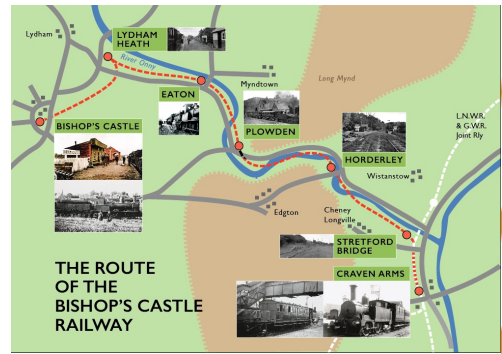


B.C.R.S. February 2021 No. 50 NEWS

The Monthly Newsletter of The
Bishop`s Castle Railway Society



Looking to the Future

For the first time ever, we have our own premises, meeting place, and even an address!! It's fitting that it should be in an old Railway building, on the same site.

That gives us the opportunity to display the items that we have, talk about them, share stories with visitors, and generally make so much more of the Railway's history. We can also be much more engaged with the town, rather than just being a group of railway interested people, we can use the building to encourage, (especially older) folks to come and share their history with us.

We can even hold events for local groups to visit and see what the Society is about. We can also be more varied in our events: model railways, local heritage, and industrial history generally, not just the BC Railway. And, we can do any of this as and when it suits us, without having to rely on other organisations premises.

This means that we need to get much more agile with our decision-making, and how we operate and plan what we do. We need to lean-down the process of gathering opinions and ideas, and how ideas are used. To that end, at the next AGM, a Board of Directors/ Trustees will be elected. This may include some previous Directors, but will give them a fresh mandate to move forward.

It is a dual role as Directors of Company Charities will always be Charity Trustees. All Directors have equal authority, and have equal voting rights. The Board of Directors is not hierarchical.

The role is not particularly onerous. The main requirements are an interest in the future running of the Society and the ability to attend regular short meetings, possibly via Zoom for the foreseeable future. The appointment of any particular Director should not be seen as a competitive process; it's not a choice of this or that individual over any other, more a case of 'what does (this person) bring to the party`?. All Directors are required to retire on a regular basis, with the longest serving director retiring in rotation at the annual AGM. They may immediately stand to be voted back if they wish, and if that is the decision of the Membership.

Directorship is open to all members of the Society. Any member can stand for election and just requires another member to propose them, by completing a simple notification and sending it to the Company Secretary. Their nomination will then appear on the ballot paper sent out to all members prior to the AGM.

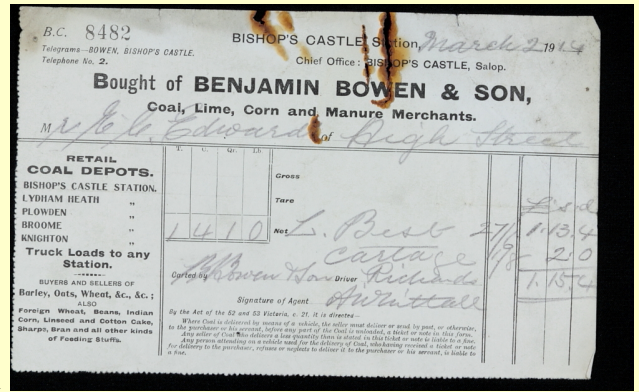
*If you are interested in becoming a Director or proposing another member,
Company Secretary Mike Boyd is ready and waiting to answer your questions,
email him at :-thesecretary.bcr@gmail.com*

The People of the BCR and The Mysteries of the Weighbridge Building

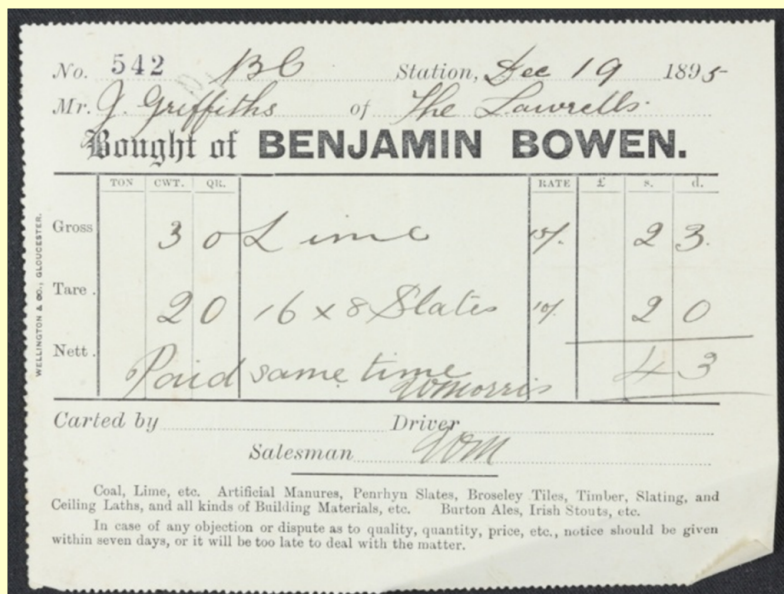
A lot has been written about the Bishop's Castle Railway, but much less about the people who worked on the railway. We will never know for sure all who worked in the weighbridge building, we can only piece together bits of information from various sources.

BENJAMIN BOWEN 1851 – 1914

The 1871 census shows that Benjamin Bowen, aged twenty, was working on the family farm at Asterton, nr Bishop's Castle. By 1881 he was a coal and general merchant living at Castle Street, Bishop's Castle and on the 1891 and 1901 census returns he was at Church Street, Bishop's Castle and was a corn and coal merchant. By this time, he'd served as Mayor. By 1911, he had moved to The Lymes in Church Street, a large property, and was described as a coal merchant. When he died in 1914, his effects were valued for probate at over £400,000 in today's money so he was a wealthy man. The advertisement on the right details the sale of his assets by his executors in 1935. Why it was 21 years after his death, we will probably never know.



The above bill of sale clearly shows Benjamin Bowen operated his business from Bishop's Castle Station



Is Salesman WM on the above bill of sale dated 1895 William Morris ?

In 1896, the Montgomery Times reported that William Morris, a former salesman for Benjamin Bowen, had appeared in court on a charge of embezzlement. He had been employed by Bowen in 1894 to look after his wharf and stores at Bishop's Castle. John Gough and R. James, both coal merchants at Bishop's Castle, gave evidence. The accusation was that Morris had pocketed money for coal etc., supplied, but not recorded in the books.

Did Benjamin Bowen have an office in the weighbridge building?

Did Morris work from an office in the weighbridge building?

Thanks to Jim Trenfield for his many hours of research for the above.

Another project in the pipeline.....

The Society has recently been offered a disused goods van body which is currently sited behind Lydham Village Hall and is no longer required.

Arrangements to transport the van to its new home down the road at the weighbridge site will hopefully be made with a local farmer in the next few months.

There is a considerable amount of work to be done on it, no doubt, a labour of love for some of our volunteers!

Once refurbished, it will provide a useful storage space, and one day, funds permitting, possibly disabled toilet facilities.



Library photo of a similar Vanfit goods van body in a similar condition

Jim`s monthly selection of videos.....

Here's the last throw of the dice for steam on BR. The 139 ton 9F series. Running time 13:52 with subtitles

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mJVM_XWF9E4

Now a link to a very good video showing the Welshpool and Llanfair Light Railway in normal times. It runs for just over 6 minutes. The production, camera work and drone footage are to a high standard.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z02nee_15IY

Next a link to GWR 6412, a 0-6-0 pannier tank engine, on the South Devon Railway which meanders for 7 miles between Buckfastleigh and Totnes. You might have to turn the sound up. The running time is 11:11

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9rKclAYr3N4&t=43s>

This is the morning timetable on the superb Yorkshire Dales Model Railway. Running time 11:50

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JPpMs7qFCPk>

And, here's the afternoon timetable. Pity about the adverts in both. Running time 12:32

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LS9W7nqwXFs>

Finally links to a trip taken by Sir John Betjeman on the Somerset and Dorset railway in the early 1960s. There are loads of shots of trains, the railway and local life before the line was closed thanks to Dr Beeching in 1966 (9:46, 9:36 and 7:16 are the running times).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dDrQkg8lOGc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UPsIIZIH0Rw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XBE2fR0z3CI>



Allan Halman shares his experience
Hull Technical College came to the rescue and the students are thrilled to be involved.



HULL & BARNSELY RAILWAY BRAKE THIRD No.1.

A.E. Halman

This former H&BR brake third arrived at the Elsecar Heritage Railway in South Yorkshire on 1st February 2013 and after seven happy years there the time came to move on due to unforeseen circumstances beyond our control.

Our difficulties in finding a new home were complicated by the severe lockdown restrictions imposed by the Covid 19 epidemic. This was a very worrying time for the Stock Fund with numerous enquiries being made to relocate before salvation was offered by the Hull Technical Collage. They kindly offered to make space available alongside H&BR bogie coach No.58 that had arrived at the collage from the NYMR on the 20th December 2019. This was a far-sighted development that gave students a valuable opportunity to learn and hone new skills that would serve them well in their future lives and the world of work. The coach with its strong local association was received with great interest by the students who were thrilled by the prospect of doing something positive with an end result which they could be rightly proud of. The arrival of No.58 on that horrible wet December day also aroused much local interest as it threaded its way through the narrow streets of Hull to the designated work compound.

With the necessary arrangements made with the collage, EHR and H. Askey transport, the movement of No.1 to Hull was affected without hitch on 29th June. It now sits on its own dedicated cradle alongside No.58 in the compound awaiting work to begin. A start had already been made by students on No.58 with some stripping out of unreclaimable and un-original material. The one-time beautiful 'lincrusta' ceiling and corridor panels are now beyond redemption but have been recorded before removal that will provide a future reference. As the coach was gutted during its BR days as a staff and tool van for the S&T dept, one of the first projects that involved the students was to create a mock up framework of the corridor and compartments in soft-wood before committing to the more expensive woods such as oak and mahogany. This programme of work is temporarily suspended due to the current lockdown restrictions.

Back in the summer of 2020 some thought had been given to acquiring a suitable chassis for the brake third body to sit on, so we cast around in search of a likely candidate. That search eventually led to the Midland Railway Centre at Butterley. Here was found a 1942 PMVY No. S2151 that the 92219 Locomotive Group were willing to sell to us. A price was agreed, transport arranged with Reid Freight and plans laid to move it to the Cannon Street site of the Hull Technical Collage who were most keen to participate in the restoration of H&BR No.1. With all the arrangements in place, a small deputation of SF committee members d travelled on Butterley on 16th November to witness the PMVY loaded for its journey to Hull. Upon its arrival at Cannon St in the early afternoon it became the first railway vehicle to return to the site of the former Hull & Barnsley terminus since it closed some 50 years earlier. By using two vehicles with each with a Hyab, the PMVY was gently lowered onto two loose sections of rail brought earlier from the NYMR and there it now sits waiting for work to commence. The Cannon Street site is where all the engineering disciplines are taught and where the PMVY will be dismantled and undergo conversion to a suitable undercarriage. Once this has been done and the work signed off then the coach body will be re-wheeled for the first time since 1925. As to what happens after that, we see the coach as a potential roving ambassador for the Hull & Barnsley Railway. In a year like no other that has blighted the lives of every-one, it is quite remarkable that so much has happened since those dark days back in March. A time when the future of a little relic from a little-known railway appeared so uncertain. We were sad to leave behind the friends we had made at Elsecar but extremely grateful to all who have helped us along the way, not least the Principals of Hull Technical Collage without whom this story could not be told in the way it has. We look forward to the future with renewed hope and that long held aspirations will be realised.

BCRS Model Group update from Stuart Taylor

Since the idea of forming a BCRS modelling group was mooted in autumn last year, I have had a very positive and encouraging response from potential members of the group who have been willing to share their modelling CVs" with me. This followed a very helpful suggestion from Trevor Hughes back in November to exchange modelling histories, ideas and aspirations.



As we are unable to meet in the current circumstances, I am thinking that this group of modellers could set up informal Zoom meetings to further introduce ourselves and initiate dialogue between us.

We could then progress to actual meetings at the weighbridge when Covid restrictions are lifted.

If potential modelling group members are happy to do this, please feel free to email me (satalt17@gmail.com) and I'll attempt to set up a Zoom meeting.

Some of the CV's received so far

Stuart Dickinson Hyssington

My earliest and formative modelling days were with Huddersfield Railways Modellers, then on to Chester MRC for a long period, helping build several 4mm/00 exhibition layouts. Another move to the now defunct Newport (Shropshire) MRC, and some time with the Shropshire area group of the Scalefour Society, (I wasn't convinced or converted!).

For the past 30+ years I have worked in 4mm/EM, mostly on scratch/kit-built models of LNWR/LMS rolling stock, for my now completed layout based on Llanrwst, in the Conwy Valley, in the early 1930's period. Some photos of it appeared a while back in the BCRS Newsletter, illustrating a thread that started with Vic Smith, visiting the prototype. During the first Welsh COVID lockdown, I built an etched brass kit of a LNWR Picnic Saloon (photo in recent Newsletter). Now in lockdowns 2/3, the current project is an etched kit of a LNWR 2-4-0 "Large Jumbo" loco.

Trevor Hughes Old Churchstoke

Present interests, 7mm scale Bishop's Castle Railway, 1/32nd scale Talylyn Railway, Present layout "Crowsnest Wharf" Snailbeach District Railways in 7mm scale.

Previously in 4mm with layouts in "OO", "EM" and P4, also 1/64th Ffestiniog Railway

Founder member, long time secretary and exhibition manager at the Rochdale club. Member of the Manchester MRS, part of the team responsible for the 2mm finescale "Chee Tor" layout. Presently a member of the Newtown MRS and the Association of Shrewsbury of Railway Modellers.

Stuart Taylor Bishops Castle

My present interest is 7mm finescale after moving up to 0 gauge from 00 finescale 6 years ago.

I was a member of the Stockport Railway Modellers whilst living in Manchester in the early 1980's.

After moving to Shropshire in 1988 I joined the Leominster Model Railway Group.

During my 00 years I built many models from kits (Nu-cast, DJH, SE Finescale, K's, Little Engines, Craftsman, Comet, Ian Kirk, etc.) based on BR North Eastern Region in West Yorkshire.

This culminated in the construction of an extensive 00 finescale layout based on Leeds Central. This layout was never fully completed and was sold prior to moving to Bishops Castle.

I have started to build some 0 gauge locos, coaches and wagons with the intention of constructing a (much smaller) layout (I only have 17'6" x 10'6" available in my workshop) based on Dewsbury Central (of which I have fond memories as my junior school overlooked the station!) and Halifax North Bridge in the early 1950s.

So far I have completed a CCW J50 0-6-0T, an ACE Ivatt N1 0-6-2T, 6 Ian Kirk coaches and various Parkside kits.

Partially completed are an Ivatt J6 0-6-0 (pictured in the BCRS newsletter) and various etched kits of Gresley coaches.

In the pipeline are a Thompson B1 and a Robinson B4 (Immingham) both Gladiator kits.

SEVERN VALLEY RAILWAY NEWS

(all subject to the usual caveats about easing of travel restrictions)

- The first services of 2021 commence on Good Friday 2 April, for the holiday fortnight, then weekends only until early May.
- Pre-booked compartments or tables only.
- Similar pattern of departures from Kidderminster and Bridgnorth as previously, with steam and diesel haulage.
- Now with stops at Arley (new) as well as Bewdley and Highley (for The Engine House); will enable a break of journey, see the website for suggested itineraries.
- **Spring Steam Up Event - 15 to 18 April,**
- Three round trips (96 miles) departing Kidderminster and Bridgnorth.
- Pre-booked compartments or tables only (including singles), discount for members.
- Using a different loco for each single trip from a pool of 7, including one surprise visitor.
- Photo opportunities at each terminus, and Highley.

Bookings now being taken for service trains and the event. www.svr.co.uk tel: 01562 757900

“New” Large Mainline Diesel Freight Loco for test runs on SVR

GB Railfreight require some additional motive power, but the purchase of additional Class 66's was ruled out because of current emissions regulations. Ten Class 56 locos have been acquired for conversion into a “new” loco designated Class 69, with an option for 6 more. Basically the existing body, frames and bogies are being re-used, the remainder will be all new, including the latest EMD engine, as fitted to the last of the Class 66's. The first conversion is now due to have test runs on the SVR in February, no further information on this has been made available.

The 135 members of the Class 56 were built from 1976-84, the first 30 were infamously built in Romania, but once the dubious build qualities were resolved, they are said to have been one of the most reliable locos of that era. Some 35 are still in service and 3 have been preserved.

The Society finally has a new home with a new registered addressThe Old Weighbridge, Station Street, Bishop`s Castle, Shropshire, SY9 5AQ

There is a shiny new post box attached to the gate (photo right)

Let`s hope the first mail in the box is not the first electricity bill!



If you have an item for the Newsletter please send to Lin Dalton at socialmedia@bcrailway.co.uk By the 1st of each month

Follow us on Facebook <http://bit.ly/2vCUOt8>

www.bcrailway.co.uk

Registered Company No. 05520291
Registered Charity No. 1111918

If you would prefer not to receive these updates you can opt out by contacting:- socialmedia@bcrailway.co.uk