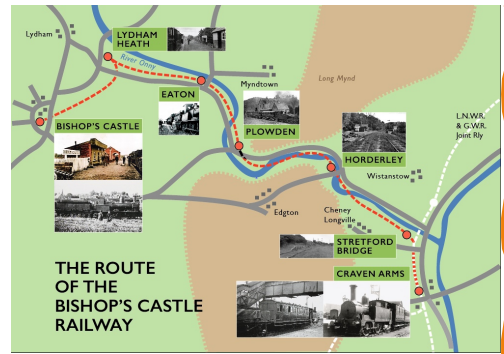


B.C.R.S. July 2021 NEWS No. 55

The Monthly Newsletter of The
Bishop`s Castle Railway Society



SOCIETY UPDATE

The BCR artefacts have now all been identified and many of them are already on display in the weighbridge, (photo right). The remainder will be displayed in the coming weeks.

The non BCR items have been checked against records held and those identified as on loan, set aside until the owners have been contacted to determine their wishes.

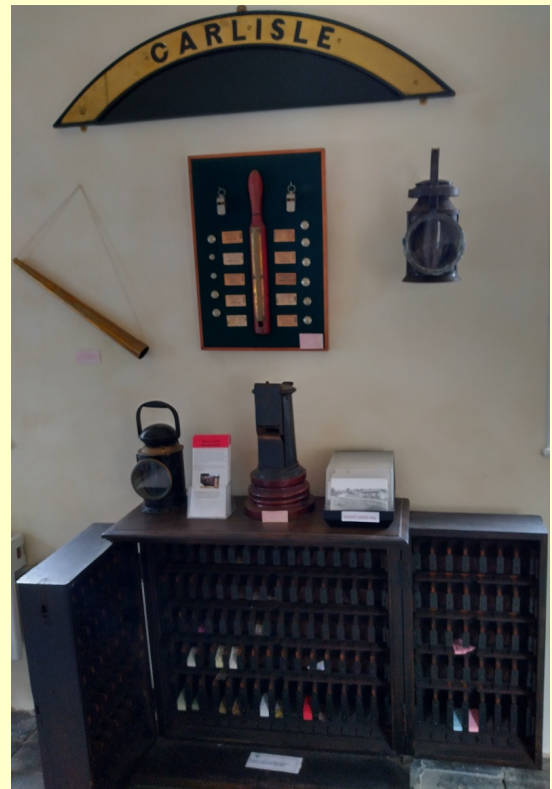
A decision regarding the remainder of the non BCR items will be made on an individual item basis, taking into account the relevance of the item and the space available.

Thank you to everyone who responded to David O`Neill`s question "What would you like from your Society?" There were some very interesting and varied replies. Some preferred daytime meetings, as coming out on a cold winter`s night was not very appealing, others preferred to continue with evening meetings. However there was an almost unanimous request for a wider range of topics to be included in the talks. Railways can encompass engineering, architecture and railway modelling to name but a few. Several different venues were suggested and after much discussion it has been decided to trial The Church Barn in Bishop`s Castle, which, in addition to roadside parking, has the added advantage of 10 parking spaces at the rear of the hall, with disabled access directly into the hall. For those of you who are unsure where the Church Barn is situated, it is approx 100m along Church lane, opposite the Six Bells. The hall is opposite the Fire Station, Post Code SY9 5AF.

It is hoped to start the monthly meetings again as soon as possible and subject to Covid restrictions allowing the first one will be Friday 1st October, followed by Friday 5th November. The speakers will be confirmed shortly.

We appreciate that some of you may be nervous of venturing out to an indoor meeting, whilst others can`t wait to get back to some kind of normality. It is unknown how things will look in the Autumn and if necessary arrangements may need to be changed, but at least we`ve made a start.

If anyone would like further details contact David O`Neill at: bcrscontact@gmail.com



Weighbridge update

It's been another busy month! The soakaways have been backfilled and the ground to the side and rear of the building has been levelled. The excess soil was taken away by tractor and trailer (photo right)

We are pleased to say that all the ground works have been carried out using local contractors. This not only helps the local economy but keeps the project costs down as well.



Next came the puzzle of the marquee. The 6m x 3m area was marked out using posts and pallets. Wisely it was decided to check the actual size of the base before starting to level and lay the floor. So off to Mike's barn, find the poles and corners and lay them out on the ground. Good job they did, it turned out to be slightly larger than the given size. Needless to say the rest of the afternoon was spent drinking tea and eating cake, thanks to Mike's hospitality! (photos left)

Roger finally managed to continue pointing around the door frames, in readiness for Malcolm to put the final coat of paint on the exterior doors. (photo right)

Another open day was held on 26th June to coincide with the Bishop's Castle Community Project Event at nearby Enterprise House. Refreshments were served by David and Mike's wives, the two Nicky's. £91.50 was taken in just 4 hours and two prospective new members went away with membership forms. So all in all a very worthwhile morning.

The next planned open day will be to coincide with another Bishop's Castle Yard Sale on August Bank Holiday Sunday 29th August 10am – 4pm.

However, as soon as the marquee has been erected and is ready for use, there will be a fortnightly drop in session, day and time to be determined. There will be tea/coffee and cake on offer and plenty of banter and company.



BCR in the Newspapers 1867 – 1870

Researched by Jim Trenfield

Shrewsbury Chronicle 04/01/1867

A sale of stock from the BCR was to be held at the George Hotel, Shrewsbury, on the 23rd. There were 61 lots including locomotives, 25 goods wagons, 5 coal wagons, 5 goods vans, 2 goods vans and carriages including 4 3rd class carriages.

Eddowe's Journal 26/02/1868

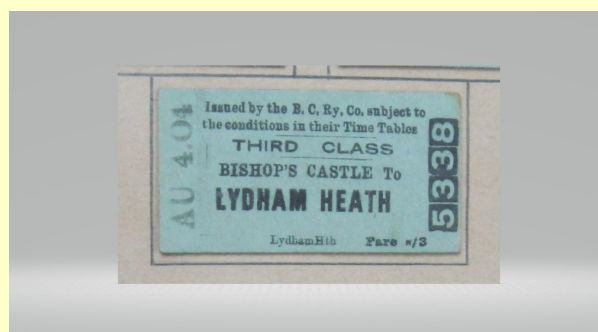
The half-yearly meeting of the BCR was held at the Craven Arms Hotel on 18 February. The director's report said that the great difficulty was the failure of Mr Piercy and his inability to complete the line to Montgomery. When the stock was sold off, the debenture holders purchased sufficient rolling stock to keep the line running on condition that a Receiver was appointed. This task fell to Mr Alfred Driver and management of the line passed into his hands. The directors thought that there was no hope of raising the capital for the extension to Montgomery and that the idea should be abandoned.

Wellington Journal 29/02/1868

The previous week, an account had been published about the marriage of Mr E E Owen in which he was referred to as the manager of the railway. A letter pointed out that he wasn't the manager but "merely a clerk who travels on the trains and books passengers in at the stations".

Wellington Journal 23/01/1869

At the Borough Petty Sessions, John Minton, a servant, was charged by Mr E E Owen for the railway company with travelling from Lydham Heath to Bishop's Castle without a ticket or paying his fare. Guilt was admitted. Mr Owen asked for a nominal fine as a caution to the public. Minton was fined 2/6d.



Birmingham Daily Gazette 29/01/1869

At the annual meeting of the Birmingham Finance Co Ltd, a shareholder said that Thomas Savin owed the company £10,000 and Benjamin Piercy over £16,000 for loans. The company had accepted shares in the "Wrexham" railway and the BCR as securities but they were worthless now (the sums represent over £1 million and nearly £2 million respectively in today's money).

Eddowes Journal 06/07/1870

At Shropshire Quarter Sessions, Edward Meachem was convicted of embezzling £1/1/2d. He had worked for the Farmer's Supply Company at their Plowden wharf from 1866 to 1869. A considerable amount of money was said to be unaccounted for. He was sentenced to 9 months hard labour.

In the June newsletter, Peter Featherstone asked about the signals used on the BCR... this prompted two replies from Jim Trenfield

"Peter Featherstone's article about the signals on the BCR triggered a memory. There were signals either side of the level crossing at Horderley. These were set to "Danger" when the crossing gates were open to allow road traffic through, but, when the line was assessed by the Railway Inspectorate in 1895, it was found that the signals were always left at "Danger" and the engine drivers had permission to ignore them. Perhaps they looked both ways before crossing the road!"

"I found an article about the BCR in the Crewe Chronicle of 8 November 1930. It said the signals were of iron and identical with those on the old Wrexham, Mold and Connah's Quay line. Peter might be able to obtain a book about the WM & CQ with photos of their signals from his local library or from this bookseller <https://www.abebooks.co.uk/book-search/title/the-wrexham-mold-and-connah%27s-quay-railway/>



Horderley Station signal

The latest BCR Items for sale on ebay

A couple more BCR tickets have fetched good prices on eBay in recent days. The same seller sold an "Excursion" first class ticket from BC to CA and return for £26.76 and a "Policeman on Duty" ticket for CA to Horderley for £26.65. They look unused so may have been taken as souvenirs when the line closed.

A collection of eight tickets, a postage stamp, a postcard showing coaches and a Bishop's Castle Railway Society badge sold for £70 recently. <https://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/BISHOPS-CASTLE-RAILWAY-BCR-Railway-Ticket-Collection-/133799921397?>

Does any member know anything about this badge?
Do you know when they were issued?
Have you still got one? (Photo right)



An earlier BCR van

Jonathan David

Before the BCR bought a batch of Iron Minks it had previously owned some timber built vans. I am not sure how many, or whether those acquired when the line opened were later replaced, though that seems likely.

There appear to be no photos of any such vans in service. The evidence I found was two photos of a grounded van body at Eaton which give some information of the end; a drawing of a side view with a small part of the end, carrying the name of the late Harold

Morgan in his handwriting along with the number 24 and a little extra information; and the very end of the side of a grounded body which appears in a photograph of the ex-GWR brake van No. 1.

I am gradually building goods stock suitable for the Newtown Model Railway Society 7 mm layout of Montgomery Town, and this seemed a suitable addition. It is built mainly of plastic sheet and strip. Axleboxes (somewhat modified in shape) and buffers were purchased from the always helpful Invertrain, and wheels and bearings are by Slaters. The couplings are D&G.

Now it has been questioned whether the underframe detail in the drawing is correct as there must be some doubt as to whether the artist was working from a complete vehicle or just a grounded body. The U-shaped V hanger is distinctive, and I hoped it must point to the builder but have been unable to find any evidence. But I decided to copy the drawing in the absence of any more definitive information. I am aware that the V hanger is a bit wide, but I needed to drill a hole in it without breaking through the edge. The wooden brake shoes and their supports are made from plastic sheet and brass strip, as is the rest of the brake gear other than the lever and its rack which are from a fret I obtained some time ago from Taff Vale Models.

Many of the bolt heads are the plastics type produced by Grant Line, though the smallest ones are simply small squares of plastic.

Livery is a guess. The photo of brake van No. 1 shows enough of the side of the van to indicate that it was a mid grey with black ironwork and that the lettering was about 18 inches high and shaded. The solebar is not visible. However, since when rebuilding an open wagon in later years the BCR team painted the underframe grey, I have followed suit. I have followed the style of lettering on the later Iron Minks, though I omitted the words "VIA CRAVEN ARMS" and the load of 8 tons is a guess. I used HMRS transfers throughout, the TO CARRY line being pieced together from letters and part words on the 4 mm/ft GWR wagons sheet, the shaded lettering coming from two different PO wagon sheets.

Please don't look too carefully as I realised when the vehicle was nearly complete that the wheelbase is correct but the wheels are a millimetre or two closer to one end than the other.

All we now need is for the club to be able to start meeting again and complete work on the layout.

And of course a photo will now come to light of one of these vans in service showing that many of my assumptions were wrong.



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

The classic film "The Railway Children" was released in 1970 and featured the preserved Keighley & Worth Valley Railway in Yorkshire. Here's a documentary with scenes from the film and volunteers and locals talking about the production. It's a good one to watch. Someone ought to make a feature film about the BCR! Running time 20:12

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z3T2SJLpWoY>

Now for a ride on the footplate of the Flying Scotsman running on the Mid Hants Railway in March 2020. Running time 22:19.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GDLnjddwj4>

This is another railway which claims to be the oldest in the world, operating between 1726 and 1964, but steam locomotives weren't used until 1881. It's the Tanfield Railway in County Durham, a standard gauge line running for three miles. Running time 3:00

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

Finally, the impressive Stoke Courtenay OO gauge model railway described by its modest builder. Running time 8:31

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fP5bYWUcE08>

The BCRS Modelling Group

We are pleased to hear that Stuart Taylor is on the mend following his recent knee replacement operation and feels able to resume his role as BCRS modelling group coordinator.



One of Member Mark Cudworth's lockdown layouts

With the further easing of Covid restrictions from July 19th, he intends to circulate the modelling group members and suggest an initial meeting at the weighbridge.

If you would like to join the group you can contact Stuart by emailing him at :-
satalt17@gmail.com

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