

B.C.R.S.
NEWS

January
2023
No. 73



The Monthly Newsletter of The Bishop's Castle Railway Society

*A Happy New Year to all
our members and friends*

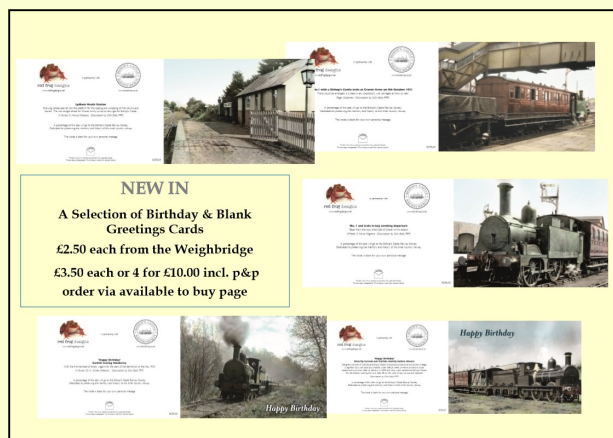
Two of our members have been instrumental in bringing fresh ideas to the goods available for sale via the Society website and in the Weighbridge Museum.

In October James Sherratt of Craven Design and Print suggested Greetings Cards using the colourised prints of the BCR photos donated to the Society by Colin Balls FRPS.

There are six designs of blank cards and two Happy Birthday options. Available at the Weighbridge on open days or by post via the Society website:

<http://bcrailway.co.uk/available-to-buy/>

Not only has James supplied these cards at an extremely low cost, but his wife is selling them on her own business website, plus Etsy and ebay and donating a percentage of the profit to the Society.



Look out for more items featuring these colourised prints on sale during 2023.

In December Part 1 of Jonathan Moor's Shropshire ghost story, inspired by an incident said to have taken place at Plowden Station, was available to all members via the newsletter. Part 2 accompanies this newsletter for members.

This atmospheric tale has now been published in a booklet available from the Weighbridge for £3.00 and by post via the website for £3.75 including postage.

Both of the above can also be obtained by contacting Lin Dalton :-
mail@ludfordpark.plus.com or by calling 07553010196.

PARLIAMENTARY TO PLOWDEN
A Shropshire Ghost Story
Jonathan Moor

A New Release
On sale for £3.00 from
the Weighbridge Railway Museum
Or £3.75 incl. postage
via the website order form

JONATHAN MOOR
The writer has lived in Shropshire for most of his years. He is a historian and a keen railway enthusiast. He is a member of the Bishop's Castle Railway Society and is currently working along with other members to secure a future for the Bishop's Castle Railway and its remains in the area.

Parliamentary to Plowden, Shropshire, August 1914

A presentation of this book will be at the Bishop's Castle Railway Society Museum in December in association with the railway and history of the area and country website, www.bcrailway.co.uk

WEIGHBRIDGE RAILWAY MUSEUM

The original documents previously on display in the Weighbridge have all been taken down and delivered to Craven Design and Print for photocopying. Next, photocopies will be obtained for all the original documents previously held in the Bishop's Castle Resource Centre. Once completed all the originals will be deposited with the Shropshire Archives in Shrewsbury, where the public may view them if they wish.

Patricia Theobald has kindly supplied a list of all the BCR documents held in the Town Chest which were deposited with Shropshire Archives some years ago. This list amounts to well over 500 original BCR documents. It will be a difficult decision deciding which documents to photocopy for use in the periodically changing displays in the Weighbridge Museum.

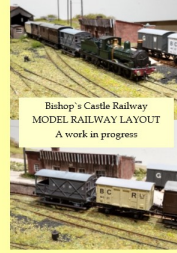
Volunteers are now busy re curating the original BCR artefacts and information boards in the building in readiness for the Summer season.

The Museum will still be open on the regular 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month, when visitors will be welcomed and offered a hot drink, homemade cake, a chat and maybe some tools to join in the work parties!



Weighbridge Railway Museum
Station Street, Bishop's Castle, SY9 5AQ.

Next Open Days
Tuesdays 10th & 24th January
11am – 3pm



**HOT DRINKS
&
HOMEMADE CAKE**

Browse the 2nd Hand
Railway Books in the GWR
Banana Van All at £2 each



Membership renewal

Thank you to everyone who has already renewed their membership, it is much appreciated.

For members who joined prior to 2022 membership renewal was due on the 2nd January 2023. Anyone who has joined in 2022 will have joined under the new system with renewal being due annually on the date of joining.

Please note the small increase in membership fee for 2023
Membership is £20.00 Single or £25.00 Joint

You can renew either by Standing Order or if you do internet banking a BACS payment can be made to: Bishop's Castle Railway Society Co Ltd

Account No: 01229877 Sort Code: 40-12-02 Ref: Name & Membership number
Both of these banking methods are free to the Society.

We do understand if a cheque is your only option and we are still happy to receive cheques. Please post them to Membership Secretary, Lin Dalton, 37 Mary Elizabeth Road, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1LP.

Don't forget if you are a tax payer the Society can claim Gift Aid on your subscriptions and donations. This means an extra 25p for every £1 you give and it will not cost you any extra.

*** If you have renewed by Standing Order and forgot to alter the amount you will have been contacted by email or posted letter.**

BCRSMG UPDATE

The 4mm scale model of Bishop's Castle railway station continues to make further progress towards the Love Lane bridge - situated at the far right of the layout when viewed from the front. This will form a scenic break where the model runs off onto a traverser/fiddle yard.

Most of the buildings and the scenery are now complete, although - as is often the case with a model railway - there are various details still to be added. For example, a flock (is that the collective noun?) of pigeon baskets has appeared on the platform in front of the station building, along with (in the yard) the first four (of eight) dummy point levers, and the embankment leading onto the Love Lane bridge is under construction. When complete, there will be a road menders' scene sited here, incorporating a traction engine, living van, and water cart, complete with water pipes and 1930s road signs. The article in the previous Newsletter regarding the lorries operated by the Beddoes family came at a very opportune moment as on the layout there is now an elderly lorry loaded with coal sacks and three coalmen bagging up beside it - just along from where the collection of coal merchants' huts are to be situated. In this area, more work is needed on the two Scotch derricks and also a grounded van body needs to be positioned alongside the weighbridge. That building needs to be bedded into position now that Roger (an exacting taskmaster!) has pronounced himself completely satisfied with its location. In front of the model of the building, and in the position it occupies in reality, is a scale model of the weighbridge plate, beautifully produced for us by Geoff Kent, in Plasticard, from a photograph of the original. Photos right.

We are waiting to hear from Squires (a model railway firm down on the south coast) regarding the etches for Number 1, which, following the collapse of the previous supplier, are now back in production.



At present we have completed, fully operational models of both Carlisle and a Great Western 2-4-0 Metro tank, photo left. It is believed that the latter ran on the line - although, admittedly, at an earlier period than when the layout is set (c.1932) most likely when one of the line's two stalwarts was under repair and gives us a semi-legitimate reason to run what is a beautiful little model. Along with having done sterling work wiring up all of the pointwork on the layout, Stuart Taylor has spent a considerable amount of his time making the Metro tank run properly. It had been given to us, along with other 4mm model railway equipment, by a lady whose husband owned it and who, sadly, had passed away. Most of the collection was not suitable for the layout, but the Metro tank and the Allchin traction engine referred to above - now correctly repainted into prototypical livery - very much pass muster. Both will need lightly weathering to make them appear as they would have looked when "in service".

As has always been the case, we are looking for more volunteers to come forward to help complete the layout and also, as and when it goes out on tour, to assist with transporting and operating it at various shows. So, if you want to help us, please get in touch. **Jonathan Moor**

What if?.....

A rather light hearted article from member Jonathan David

What if the Bishop`s Castle Railway had been built as planned? Here are my thoughts of an alternative history of the BCR.

Of course the Overend & Gurney bank collapse didn't happen, so the contractor didn't go bankrupt – well not yet, anyway. So the line would have been built through to Montgomery station on the joint GWR/LNWR line between Shrewsbury and Welshpool. This would mean that, once the Shrewsbury & Hereford Railway became joint GWR/LNWR in 1870, there were junctions with the GWR/LNWR at both ends of the line. Almost certainly, then, the company would have been absorbed jointly by those two companies.

Of course in time the short branch authorised to Montgomery town would have been built, so the existing Montgomery would have had to be renamed. How about Montgomery Junction? Though I rather like leaving it with the same name and calling the new Montgomery station Montgomery Arthur's Gate, as that is where it would have been, just below the castle ramparts.

And the line to Minsterley would also have been completed, giving a through route to Shrewsbury and easy access for coal from Hanwood colliery to Montgomery and Bishop`s Castle.

It is even possible that the line mooted along the Kerry Vale would have been built, linking with the Cambrian branch from Abermule to Glanmule. It seems unlikely that the BCR line would have been continued to Newtown, as that would have needed either a tunnel from the Kerry Vale to the Severn Valley or a cutting which would have dwarfed Talerddig.

Now we have a much shorter route from South Wales and the Marches to the Cambrian line, so there would have been a good deal of through traffic, possibly stealing that from Newport, from the Mid Wales Railway. Probably through carriages from the Cambrian line to Gloucester, Bristol and further south.

And local services would have been between Craven Arms (or possibly further south such as Hereford) and Welshpool, and between Bishop`s Castle and Shrewsbury via Minsterley.

The main line Montgomery station would probably have been rebuilt with four platforms in a similar style to Buttington, and in all probability Craven Arms station would also have been expanded. It is likely though that Bishop`s Castle station would be much as it was in reality, being on a spur, and I suspect that Montgomery Town would have been served only by a shuttle service from Montgomery Junction.

So it would have been a relatively prosperous line with good services and, thanks to the resources of the parent companies, equipped with decent quality, well maintained locomotives and rolling stock.

Would it have survived Dr Beeching? Probably not. It would now just be another closed secondary line. With no railway society associated with it.

So no fun at all!

Jonathan David

Bits and Pieces....

Mike Boyd`s research into Emmanuel Beddoes lorries

He writes.... I was particularly interested in the article about Mr Beddoes lorries.

If it adds anything, I have found that 'lorry 003', which has the plate UX9168 was registered in 1931. At least, the 1931 plates begin at UX7976 and 1932 plates begin at UX9573.

It's likely therefore, that the plate was issued during 1931.

Similarly, 'lorry 004' (UJ8066) has a plate issued in 1936; 1936 began with UJ6444, and 1937 began with UJ8742.

The UX series were issued from March 1927 and UJ series from April 1932.

Of course, there are many reasons why the vehicles may or may not be manufactured in the same year as indicated by the plate series; ex-military, Govt surplus and held in store, ex-utility company etc. meaning that they could be several years older than the date suggested by the plates.

Also, Councils (who were the registration authority at this time) had their own interpretation of the Government's instructions. Some had been registering Motor Cars, Heavy Motor Cars and Motorcycles in various groups, or blocks of numbers, thus distorting the ages of vehicles (from the plates).

Just for interest. Other interpretations are available!!

Information from "A History of Motor Vehicle Registration in the United Kingdom" (Third Edition) L.H. Newall et. al.

Jim Trenfield stumbled upon this whilst looking for something else.

This must be just upstream from the ford at Glenburrell

<https://britishplacenames.uk/smeathen-wood-shropshire-so409858/photos/43130#.Y69TaXbP3ce>



Mike Boyd spotted this article on the BBC West Midlands website `End of the line for Birmingham New Street signal box`

A landmark railway signal box which has helped guide passengers safely into one of the UK's busiest stations will close on Christmas Eve. The New Street building, one of the best-known examples of Birmingham's brutalist architecture, is Grade-II listed, and although no formal plans have been announced, it is thought it could be used as a training centre for the next generation of railway signallers.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-england-birmingham-64007383>

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

A railway training film from 1942, complete with stirring music, showing decontamination and repair procedures after enemy action. Running time 20:20

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y3HAAiKvfOI>

Cambrian Heritage Railways celebrated a triple 50th anniversary in 2021. It was 50 years since they and CAMRA were set up and 50 years since the last freight train arrived at Oswestry.

Here`s how they marked it. Running time 20:43

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ky2LCuN54CM>

Just in case there`s no snow this month, here`s some. Would you want to run your model trains through it? It`s some layout though. Running time 6:50

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ZrzqOxUtwc>

This is a link to an article about how sound effects can be added to a layout quite cheaply which may be of interest

<https://modelrailwayengineer.com/background-scenic-sounds-for-model-railways/>



2023 CALENDAR

"Tucked away in a remote corner of Shropshire, almost on the Welsh border, lie the last remains of what must surely rank as one of the quaintest old railways in England"
- Edward Griffiths 1949



Bishop's Castle Station 1908
Clearly this is a group photograph of railway staff and others, over the postmen, gathered around No. 1. There are three members of the Lucas family in the scene - in the background on the right hand side - Thomas Lucas, in front of the engine, second from the left, Thomas Cyril Lucas and the young Will Lucas. Information supplied by Judith Lucas.

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