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## Association of Shrewsbury Railway Modellers Newsletter No.29 September 2024



When I agreed to edit this newsletter I was not sure what to expect but thought I might as well give it a go. Various motivational phrases entered my mind, 'In for a penny, in for a pound' I thought, 'Who dares wins' I muttered, throwing my shoulders back and taking a deep breath. However, come mid-August I still only had two articles which was clearly not going to be enough. Thankfully, this last week some fabulous contributions have appeared in my inbox and I am immensely grateful to all those who have taken the time to put together the wide variety of articles presented here. I hope you enjoy reading them as much as I have been relieved to receive them!

Chris Cox

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*Rebuilt Royal Scot No. 46100 Royal Scot races through the landscape near Beeston Castle with a Saphos Trains excursion heading to Chester on 10th. August. The locomotive is in reality an imposter, as it was actually built in 1930 by the North British Loco Co. as 6152 The King's Dragoon Guardsman and then became a substitute for 6100 Royal Scot in preparation for a trip to the USA in 1933, as the real Royal Scot was then in need of an overhaul. The identity swap was permanent. The large nameplate commemorates its visit to Chicago to the Century of Progress exhibition. Chris Kapolka*

### **A borrowed live steam engine.**

I recently borrowed this loco from a neighbour who was given it by his dad but had never run it. It was seized solid, so I dismantled part of it and soaked it in WD40 till it eased off. The spring for the safety valve was rusty and I put in a new one. A fill of oil in the lubricator, water in the boiler and meths in the tank and it was ready to steam. It ran very smoothly but came off the track! I contacted a friend, Rafe Shirley, and sent him a photo to identify it.

He told me that the engine is one of a batch of several hundred built by a firm of primarily optical engineers called Leech based in Rochester and marketed via a, now defunct, outfit Messrs Burtons Model Importers of Walsall. The engine is closely based on LBSC's 'Mollyette' design. They were well made with silver soldered boiler, bronze cylinder assembly and robust upperworks all screwed together. However, they did vary considerably in performance; some functioned well straight out of the box, whilst others, mainly due to a dimensional error on the slide valve were very poor performers. The wheels were not turned to standard dimensions and would derail at the least provocation.



The loco has a 'pot' boiler; that means it is fired from outside the boiler barrel, from below. The side tanks are open at the top to let out the fumes from the flames or it would suffocate itself! This means the boiler is pitched quite high and black paint disguises any scorching.

To keep the design simple, it only has one cylinder between the frames. If it stalls, it needs a push to restart. There is a slide valve controlled by a 'slip eccentric'. If you push it backwards, the eccentric turns half a turn and the loco runs backwards. If you push it forwards the eccentric turns half a turn and the loco runs forwards! A huge, regulator projects from the back of the cab to control the speed.

It is a bit of a crude machine, but it could be 'civilised'. Apparently, the procedure was to strip the engine down, fit new scale wheels, turned from Walsall Models castings, modify the slide valve to get full port openings, take all the slack out of the coupling rods with little brass sleeves, replace the safety valve spring with a stainless steel one and add a third wick tube to the burner. Also, fit scale buffers, handrail knobs and couplings. These alterations enabled the engines to easily haul five weighted Lima coaches for about a quarter of an hour. If the weather was cold or windy this would be reduced.

Nick Coppin

## California Dreamin'

Thanks to dear old Freddie Laker I could afford to go to the USA. It was back in 1978 and here was a man who broke the monopoly of the extortionist airline cartels, till they eventually broke him. A friend hatched the idea of crossing the USA by train with a month-long Amtrak pass from New York and flying back from L.A. That trip sowed the seeds of wanderlust and also the love of American railroads. We started that epic hike on the Southern Crescent, the last privately operated long distance train in the USA. We had a 'Pennsy' GG1 electric loco race us down to Washington where a quartet of E8s in Southern Railway Colours took over. Some 36 hours later we were soaking up the Blues and Jazz in New Orleans's Preservation Hall. It was just the start of the adventure.



*Above: Union Pacific Big Boy 4014 a few years before she was restored back to working order.*

*Right: The brutal front end of 9000 has none of that elegant styling that was synonymous with British locomotives.*

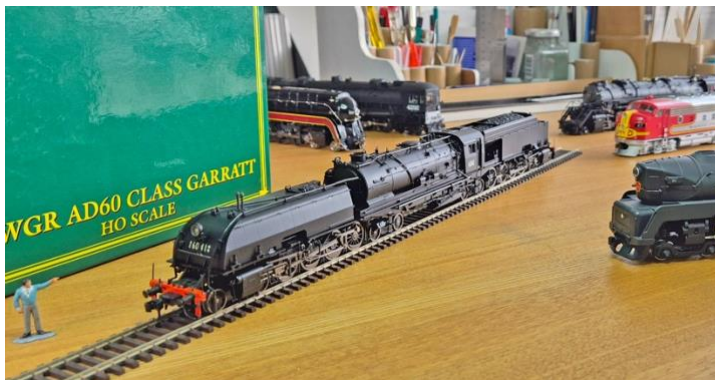


Years later, on my second visit to Peru I returned with a stop over to see friends in San Francisco which then to become a bit of a routine. On one visit Tom and I drove a hire car down to L.A. to a model train convention. We took the opportunity to visit The Rail Giants collection in Pomona at the Los Angeles State Fairground. As the name suggests these were serious beasts and several are the sole survivors. My favourite was Southern Pacific 4-10-2 No. 5021 which had been restored to full working order only to be banned from working by the California state legislation due to carbon emissions. To add insult to injury it has been positioned making it impossible to take an unobstructed photograph. Another unique survivor is the massive 3 cylinder Union Pacific 9000 class 4-12-2. Developed in the 1920s there were 88 of these locomotives capable of hauling half mile long freight trains at 50 mph. Here we had all these incredibly powerful machines all just sitting in a park, it was almost blasphemous!



*The UP 3 cylinder 4-12-2s evolved in the 1920s to haul fast freights across the vast plains.*

The next day we enjoyed the convention with many layouts including a 0 gauge LSWR layout built by ex-pats. There was a lot to see and numerous traders standing around hoping you would visit their booth...men at work! One guy had a different accent, "Do you come from a land down under?" I asked him. He smiled and showed me a few samples of Eureka products. He was a possie Aussie ... of all the temptations that had been presented my way, all those wonderful miniatures of American giants of steam and some diesels too I had weakened at the sight of Aussie Garratt. Knowing it was a limited



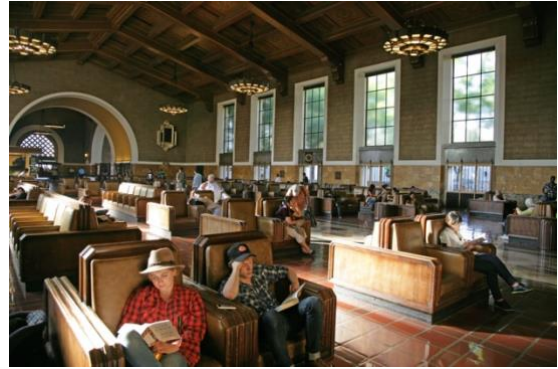
production run I made a decision it was now or never and hoped it didn't need to return to vendor!

*Left: The beautiful RTR model of an Australian AD60 Beyer Garratt is surrounded by other American train temptations that I succumbed to later.*

Some years previously I had climbed into the cab of loco 6040 at Thirlmere Railway Museum. When I realised it was full of my least favourite creature ... spiders ... arachnophobia kicked in fast knowing how deadly these can be and leapt out that cab like a kangaroo. I wished I had seen those Garratts in their working days, but I could now watch my model relive those days. So, with an Aussie train my bag we headed home from L.A by train as was planned.



Los Angeles Union Terminal built in 1939 is a wonderful blend of Art Deco and Spanish Mission style architecture and rates as one of the great stations of the world. It was the starting point for some of the greatest of trains ...most notably the Santa Fe *Super Chief*, the Ritz of the Rails and rated as the most stylish train the world. It was frequented by the Hollywood moguls and stars and made an unadvertised stop at Pasedena in the suburban area to pick them up or drop them off. There was a through car car to New York which would be attached to the Pennsylvania Railroad's Broadway Limited. Today's Southwest Chief is a humble shadow of the diesel streamliner of yesteryear.



We were booked aboard the Coast Starlight starting its northbound 1,377 mile voyage to Seattle. This Southern Pacific route heads north towards Santa Barbara and hugs that forever sunny Californian coastline for some one hundred and forty miles, the longest coastal route in the world. This was the route of the 'Daylight' a SP express passenger service linking L.A. with San Francisco... SP Cab Forward freight

haulers were predominant of this route. Northeast of San Francisco is Sacramento, home to the California State Railroad Museum, a world class museum that boasts the only surviving Cab Forward locomotive out of some 250 variations.

*Above: The Coast Starlight hugs the California coastline north of Santa Barbara for some 140 miles, the longest coastal route in the world.*

*Right: Looking mighty reptilian loco 4294 weighs in at just shy of three hundred tons with no water on board...This is the sole surviving Cab Forward which had to be oil burners by design.*



*Below: Two Santa Fe behemoths languish in a siding near Sacramento Railway Museum. Sister loco 2926 has just been restored back to working order in Albuquerque.*



Having seen the Cab Forward loco I wanted to travel the Donner Pass route that had been their domain until the advent of diesels. Climbing to an altitude of some 10,000ft this double track route is a serious railway challenge. In those very early days of settlers heading west, the Donner family came to grief in the harsh reality of winter, only surviving by resorting to cannibalism,

hence the pass was named in their honour. More recently the city of San Francisco train was snowed in by a blizzard in 1952 the passengers were miraculously rescued after three days before they needed to eat their fellow travelers! We travelled this line on the Chicago bound Amtrak's California Zephyr with a stopover at Reno where I lost all of ten dollars gambling. We returned to the Bay area on the west bound train which was surprisingly on time.



*Right: A view from the Chicago bound Amtrak California Zephyr near the summit on the Donner Pass route. It was up here that in 1952 the diesel hauled City of San Francisco was stranded by a blizzard for three days.*



*Left: Dutch Flat on the Donner Pass was a favourite location for celebrated American railroad photographer Richard Steinheimer.*

Per chance I had stumbled across a prospective American mainline rail-tour with steam. Usually these are sold out before news goes public. I proposed an itinerary of

a possible railway trip to a friend joining with my friends in San Francisco. We grouped together and flew to Portland for what was to become a fabulous trip behind Southern Pacific GS4 class No. 4449. The two-day trip from Portland Oregon to Bend was a real step back into the glory days of American train travel. Within the consist of cars, using American railroad parlance, was the Santa Fe Super Chief dome car with its Turquoise Room frequented by film star Maryln Monroe on her trips across the USA.



*Left: Southern Pacific 'Daylight' GS4 No. 4449 stands at Portland station in readiness for our 2 day excursion.*

*Below: 4449 steams alongside the Colombia River and will take our train over the massive girder bridge in the right of the picture.*



The route began following the Colombia River then heading south on a tortuous heavily graded route so there was no chance to really sample the GS4's performance. These GS4s often clocked a 100mph on the prime named trains. On the return journey we had a photo run past session at the Willow Canyon Trestle ....how good does it get! ....Must do it again ...maybe with the Big Boy. Chris Kapolka



*Above: Classic Dome cars at the tail end of the train and the view from inside ex-Santa Fe car.*





*Above: Meet Conductor Bill. "We live for these trips " he said as 4449 catches the late afternoon sun, left.*



*The Willow Canyon Run Past ...what a setting!*

### **Traffic Movements past Oswestry South Signal Box in 1962 and 1963**

Our recent visit to Cambrian Heritage Railways was a most enjoyable evening and one of the highlights was the tour of Oswestry South Signal Box which dates from 1892 and is now a Grade 2 listed building. It is of course fortunate the box has survived and that much effort is being put into its restoration with the installation of a lever frame from Wellington. Unfortunately, the changing landscape around Oswestry Station since the 1960s, including the sweeping away of much of the railway heritage, makes it difficult to visualise what a busy location this once was for trains. Oswestry South Signal Box was

an integral part of this local railway scene and using a working timetable of the area for 1962 and 1963, this article looks at train movements which the signalmen in the box would have handled. The specific document used was published by British Railways, Western Region and is the 'Working Timetable of Passenger and Freight Trains, Shrewsbury District (Oswestry Area)' covering the period 10<sup>th</sup> September 1962 - 16<sup>th</sup> June 1963.



Oswestry South box was then continuously open Mondays to Saturdays but on Sundays closed after the departure of the 6.45am passenger to Aberystwyth and did not reopen until 8.15pm. One assumes that the box was worked by one person and that it was covered by three 8 hour shifts, possibly 10pm to 6am, 6am to 2pm and 2pm to 10pm. Although there were slack periods, the box was invariably busy with 18 daily down trains heading in the Welshpool direction and a similar number of up trains to handle as well. No doubt there would have been much ringing of bells but also probably telephone calls to adjacent boxes at Oswestry North and Llyncllys Junction.

Timetabled trains, however, do not include all the movements which Oswestry South would have dealt with because some of the trains from Whitchurch, for example, terminated at Oswestry so the train engine would more than likely need to run round past the South box. Additionally, there was a lot of shunting activity at Oswestry with no less than 7 locomotive diagrams on weekdays. From 10am until 2pm a locomotive shunted the 'South End and Branch Yard', whilst another was engaged there from 5pm until 6.45pm which the South Box would have been involved in. Much of the shunting would have

been sorting wagons and preparing freight trains for north or south departures.

Down trains (Mondays to Fridays) which would have passed the South Box from 10<sup>th</sup> September 1962 until 16<sup>th</sup> June 1963 were as follows:

4.05 am Aberystwyth passenger/mail  
4.20 am Aberystwyth freight  
6.45 am Llanfyllin light engine  
7.50 am Four Crosses passenger  
8.20 am Aberystwyth passenger  
8.28 am Aberystwyth freight  
8.40 am Tanat Valley freight  
9.30 am Moat Lane Junction Freight (M, W, F only)  
10.00 am Llanfyllin freight (T, Th only)  
10.43 am Aberystwyth passenger  
12.40 am Llanfyllin passenger  
2.21 pm Aberystwyth passenger  
3.20 pm Llanfyllin passenger.  
4.25 pm Llanymynech passenger (not in school holidays)  
5.45 pm Aberystwyth passenger  
6.15 pm Llanfyllin passenger  
8.05 pm Llanidloes passenger

As for the locomotives which would have been running these services, the Shed Bash UK website records details of engines on Oswestry depot on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> November 1962 and also Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> May 1963. There was a good supply of Manor locomotives for the Whitchurch to Aber run but also the versatile 2-6-0 Ivatts which operated the Llanfyllin branch. There were some Hawksworth 16xx pannier tanks which were useful for shunting turns and early in 1963 a group of BR Standard 2-6-4 tanks were transferred to Oswestry and became a familiar sight.

1963 was something of a Cambrian finale in the Oswestry area. January 18<sup>th</sup> 1965 saw the last passenger services to Whitchurch, Welshpool and Llanfyllin. The locomotive shed closed in 1965 followed in 1966 by the works and the Oswestry to Gobowen passenger service. Freight trains to Blodwell Quarry continued to run past the South box until 1988 but Oswestry's decline as a railway centre was short, brutal and comprehensive.

As yet I have not really said anything about railway modelling. A working timetable, however, is most useful when starting a new project such as modelling Llanfyllin terminus because with archive photos it provides detailed insight into train workings which can be replicated in an historically accurate manner.

Paul Bowen

## On the Straight and Narrow in Wales

During August I visited two railways in Wales – the Llangollen on the fourth, and the Welshpool and Llanfair on the seventh.

The fourth of August was the second day of Llangollen’s 1960s weekend, during which an intensive timetable was in operation. Since 2018 the line has been in serious financial difficulties, and in 2021 its operating company, Llangollen Railway PLC, went into receivership, with debts of £350,000 and no prospect of meeting its liabilities. Sadly, it had to dispose of much of its rolling stock, while operation of the line was handed over to the Llangollen Railway Trust, which runs it today. Despite these setbacks the two-mile extension of the line from its former terminus at Carrog to Corwen was completed in 2023, and the line is now marketed as the “Llangollen and Corwen Railway”. Its ten-mile route runs through the picturesque Dee Valley and is a delight for visitors. I have travelled on the line a number of times over the past few years, partly to acquire further information and photographs for my latest N-Gauge cameo layout project of Llangollen station.

Sunday the fourth of August saw three trains operating on the line: two 2-car DMUs coupled together to form a 4-car unit; its principal remaining steam loco 3802 (an ex-GWR 2-8-0 heavy freight loco) hauling 6 coaches, and its Brush Type 4 diesel 47449/D1566 (the loco carries both numbers) hauling 5 coaches.

*Below: 47449, in immaculate condition, at Llangollen on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2024. That wonderful GWR footbridge and station canopy are not going to be easy to build in N-Gauge!*



Before setting out, my wife Diane (who accompanied me to Llangollen) wondered if we should book tickets in advance in case the trains were fully

booked on the day. In the end we decided that in view of the intensive timetable this wasn't necessary as we were sure to find two spare seats somewhere on the train. In the event, we travelled on the D1566-hauled train in both directions.

On the outward journey we shared our coach with three other people, and on the return journey we had the coach to ourselves! This was all the more surprising as 4<sup>th</sup> August was warm, sunny and at the height of the summer season, and Llangollen was very busy, as it always is at this time of year. I can only hope that the previous day attracted more passengers – to be fair, there were more activities taking place on the Saturday – as I can't imagine the Sunday was very profitable for the railway.



*Our very well-appointed coach interior on the outward journey.*

All three trains were beautifully turned out, and the coach interiors all appear to be in excellent condition – better than some of the SVR's coaches if I am to be honest.

Although still extant, the railway could not use the original Corwen station building as it is now the head office of a trailer company.



*The original station building at Corwen, now the home of Ifor Williams Trailers*

The railway therefore had to build a brand-new station a few hundred yards to the east. It was opened in June 2023. The new platforms and canopy, built on an embankment at the rear of the town's main car park, are built to a classic GWR design and are superb. However, the main station building, housing the ticket office, shop and (very small) refreshment counter, looks a

bit like a Portakabin and is a big disappointment. On the other hand, unlike the previous terminus at Carrog, the west end of the line now terminates in a town and visitors have the opportunity to visit Corwen, the centre of which is adjacent to the car park.

All in all, we spent a very pleasant day on this lovely line, but I continue to worry about its future.



*Corwen station on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2024. The wonderful new GWR-style canopy can be seen behind the coaches, and the rather disappointing station building can just be seen behind the campervan at the centre right of the photo. Visitors could drive the Class 08 diesel shunter – seen to the left of the coaches – along a short stretch of line for £5 under the railway’s “Driver for a Fiver” offer.*

Three days later I found myself at Raven Square in Welshpool, the western terminus of the Welshpool and Llanfair Light Railway. Having driven past it many times over the years, this was my first trip on the line. My initial impression – which continued throughout the day – was of a very well-maintained railway, much loved by the people who work on it. The Welshpool site includes a scrupulously clean shed containing two locos currently out of service and a series of information boards describing their history. I was struck by the relatively large size of these narrow-gauge locos. I hadn’t previously appreciated that the line has an unusual gauge of 2’ 6” – slightly larger than most Welsh narrow-gauge lines (by comparison, the gauge of the Ffestiniog Railway and the Talylyn Railway is 1’11½”). In consequence, the railway has had to scour the world in order to source surplus 2’6” gauge rolling stock, with their current inventory originating in Antigua, Austria, Hungary, Romania, South Africa and Taiwan – in addition to two locomotives that were built for the railway on its opening in 1903 and have spent all of their working lives there.



*Above: No. 12 “Joan”, built in 1927 by Kerr Stuart of Stoke on Trent for a sugar cane company in Antigua, before her acquisition by the W&L in 1977, inside the immaculate shed at Raven Square on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2024*



*Above: My train, hauled by The Earl, at Llanfair Caereinion on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2024 awaiting departure for Welshpool Raven Square. The coaches are a mixture of former ZillertalBahn (from Austria) and Sierra Leone Railway stock. The railway also operates a number of former Sierra Leone Railway locomotives.*

*Above: Built in 1902 by Beyer Peacock & Co for the W&L, No. 822 “The Earl” has spent all of its working life there and continues to provide sterling service, together with its sister loco No. 823 “The Countess”.*



*Above: The other train operating on 4<sup>th</sup> August was hauled by diesel loco No. 17 “Diema”. Built in Bremen in 1979, originally for the Taiwan Sugar Corporation, it was acquired by the W&L in 2004. Coaches are a mixture of former ZillertalBahn, and Salzkammergut-Lokalbahn (SKGLB) stock – both originally from Austria.*

The journey, which runs partly along the Banwy valley, although not as well-known as the Llangollen Railway’s Dee valley is every bit as attractive – arguably more so in fact. And at 8½ miles is not far short of the 10 miles between Llangollen and Corwen.

It is difficult to compare the two visits. The W&L created the better initial impression, as both of its stations are cleaner, and the grounds better maintained. But this is probably an unfair comparison, given the considerably larger size and scale of the Llangollen Railway operation. What I can say is that I thoroughly enjoyed both days and I can recommend a visit to both railways. As with all heritage railways, their futures remain uncertain, and they need our support.

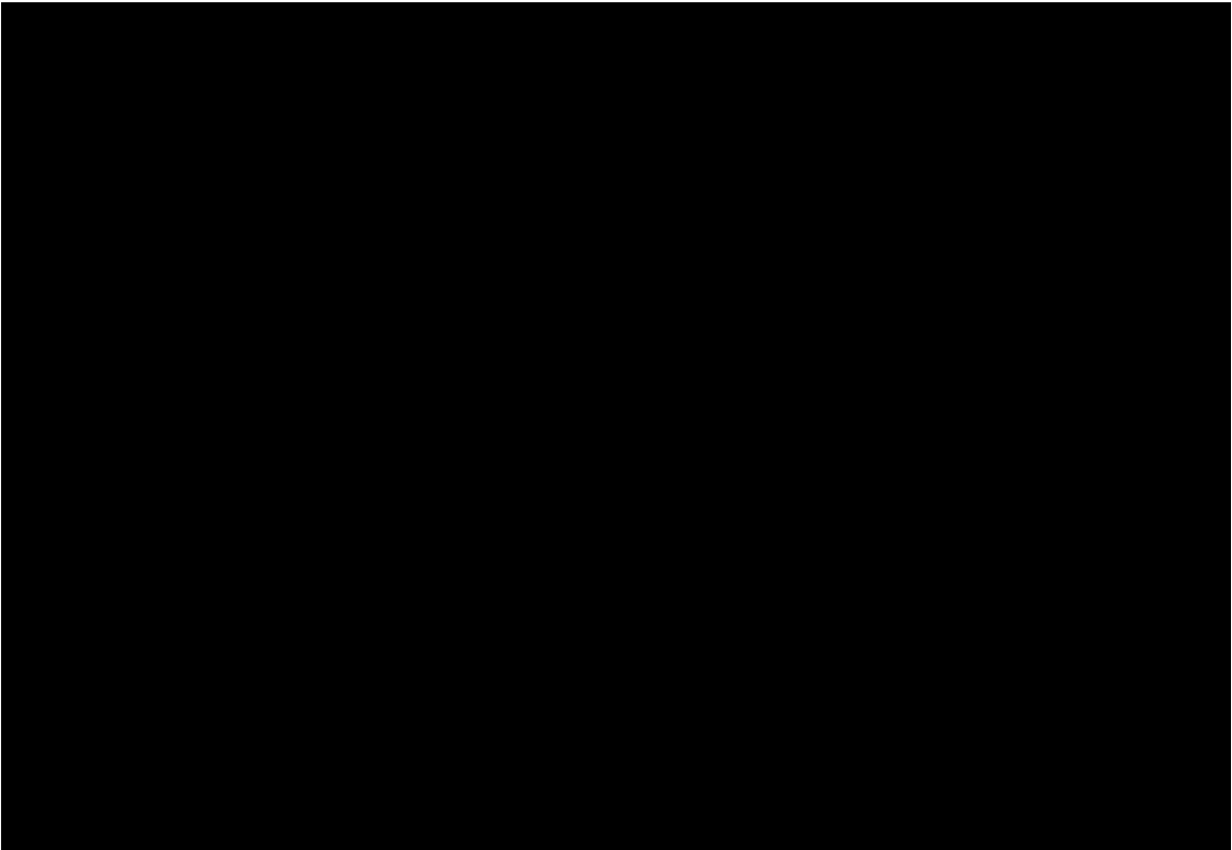
***The Welshpool and Llanfair Light Railway will be holding its annual Steam Gala from Friday 30<sup>th</sup> August to Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024.***

***The Llangollen and Corwen Railway will be holding a Heritage Railcar Weekend on Saturday and Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> October 2024, with four heritage railcar sets in operation.***

Dave Gotliffe

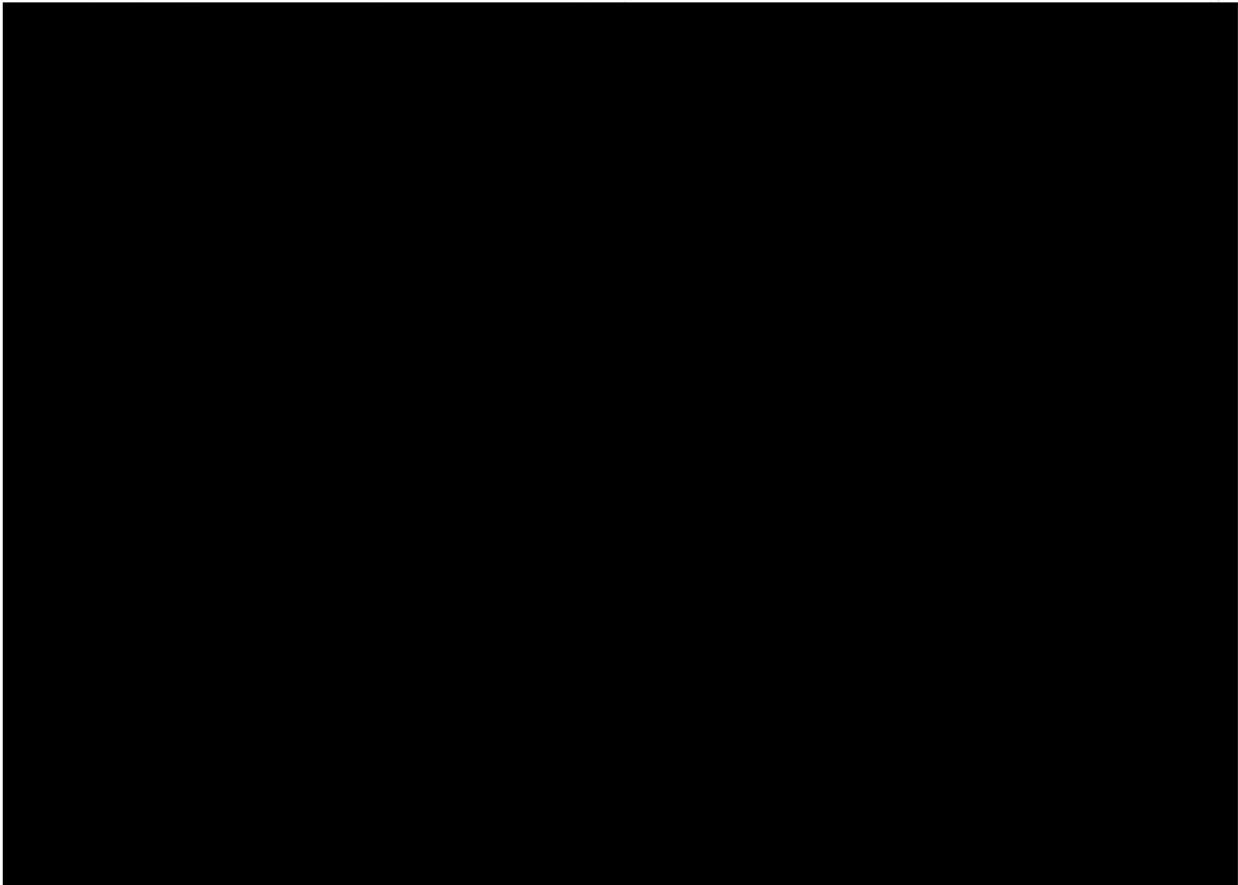
## **NORMANTON – ‘CREWE OF THE NORTH’?**

Recalling my first memories of railways, aged under six, occurred near Normanton station in the former West Riding of Yorkshire, when my mother and I were engulfed in smoke from a passing departure whilst crossing the adjacent road bridge. However, after moving to live in Shrewsbury, ‘trainspotting’ holidays with Grandma led me to make journeys from Normanton to York, Doncaster, Leeds and one journey heading west, where my memory defeats me regarding the ultimate destination.

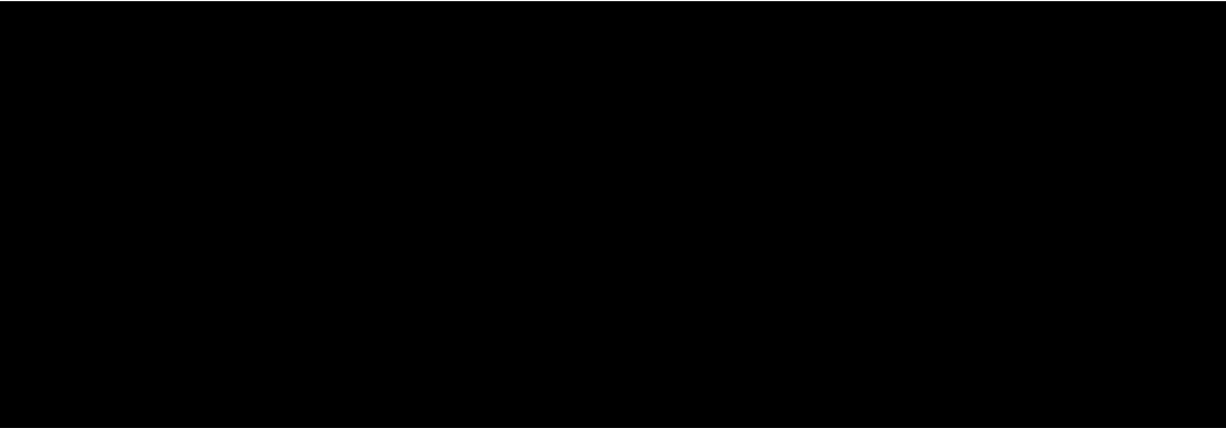


Normanton is less than four miles from Lake Lock railway, the first public railway in the world, opened in 1798. So important in its early days I understand it was referred to as the ‘Crewe of the North’. Records show that Queen Victoria, US President Ulysses S Grant, Brazilian President Dom Pedro, PM’s Disraeli and Gladstone have all broken journeys at the station. Sadly, I cannot find reference to its nickname ‘Crewe of the North’ but suspect it was due to its initial location as a major junction and immense amount of coal traffic.





Surrounding the station were significant collieries: West Riding and Silkstone Col, Methley Junction Col, St John's Col, Don Pedro Col, Whitwood Col and Glass Houghton Col, to name a few.



The station itself was opened by the North Midland Railway (later MR) from Derby and joined by lines from York (NER), lines extended to Leeds and west from Wakefield (L&YR), so a great potential mix of locomotives and rolling stock for the railway modeller. But, the station with its H shaped island platform, would make an interesting challenge from a modelling perspective. Including double bays at both ends its length measured from the OS map was 1250ft – 5 metres in 4mm scale, and had 7 through lines, over 27 lines in marshalling and numerous other sidings. These were separated from the engine shed, which included a roundhouse, by the multi arch road bridge referred above.

Family history has also revealed my Great Grandfather, John William Betts, born in Holbeach Workhouse 1873, left home near the Midland and Great Northern Railway to work for the Midland Railway at Normanton, Yorkshire. The MR employees book shows he started as a H Driver (H is possibly a horse) at 17/- a week at Normanton in 1892. The 1901 census records indicate he had become a signaller.

I have found a few images online that may indicate just how vast this junction, now little more than a halt with a bus stop shelter, once was.

Graham Betts

### **Ballast – the perfect shade?**

The photos below were taken on the 28<sup>th</sup> July just north of Craven Arms. It's a rather entertaining reminder that sometimes the real world can throw you a curved ball. As keen railway modellers we often expend quite some effort to achieve a level of realism that suits our tastes, simply getting the colour of ballast correct for your region or period can often be quite challenging. However, judging by the polychromatic pebbles on this section of mainline perhaps we need not be too concerned!



Chris Cox

### **Coalbrookdale Modelling Day**

A great day's modelmaking in the company of like-minded railway modellers, the second Coalbrookdale Modelling Day was a success with folks getting more done than they expected.



If you would like to take part in a day of uninterrupted modelling without all the usual domestic distractions, please get in touch with me by email

or phone [REDACTED] and I'll add you to the list. As you will see from the photo, we have plenty of room for more keen modellers who enjoy a full day's modelling with free tea, coffee, and home-made cake. The day costs £10 to cover the use of the Scout hall upstairs

and all funds raised go to help the Coalbrookdale Scout Group provide adventurous activities for young people. The next modelling day will be held on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October at the usual venue: Coalbrookdale & Ironbridge Community Centre, 2 Wellington Road, Coalbrookdale, TF8 7DX.

Vernon Larcombe has sent the following amusing tips regarding good modelling practice. A combination of things learned the hard way (hopefully not all on the Modelling Day) and things worth remembering to maintain a cordial relationship with the boss!

### **5 Things Not To Do When Modelling**

1. Don't shake a pot of paint if the lid is not properly on. This can get very messy and has the potential to spoil the paint job on your model.
2. Don't try and catch your soldering iron If you knock it off your worktop – the chances are that you will catch the hot end.
3. Don't pick up the tissue you have just used to mop up excess super-glue until the glue has had time to set. You can not only end up with tissue stuck to your fingers you can end up with your fingers stuck together.
4. Don't leave a pot of acrylic paint open overnight – it spoils the paint. This can be a problem when painting late at night.
5. Don't drop your paint brush when you're wearing a good shirt, it can be tricky explaining to the domestic authorities.

I will let you guess how I know these things, I'm sure you all have similar advice you could share...

*The editor would add a further tip to point No.1, especially when using Matt Humbrol or similar enamel paints. The paint should obviously be well stirred but less obvious is the fact that if you use enamel paint straight from the tin, no matter how well it is stirred, it will usually leave a slightly satin, or worse still a glossy finish. Nine times out of ten you're aiming for a matt finish so this can be frustrating. If you're painting figures and their clothing ends up glossy (my pet hate) it can look particularly unrealistic. I always dip the handle end of the*

*brush into the stirred paint and wipe this onto a palette (an old styrene off cut or plastic lid will do fine) then use this paint on whatever I'm working on. This way matt paint always dries matt, and it also provides an easy opportunity to blend colours or create lighter and darker shades, essential when painting figures.*

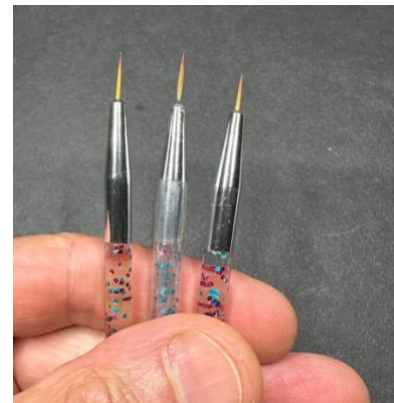
### Useful Bits

Like many of us I'm always chuffed to find a useful supplier of bits and bobs from essential raw materials to handy tools.



I recently purchased a set of brushes via Facebook from Quickdraw Supplies [WWW.QDSUPPLIES.CO.UK](http://WWW.QDSUPPLIES.CO.UK). The pack consisted of 15 assorted nylon brushes for fine detail work. Delivery was super-fast and at £5.95 free postage I was delighted and frankly amazed as the brushes have turned out to be pretty good quality. As a rule, I do not buy via Facebook but thought I'd give it a go. I was expecting to have something fairly disposable at that price but have been very pleasantly surprised.

Whilst on the subject of brushes, I recently purchased a set of three brushes for decorating nails (not the ones in your shed, the ones on the ends of your fingers). Not that I desire fancy nails for a frisky night out but having very long fine bristles they are absolutely superb for lining and detail work. A search for 'Nail Art Brushes' on eBay will turn up plenty of options and at less than a pound a piece it turns out they are in fact cheaper than chips!



Tiny magnets can be a handy addition to the bits box. I've used quite a few recently to fit figures in and on some of my early carriages. A good supplier is [WWW.MAGMAN.CO.UK](http://WWW.MAGMAN.CO.UK), the inexpensive magnets come in a wide range of sizes and the tiny ones are very handy for securing roofs on carriages, buildings etc, you may want to be removeable for maintenance purposes. One of those items you don't realise you need until you have it!

Please do share details of useful bits and bobs you may have discovered and that have proved unexpectedly handy. A quick email to the newsletter editor is all it takes to pass on your handy tips.

### Sales and Wants

Howard Mainwaring [REDACTED] has an N scale Country Station set for sale. It's beautifully constructed and essentially ready to fit to

your layout. He is open to offers and can be contacted on the above email address. The photo shows the main station with a platform waiting room and shelter, together with a platform ramp and steps which can be used to butt against platform at the rear of the station for entry to the booking hall.



Stephen Duffell has some storage units going spare.

I have some storage units that were made to fit under baseboards and I used them for storing books. They are surplus to requirements, and I wish to dispose of them. There are 5 units in all, 3 with closed backs and two with open shelves. There are handles on the ends and with castors can be moved easily.



#### Measurements

height = closed backs  
750mm, open backs  
730mm

depth = closed backs  
310mm, open backs  
380mm

length = closed backs 2  
x 910mm, 1 x 690mm,  
open backs 590mm

Offers are invited. I could bring some of them to the September meeting.

Contact: Stephen Duffell



### **And finally...**

The photograph below was taken by me this summer on our esteemed secretary's 7mm layout. I'll admit to 'photoshopping' it a tad but to achieve such a level of atmosphere, the model has to be a pretty good one in the first place! We would love to see individual images of your railway models that you are particularly pleased with. Simply email your photo to the editor of the newsletter and perhaps we can make 'Favourite Photos' a regular feature.

