



**The Monthly Newsletter of The Bishop's Castle Railway Society**

**WEIGHBRIDGE RAILWAY MUSEUM UPDATE**

Volunteers have been busy re-curating the BCR artefacts in the three rooms that make up the museum.

Room one is home to the model railway layout, a large map of the line and many original items including Carlisle and Tankie's fire irons.

**Weighbridge Railway Museum**  
 Station Street, Bishop's Castle, SY9 5AQ.  
**Next Open Days**  
 Tuesdays 14th & 28th February  
 11am – 3pm

**HOT DRINKS & HOMEMADE CAKE**

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

Bishop's Castle Railway MODEL RAILWAY LAYOUT A work in progress



Room two houses the Steelyard, the Carlisle nameplate, BC Station ticket cabinet and many other original artefacts. Also story boards telling the restoration journey of the building and weighing platform. Photos above.

**Part of Bishop's Castle Arts Festival**  
**Saturday 25th February**  
 10am—4pm  
 The Weighbridge Railway Museum, Station Street, Bishop's Castle.

**Free Entry**  
 Hot Drinks & Home made Cake

**Traditional Sign Writing Demonstrations**

**Railway Modelling**  
 Members of BCRS Model Group will be demonstrating the Bishop's Castle Station complex circa 1932. They will be pleased to discuss all aspects of modelling including scenery building, track laying and building the locos and rolling stock.

Member Malcolm Reeves, our resident sign writer, painter and wood worker will be giving demonstrations of his skills at the forthcoming Arts Festival open day .

An example of his work is this Donations board that he has painted and erected in Room three.



## **Would you like to become one of the members who lead the charity and decide how it is run?**

Being a trustee means making decisions that will impact on the success of the Society as a whole, in turn making a difference to the local community.

For a charitable company, the dual role of company director and trustee has the strategic responsibility for running the charity.

The main requirements are an interest in the future running of the Society and the ability to attend a short meeting every six to eight weeks. The appointment is not a competitive process; it's not a choice of this or that individual over any other, more a case of 'what do they bring to the party?'. There must be a minimum of three Directors and although there is no maximum, at least six would allow for a balance of skills.

This role is open to all members of the Society. Any member can stand for election and just requires another member to propose them.

To become a Director/Trustee, no fewer than 14 days nor more than 35 clear days before the date of the AGM, you need a member entitled to vote at the meeting to give signed written notice to the Company Secretary Mike Boyd of their intention to propose your appointment as a Director/Trustee. It should contain the details that, if you were to be appointed, the Charity would have to file at Companies House and the Charities Commission i.e. Full Name, Address, Date of Birth, Occupation. It should also be signed by you to show your willingness to be appointed. The nomination will then appear on the ballot paper sent out to all members prior to the AGM.

For 2023 Nominations can be sent between the 9th and 30th of March to Company Secretary Mike Boyd, either by email: [thesecretary.bcr@gmail.com](mailto:thesecretary.bcr@gmail.com) or by post to Sunny Bank Farm, Banks Head, Bishop`s Castle, SY9 5JW

All Directors are required to retire on a regular basis, with the longest two serving directors retiring in rotation at the annual AGM. They may immediately stand to be voted back, if they wish, without nomination, and if the membership approves.

If you are interested in joining the team or proposing another member, Company Secretary Mike Boyd will be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

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## **Bishop`s Castle Railway Society Annual General Meeting 2023**

**Friday 14th April 2023 @ 7pm**

**at Enterprise House, Station Street, Bishop`s Castle, SY9 5AQ**

The first A.G.M. in person since 2020 will be held at this new venue for the Society. It has plenty of parking space and a light, comfortable, warm room. The entrance in an evening is at the side of the building, with a lift for those who cannot manage the stairs. Refreshments will be served after the AGM, followed by a talk by Peter George about Daniels Mill.

Daniels Mill is a working water mill used for milling flour, located near Bridgnorth. The mill has the largest cast iron waterwheel in England, spanning a 38 feet diameter.





## BCRSMG UPDATE

Jonathan has been really busy turning the Bishop's Castle Station into a SSSI!. Rare grassland species have been introduced in between the track, and cow parsley in the wild flower meadow, which has resulted in a hare down among the cow parsley in the field nearest the Love Lane bridge, minding his own business. A fox in the field next to the cattle is stalking a bevy of presently non-existent pheasants.

The local farmer (and his dog) has been provided with sheep and cattle pens and the station cat is on the path to the gents. A traction engine is on Love Lane as part of the road menders' scene, along with the horse drawn water bowser.



Huts for the coal merchant's office and store are under construction and the skeleton of Love Lane Bridge has been constructed. Meanwhile Roger is busy constructing the framework for the traverser and Stuart has connected all the points to the slider switches which will be made 'live' in the coming weeks.

Brake van No. 1 has been completed. Photo left. Photos by Stuart Taylor

### Further news from the BCRSMG

As Society members will doubtless be aware, for the last fifteen months a small group of us have painstakingly been constructing a 4mm Finescale operational model of Bishop's Castle station as it would have appeared in the early 1930s - hence its name Bishop's Castle c.1932.

The reason for the layout's creation was not idle conceit but undertaken in order to help visitors to the Weighbridge understand exactly where the station and other vanished railway buildings were once situated. In other words to show what, standing in front of the Weighbridge on a long gone May morning in about 1932, a cooper having brought his load of barrels to the station, to convey them down to Craven Arms by train, would have seen.

A very great deal of time and effort has been invested in the model in order to try and make it as accurate as possible, bearing in mind that, save for the Weighbridge, all other railway buildings in Bishop's Castle have long since passed into history. There still remain various items to complete on the model.

Given the fact that another reason for its construction was to help make both the history of the Bishop's Castle Railway and the Society known to a wider range of people, early on it was decided to make the layout portable. As a result, it has always been the intention to take the layout off to various model railway exhibitions. To this end, the layout is to make its debut at the Ludlow Model Railway Show on Saturday 3rd June 2023.

As members will doubtless be aware, the above show - held at Ludlow Racecourse - is presented by the Craven Arms and District Model Railway Circle (CADMRC), which was formed in the 1970s. CADMRC have their own fine 4mm railway layout, in their case of Craven Arms and Stokesay station as it looked in the 1920s and 1930s - the very same period as the model being built by our own Society members.

We need all the support we can muster, so please make a note for your diaries to come along to Ludlow Model Railway Show on Saturday 3rd June and cheer us on - literally if you wish - as Carlisle once again steams out of Bishop's Castle station bound for Lydham Heath and then all stations down the Onny valley to Craven Arms and the wider world.

Additionally, Bishop's Castle c.1932 is also booked in, presently as a reserve layout, for the Stafford Model Railway Show to be held at the Stafford County Showground over the week-end of 23rd-24th September. While we await confirmation for 2023, we are definitely part of the line-up of layouts for the Stafford Show in 2024. So, once again, please, another date for your diaries.

With the Ludlow Show looming, an article on the Society's layout has been submitted to the editorial board of the Railway Modeller for consideration and, if accepted, to be included in one of their forthcoming issues - hopefully, that for May. We presently await hearing from the editorial board.

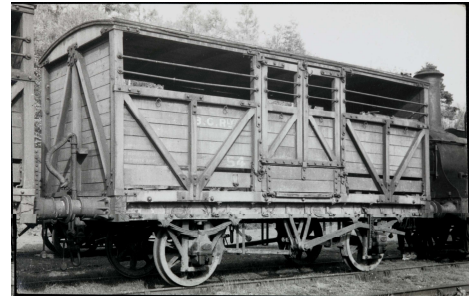
Jonathan Moor

We recently received this question via our Facebook page.....

## *‘When did the BCR acquire the ex Midland cattle wagons’*

Here Jonathan Moor answers the question .....

Probably acquired c.1910. That is the short answer. However...The BCR cattle wagons still extant at the closure of the line in 1935 are always said to have come from off the Midland Railway (which ceased to exist with the Grouping in 1923). Delving further into this, I have come across a suggestion that the BCR cattle wagons were not Midland Railway wagons at all but were constructed to a design of that company copied by S.J. Claye and Company. This particular firm had opened a wagon works at Long Eaton in Derbyshire in 1851 which remained in business until shortly after the end of the Great War.



The design of the BCR cattle wagons is very similar to two almost identical batches of such wagons produced by the Midland Railway at their Derby works - namely D293 and D294. There were 375 built to the D293 diagram - these constructed between 1885 and 1891, and 100 of the D294 diagram erected in 1893. The latter were a matter of inches longer (16' 6" as opposed to 16' 3").

A further confusion attributing the earlier cattle wagons on the BCR to the Midland Railway may have arisen when the BCR went insolvent in 1867. An auction of the company's assets was held at the George Hotel on Shoplatch in Shrewsbury with a large number of wagons being acquired by the Midland Waggon (sic) Company and then promptly leased back to the BCR. The Midland Waggon Company was based in Birmingham and so had nothing whatsoever to do with the Midland Railway in Derby. However, the MWC did have premises in Shrewsbury.

Taking all of the above into account, acquisition by the BCR would therefore, I suggest, have been in the early years of the twentieth century, probably from off the Neath and Brecon (to which old Midland carriages had been sold c.1910). It is possible that the newer BCR cattle wagons were acquired by the company at the very same time it purchased the ex-London and South Western Railway six wheel coach from the Neath and Brecon. To show you just how complicated this becomes, the Brake Third ex Hull and Barnsley carriage on the BCR came from off the Cardiff Railway via the Great Western!



There was also a third batch of Midland Railway cattle wagons, these produced to Diagram 298, some of which were acquired by the Midland and South Western Junction Railway (which ran between Cheltenham Spa and Andover with running powers to Southampton). These wagons later passed into the ownership of the Great Western. It is therefore possible that the BCR vans were some of these, sold on to the BCR by the GWR.

I doubt there will ever be a definitive answer as to the origin or date of these BCR wagons!

**Signalling was never something which the Bishop's Castle Railway took very seriously. So it was somewhat of a surprise when Ian Scott, a member of the Signalling Record Society (SRS) contacted the Society.....**



**Ian`s request.....`** I have recently volunteered to take on the role of Photographic Researcher for the SRS.

As a charitable organization, our aim is to maintain and share knowledge of Railway Signalling and Operation in the British Isles and Overseas.

To achieve this aim, the SRS endeavours to record the railway signalling of today so that knowledge will be available for the researchers of tomorrow. We also research and record the events of yesterday so that historic information is available now and in the future.

Whilst we have a large number of photographs in our own collection, we are aware that it is not exhaustive, and from a research perspective, there are gaps in the photographic evidence that can have an impact on the completeness of research activities.

We would like to build up a knowledgebase of other photographic archives to assist all researchers (not just SRS members) to help plug any gaps in either historical or present day 'photographic evidence' of signal boxes, signal box diagrams, signals or any other signalling related equipment. Whilst photos actually showing signalling items as the main subject are particularly valuable, some photos where the main focus is of a station or train/locomotive etc., it may also contain very useful pictorial information of signalling related items.

Does the Bishop`s Castle Railway Society have a photographic archive that is catalogued? If so, could I ask if you would kindly email a copy of the catalogue to me at [photos@s-r-s.org.uk](mailto:photos@s-r-s.org.uk) or if you have a catalogue and it is available on-line, could you please provide a web address?

Just to clarify, we (the SRS) are not seeking copies of images per se, rather our aim is just to identify which organisations, such as yours, have a catalogue that could be made available on-line to future researchers to enable them to identify photos that may be useful to their research. They can then contact the particular organisation to enquire further, and possibly arrange for copies. Our main aim with this exercise is merely to act as conduit to gather catalogue information and produce a list of where these catalogues can be located.`

Society Archivist Jonathan Moor has been in touch with Ian, and has added another task to the to do list- that of cataloguing the archive of many hundreds of photographs of the railway held by the BCRS.

If you feel you would like to help with this task, you don`t need to live near Bishop`s Castle, just have basic computer skills and an interest in the many and varied old photographs of the BCR. You can contact Secretary Mike Boyd -[theseecretary.bcr@gmail.com](mailto:theseecretary.bcr@gmail.com) who currently holds the photographic archive. All the photographs, but not necessarily in the right order!



## Membership update

The Society continues to flourish, with the vast majority of members renewing their membership for another year. Only a handful have chosen not to renew for various reasons.

For new members who joined in 2022 under the new scheme of annual renewal on the anniversary of the date of joining, we hope you will continue to support the work of preserving the history of the Bishop's Castle Railway.

Your emails and letters of support are much appreciated, as are your donations. It's always nice to hear from members, particularly the members who live too far away to drop into the Weighbridge for a look around and maybe partake in a coffee, cake and a chat.

Members who do call in on a regular basis usually find themselves helping out with whatever small jobs are being done that day. Some now bring their lunch box and join the gang in putting the world to rights at lunchtime.

If you find yourself in the area on the 2nd or 4th Tuesday of the month between 11am and 3pm, do call in, you will be made very welcome.



## Jim's monthly selection of videos.....

This is from 1910 and shows trains running from Baker Street to Uxbridge and then Northwood to Aylesbury with some relaxing music to my ears. Running time 11:40

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

If you thought HS2 was a challenge then look at this. It's a tunnel linking Germany to Denmark by rail under the sea. Running time 27:50

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

I bet you model railway enthusiasts would like a shed like this not to mention all the trains! Running time 7:34

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GrJz-5t1XNo>

[www.bcrailway.co.uk](http://www.bcrailway.co.uk)



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If you have an item for the Newsletter please send to Lin Dalton at [mail@ludfordpark.plus.com](mailto:mail@ludfordpark.plus.com) by the 1st of each month

You can opt out of receiving this newsletter at any time by emailing:- [mail@ludfordpark.plus.com](mailto:mail@ludfordpark.plus.com)

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