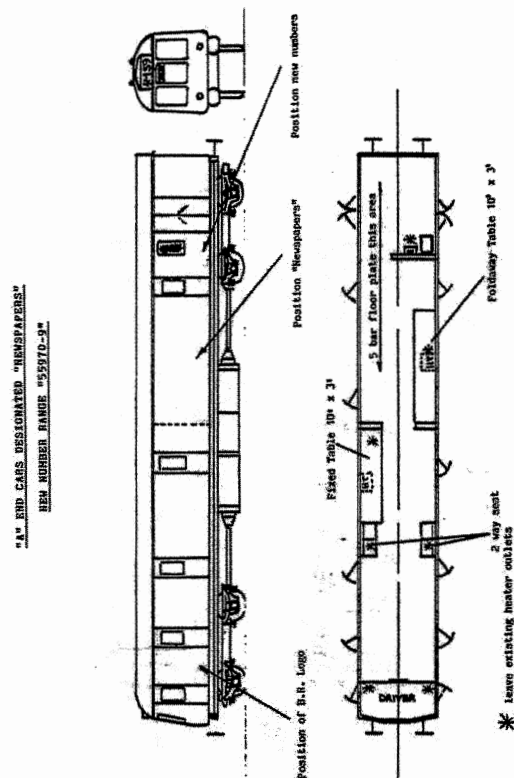
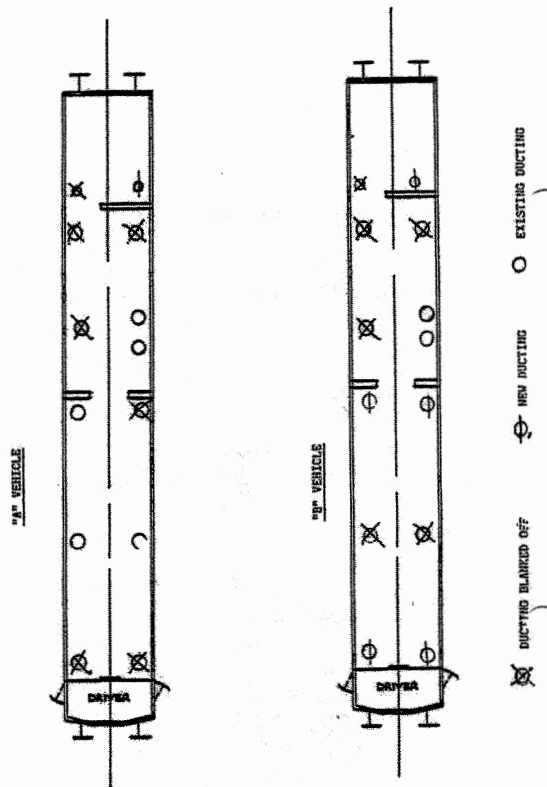
7. Provision of Diesel Parcels Units

In view of the high cost of running certain locomotive hauled parcels and newspaper trains, it has been decided to convert 22 surplus class 127 diesel multiple units, specifically for this purpose. Upon conversion the two car units will be reinstated into traffic with the following layouts.

The vehicles will have their insides completely stripped and modified in accordance with Sketches 1, 2 and 3. The two vehicles will be utilised; one for parcels and one for newspapers with the appropriate interior layout suiting each application. In addition to this the vehicle designated for parcels will have side roller doors fitted (see Sketch 4), with an area of floor plated over, between the two sets of doors.

SKETCH 1.





The local "suburban" train service on the Midland Main Line out of St Pancras station did not convert from steam haulage to electric traction – unlike the near neighbour at Euston - but



No.51625 in original livery (photo courtesy of Vintage Carriages Trust).

instead, received a dedicated fleet of 4-car diesel multiple units with a "high density" layout ideally suited to such suburban services with bodyside doors to each seating bay and "2+3"

seating layout. These thirty trains appeared from Derby Carriage Works in 1959 and were a derivative of the suburban DMUs built there and by other manufacturers in large numbers for the Western Region. In recognition of the stop-start nature of the St Pancras to Bedford (and beyond) suburban service, the heavy passenger loadings and particularly the gradients, these new trains eschewed the twin 150 horsepower AEC or Leyland underfloor engines combined with four speed epicyclic gearboxes of powered vehicles of “typical” DMU designs; each powered vehicle on a St Pancras unit had a pair of eight cylinder 238 brake horsepower Rolls Royce C8 engines, each powering the associated driven axle through an hydraulic torque converter transmission. Each new train comprised a powered vehicle at each end, each with a brake van area for the Guard, sandwiching a pair of intermediate trailer vehicles, one of which featured a pair of toilet compartments roughly mid-way along. On account of the need to maximise passenger capacity, there were no inter-vehicle gangways, so passengers with weak bladders had to choose where to sit with care!

As a youngster in St Albans I was familiar with these St Pancras units, which had become referred to as “Class 127” by the mid-1970s. Our local ex-LNWR branch line to St Albans had “conventional” DMUs and as they accelerated they sounded not unlike a bus, with the driver changing gear as the speed increased. At the “City” Station on the Midland Line, the St Pancras units were a different beast altogether – when a 127 unit departed the driver was able to unleash all 952 horses at maximum engine revs, and the hydraulic transmission increased the train speed to just above 40 mph at which point “direct drive” was engaged automatically.

By the early 1980s, British Rail had commenced electrification of the Bedford-St Pancras “Bed-Pan” line and the Class 127 units were gradually being run down. From the late 1960s they had been painted in plain BR Blue, so always looked drab, but by the early 1980s they appeared to be even worse. Even so, the maintenance depot at Cricklewood was able to keep them going day after day. The electric train service was to be provided by brand new Class



317 trains, and the first of these appeared in 1981. By the time the forty-eighth such unit was completed, they had still not begun service running, so the entire fleet was stored wherever siding space was available, until the point where BR was able to resolve the issue of Driver Only Operation. A minor relief from the drabness of the BR Blue livery was the appearance of a couple of intermediate trailer cars in Blue/Grey livery in October 1982, hinting at further use elsewhere. The first power car, M51591 was specially painted in lined BR green and ran in service with a small plaque each side commemorating 1¼ million miles run.

Finally, in 1983 the electric train service began a phased introduction and Class 127 withdrawals commenced. Many of the intermediate trailer cars migrated to the Birmingham area to displace inferior Class 116 vehicles. The power car fleet was reduced, a few were preserved, some were scrapped but others were stored. A small quantity held on in service – in early 1984 a visit to north London found back-to-back power cars running on the Gospel Oak to Barking line, though these were soon displaced by other DMU types. A three car formation

had been decorated with white painted cab roof domes and side gutters in an attempt to sell some or all of the fleet abroad, though this came to nothing.

By this time, British Rail had been “sectorised” and the Parcels business sector had been examining the costs of running their business. Although there had been a small fleet of dedicated parcels DMUs running since the late 1950s, the majority of parcels trains were loco-hauled. The longer trains were presumably cost-effective, however shorter trains were not. An article in the April 1985 “Rail Enthusiast” magazine reported that the Parcels Director was looking at a fleet of twenty Class 127 power cars stored at Carlisle with a view to removing the seating and using them in pairs to eliminate shorter haul van trains on routes such as Manchester to Leeds or Preston. By this time, the issue of blue asbestos insulation in DMUs and coaches was a major headache to BR, but the Class 127s were not so blighted. Having the powerful Rolls Royce engines made them ideal for tail traffic, while the relatively simple bodyside construction would make it easy for body modifications. The magazine article mentioned a two year life for these vehicles once converted.



M55976 preserved Class 127 MBS parcels conversion, Kidderminster (SVR) 17.10.2004.



During 1985, the conversions took place at Newton Heath Depot, Manchester, and Currock Wagon Depot, Carlisle, and a fleet of ten trains entered service. As described in the Traction Bulletin, each two car unit had an “A” vehicle for Newspapers and a “B” vehicle for Express Parcels. The document describes the Newspaper vehicle as having tables provided inside and retaining some of the bodyside slam doors while the Express Parcels vehicle had two opposing large doorways cut into their bodyside, fitted with rolling shutters, together with a strengthened floor area between them. The vehicle interiors were gutted of passenger seating, the central partition was taken out on the rolling shutter-fitted vehicles and retained, though with an enlarged doorway, in the Newspaper vehicles. The partition between the Guard’s luggage area and the saloon had a doorway cut into it in each vehicle. The Traction Bulletin goes into detail about revised arrangements of heater duct outlets – as built these emerged beneath passenger seats, but they would be in the middle of an area of open floor after conversion.



Nos 55979 and 55969 in March 1987.

In reality, at least some units emerged in a different format – a unit was seen in November 1985 in a freshly painted state with one vehicle labelled “Newspapers” and the other “Express Parcels” though neither had rolling shutter doorways fitted. What is notable was the conversion of the double doors in the former luggage area to both open outwards – when in passenger service; one door leaf opened inwards and also had a droplight window. Some bodyside passengers’ doors and all passenger glazing was panelled over. The livery of this early style conversion was plain BR Blue, with some low key “Red Star” branding on each side of each vehicle applied on one of the glazing blanking plates. Eventually the large access doorways and associated rolling shutters were fitted across the fleet though at least one vehicle had this immediately behind the cab end rather than half way along the body.

From the above, it looks like the specification for these units was “flexible” though in the end the appearance of the Class 127 parcels sets settled down with a standard appearance where both “A” and “B” vehicles were fitted with rolling shutter doorways around half way along the bodyside, and the plain blue livery was enhanced with a red band, edged with cream, just below window level. Although the bodyside glazing apertures were plated over some of the

bodyside doors were retained, including the droplight windows. "Red Star" branding was applied along with the "Newspapers" and "Express Parcels" identification. The "A" vehicles had two fixed tables inside. Vehicles were renumbered in the parcels DMU series, with numbers ranging 55966 – 55987.

The attentive reader will have noticed that this number range implies that there were 22 vehicles, not just 20. One report suggested that a twenty first power car was identified as suitable for use, though it needed a partner. The first power car, M51591, that had completed its passenger service in lined green livery had then been "preserved" at the National Railway Museum. At least it was preserved until BR asked for it back, in order to partner the twenty-first vehicle. This eleventh unit at least had some special treatment in that the green livery on M51591 (to become 55966) was retained and its new partner also gained a matching livery. Even the special plaques on the sides were kept. If you are really clued-up on parcels DMUs, you will also have noticed that the number 55987 duplicated a Class 128 parcels car, though that was withdrawn long before 1985.

The full fleet of eleven units was allocated to Longsight depot, Manchester, and each set carried a set number in the range 910 – 920. These trains were easy to distinguish from other, lesser DMU classes; apart from the 9xx set number, the cab fronts carried an eagle symbol (apparently the insignia of Longsight), and for some reason many of the 4-character headcode displays were still extant. Each cab front also carried a red triangle symbol above each buffer, which was a "multiple working" identification. In theory, red triangle units could only work in multiple with other such units, though see below...

The Class 127 parcels units found use not just in the immediate Manchester area, but in Birmingham and even as far south as Euston. Photographic evidence of a unit stabled in Taunton has even emerged. Although vehicle 55974 was withdrawn late in 1986, the remaining ten units put in some good service until withdrawal during 1989.

The vast majority of 1950/60s DMU vehicles were coded as "blue square" multiple working – they could only work in multiple with other vehicles with this code. The units on my local line to St Albans with their driver controlled gear changes fell into this category. By the time the Class 127 parcels units appeared, every other first generation DMU vehicle in use was a "blue square" variant and so incompatible. Except that Class 127s were worked in multiple with other DMU classes – but how?

Part of the design of blue square units was the ability of the driver to select four different gearbox settings: 1st gear to 4th gear. When new, the Class 127s were "blue square" units, as they had the gear selector handle and all associated wiring. As they had hydraulic transmissions which were fully automatic, the driving cabs of the Class 127s had special speedometers to indicate gear change points to the driver. Whatever gear was selected, the hydraulic transmission simply selected "Drive" and looked after itself depending on train speed. In the 1960s, the Cricklewood DMU allocation included some Cravens DMUs alongside the Class 127s. These Cravens vehicles each had a single Rolls Royce C8 engine, but this drove an epicyclic gearbox which needed the driver to select 1st gear, 2nd gear etc. On one occasion in 1968 a train was formed of a Class 127 set leading two pairs of Cravens vehicles. Apparently the driver had the Cravens units in the "wrong" gear for the speed of the train, though this was not a problem for the Class 127 unit, of course. The gearbox on one of the Cravens cars seized, which tore it from its mountings and led to flailing Cardan shafts holing the fuel tank and setting the underframe on fire. Some passengers jumped to their death before the train had stopped, while others were injured. Almost immediately the Class 127 vehicles were re-coded as red triangle and were thus not permitted to couple to any unit with "conventional" mechanical gearboxes.

In the 1980s, BR was able to stretch the rules slightly and couple the Class 127 parcels cars to conventional "blue square" units as they were technically compatible. There was a working from Manchester to Buxton that operated in this way, but the local instructions were explicit that the "blue square" unit must always lead the train, so the driver was always in a vehicle that required him to change gear.

Some preserved railways snapped-up Class 127 power cars in the mid 1980s, straight out of passenger service. When the Class 127 parcels conversions were withdrawn in 1989, there seemed no obvious point in preserving any, as they had obviously lost their passenger interiors and had big holes in the sides for the roller shutters. Some brave souls at the Midland Railway, Butterley thought otherwise and rescued vehicles 55966 and 55976. The former was of course M51591 that had briefly been at the NRM and had run as a parcels unit in lined green livery.

The reversal of the parcels conversion was achieved by taking advantage of the withdrawal of the similarly-bodied Class 115 units from the Marylebone line in the early 1990s. Many if not all of these vehicles were disposed of by Gwent Demolition at a desolate site in Margam, South Wales. On a visit there, I observed a "115" power car with a large section of bodyside cut out. Upon enquiry, I was told that some preservationists from the Midlands had taken these sections away on a lorry along with a load of interior parts.

M51591 was restored back to passenger carrying condition at Butterley, and a Class 127 centre car was obtained to make up a three car formation. A claim to fame of the other Butterley power car, 55976 (originally M51625) was its display as a "tapered restoration" at the "Railcar 50" Gala held at the Severn Valley Railway in October 2004. One side of the vehicle had lost the shutter conversion, and was presented so as to show the various stages in restoring the body of a DMU vehicle. The Brake Van end was in typical "as withdrawn" condition and the cab end was pristine in lined DMU green livery, while the bodyside showed the intermediate stages. A few years later saw this vehicle in service at Butterley with all bodyside work having been completed and a coat of lined green having been applied, though with the interior still gutted. M51591 and the centre trailer were at least able to carry passengers. This DMU set often saw use in conjunction with events featuring that global brand "Thomas the Tank Engine" and the global brand police were not impressed with seeing M51625 in service with no proper interior. A compromise was to cover the inside of the glazing, but in the end M51625 was taken out of traffic for the interior to be completed. This work took account of some of the work done as part of the parcels conversion in that the centre partition was not reinstated, and the doorway in the normally full-width brake van partition was retained. A set of seats near the rear of the vehicle was omitted so now M51625 can be loaded with wheelchairs via the brake van doors then they can be wheeled into the passenger saloon.

Butterley has also become the home of the only other surviving Class 127 Parcels conversion vehicle, 55967 (formerly M51610) spent some years at Rogart Station on the "Far North" line in Scotland, but is now a stores van / spares donor at Butterley. This was the partner to 55966 / M51591 and was the other half of the lined green parcels unit.

[Photographs are by Eddie Knorn , David Goodwin, and the Vintage Carriages Trust].

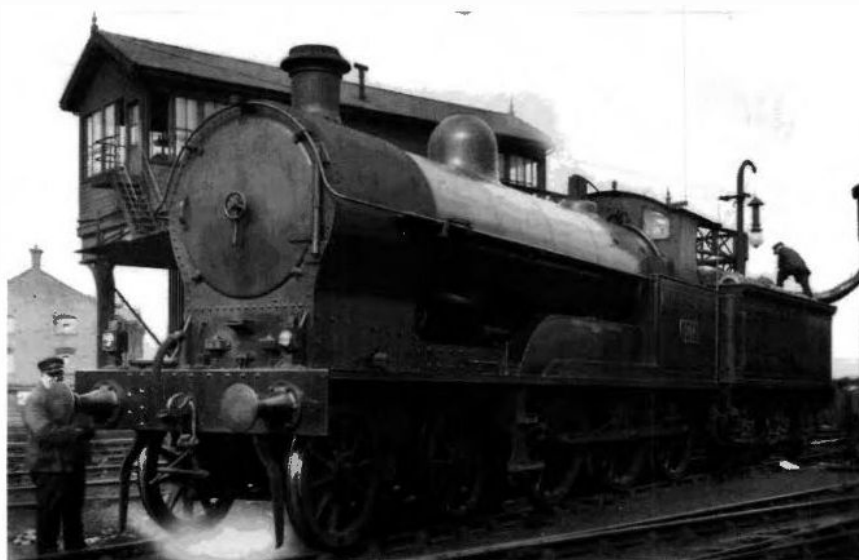
Tishy in Italy

by Norman Lee

Tishy was a racehorse. He had quite a turn of speed at the peak of his career in 1922 but he had the unfortunate habit of crossing his legs and falling down! His fame increased no end when he appeared as a cartoon - drawn by Tom Webster - in the *Daily Mail*. Many is the time he came up from the rear, passed through the field and then tripped up a few yards short of the finishing post.

The LNWR had a Tishy. Its beginning was in Mr F W Webb's time, in 1880, when the famous '18in Goods' 0-6-0 came into production - the type was usually known as a 'Cauliflower' because the LNWR crest was displayed on the middle splasher and it really did look like a vegetable from a few feet away. The Cauliflower was a thoroughly new design. It was

Webb's first engine to use David Joy's valve gear - this didn't need eccentrics on the crank axle and the motion of the valves was derived entirely from the connecting rod. There was no problem here with getting its rods crossed. There was plenty of space along the crank axle and so large bearings were provided. Moreover, there was space between the cranks for a third bearing - the Cauliflowers had a sub-frame attached to the frame spacers and this held



LNWR 'Prince of Wales' No. 964 BRET HARTE before it was rebuilt as a 'Tishy'. It was photographed in the engine yard at Manchester London Road in its full LNWR lined black livery. The LNWR power signalbox is in the background. When built in early 1914, the engine was superheated and had two inside cylinders and piston valves - a fairly usual layout for a British engine at the time.

(Ref DNR 747).

the extra, central, bearing on the driving axle. The result was a very robust engine which could be driven hard without risk of damaging the crank axle or of overheating the bearings.

The arrangement of Joy valve gear and a centre bearing was used in almost all of Mr Webb's subsequent designs and was the basis of the much larger 2-cylinder Whale and Cooke engines such as the 'Precursor' and the 'Prince of Wales'.

The shortcoming in Joy valve gear was that the connecting rod between piston rod and the big end on the crank axle had to have a hole made through it to take some of the mechanism. That was a weakness in what was a highly stressed component. In practice, the connecting rod was widened and reinforced at the critical spot - the rods didn't give trouble in Webb's day and they worked well for Whale and Cooke on their more powerful engines.

After the Great War, maintenance standards didn't return to pre-war levels - Crewe couldn't get the staff to deal with the wartime backlog. After Mr C J B Cooke's death, in 1920, someone at Crewe began to worry about the connecting rods and there had been one or two failures. Since 1913, the LNWR 'Claughtons' had been running successfully with outside Walschaerts valve gear and that needed neither eccentrics nor holes in the connecting rods. It was decided to fit outside Walschaerts gear to a couple of the existing 'Prince of Wales' 4-6-0s - Nos.964 BRET HARTE and 867 CONDOR. In March 1923, very early into LMS days, the modified engines appeared and they seemed to work all right.



LNWR 'Tishy' No. 964 BRET HARTE, photographed at Crewe Works on 2nd May 1923, early in LMS days although the engine is in LNWR plain black livery with LNWR fittings. In the background are the gardens of the management houses. The engine has recently been rebuilt with outside Walschaerts valve gear but still with its inside piston valves and cylinders. (The reference number for the picture is CRPRT A631 (an LNWR official photograph)).

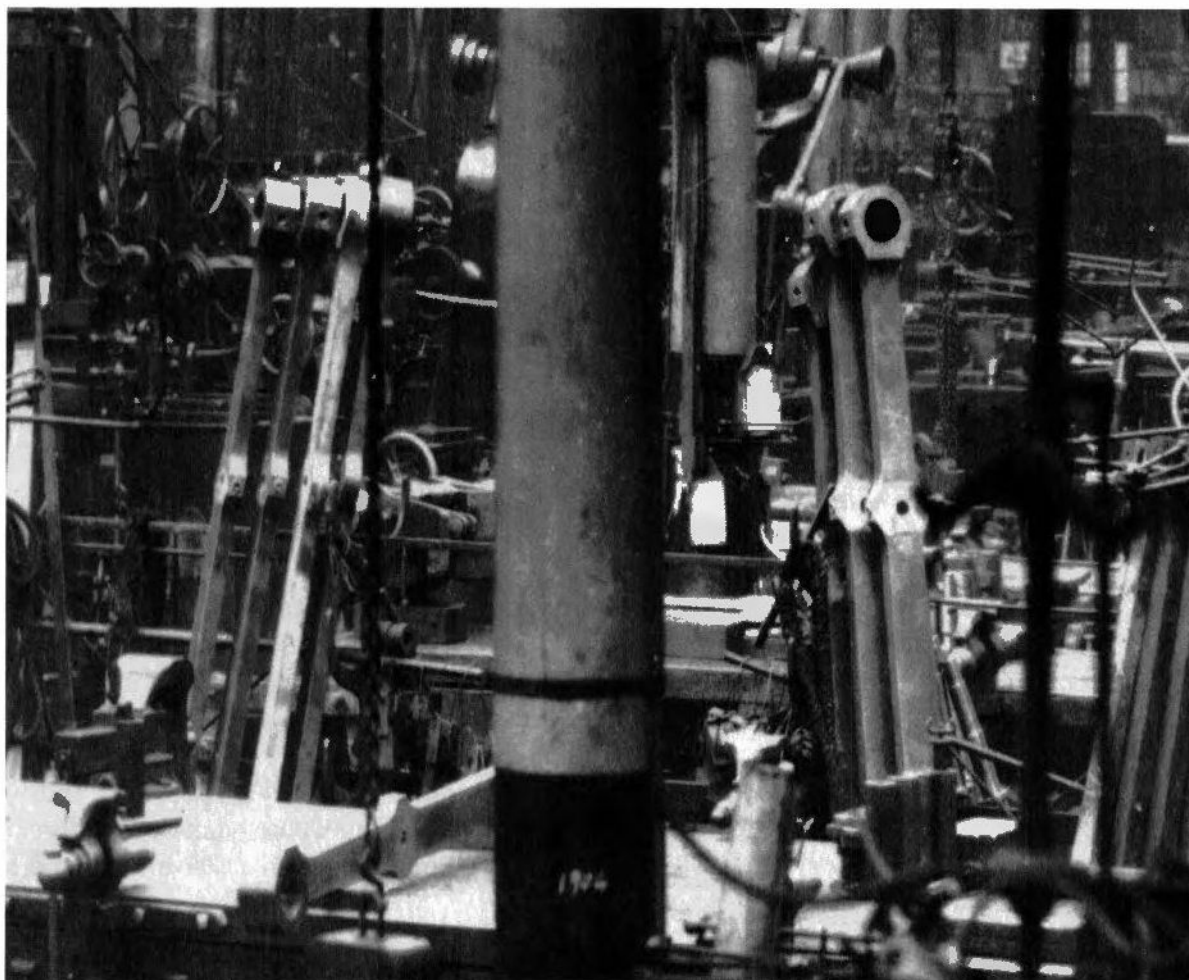
At the time, outside Walschaerts gear had become quite popular in Britain, particularly on the Great Northern and on Southern constituents. However, all these other designs, including the 'Claughtons', had outside cylinders and coupling rods - the modified 'Princes' had inside cylinders and they looked quite odd. The rods of the Walschaerts gear looked to be thrashing around aimlessly and someone on the North Western thought ... TISHY. The name stuck with enginemen and some of the staff at Crewe Works. Further rebuilds were proposed and, according to tale, TISHY nameplates were made. However, senior management eventually realised that calling an engine TISHY wasn't entirely a compliment and the plates went to the brass foundry furnaces.

All this was a long time ago. Using Walschaerts gear had little effect on the performance of the engines. Two more 'Princes' were modified and one new 'Tishy' was built (speculatively, by an outside builder) but the combination of inside cylinders with outside Walschaerts gear remained a barely remembered by-way of British locomotive practice.

However, your author went on holiday to Italy this summer and stayed for a few days in Trento, up in the mountains on the line from Verona and over the Brenner pass into Austria. When steam was in decline, the FS - the Italian state railway - left redundant engines in sidings in many of its stations. This seems rather a nice touch and most large towns have their steam locomotive. The Italian climate is milder than in Britain and the engines are, cosmetically, in reasonable condition. Trento's engine is a 2-6-0 and is parked in a siding off the north end of the main station and across from the platforms used by very modern metre gauge

trains which run to a nearby ski resort. Viewed from the narrow gauge, the 2-6-0 looked fine but seemed as though something had been dismantled.

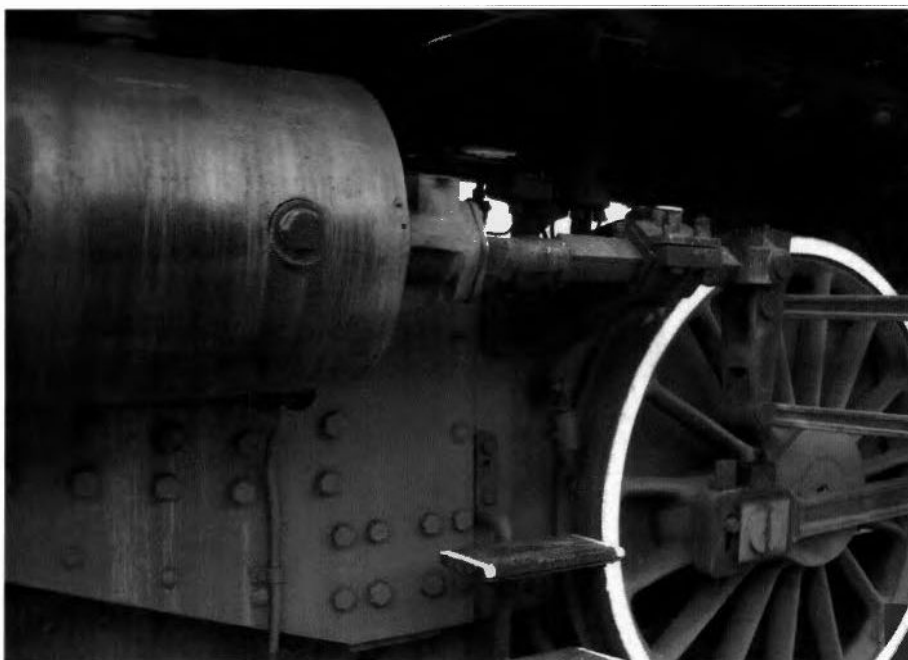
It was difficult to get very close to the sides of the engine. It was in a siding at the end of a main line platform but four railway policemen, in impressive uniforms and carrying pistols, were not keen on tourists walking about on running lines either side of the relic. However, I could get to the front end of the engine where I took a few photographs and found out what the engine was. Nothing was missing - it was, in effect, an Italian 'Tishy'. It wasn't quite the same as the LNWR layout since although it had two inside cylinders, it had outside piston valves as well as outside Walschaerts gear. At first glance, from a distance, the piston valves looked like cylinders and the Walschaerts gear appeared to be very flimsy piston and connecting rods.



The view inside the fitting shop in the Old Works at Crewe, showing connecting rods for engines with Joy valve gear, propped up on their ends. The hole where part of the Joy mechanism fits can be seen quite clearly. The picture is a detail from LNWR official photograph No. A395 which was taken on 9th December 1899. The connecting rods are probably for 'Watford Tanks' - 0-6-2T passenger engines which were being built at the time. Ref CRPRT A395A.



The preserved 'Tishy' in Italy, seen on a short piece of track off the north end of one of the main line platforms at Trento, on the line running north from Verona and over the Brenner Pass to Austria. The engine is a 2-6-0 with number 625 011. It has two inside cylinders but its piston valves are outside the frames and are worked by Walschaerts valve gear, also mounted outside the frames. RefSOC 1339.



The Italian engine, showing the left hand outside piston valve, its rod and guide and the connection to the Walschaerts gear. At first glance, the piston valve looks like an outside cylinder with a rather weedy piston rod and crosshead guide. A second glance sees that there is no coupling rod and then the penny drops - it's a piston valve, not a cylinder! Ref SOC 1340.

(All the images are from the LNWR Society photograph archive).

A SALOP TRAGEDY by Tony Robinson.

In the early sixties my father was called on to attend a number of B.R. seminars and courses mainly on dieselisation and the technical implications for steam era Shed Masters and their subordinates. These were usually held at venues such as the Derby Technical Centre or Crewe works for example. However he also attended a number of unrelated seminars on what was then the “Flavour of the month” – Work Study (time & motion). As one might expect these were not held in the confines of the works but usually at some rather splendid country house or hotel. I recall him attending one such near Tring in 1963 and another in Lyme Regis in January 1965, why such a venue was chosen in the month of January is anybody’s guess!

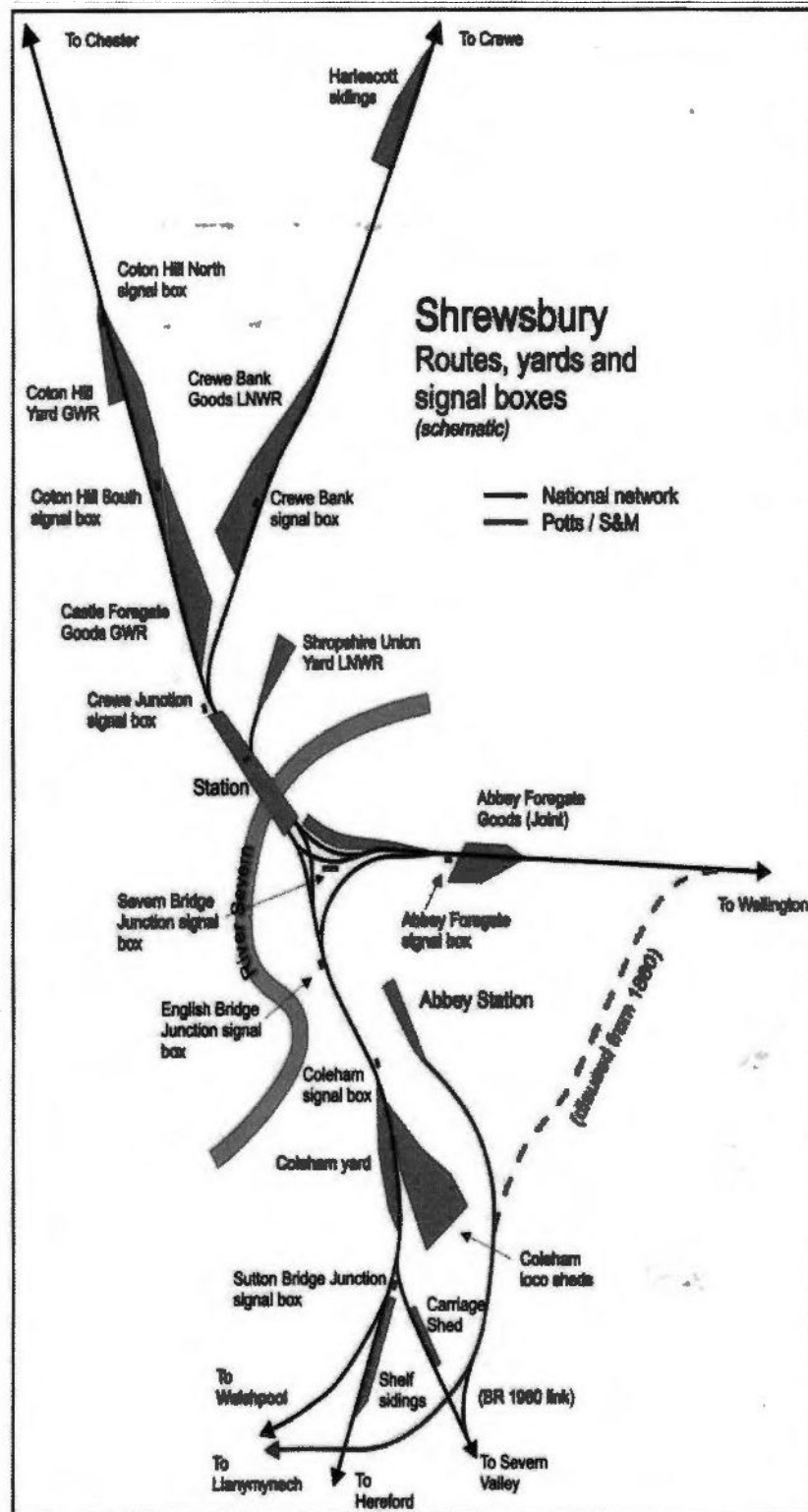
The date was January 11th and prior to setting off for Chester General that morning he received a call from one of his duty deputies at the shed advising him that there had been a bad accident at Coton Hill, Shrewsbury and as his train would be passing that location to look out for it. Well that called for him to do something completely out of character and arm himself with a camera! We see below the result of his amateur photography, a quite unique picture of the accident. Taken from a carriage window of his passing Woodside – Paddington train (he would change for a Bristol bound train at Shrewsbury) we see D1734 of (82A) Bristol Bath Rd shed, a Brush Type 4 Class diesel electric (later Class 47) piled into the remains of Coton Hill Yard South Signal Box. Whilst I have kept the photograph in my files all these years I never had the full story of what happened until I purchased a copy of Geoff Cryer’s excellent book *Shropshire Railways* (Crowood Press ISBN 978-1-84797-691-8 [Note 1]), I knew it didn’t involve Mold Junction or any 6B men so didn’t think it was relevant to put in my own book [2].



Taken from a passing south bound train on the “wrong road” (i.e. down main) D1734 can be seen with what remains of the displaced Coton Hill South Signal Box lying in front of the badly damaged cab. Also some of the train’s wagons from the 12th onwards can be seen piled up behind and at the far side of the loco. [Photo: J. E. Robinson].

However we now have the story of what happened so I will firstly relate it here as described by Geoff in his book:
[map courtesy of Geoff Cryer]

BRITISH RAILWAYS 1948-1994



Shrewsbury's scattered goods yards as they were in the first half of the twentieth century.

"The last few miles of the line from Chester are on a falling gradient the steepest of which is the 1 in 100 of Hencote bank. At the foot of the bank Coton Hill North signal box marked the entrance for freight trains into Coton Hill marshalling yard. Shortly before 6.00am on 11th January 1965, a Saltney to Pontypool Road freight approached Shrewsbury, hauled by a locomotive that was less than a year old, Brush Type 4 D1734.

At the top of Hencote bank there was a stop sign (Probably an "All goods trains to stop & pin down brakes" sign -AJR) but, possibly due to it being a fitted freight, the driver didn't stop but continued down the bank into the yard. Entering the North end of Coton Hill goods loop at speed it continued through the yard and derailed at trap points at the end of the loop, then it ran on for a further 70 yds before demolishing the Coton Hill South signal box. The signal man was killed and the driver of D1734 was seriously injured. The locomotive beyond economic repair was written off. It was the first of the class to be scrapped, one of what was to become a very numerous class the last one D1111, being built more than two years later".

Upon visiting the Shropshire archives in Shrewsbury, where the staff had very kindly prepared a collection of January 1965 *Shrewsbury Chronicles* in preparation for my visit, the following information was revealed:-

The train was the 3.56am Saltney to Pontypool Road comprising 46 wagons @ 775 Tons, the driver was 43 year old George Pike of Scott St, Shrewsbury with second man (Fireman) 19 year old Kenneth Clorley of Copthorne, Shrewsbury both based at Coleham (6D) shed. When the train reached the top of Hencote bank the driver was unable to stop the train, as per established practice, which continued down the 1 in 100 bank at 30 to 40 mph the klaxon was sounded continuously to alert all at Coton Hill yard of the impending danger, the train entered the up reception loop at this speed and whilst it was presumed the Signaller, 43 year old Tom Farrington a father of two daughters from Coleham, expected the train to come to rest in the loop, it ran through the trap points and carried on to demolish the small signal box in its path killing him outright. The time was 5.45am and the horrific noise of the train piling up behind the stricken locomotive woke everybody in the heavily built up area around the marshalling yard. It took rescue services over 45 minutes to free driver Pike who was rushed to the local infirmary where he was subjected to a 3 hour operation. Second man Clorley fortunately only received relatively minor hand injuries but was severely traumatised by the accident, he had wedged himself in the cab doorway and only jumped clear after the locomotive had come to rest. It took firemen over an hour to find the body of the signaller amongst the shattered remains of his timber framed signal box, most of which had been pushed by the locomotive some 50 yards from its original location.

The following serves as a reminder of the mixed consists of freight trains even in those embryonic days of diesel haulage. Chief amongst the train casualties were occupants of some shattered cattle wagons, six heifers killed amongst 28 survivors that were attended by vets and the RSPCA. One survivor was found beneath the wreckage some 4 hours after the crash! A major alert was sounded when it was discovered that some of the crushed wagons contained shattered sulphuric acid carboys which caused acid spillage which was later neutralised with limestone from another smashed wagon – ironically convenient! Another alert was sounded over the presence of a 20 ton chlorine tanker lying on its side in the consist, here the worry was that if punctured (and it wasn't) the people living nearby would be gassed by the fumes! Police alerted householders to seal their windows and fireplaces just in case and issued a warning that a siren would sound if chlorine was detected in the air. An upturned wagon load of army munitions also raised serious concern, especially due to acid

and fire risks! Members of the local regiment were called in and defused all items in the shipment as a very necessary precaution. Despite all the steps taken to safeguard the situation, battery acid from the loco leaked out and pungent fumes were emitted when it mixed with spilt caustic soda from a wagon near to the locomotive.

It is interesting to note that despite all the carnage of the accident and the presence of a breakdown steam crane that morning along with all the necessary service and rescue vehicles etc, train services carried on pretty much as normal and were flagged through, as witnessed by my father who didn't suffer any delays to his journey south. One can't help but postulate that if such an accident happened today not only would Health & Safety decree that the line be closed for probably an indeterminate period but there would be a mass evacuation of all people living within half a mile of the accident scene!

My further investigation of the original accident report concluded that the train vacuum brake and locomotive's secondary air brake systems were in good order (as indeed they should have been given that the locomotive was almost new), also 22 of the total of 46 wagons were fitted with vacuum brakes. Col J. R. H. Robertson of the Railway Inspectorate concluded that the accident was caused by the driver, who running 34 mins late at Gobowen may have thought that as the train was only due to stop at Coton Hill South to relieve him and his mate, consequently wouldn't be directed into the loop! Also it was revealed that the AWS system had been previously isolated but given the circumstances of the accident this would have made little or no difference to the outcome. It seems that the train broke apart at the eleventh wagon, and the twelfth onwards detoured into a loop behind the site of the demolished signal box. The cause of this effect probably being the forcing of point rodding as the signal box was hit. However these wagons soon became derailed by incorrectly set points and subsequently piled up against the side of the derailed loco causing further carnage.

The Locomotive D1734.

Built at the Brush Falcon works in Loughborough in 1964.

Supplied new to 82A in May 1964.

Officially withdrawn at Crewe works in March 1965.

Cut up at Crewe in April 1965 having given only 8 months of revenue earning service.

Has the 'distinction' of being the first of its class to be scrapped and never ran with a TOPS number.

Hencote bank in August 2014 [next page]: note the remains of Coton Hill up sidings to the right of the main line.

A Chester to Birmingham New Street working by a Class 158 DMU awaits the home signal beyond the Ellesmere Rd bridge; Coton Hill South Signal Box was situated just the other side of this bridge. Shrewsbury still sports a grand mix of lower quadrant (GWR) & upper quadrant (LMS) signals redolent of the days of its joint ownership.

[Picture taken by AJR from the top of Shrewsbury Castle: ("Bit of a bugger holding the camera still on 30x zoom...the Ellesmere Road bridge is about a mile from the castle")].



THE GREAT WESTERN EXPRESS

SATURDAY 11th APRIL 2015

A SPECIAL EXCURSION TRAIN TO WORCESTER and OXFORD A CIRCULAR TRIP

via

THE BEAUTIFUL COTSWOLD HILLS

Join us on our special class 47 diesel-locomotive hauled tour with Riviera Trains carriages. We will start from HOOTON at around 6:45am and pick up at BACHE, WREXHAM, GOBOWEN & SHREWSBURY (about 08.15am).

The train then proceeds via the West Midlands and Kidderminster, to arrive at our first drop-off at WORCESTER SHRUB HILL (about six hours). Worcester sits on the River Severn and is full of history, with its cathedral, the old buildings and shopping opportunities. The museum of Royal Worcester Pottery is not to be missed.

We then continue south through Cheltenham Spa and the outskirts of Gloucester to take the Golden Valley Line through Stroud, over Sapperton summit and towards the Vale of the White Horse at Swindon. A fast run along the main line and a turn northwards brings us to our main destination of OXFORD (about four hours). The city needs no introduction with its dreaming spires, college buildings and elegant shopping streets. We return along the Cotswold Line through Evesham and the heart of the Cotswolds, picking up at Worcester and arriving back in Shrewsbury mid evening and Hooton late evening.

Each passenger will have a reserved seat, a free detailed route description and local plans. The train has a buffet car and a trolley service in first class providing light refreshments. Seating in First Class is in open coaches around tables for two (first come, first served) and four. Most Standard Class seats are at tables for four.

Fares: First: Adults £99, Children (5-17) £59, Children under 5 sharing a seat, free.

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Tickets, seat reservations and final timings will be sent a few days before the train runs.

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MS1

Editor's page

As a more law-abiding alternative to Amazon, I have used Wordery (www.wordery.com) to order five titles (not all railway books). Impressions so far: generally seem very efficient: there was a problem with their courier regarding one order (they couldn't find my house!) and it was sorted fast; discounting is not quite as big as with Amazon, but I can live with that. Come back the Net Book Agreement, which provided a level playing field until Mrs Thatcher interfered!

Recent books:

The Beeching legacy, vol.4: the Cambrian lines, North Wales & the Wirral peninsula: a comparative view, past and present, of the Beeching Report - The reshaping of British Railways, by Philip Horton. Silver Link, 2014. ISBN 978 1 85794 434 1. £20.

Welsh Railways Research Circle data sheet 7: Research sources compiled by Michael Denman and Tony Miller. WRRRC, 2014.

Cambrian Railways: Working time book, October 3rd 1921. Reprinted WRRRC, 2014. ISBN 978 0 9527267 6 0. £3.95p.

Anglesey railways through time by Mike Hitches. Amberley, 2014. ISBN 978 1 4456 0871 6. £14.99p. [See also page 11 for Richard Stagg's review of another book by this author].

Private owner wagons: a tenth collection by Keith Turton. Lightmoor, 2011. ISBN 978 1 899889 55 6. £21. (Includes William Gossage, Widnes).

Private owner wagons: an eleventh collection by Keith Turton. Lightmoor, 2012. ISBN 978 1 899889 68 6. £21. (Includes Broughton & Plas Power, Wrexham; Meade-King Robinson, Liverpool; Settle Speakman, Stoke).

Private owner wagons: a twelfth collection by Keith Turton. Lightmoor, 2013. ISBN 978 1 899889 80 8. £21. (Includes Barton, Wrexham; Bickershaw, Wigan; Frederick Colley, Calveley; Colwyn Bay Gas Dept.; Higginson, Liverpool; McKelvie, Liverpool; Stalybridge Gas Dept.; Wood, Stockport).

Shropshire railways by Geoff Cryer. Crowood Press, 2014. ISBN 978 1 84797 691 8. £16.99p.

BR air-braked wagons in colour by David Ratcliffe. Ian Allan, 2014. ISBN 9780711034600. £20.00p.

Letters to the Editor

We have received a number of messages complimenting us on our tenth anniversary issue, for which we are grateful, but the only ones reprinted here are those which also refer to another subject:

[Email from Stan Yates (Rhyl) with more information about LMS 7532 which was the subject of an article by Norman Lee in the last issue]:

"Congratulations on the format and content of the Anniversary Journal. A real quality issue. As regards the article on 7532 (later 27532 and 58863), this particular engine was transferred from Devons Road in north London to 6C w/e 17/5/41 (LMS Western Division notice) to work on the Birkenhead and Wallasey Docks. It was one of six such engines transferred north for this purpose during the wartime years of 1941/2 and was still at 6C in 1952. The engine was renumbered 58863 in December 1950, was in store at 6C along with the rest of its

class by 8/6/52 (Richard Strange/Steam Archive Services), and transferred back to Devons Road w/e 11/10/52. (58851 formerly 27509 was the engine noted on 6C shed by Edgar Richards on 9/11/52 and transferred back to Devons Road w/e 15/11/52). Much has been written about this class at other locations but not about their presence at Birkenhead. It's the same story with the Bissel tank engines.

I've attached an undated photograph from the John Ward collection of 7532 in its BR guise as 58863 at 6C with the ex GWR coal stage in the background. I'm afraid it's not the best of photographs ...”



.....

[Email from Laurence Wheeler of the **Chester M.R.C.**, giving details of their **new Honorary Secretary**]:

“Dave, Our Secretary’s details are as follows

Phil Buttifant
1 Deeside Close
Ellesmere Port
CH66 6TH
Tel 0151 357 3495

phil_buttifant@hotmail.com

I’m really enjoying reading the BMRJ – a splendid effort. Even got your picture in it!

Incidentally why would the Freemason not be interested in LNER No 7532 (a GER J15 0-6-0)! I don’t think the SR or GWR had a 7532 though. All the best, Laurence.”

[Exchange of messages following “Mostyn” appearing at Taunton exhibition]:

From: steve pike [<mailto:pevenstike141@hotmail.co.uk>]

Sent: 02 November 2014 13:11

To: Richard Oldfield

Subject: RE: Taunton Railex 2014

".... can I please take this opportunity to say a heartfelt thanks to you and the guys from Mostyn, it is a spectacular layout and was great to see in operation, the juniors are still smiling and are very pleased to have been allowed to help out.

We were slightly down on last year's visitor numbers but still managed to put some pennies into club coffers so on behalf of all at the club Thankyou.

On a personal note, I would like to say thankyou again for all your understanding, it was a steep learning curve for me, and we look forward to seeing you guys again at some time in the future.
Kind Regards, Steve"

From: Richard Oldfield [mailto:richardoldfield@btinternet.com]

Sent: 03 November 2014 20:36

To: 'steve pike'

Subject: RE: Taunton Railex 2014

".... Thanks for your e-mail. A few us have been demonstrating modelling at the nearby Merseyside exhibition last weekend and I'm now catching up with e-mails.

We were delighted to come along to Taunton and thoroughly enjoyed the exhibition. There could not have been a warmer welcome from all your members, both young and old. Despite the aggravation of the first hire company letting us down, plus a late withdrawal of an operator and then one of our remaining operators falling quite ill on Saturday night, we think Mostyn performed beautifully for your paying visitors throughout the weekend. We suffered very little damage to the stock compared with other shows showing that our team was relaxed and at ease.

We are 100% certain as a group that this would not have been possible without the enthusiastic support and help from the younger Taunton members. They are a great credit to you.

We would be delighted to return in the future – perhaps to give your members the challenge of operating our O gauge layout, Johnstown Road, with its shunting challenges and branch line operation?

All the best, congratulations on putting on a smashing exhibition, and be sure I am spreading the good word about Taunton. Cheers, Richard"

..... and another exchange, with the Merseyside club, following our attendance at Wallasey with a demonstration table:

It is good that our group is able to support our former colleagues at Merseyside, and I am pleased to see an invitation for next year. Joking apart, I suspect that the DCC Central Railroad was a treat for many, even if that big scruffy man would not shut up.... Richard.

From: Steve Hales [mailto:mmrs@merseysidemrs.co.uk]

Sent: 04 November 2014 10:23

"I'm just writing to thank you for bringing your stand to our exhibition thfs last weekend and helping to make it a success. We can't do it without you and I hope we will see you again next year.

Many thanks – Cheers, Steve"

%%%

Book review ... by Richard Stagg

Passenger Steamers of the River Conwy

by Richard Clammer. The History Press, 2014. £14.99. ISBN 978 0 7509 5902 5.

This book arrived as a Christmas present from a very astute grandchild.

When as a family we first moved to Deganwy (well over 40 years ago) there were on the beaches the vestigial remains of what, to my eyes at least, must have been some sort of landing stages. Having read this book now I know what they were for, as some of the illustrations show crowds of would be passengers queuing to get on the steamers at Deganwy.

This book is a well written and well illustrated account of the rise, decline and eventual disappearance of the summer high season tourist traffic on the Conwy catering for the holiday makers, starting in Victorian times and running through the first half of the 20th century. The service started running up the river from Conwy to Trefriw as an adjunct to the general freight and passenger service on the river prior to the building of the railway to Llanrwst. It also relates developments around the up river destination of the steamers in and around the village of Trefriw.

The craft used were developed specially for the Conwy, being exceptionally shallow drafted and having an ingenious method of engine controls positioned by the centrally placed wheel. Most of the steamers were paddle driven boats though in later years screw propulsion and internal combustion engines made an appearance. The last recorded landing at the quay in Trefriw was in 1965 by a boat called *Princess Christine* which is still in service as one of the tripper boats sailing out of Conwy harbour today.

Include among the interesting facets discovered by the author was the fierce determination of the original proprietors of the service not to run services on Sundays – till forced to by their competitors; the complexity of the time table which was, of course, totally ruled by the tides; and the running of special boat trains from Llandudno to Deganwy in conjunction with the steamers the times of which were also changed daily to fit with the tides! What a job for control! This boat service must be one of the shortest known, just between two stations less than three miles apart.

All in all this is a book I commend as one that tells a good story of a little known operation in the business that we are all interested in – the movement of people etc. by the side of, or actually on, one of the rivers of North Wales!

Chester, May 1982

by Eddie Knorn

This piece is written shortly after Mostyn's successful visit to Taunton Rail-Ex in October 2014. While operating the layout there, I was as immersed in 1977 as ever. Shortly after the show, I found one of my many sets of train spotting notes within these, the record of a

visit to Chester in May 1982 – roundly five years after Mostyn's set period – came to notice. Join me, if you will, for a look back, and let's see what we recognise from 1977 and what has changed.

Flicking through my notes, one thing that that I noticed is that I did not encounter any of Mostyn's loco fleet that day, although the Chester area still had a good selection of Class 47s ('steam heat', no heat and electric heat variants) and Class 40s. There were also occasional sightings of Class 25s, though as I recall, the fleet had been reduced in the general clear-out of locomotives around that time.

Highlights of the Class 40 observations included 40029 with her "Saxonia" name reinstated, or at least painted in white letters with a white border on a red background. Similar treatment was applied to 40027 "Parthia". Another Class 40 that was later to attain celebrity status was 40009, which was the last survivor to be equipped with vacuum brakes only.

In 1977, the use of headcode displays had been discontinued so many locos so-equipped displayed "0000" while a few had the black panel with white 'domino' dots applied to the glass. By 1982, the 'domino' treatment was typical on any Class 25s and headcode-fitted Class 40s, but the Class 47s all had the next iteration which was a metal panel painted yellow, with two opaque discs. Nothing seen that day had been fitted with the square-cased high intensity headlamps. A notable Class 47 seen was 47535 "University of Leicester" which had yellow bearing covers, white wheel rims and silver buffers – I suspect that the nameplates had not long been unveiled. Around a year later, accident damage to both cabs would see this loco sent to Crewe Works for repair, to emerge with flush cab fronts at both ends.

With my particular interest in Diesel Multiple Units, it will come as no surprise that I recorded plenty of sightings that day. In 1977, the Chester allocation retained a fleet of Class 119 Gloucester RCW "Cross Country" three car units. These had been built for longer distance routes on the Western Region, and after the summer of 1977 most of the Chester allocation gravitated back there to be exchanged for Class 120 units, essentially the Swindon Works interpretation of the same basic design. By May 1982, the Chester allocation of Class 120s had certainly become established. In theory, these Cross Country sets tended to spend most of their days working the Chester – Shrewsbury – Wolverhampton axis, along with the Cambrian Main Line and Coast lines, but from time to time they would visit Mostyn on their way along the North Wales coast.

The more typical Chester-allocated DMUs passing Mostyn in 1977 were from the large allocation of Metro Cammell Class 101 two car sets, supported by Derby Class 108 and Park Royal Class 103 versions. In 1982, nothing much had changed. Five years earlier, these units all ran in plain blue livery apart from the "101" and "108" cars that had been through the refurbishment scheme and wore a distinctive white livery. In 1982, these liveries were still to be seen, but in decreasing numbers as from 1979 any DMU car newly-refurbished gained the Blue/Grey livery formerly reserved for Inter-City hauled stock but also seen on the Cross Country DMUs. Vehicles in the white livery were also repainted Blue/Grey while even unre-furbished Class 101 and 108s also gained these colours. The Park Royal sets, on the other hand, had never been considered worthy of refurbishment so carried on in plain blue; within a year or so the class was to be rendered extinct in passenger service in any case. As a little aside, from the early 1970s until the fleet was withdrawn, the Park Royal units in passenger use were synonymous with Chester and the North Wales area, however we have yet to add some to the Mostyn allocation.

My 1982 excursion was a Summer Saturday, and just as Mostyn has, there were plenty of holiday special services bringing DMUs from other depots to North Wales. Allerton-based 108s were transporting people from Liverpool Lime Street via the Halton Curve, while New-

ton Heath Class 108 power twins, one with a Class 104 centre trailer, did the honours from Manchester, though of course another popular holiday route was from Manchester to Blackpool, so I suspect much of Newton Heath's DMU fleet went there instead.

In amongst all of this, Longsight also provided some DMUs. My notes record plenty of Blue/Grey Class 108 units, but as in 1977 I suspect many of them were running the Manchester – Northwich – Chester service, and not actually reaching Wales. The Longsight DMU contribution to the ebbing and flowing holiday crowds appears to have come from their plain BR Blue fleet and my sightings include a Class 104 BRCW triple set (similar to several on Mostyn), a GRCW two car set (Class 100) and a hybrid set of Class 100 motor coach and Cravens Class 105 Driving Trailer. These latter classes have yet to appear on Mostyn, but did run there for real in 1977.

The 1982 DMU offering was not that different from what we run on Mostyn now, or plan to in future. Apart from the spread of the Blue/Grey livery, a notable change in 1982 was the abolition of First Class. I recall reading that London Midland Region management considered that the admittedly more comfortable seating, carpeting and curtains of DMU First Class unworthy of the differential in ticket prices. As is usually the case, some vehicles had been fully de-classified while others had lost the “1” window stickers but retained the cantrail level yellow strip painted on the exterior. Some were still fully marked-up as First Class. By way of contrast, that Autumn I went to Leeds and the West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive still had First Class in all of their DMUs.

In summary, the five year gap from 1977 to 1982 had not significantly altered the passenger traffic to be seen along the North Wales Coast; there was still Class 40 haulage available and a similar mix of DMUs, with plenty of holiday traffic to make a Summer Saturday at Chester a rewarding trip. It goes almost without saying that the thirty or more years since my day out have seen significant changes in service patterns and rolling stock, albeit with some notable high points such as Class 37 haulage, and Class 57s on the Pendolino “drags”; I suspect that modern enthusiasts could find plenty to observe at Chester on a Summer Saturday, but not with the same levels of excitement as I enjoyed with staying vigilant to see if a 40 was arriving, or looking out for rag-bag DMU formations.

The full route of my day out saw me start at Watford Junction, take the obvious route to Chester via Crewe but then head for home via Shrewsbury, Wolverhampton and Birmingham. On the return journey, my notes record that I was rewarded with a ride in a Marylebone allocated Class 115 unit, but that is another story...

“WHITHORN” - FIRST TIME OUT

by Alisdair Macdonald

BMRJ40 made reference to “Whithorn” EM making its debut at the Annual Show of the Merseyside Model Railway Society. The show was held over the first weekend in November at Mosslands School in Wallasey, Wirral. So here is a short review of “Whithorn’s” debut.

Packed up and ready to roll at 10.00 am on the Friday morning the man and his van arrived promptly, and within twenty minutes the van was packed and we were on our way to Wallasey. The layout was set up and ready to roll within a couple of hours, including the installation of the never-used-before lighting rig.

With the layout usually being located in my shed against a wall, the exhibition floor at Wallasey was the first occasion that I was able to view "Whithorn" from behind the backscene. And because I had operated it from the front in the shed I believed that it could be operated from the front at the exhibition, and interact with the public. The debut experience at Wallasey made it clear that the only way to operate this layout is from behind the backscene. While I can walk and chew gum at the same time, but I found I couldn't

operate a layout and discuss its finer points at the same time.



So modifications will be required to the fiddle yard and the location of the control panel for future outings.

I found out satisfactory running in EM doesn't really work by a bit of local fettling and the easing out of Bachmann wheel sets with an EM back-to-back gauge despite what anyone might say. I can hear the chorus of

"Neh Neh Neh!" as I type this! So it's an early order with Colin Seymour for a bulk order of Alan Gibson wheelsets.

At the show the layout received many complimentary remarks on the quality of the scenery. Maybe the absence of Metcalf building kits helped its individuality. I was quite surprised how many, in conversation with me, had visited this out of the way part of South West Scotland.

The Merseyside Model Railway Show more recently has, in my opinion, become more of a family show, rather than one for the serious railway modeller. The saving grace for "Whithorn" was the scenery rather than the quality of its running, which saved the day. I hope that there were not too many disappointed enthusiasts at the show.

So it was a learning curve on the first time out. But with the patience and support of the operators we all had an enjoyable weekend. And I still have plenty of enthusiasm for "Whithorn", and definitely no despondency after the first public showing. There is plenty of modelling work to be progressed on the layout over the coming winter months on cold nights in my warm shed.

Thanks must be given to Paul Rees of the Merseyside Model Railway Society for his help with the fettling of the stock and his electrical expertise in the run up to the exhibition and for his time spent at the exhibition; as well as thanks to Bob Powell of the MMRS for his help over the exhibition weekend and for giving me his own experiences in the use of Sprat and

Winkle couplings. Local Saughall model railway enthusiast, David Parry, must also be mentioned in dispatches for his electrical wiring diagrams.

Finally the Yorkshireman, Ian Clark, used his pensioner bus pass to come over the Pennines for the event and provided his own personal advice.

The show closed at five on the Sunday evening. “Whithorn” was packed and away and back in my shed in Saughall by quarter past six. Smaller layouts do have some benefits!

[The Editor hopes that readers will have noticed that another view of the layout is featured on the cover of this issue].

“WHITHORN” BMRJ UPDATE JANUARY 2015

by Alisdair Macdonald

“Neh! Neh! I suppose it photographs well” was the feint praise of one of the Barrowmore Group elder statesman, Dave Goodwin, when the layout was set up in the clubrooms after its one and only outing to the Merseyside Model Railway Show in October 2014. With such a compliment ringing in my ears, I am pleased to say that the Group have taken the layout to its heart, and adopted it into the Barrowmore MRG family.

But before getting into the detail of its development and progress in the clubrooms – why Whithorn?

David L.Smith, the railway historian and doyen of anything to do with the “Sou’ West” (The Glasgow and South Western Railway), once described the railway line to Garlieston and Whithorn “*not really Waterloo*”. So for modelling impact at exhibitions it might be felt that operating Whithorn might not keep the spectator’s interest for any length of time. For the past decade of its existence there was only a twice – or thrice – weekly goods train. So much in the way of traffic. I can already hear those who saw it at the Merseyside Show in Wallasey say yes there wasn’t much running. Prototypical or what?

I had dabbled in EM previously, and feared the finer tolerances of P4, so decided to stick to EM as my standard. With a move to Saughall, and a new settled life, I decided to embark on a new layout from scratch. First stop was to delve into Iain Rice’s two books *Light Railway Layout Designs* and *An Approach to Model Railway Design* for inspiration.

Light Railway Layout Designs had a chapter on the Isle of Whithorn. Rice’s writing fired my imagination, and he concluded his note by saying “As an exercise in prototype modelling, you’d have a job to find a simpler subject than Whithorn – but it’s far from being hackneyed in the manner of similar GW termini”. Back in 1961 I had travelled on a Stephenson Locomotive Society enthusiasts’ special to Whithorn from Glasgow with GNSR no.49 ‘Gordon Highlander’ at the front.

Whithorn was also the most southerly station in Scotland.

A look through my library found a picture of a stove-pipe chimneyed Caledonian Railway Jumbo on the branch which had headed our special train down the branch, and with a 4mm EM locomotive to hand the die was cast.

The location for the new layout was now fixed. Whithorn in 4mm EM was born.

A scenic section of 12 feet by 2'6" was settled with a six foot fiddle yard. Track was quickly laid, looking back maybe a bit too quickly, with a later realisation that there is a limit to the amount of track fettling to achieve good and reliable running. But I did crack on with the scenery and probably ignored too much of the other important elements which make an exhibition standard model railway. The date of the Merseyside Show was however met. On reflection this exhibition was a steep learning curve for me.

So Whithorn was taken back, not to my shed, but to the Barrowmore Clubrooms for assessment and review, particularly by Richard O and Gavin L. From their assessment a number of positives came out for "Whithorn".

There was an immediate view that "Whithorn" could easily fit into a transit van and be set up within a couple of hours maximum at a show. Equally it could be quickly dismantled afterwards. This allows an earlier arrival back at base, unlike the energy and time expended on transporting "Johnstown Road" and "Mostyn". The smaller layout would allow the Mostyn Demonstrators to accompany it to exhibitions.

Richard's initial comment, with his permanent way expertise, suggested that the use of the Marcway set track for the pointwork was unprototypical, and he decided to Templot the track layout. This led to a suggestion that an extra two feet in the middle of the scenic section would give a more generous station throat and the benefit of a headshunt. I agreed and said that my track plan did not allow for the catch points at the throat, again un-prototypical. The headshunt would add to the operating interest of being able to simultaneously shunting the yard while a passenger train arrived and departed from the platform road.

The existing trackwork was lifted and Gavin inserted the two extra feet into the baseboard and added additional depth the scenic frontage.

The original station at Whithorn was located on the northern outskirts of the town. The land was no doubt cheap which allowed the station and yard to be quite spread out. I had attempted to create this same "spread out" appearance on the model.

Having agreed to the adoption of "Whithorn2" by BMRG, it was agreed that any work on the layout must provide for it to be to an exhibition standard, to meet the standards laid down on "Mostyn", even if EM standards are followed and not P4.

To achieve this standard much has been stripped back, but I know that "Whithorn" will arise phoenix-like as a model railway which we can all be proud.

Other members of the BMRG have since become involved. Dave F has assisted with the new fiddle yard and related joinery work jobs which will go mainly unseen, but which will make all the difference in its final appearance.

Eddie is getting excited on the green diesel options which might be employed on the branch, while Richard Stagg has offered to build a more refined GSWR signal box. In addition I must thank him for his further researches.

Mike Matey Rapson is warming to rebuilding the bridge over the River Bladnoch. I can't wait to get involved in the scenery and I am presently working on the creamery and the other structures reclaimed from "Whithorn" Mark I.

So thanks to you all. The June Chatham date will soon be here!

I just hope it photographs well.
[I'm sure it will – Editor!]

[Report on the 2014 Warley show by Simon Jennings, forwarded by Eddie who thought it would make an interesting piece for BMRJ ...]

----- Forwarded by Eddie Knorn/FKTPE/FirstGroup on 25/11/2014 13:19 -----
From: Simon Jennings <Simon.Jennings@arrivatw.co.uk>
To: Eddie <Eddie.Knorn@firstgroup.com>
Date: 25/11/2014 11:14
Subject: Warley Report

"Heljan

Went early to join the opening time queue for the second year running, which using an advance ticket purchased at face value (£12.50) from the Ian Allan shop in Birmingham a few weeks previously. Off the 07.00 Bristol Temple Meads - Manchester and an unofficial

connection into the 08.33 Birmingham New Street-Euston London Midland service, this got us to the top of the stairs at 08.50. The queue moved forward ready to enter at 09.05 and by 09.08 the great unwashed were entering the Hall. While the majority rushed to the Bachmann stand "bargains" I headed down the side to the Heljan stand.

Posters behind the stand advertised only one new loco, on present timescales presumably a 2016/2017 release, was the much requested GWR Class 47 2-8-0 steam loco. In the display cases were paint samples for EIGHT variants (7 of them green) of the Class 05 0-6-0 diesel shunter. Departmental loco 88 took my fancy but the blue one was impressive. Tucked behind was an unpainted engineering sample of the "Sarah Siddons" Metropolitan Bo-Bo electric loco. Missed on my initial view was the Lynton & Barnstaple OO9 tank loco, because it was in kit form!

Hornby

Next port of call was the Hornby stand, long before the crowds but before the announcement of the bits of the 2015 range they were revealing that I had to return for after 10.00. It did give me a chance to watch and listen to the Limby Class 37 with the cheap TTS sound system in Network Rail yellow livery. It certainly sounded like a Class 37 when their former, but made redundant PR man 10 months ago, Simon Kohler put it through its paces and with an rrp of around £80 will form the basis of many repaints conversions. It should take an old Lima or modern Vi Trains 37 body as a straight fit. Could be in the shops by Xmas, but it is at least a 4 month wait for the 47 or 40. Paint samples for the small 0-6-0 tender locos (SR 700 and LNER J15) were on show in various liveries, promised for March 2015 release and the Crosti 9F was also on show. £119 for a Railroad version pushes the limit of my vision of a "cheap" version.

When I returned after 10.00 the 3rd case was uncovered and inside were unpainted engineering samples of the already leaked GWR King, an Adams Radial tank (yes another one), three versions of LMS suburban coaches, and painted samples of a standard BR "HOP 21" in unfitted grey, which would make it an HTO if there were a Tops version on show. But there was wasn't. A DVD was by now playing on a large screen tv which had laser scans of the Class 71 electric loco clearly taken at Barrow Hill. Perhaps they should focus on the 81 and 83 behind instead? Three possible new locos, all duplicates: *Class 71 confirmed later in a press release so bad luck if you signed up for the crowd-funded DJM one*

Bachmann

New on the Collectors Club stand, but not yet for sale, was a limited edition twin pack of Mark 1 coaches (BSK and SK) in Sea Link livery for £75. Rest was old news. Paint samples for the Class 150 in FGW (plain) livery and Northern on show. In the Scenecraft cases was the entire N gauge Power Station which is impressive.

Dapol

Still not recovered from the China issues and no sign of the June 2013 release 121/122 Railcars but the N Gauge "book set" of Gerald (the Arriva WAG express train) was on sale for £175 but loco, DVT and 2xTSO only so you still need to buy 2 more coaches. A tv was showing progress reports for the 59 and other locos in the 2013/2014 catalogue

Real Track

Was forced to hand my credit card over to Dodgy Charlie to relieve him of an ATW Pacer, picked "Sir Tom" with Bargoed and Penarth as destinations. He had at least one box of each ATW version for sale, but only a couple of (rejected) paint samples for the FGW Local Lines livery. He did, however, admit they are either about to go into production or already have started production, and that Ally Pally would be the grand release of that. No comment on other liveries on the way (Wessex and Valley Dragon were promised before) but he is working on TWO other units both of which he said the prototypes were "every bit as cr*p as the 143". Would guess 142 and perhaps 141?

Model Rail

New Limited Edition announced, Bachmann split box 37 in RfD triple grey as 37068 "Grainflow". Purchased the Network Rail yellow BG, while £33 seemed steep for a coach when announced, by current Bachmann standards turned out to be a bargain. Except it should be £39.50 or £35.75 for subscribers making a mockery, as usual, of the pre order prices.

Kernow

Still getting my head around the two new announcements and how much one of them may end up costing me, The Thumper order is definitely being cancelled now. The big "Steam" announcement everybody took to be a 3rd Adams Radial actually turned out to be the GWR

steam railmotor which they obviously scanned while at Didcot to do the 1369 Pannier tank. The "diesel" announcement was a showstopper. BR WR Suburban DMU's. All 3 cars. Not either a Pressed Steel or a Birmingham RCW one, all [insert rude word] 3 classes, 116/117/118. All livery variants. Green with whiskers, green with yellow panels, banger blue, reverse blue/white, blue/grey, Regional Railways, GWR 150 chocolate and cream, and yellow British Telecom. Bad enough Charlie melting the credit card with Pacers, this is a phenomenal grab by Kernow. No indication on the flyer of who will make it, but cancellation by DAPOL of the Kernow Limited Edition 121/122 railcars rules them out. Leaves DJM or Bachy.

Rapido

The Canadian's made the long haul flight to bring a pre-production APT-E over and very good it looked. One car broken down into component parts to show interior and tilt mechanism.



DJM/Oxford Rail

Neither present, indeed only evidence of DJM's existence was pre-production samples of the O2 0-4-4T on Kernow's stand

There were some layouts as well, including Stan and Pete from Swindon finally getting Barton Hill displayed. Some great Scottish branch lines, really nice and accurate model of Blandford Forum as well.

Also at the NEC was the Motorcycle

show, The Christmas Show, a cat show and Comicon. So not just the great unwashed trainspotters heading down the walkway from International station. One image was rudely shattered, as ahead of my little group was Obi-Wan Kenobi. He took the escalator to descend, I walked down the stairs. Glanced back for my cohorts to see that Obi-Wan was a middle aged black man with a goatie beard. Perhaps he was too busy lending his voice to make Darth Vader sound more menacing and a lot less Bristolian than The Green Cross Man so Sir Alec Guinness had to voice over for him?"

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The shape of things to come in the Irish Republic(as seen on the Editor's trip there in 2013)



Laid-up Inter-city coaching stock and containerflats in a siding near Waterford, 22 September 2013.



Irish Rail ámus 22349 and 22303 at Heuston station, Dublin, on 26 September 2013.

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