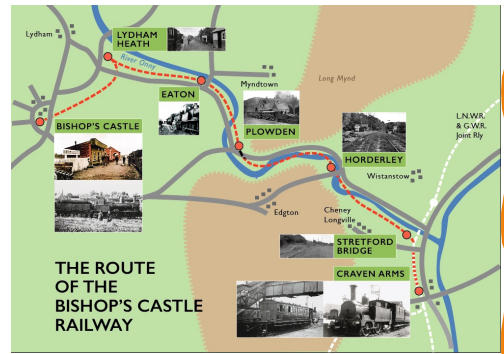


B.C.R.S. NEWS

August
2020
No. 44

The Monthly Newsletter of The
Bishop's Castle Railway Society



The first Open Day of 2020

Fingers crossed that Government Guidelines will continue to permit us to open the Weighbridge site for the National Heritage Open Day on September 19th.

Social distancing will be in place with a one way system throughout the building and a limited number of people in each room at any one time.

Volunteers have been working hard since lockdown was eased and visitors will be able to see how the building is coming on in leaps and bounds now.

Plus.....

Mark Wigley will be displaying his collection of Matchbox Models of Yesteryear.

Alistair Evans hopes to bring out a steam engine or two to commemorate what would have been the 25th anniversary of the Bishop's Castle Michaelmas Fair, now postponed until 2021.

There will be an opportunity to purchase the BCRS Heritage Calendar 2021, the first ever calendar produced by the Society.



The Railway Weighbridge Building
Station Street, Bishop's Castle, SY9 5AQ

Social distancing will be in place with a one way system through the building and a limited number of people in each room

Saturday
19th September 2020
11am – 4pm

View the ongoing restoration work of this original Victorian Railway Weighbridge Office, the last surviving building on the site of the Bishop's Castle Railway Station.

Discover the secrets that have been revealed

Purchase an exclusive Bishop's Castle Railway 2021 Calendar

Reminisce at Matchbox Models of Yesteryear

Live steam outside weather permitting

Weighbridge Project Update

The first fix electrics has been the big job of the past month. Thanks to David for designing the scheme and Mike for ably assisting the installation, it is almost ready for the next stage. (Photos below)



The Monday team have also been busy continuing to paint the new windows and finish the pointing around the window frames.

Meanwhile behind the scenes, project manager Roger has been fully occupied persuading the Building Control officer that a simpler soakaway scheme at a quarter of the original cost would be equally suitable. The new scheme agreed is a fraction of the cost to purchase and easier and cheaper to install. Time well spent!

The contract for lime plastering the walls was put out to tender at the beginning of July and after obtaining three quotes has been awarded to local lad Harry Aldridge, who will be starting in mid October.

We are also hopeful that the four new doors will be delivered to site at the end of August, in time for volunteers to fit at least a couple of them for the Heritage Open Day on September 19th.

The 2021 calendar is attracting a lot of interest with a third of the quantity ordered already reserved. Have you reserved your copy yet?

An advertisement for the 2021 calendar. It features a central image of a steam train on a track. To the right, there is a price tag that says "£7.50 + £1.50 p&p". Below the price tag, there is a small table with the following information:

| Quantity | Price |
|----------|---------|
| 1 | £7.50 |
| 2 | £14.00 |
| 3 | £20.50 |
| 4 | £27.00 |
| 5 | £33.50 |
| 6 | £40.00 |
| 7 | £46.50 |
| 8 | £53.00 |
| 9 | £59.50 |
| 10 | £66.00 |
| 11 | £72.50 |
| 12 | £79.00 |
| 13 | £85.50 |
| 14 | £92.00 |
| 15 | £98.50 |
| 16 | £105.00 |
| 17 | £111.50 |
| 18 | £118.00 |
| 19 | £124.50 |
| 20 | £131.00 |
| 21 | £137.50 |
| 22 | £144.00 |
| 23 | £150.50 |
| 24 | £157.00 |
| 25 | £163.50 |
| 26 | £170.00 |
| 27 | £176.50 |
| 28 | £183.00 |
| 29 | £189.50 |
| 30 | £196.00 |
| 31 | £202.50 |
| 32 | £209.00 |
| 33 | £215.50 |
| 34 | £222.00 |
| 35 | £228.50 |
| 36 | £235.00 |
| 37 | £241.50 |
| 38 | £248.00 |
| 39 | £254.50 |
| 40 | £261.00 |
| 41 | £267.50 |
| 42 | £274.00 |
| 43 | £280.50 |
| 44 | £287.00 |
| 45 | £293.50 |
| 46 | £300.00 |
| 47 | £306.50 |
| 48 | £313.00 |
| 49 | £319.50 |
| 50 | £326.00 |
| 51 | £332.50 |
| 52 | £339.00 |

At the top of the advertisement, it says "THE BISHOP'S CASTLE RAILWAY SOCIETY 2021 CALENDAR". To the right of the price tag, it says "This unique Calendar, the first ever produced by the Bishop's Castle Railway Society is available from September is available to pre order now by emailing - socialmedia@bcrailway.co.uk or phone 07553010196".

Got any BCR buttons?

The three in the photo on the right spotted by Jim Trenfield on eBay recently sold for £200

https://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/3-VINTAGE-BISHOPS-CASTLE-RAILWAY-BUTTONS-VERY-RARE-2-Sizes-/274399304475?hash=item3fe3791b1b%3Ag%3AedoAAOSw5KVe6RC1&nma=true&si=jN3lx19H%252FFLRNfDf76XFRED3Bxc%253D&orig_cvip=true&nordt=true&rt=nc&_trksid=p2047675.12557



Also on eBay recently



The post card on the left on sale for £6.

Also, an unused Parliamentary ticket for a journey from Horderley to Plowden sold for £26. Tickets continue to fetch decent prices for what they are. There must be some serious collectors out there. Another item which sold for £34.99 was a cassette tape from 1999 about the BCR. It featured interviews with local people and was funded by grants. Originally available from the BCR shop at £5.

Percy Verance aka Jim also stumbled across a bit of a mystery from Arts Alive on YouTube.

A cine film entitled Railway BC. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cYvuidqP2ug>

The lorry has Great Western Railway on the side and a wagon has LMS so it can't be much later than 1948. The demolished building must have been a signal box as telegraph equipment has been salvaged and stacked. In one shot you can see the huge carriage shed in the background. This could be at the Long Lane level crossing to the north of Craven Arms. The house looks like the one still there with a bay window facing the tracks and opposite where the signal box is today. You can see a gate post for the level crossing but there's no gate.

Following a post on Memories of Craven Arms Facebook page, someone with a relative who lived in Long Lane, thinks the accident happened in 1947. Carriages on a train travelling south became uncoupled at Warren's Lane and somersaulted towards the signal box. The signalman Mr Tonks of Newton Street was in the box, which was reduced to rubble, and crawled out with just a few scratches on him!!

The year 1947 looks a good bet with the lorry being GWR, a wagon LMS, workers wearing berets and the clothing of the onlookers. The comments about carriages ie wagons somersaulting into the signal box after becoming uncoupled begs the question why? There's a site with official reports of railway accidents but there's no mention of the incident. There's nothing in the British Newspaper Archive either. You'd have thought that the accident and the signalman's lucky escape would have been picked up by the national newspapers. During WW2, news was censored so, perhaps, that's why there seems to be no record of this accident.

Post Script.....

"Found it in the Kington Times no less! The accident happened in the early hours of 8 May 1947. The train was a fast freight service from Birkenhead to Cardiff. About a quarter of a mile north of the Long Lane level crossing, four wagons derailed at the Watling Street level crossing (since removed). Two of the wagons crashed through the crossing gates and stopped a foot from the keeper's house (now demolished). At the Long Lane level crossing, fifteen wagons derailed, one crashing into the signal box and razing it to the ground. The signalman crawled from the wreckage with only cuts, bruises and shock. Both up and down lines were completely blocked. What caused the derailments is unknown."

So what's it got to do with the BCR? Nothing it seems! So what does Railway BC mean?

Member Andrew Wood has sent in two contributions this month.....

"I recently tripped over this video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kASUPa3qiBs> of the zigzag railway in the Blue mountains of Australia. I am sure several society members will have experienced it but it reminded me that some years ago, a friend and I had the privilege of travelling back up on the footplate of the locomotive".

(Photo: Andrew on the right)



And also a link to Miniatur Wunderland, the largest model railway/railroad of the world. It takes a model railway to new levels and is well worth watching.

https://www.youtube.com/embed/ACkmg3Y64_s?rel=0

Jim`s monthly selection of videos

First, a silent film in colour of the Ruabon to Llangollen line in 1964 before Dr Beeching's axe fell the next year. Running time 1:31

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjN2wXaCeAw>

Next, a nostalgic look back to the Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway, another victim of the Beeching axe in 1966. It ran between Bath and Bournemouth with a branch to Burnham-on-Sea and Bridgwater. There are some local accents. The running time is 21:16

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fhrS_jR3U3o

Ever fancied being a fireman on a steam train? This video starts at the Loughborough depot of the Great Central Railway which runs for over eight miles to just outside Leicester. The volunteer fireman starts his shift at 6:30 in the morning and the video shows him and the engine driver at work throughout the day. There's no commentary nor music just action. Running time 33:14 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6IjTsQmEaU>

Hornby ceased production of their Dublo three-rail system in 1963 but it's still popular with many modellers. This is a link to a video explaining the Hornby Dublo system and a layout being set up. No need for ballast! Running time 12:20.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Se1uPMnP7E>

SEVERN VALLEY RAILWAY NEWS

Via Stuart Dickinson

As widely seen in the media, public trains are now running again; the sound of steam locos working in the valley is a real positive sign in these fraught times.

Test trains operated at the end of July for working members and their families, to check out the new arrangements for public safety, to comply with COVID19 protection.

The pre-booked special trains will now continue throughout August: three round trip services every day : 10.15 & 10.45 off Kidderminster, 10.45 ex

Bridgnorth. Ticket holders will have their own reserved compartment for the day, and bookings have been going well, (some compartments may be available on the day, where space permits, priced at £85). There is an opportunity to alight at Bewdley, and all trains stop at Highley for an hour, to enable a visit to the Engine House.

It is hoped that a more normal service may begin in September, without having to pre-book, but only from Wednesday to Sunday, to contain costs. However, nothing is certain these days, and Government advice will have to be observed.

Predictably, the Autumn Steam and Diesel Galas have been cancelled, to avoid the risks that a large influx of visitors could bring.

Work is continuing on land slippage prevention, at a couple of locations, as a result of the storms earlier in the year.

contact details :- phone 01562 757900 or online at svr.co.uk



The Quiz

I'm going to run a Quiz on September 4th starting at 7.30 using Zoom. Many of you will have experience this during lockdown; it's been an easy way to keep in touch with family and friends.

If you haven't experienced it, worry not! You'll need a computer with a camera and a microphone but full instructions will be circulated to you a few days before.

The format will be five or six rounds, mostly themed, on railway related topics and, I hope, a good balance between reasonably easy and irritatingly difficult! We'll need to reboot halfway through, because Zoom has time limit of 40 minutes; but if anyone has a personal zoom account we could "borrow" for the evening, we wouldn't need to do this.

I hope we have a good turnout but, if we don't, I wasn't going anywhere else that evening!

John Rimmer

From the Chairman.....

Coming back to life

It's with regret that it's been decided to abandon the usual programme of monthly meetings that normally start in September here in Bishop's Castle. This will, I'm sure, surprise no one; with continuing uncertainty and a lack of clarity about any future strategy to move forward out of the present emergency, no other decision is possible. We'll see if we can resume in the New Year and, of course, keep you informed.

But not all is bad. As we have already documented, and as you will read in this newsletter, work at the weighbridge has moved on and some catching up has been achieved. What hasn't happened of course is the steady, nay relentless, fundraising activity. But even here, an open day in September is planned (barring second lockdown, alien invasion or something serious) and an opportunity to shift some second-hand books, which continue to accumulate, will arise.

And steam railways are opening! The precautions are, no doubt irksome, but it is so good to see them back. My son and I have a booking for the Ffestiniog later in August and one of these days we'll be able to do this on an ad hoc basis too. As Joni Mitchell observed, "You don't know what you've got till it's gone", and I guess we'll all try to make the most of things when "normality" (probably a different type of normality) returns.

I mentioned a couple of months ago that I would run a railway quiz on Zoom in September, coinciding with the would-be date of our first meeting. More of this elsewhere in this news letter but it would be so good to reach out and meet some of you, if not in the flesh, at least virtually.

I hope that I'm not saying, at 7.30 on September 4th, "is there anyone out there?"

John Rimmer

And finally all you need is a bit of imagination and a sense of fun.....

Or as Albyn Austin said "This is rather good and well worth five minutes to see it"

During 'lockdown' a small clockwork train has no driver, no track and nowhere to go. What can be done? Find out on this mini adventure.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5eH8dyPAc3k&feature=share&fbclid=IwAR1_zNf6UsBu_2j5UKNG0F0fKFAIT6M3NRTAzlJbgHLCCKafPhqhRFB3Hnk)

[v=5eH8dyPAc3k&feature=share&fbclid=IwAR1_zNf6UsBu_2j5UKNG0F0fKFAIT6M3NRTAzlJbgHLCCKafPhqhRFB3Hnk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5eH8dyPAc3k&feature=share&fbclid=IwAR1_zNf6UsBu_2j5UKNG0F0fKFAIT6M3NRTAzlJbgHLCCKafPhqhRFB3Hnk)

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www.bcrailway.co.uk

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