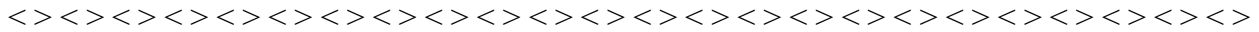


# WELLS RAILWAY FRATERNITY

Newsletter No.198 - July 2020

[www.railwells.com](http://www.railwells.com)

Thank you to those who have contributed to this newsletter.  
Your contributions for future editions are welcome;  
please contact the editor, Steve Page  
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“Glastonbury Bound”  
Roy Kethro and Class 47 loco “Abertawe” at Paddington  
For the full story see Roy’s article on page 7

## **A LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

Dear All

I hope this latest Newsletter finds you well after the great changes we have all had to make, some more than others.

As you know in general all things were and are cancelled but the light has been turned back on, albeit slightly dimmer. The committee had to cancel two meetings together with the B&E exhibition and of course Railwells, the first time in the history of the show. Nevertheless we are embarking on this year's programme as arranged by Andrew Tucker well in advance of the pandemic. The first meeting will be, as usual, on the second Tuesday in the month, September 8<sup>th</sup> in the Town Hall. The Speaker will be Steph Gillett and his subject is the MSWJR. There will be special measures in place to adhere to the Governments guidelines with no book stall and coffee at half time, so if you require a drink you will have to supply one yourself. The usual toilet facilities will be available.

It was a difficult decision, whether to resume in September or at a later date and to predict how many members feel confident about returning to a meeting in a hall. Therefore we are asking you to **REPLY BY EMAIL TO THIS NEWSLETTER** and let us know whether or not you are likely to support starting the programme of meetings now. We need to be sure that there will be enough members attending to make it worth starting in September. The arrangements are of course subject to any further restrictions that may be imposed locally or nationally.

Being the start of a new year for the Fraternity subscriptions are due. However, this year because of the shortened programme last year, the cancellation of the proposed outings and exhibitions, the committee have resolved to defer the subscription until January when we can make a more informed decision.

Our Secretary John Uncles has decided to step down at the next AGM after being in that post for longer than I care to remember. I would like to thank him on behalf of the members and personally for all the work John has given to the club. If there is any member interested in taking on the role as Secretary then please pass on your name to one of the Committee.

We do hope that you will support the Fraternity in these difficult times as we feel our way into the future.

Hope to see you soon.

**Colin Price**

Chairman

## THE ONES THAT GOT AWAY – Part 1

– by Andrew Tucker

Fortunately most of the people that I have invited to give a talk for us are more than happy to come to Wells. However, over the fifteen years that I have been in the role of Speakers' Secretary there have been a few who have prevaricated or simply said 'no'.

When I first took on the job I had very little idea of where I would find suitable candidates. We usually need eight speakers for each season (September to May but excluding the AGM in December). It was helpful that my predecessor, John Uncles, already had arrangements in place for 2005/6. My first 'lead' was at Railwells in 2005 when an acquaintance mentioned the name of someone he knew who could give a presentation on *The Atmospheric Railway*. I was given the contact details for this person who I will refer to as 'Mr P G'. The invitation was sent off including my suggestion of two possible dates in early 2007. Mr P G eventually responded with an apology about the delay and information about his current circumstances at work which meant that he could no longer borrow a digital projector for his PowerPoint presentation. He asked if we could provide a suitable projector and others on the committee advised that we had a member, Terry Paget, who was happy to let us use his projector when required. I was also able to arrange to have the use of the digital projector from my office as a stand-by if required. Knowing that connecting projectors and laptops is not always a simple operation I put forward the idea of a trial run when Mr P G came to the Railwells in 2006 (he was a regular visitor). I heard nothing more about this arrangement. Railwells came and went so I contacted him again but Mr P G gave a rather negative response so the idea of his talk was quietly dropped. In October 2005 I attended the Taunton Model Railway Exhibition with our N-gauge layout *St Denys*. Our position in the hall was back-to-back with a bookseller who was also an author and publisher. He had a newly produced book on the *Blue Pullman* so I asked if he would come to Wells to give us a talk on this subject. Apparently he had previously spoken to the Fraternity (I subsequently found out this was in 2002 and the subject was *The GWR Gas Turbine Locos*). Unfortunately Mr K R said he now limited his talks to groups who meet near to his home in Hampshire. Wells was out of the question.

I gradually developed contacts with other groups in the area who hold meetings in a similar way to ours and from time to time we have exchanged information on possible speakers. In 2008 I became aware that a joint RCTS and S&DRT meeting had arranged to have a talk on *Collectors Corner*. Now this fabled 'Aladdin's Cave' of ex-BR or earlier railway equipment that operated near Euston Station in the 1970s and '80s sounded like an excellent talk to me so I contacted the speaker, 'Mr B B'. He replied declining the invitation because he only gave his talk to RCTS groups.

In 2008 I went to Dillington House for a talk on an architectural subject. The speaker was a well-known expert from a TV programme who has also written several railway books. At the end of the evening I approached Mr P A and asked if he also gave presentations on railways and if so would he come to Wells. His replies to both questions were positive so we exchanged details. One possible snag was that this gentleman wanted reimbursement of his travelling expenses plus a fee of £300 (this fee was over ten times more than we were normally paying at the time). However, after discussing with the committee it was felt this was an opportunity to attract a good number of visitors and charges for admission should go most of the way towards the £300 fee. A date of 9 March 2010 was set for the talk entitled *Discovering Britain's Lost Railways*. In mid-2009 I prepared a poster for the event and sent it to Mr P A for his information and comment. He replied to say that an assignment in Australia in February 2009 was now being extended in to March so please could we re-arrange the date for his presentation. This was unfortunate but I was able to offer October 2010 as the next available date. I checked again after Mr P A returned from Australia only to hear that he was double booked again. This was beginning to get annoying but worse was to follow. When I started to offer dates in 2011 Mr P A told me that he hoped to have moved home from Dorset to Cornwall by then. Travelling expenses would be more and he would also need overnight accommodation! The committee felt that these additional costs, which had arisen through no fault of the Fraternity, were unreasonable and we decided to drop the idea of a talk by Mr P A.

*to be continued*

## **The Seven Railway Lines (*well 6 attempted and one successful*) of Tetbury**

**by David Mace**

I wanted to build a small model railway based on a GWR Branch line and having looked at many I found Tetbury station was ideal with its strangely different layout to most standard GWR branch terminus stations. I dismissed this strangeness initially as just typical quirkiness of branch line development. However, the layout of the station never changed over its life. It was a typical small GWR through station design and had a quite distinct S curve to its layout which may or may not be explained by this article.

Tetbury prior to the railway arriving was pretty insignificant. It was small and although a market town it was only serving a very small local populous. Its main industry was wool manufacture but being so close to the Stroud Valley it always had strong competition. This industry declined in the 1870s and if you notice in my article Tetbury residents really showed their greatest interest in a Railway around 1863 perhaps trying to prop up the industry. It was, however, the railway that allowed to town to expand but not because of wool but its popular cattle market which grew to a size and popularity that brought some wealth into the town. But if it was so small why did it then have 6 failed attempts at bringing the railway to it?

This sounds like it was Tetbury that the railways were vying to serve but in fact Tetbury was just lucky to be on a suitable through route using the natural topography. The final successful scheme was a terminus but if one of these through route had been successful would Tetbury have had such a prosperous future? Below is a summary of the routes in date order. The last and successful route did look like it was built to serve Tetbury only but it still may have had a twist in its tail as I suggested above.

When I re-read this article it did seem a bit dry so I suggest you have a book of maps or google maps in front of you to cross reference places as it makes the text more interesting if you can track the routes.

### **1845 The Wiltshire and Gloucestershire Junction Railway**

This route proposed connections at Stonehouse (Bristol and Gloucester Railway) and Randwick (GWR), west of Stroud with the 2 lines joining at Dudbridge, then continuing to Nailsworth and along the valley to Avening skirting Tetbury on the southern side. Malmesbury was ignored in favour of a junction either at Thingley or Chippenham. Part of it was constructed by the Midland Railway from Stonehouse to Nailsworth and opened in 1867 but the full route was dropped as the money ran out.

### **1863 The Wiltshire and Gloucestershire Railway**

This proposed a line extending from Nailsworth, which at the time was under construction (see above), but with a steeper gradient along the Avening Valley and through a long tunnel at Longford Mills in order to join the GWR line at Christian Malford. This was soon dropped as the civil engineering proposed was too costly.

### **1863 The Wiltshire and Gloucestershire Railway**

Yes, you did read that right they proposed 2 routes at the about the same time. This route attempted to connect the Midland Railway at Nailsworth with the GWR between Wootton Bassett and Chippenham. It was basically the route above but with spurs and triangles to connect with the GWR. It was a mix of Broad and Standard gauge to allow both companies to run but some sections were only one gauge so both companies could not use the full route. Both the GWR and the Midland Railways disliked the scheme where trains would be encroaching on each other's territories.

By this time Tetbury residents were desperate for a railway and it was at this time the pressure for a railway came from the local area as well as farther afield.

### **1871 South Midlands Railway**

This was a much more adventurous route starting from the GWR at Lydney, crossing the Severn on a new bridge and joining the Midland Railway at Berkeley Road. It then split into seven sub routes, which could all stand on their own, some of which were built including the bridge. However, the route proposed around Tetbury was a repeat of the first scheme from Nailsworth along the Avening Valley running south of Tetbury to Thingley Junction. The other parts of this scheme were seen as more profitable so they were the parts that got built.

### **1889 South Wales and Southampton Railway**

This followed a similar route to the previous proposals but instead of a connection at Thingley Junction it intended connecting with the Marlborough and Andover Railway near Swindon. It was during this proposal that the GWR showed their '*frustrations*' and made clear it would not support any scheme which was not promoted by them, where running rights and connections to the GWR network were involved, so the scheme failed.

### **Further discussions**

The Tetbury residents had become very frustrated and in 1872 Colonel Kingscote and a group of dignitaries met with the GWR to voice their frustrations at the lack of interest and cooperation by the GWR. The discussions were basically to vent frustration but at the same time another route was being discussed, which had been surveyed by the GWR, alongside the Tetbury Road from Kemble. The route, which was proposed as a tramway, was a very easy and straightforward route and to quote the engineer Mr W Owens, '*nature has prepared the route, it is only necessary to put the rails down*'. The GWR were dubious about the costs adding 25% to the estimate and the meeting collapsed with no railway proposed which I think the GWR intended. Note I have not put this under the heading of a route itself as this proposal took part in the two following routes.

### **1882 The Swindon and Cheltenham Extension (MSWJR)**

I must admit to being very interested in this route as it branched off the MSWJR from just South of Cirencester at Siddington. Cirencester is my home town so I came across the disused MSWJR on many occasions in my youth and it became, I suppose, embedded in my mind similar to the S&D for you Somerset folk.

This proposed line took a similar route, along part of it, to that of the GWR surveyed route. It proposed a bridge to get over the Swindon to Gloucester line at Kemble and then a new line to Siddington. Instead of just terminating at Tetbury it went north of Tetbury joining the route previously proposed at Avening and finally connecting the Midland Railway at Nailsworth. Tetbury was then served by a branch off a new junction at Larkhill.

## **The Seven Railway Lines of Tetbury - continued**

At the time the MSWJR did not go beyond Cirencester and this route would allow them to connect with trains to the North making it quite an important route for them. However, the GWR were not happy with the competition this would bring and that the MSWJR had the audacity to use a route previously surveyed by them and apposed it virulently. The GWR were so opposed to it that they even put forward that if the bill for this railway was thrown out they would build the Tetbury Branch from Kemble at a reduced cost! The Bill was passed by The Commons but failed to pass through the House of Lords as they favoured the GWR option and the GWRs bluff was called!

The MSWJR then went on to extend the line from Cirencester to Cheltenham but was always hampered by the GWR at every turn.

### **1891 The Tetbury Branch (GWR)**

The GWR now had to hold to their promise and the delays and dealings in building this railway deserve an article in itself as the GWR just did not want to build it. The line was easy to build and cheap but most of the work was at the station end where a limestone cliff had to be cut back and ground made up. At last Tetbury had a railway to call its own!

### **The story doesn't stop here however**

If you look at the Station plan it is typical of a standard GWR through station not a Terminus. It could be simply to fit in with the land form but then why use a typical through station layout. It forms a lazy S shape around the limestone cliff and curves towards routes suggested above from Nailsworth to Thingley Junction which seems over complicated with additional civil engineering works. Did the GWR look at building in some future planning of extending through Tetbury?

The other interesting item I found is that there is a small embankment about four feet high on the opposite side of the platform two tracks away. The embankment levels out for about the width of a platform or more and then the slope continues up behind this. Its length is approximately the same of the platform opposite. This was man-made and would have taken some cutting to form it so it must have been planned and have been quite costly to form. Did the GWR pre-plan for another platform ready for a through station?

I'll let you mull the above over yourselves and come to your own conclusions.

As a last little teaser, if you recall, the Midland Railway, despite several attempts, did not make it to Tetbury, or did they? Westonbirt Girls Boarding School chartered a train at the beginning and end of school term to transport the girls into and out of Tetbury, which was the nearest station to the school. It was a big event at Tetbury as the station got clogged up with trunks, cases and girls travelling home or coming back to school. The train was chartered off the LMS and came down from Gloucester (later Gloucester Eastgate) and frequently consisted of two or three Stanier designed coaches hauled by an LMS 2MT tank. So the Midland (well LMS) did get to Tetbury in the end!

### **Further interest**

If you want to read more about the Tetbury Branch there is a very good book, which unfortunately is no longer in print but can be bought second hand, entitled 'The Tetbury Branch' by Stephen Randolph and published by Wild Swan Publications.

As I put pen to paper towards the end of June during Covid-19 lockdown, I realised that Somerset's major event would not be happening this year. I refer of course to the Glastonbury Festival. Love it or hate it, it does have a major impact our part of the world for a week or so at this time of year.

Many of us will remember our 2016 Fraternity outing by open top Mendip Mule Motorbus, exploring the route of the former Somerset & Dorset line from Evercreech to Burnham-on-Sea. Early into the journey, our bus took us through Worthy Farm to seek out where the railway ran across what is now a part of the Festival site. We were shown the frame of the pyramid stage as well as an area referred to as 'The Drops'. I will leave it to your imagination as to what this is for, but in the Navy, it would be known as 'The Heads'.

It has never appealed to me to attend the Festival but in the early 2000's I came quite close. With Castle Cary being the nearest railway station to the site, it fell to us at First Great Western Trains to ferry thousands of Festival goers to and from the event. We laid on special workings from Paddington by juggling High Speed Train diagrams, cutting out some of the poorly patronised half hourly Cardiff services, utilising a set which was booked to lay over at Old Oak Common between the morning and evening peaks and releasing a complete set from the maintenance programme. Similar arrangements applied during the Cheltenham Racing Festival in March, albeit with a different sort of clientele.

A virtual guarantee during the five days of the Festival is heavy rain. Every year, once lush green fields transform into a very soggy looking brown mire. Our rolling stock took the brunt of this as we took the 'great unwashed', as we referred to them, back home afterwards. At times, our coaches were completely unfit for further use until they had been decontaminated and heavy cleaned. We did our best to mitigate this by issuing things like overshoes to prevent mud being ground into the carpets and upholstery, and laying runner mats along the centre aisles, but all with limited success.

This particular year, someone came up with a brilliant idea to create some additional capacity. Our Night Riviera sleeper services conveyed four Mark 2 air-conditioned day coaches, as well as the sleeping cars. As the whole formation was laid over at Old Oak Common during the day, it was proposed to use the day coaches together with a number of maintenance spares to make up a scratch rake for a trip to Castle Cary and back. There were always two locomotives at the London end so a top and tail working was possible. Topping and tailing, where the rear loco is conveyed dead at the rear of the formation, is very inefficient in terms of locomotive usage but operationally it works very well. Having departed from the depot, no coupling and uncoupling, running round and subsequent brake testing is required. There is a need to turn the deadman's isolating cock on the rear loco, otherwise we just sit there until the cows come home trying to release the brakes. The only downside is having to drag 100 tons of dead loco around, equivalent to three extra coaches.

On the day before the first such working, I was on duty in Control. Our HQ Locomotive and Rolling Stock Engineer wandered in for a chat about the arrangements and just happened to mention that he was going to ride shotgun on the locos next day. I tended to think of our engineers as being more contract managers rather than people with recent front-line hands on experience. Tongue in cheek, I asked him if he would know what to do if and when it sat down on the main line with around 500 on board and a queue of scheduled services stacking up behind. Although it was getting on for 20 years since I had last worked on locos directly, I liked to think that some aspects of what makes them tick was still up there in my grey matter.

## GLASTONBURY - continued

I always maintain that if something does go wrong, you have to know what 'normal' looks like in order to identify what is or isn't happening.

With a philosophy of 'plan for the worst and hope for the best', I suggested that as the next day was my day off, I was willing to come along for the ride. In my role as a Fleet Engineering Controller, I held a footplate pass and always had a small toolkit plus PPE ready in my locker, should I be called upon to attend to an ailing train. In the worst-case scenario with this working, there would be a complete set of spare parts at the far end of the formation or, if all else failed, we could arrange for the rear loco to be run round onto the front. The actual worst-case scenarios were really a lot worse than anything I could deal with, so they were confined to the 'too difficult box'. Also, my thinking was that opportunities to check the performance and general condition of our locos in service were rare, as they only worked at night and were not often pushed to the limit. Sleeper services by then only loaded to 7 or 8 coaches and ran at no more than 80mph for passenger comfort. Our four class 47's were tired old girls with a limited life expectancy, but they soldiered on night after night without too much grief.

And so, the following afternoon the two of us travelled up to Paddington to be met by hordes of Festival goers in the queueing system behind temporary barriers along the platform. The collection of rucksacks, trolleys, rolled up tents and sleeping bags, babies and toddlers in buggies, sack trucks loaded with 24-packs of cheap lager etc. had to be seen to be believed. Looking at some of the attire, you couldn't help thinking 'I hope she's got a woolly vest in her bag. Night time in a tent out in the countryside can still be quite chilly even in June'.

Eventually, our empty stock dropped into the platform from Old Oak Common and everyone piled on board. Our train loco for the outward journey was 47815, which had been repainted in the original British Railways two tone green, even sporting her original number D1748. She had also been named *Abertawe/Swansea* in recognition of Landore depot, who were responsible for maintaining our locos. That might seem illogical as their diagrammed work never took them over the border into Wales but Landore had spare capacity as well as experience with this type of loco. Light engine movements to and fro were a serious headache due to driver route and traction knowledge issues.

Having introduced ourselves to our pair of drivers, we clambered into the rear cab. On being given the 'right away' we set off down the main line gradually building up speed to around 90mph. That was reasonable with a trailing load of around 400 tons. On a few occasions we were switched across to the down relief line through the 70mph facing crossovers, in order to allow faster services to overtake us. Once the loco was into her stride and thoroughly warmed up, I donned my ear defenders to have a nose around the engine room, noting things like coolant temperature, oil pressure and turbo charger air pressure. It was possible to gauge how each of the twelve cylinders were firing using an engineer's stethoscope. That's a long-handled screwdriver with the blade resting against the cylinder head and the plastic knob in your ear. Another key performance parameter to record was the line speed at which the three stages of traction motor field diversion took place. That is like an electrical version of an automatic gearbox which allows more power to be applied to compensate for traction amps dropping back as the motors generate an increasing reverse voltage the faster they rotate.



## GLASTONBURY - continued

The down service took us through Reading to Swindon, going straight ahead at Wootton Bassett for Chippenham. Beyond there, speed was checked as we approached Thingley Junction, before trundling gently down the single line through Melksham. On approach to Bradford Junction, where this line joins the route from Bathampton to Westbury, we came to a gradual halt. The coach immediately behind the leading loco was the brake vehicle. After languishing there for a few minutes, a head appeared from the guard's van window and scowled in our direction. It was the guard with a thunderous look that would probably have done well in a gurning competition. The conversation went something like this:-

'What are you two doing in there?'

'We're engineers from HQ. We're here to help out if anything goes wrong.'

'Well why aren't we moving?'

'Madam, we look after trains, we don't do signals!' (pointing behind me towards the red light ahead of our train).

Around that time, I had been reading about a 15<sup>th</sup> century Romanian bad boy called Vlad the Impaler so I decided there and then to nickname her Vlad. She disappeared back into her van muttering to herself and within a few minutes we were given the road to proceed towards Westbury, then on to Fairwood Junction to join the West of England main line. From there it was a short final leg down to Castle Cary where we disgorged our hundreds of customers. We quickly walked through the coaches checking for any sleeping beauties and forgotten luggage. The last thing we wanted on pulling away as empty stock was someone pulling on the locked doors because they had left their rucksack up in the luggage rack, or even worse, not having come to a clear understanding with their partner as to which one of them was in charge of the buggy with the baby strapped in. With everything locked and secure, we changed ends and were on our way, crossing over to the up line as a service from the Weymouth area would do.

Our return journey was booked to run straight up the Vale of Pewsey on the Berks and Hants line, following the route of the Kennet and Avon Canal to Reading. From there it was on to Acton and straight into Old Oak Common depot, avoiding Paddington in the middle of the evening peak. Our loco at this end was 47832. Her performance was nothing like as good as the other one, struggling to exceed 80mph with the power handle wide open and with suspension bottoming out on the dips and bumps in the track. A loco that was clearly in need of some TLC but perfectly serviceable for piloting the sleeper stock in and out of Paddington. Rather than face a potentially lengthy wait for an empty stock to get us back from the depot to Paddington, we asked our drivers to pull up briefly and drop us off on the through line at Reading.

It was a welcome day out away from the office, keeping my hand in with our locos and assessing their performance. Around 500 Festival goers were transported in relative comfort down to Castle Cary who might otherwise have had to cram themselves aboard the other already fully loaded services. As for the Festival itself? Each to his own but not really my cup of tea!

## **DEVELOPMENTS AT CASTLE CARY STATION**

**by Andrew Tucker**

It is now over four years since work started on the demolition of the former goods shed at Castle Cary station. The corrugated iron covering to the roof and the sheeting on the south side was removed quickly enough but work then stopped leaving the bare steel frame and the brick gable and office at the station end. I was told that the hold-up was due to bats being found in the building but with the roof effectively removed it seems strange that the structure has been left for so long when more car parking space is obviously needed. Before the Covid-19 lockdown the car park was regularly overflowing on weekdays with some passengers leaving their vehicles on the adjacent A371.

The parking problem has clearly not escaped the notice of GWR as they have engaged Atkins to prepare drawings for a new car park at the east end of the station. Planning Permission for this scheme was granted by South Somerset District Council at the end of last year. It is on land behind the up platform that has previously been used by various businesses including a builder's merchant and a stone mason. The road in to the site is to be upgraded and the steps on the pedestrian route up to the platform, adjacent to the footbridge, improved. There are to be almost two hundred new spaces together with alterations to the arrangement of the present parking adjacent to the station building to provide eighteen spaces specifically for disabled users. Apart from an area to be marked out as a bus stop, the drawings don't show any other changes to the existing car park although there is a suggestion that this may follow at a later stage.

The brick chimney of the former creamery has long been a landmark adjacent to Castle Cary station. Opened in 1910 and extended over the years before and after the First World War the business provided some goods traffic for the railway. However, following changes in the industry, the creamery closed in the mid-twentieth century. The building has been put to a number of uses over subsequent years including tyre remoulding, model-makers studio, antiques restoration and a wine merchant. Having suffered somewhat during these various changes the building is now set to be carefully restored to its original use as a creamery with cheese making and a shop and café.

The creamery site was purchased in 2018 by the Emily Estate who over recent years have transformed the former Hadspen House Estate (7 miles due east of Castle Cary) with a hotel, restaurants and landscape gardens. Known as 'The Newt' the estate reopened in 2019 and visitors from outside the area were encouraged to travel by train with a linking coach service. It is said that the owners of The Newt paid for Castle Cary station to be manned on a full seven-day basis rather than part time. The proposals for the Creamery were granted Planning Permission last November.

### **STOP PRESS!**

Since I drafted the above things have been happening at the station. Demolition of the various modern additions to the Creamery is now in progress. To my dismay the chimney has also been taken down. This was to have been a central feature in the new development and I can only assume that it was found to be unsafe. I very much hope that it will be rebuilt.

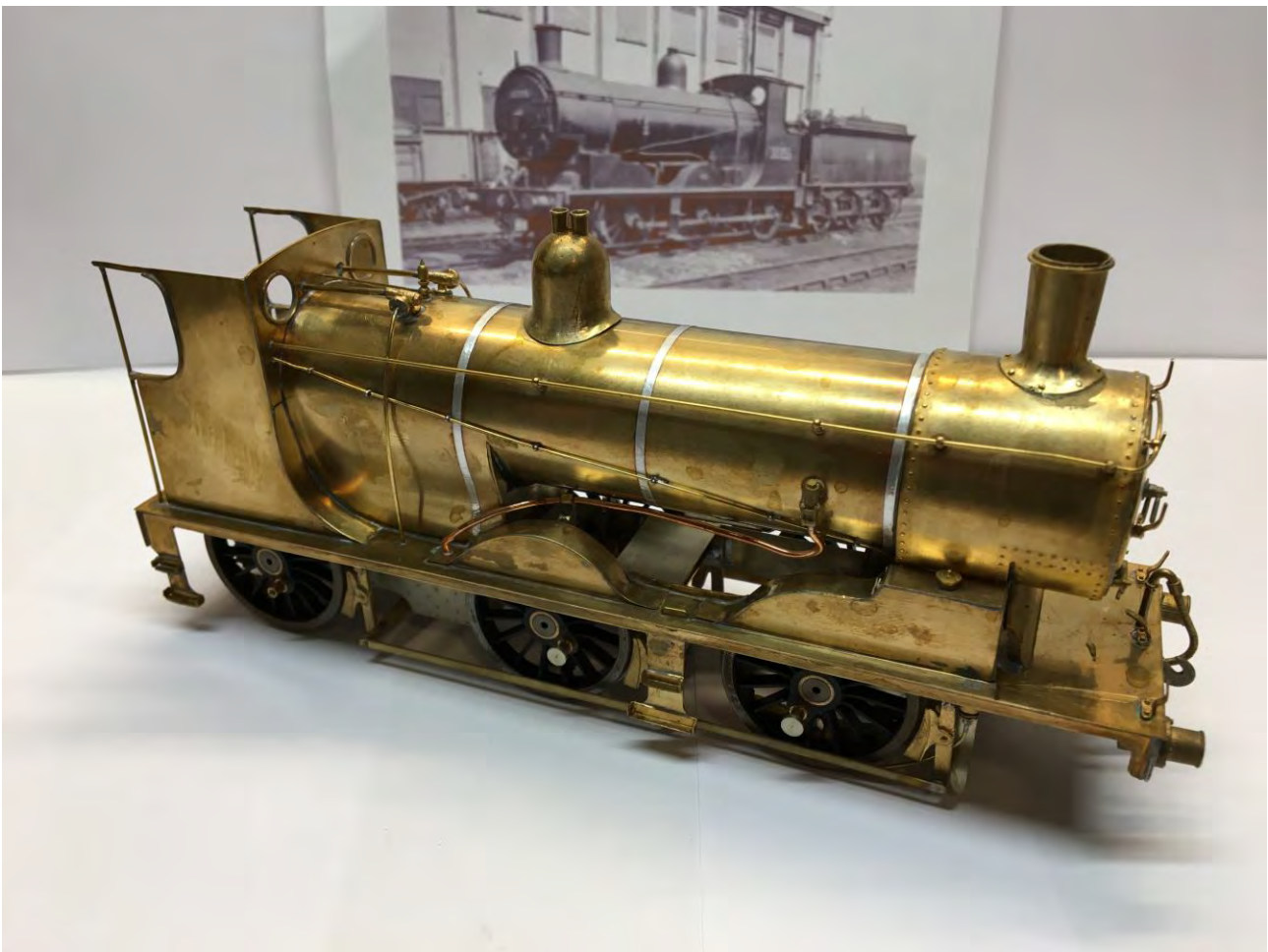
Also, a temporary footbridge has appeared at the west end of the station linking the platforms. It looks to be complete although at the moment (late July) the steps are fenced off to prevent them being used. It is not clear whether this is to do with the work currently in hand or if the existing footbridge is to be taken out of use for repairs or upgrading.

## SR 700 CLASS BLACK MOTOR IN “0” GAUGE

by David Sedgman

Many of you will have viewed my 0 Gauge ‘Nethercreech Junction’ at Kingweston which I have been building since the mid 1990’s. The layout is now largely complete but when I first decided on this venture and undertook some preparatory research I soon realised that many people had stock that they had built but had limited – or no – space to run it, and even more people had collected kits that they were never going to build, even if they lived to be 300! I am fortunate in that I had the space to build a layout and was wise enough to realise that, at the time, I did not have the skills or knowledge to build stock. I therefore decided to construct the layout, with help and guidance of others (in particular the late and talented Bob Alderman) and that the stock would follow – and, over the years, from shows and commissions it has.

With the layout ‘complete’ and my skill and knowledge vastly improved I have now turned my attentions to building stock, both for the layout and my own satisfaction from ‘making things’. Some years ago I built the turntable and some wagons and more recently have built a rake of Sparmac Gresley coaches (often seen on the S&D, particularly on summer trains and the Exmouth to Cleethorpes). My loco building started with a Connoisseur 0-4-0 beginner’s kit, followed by a JM Midland 2P, some Fowler tenders and now the ‘Black Motor’.

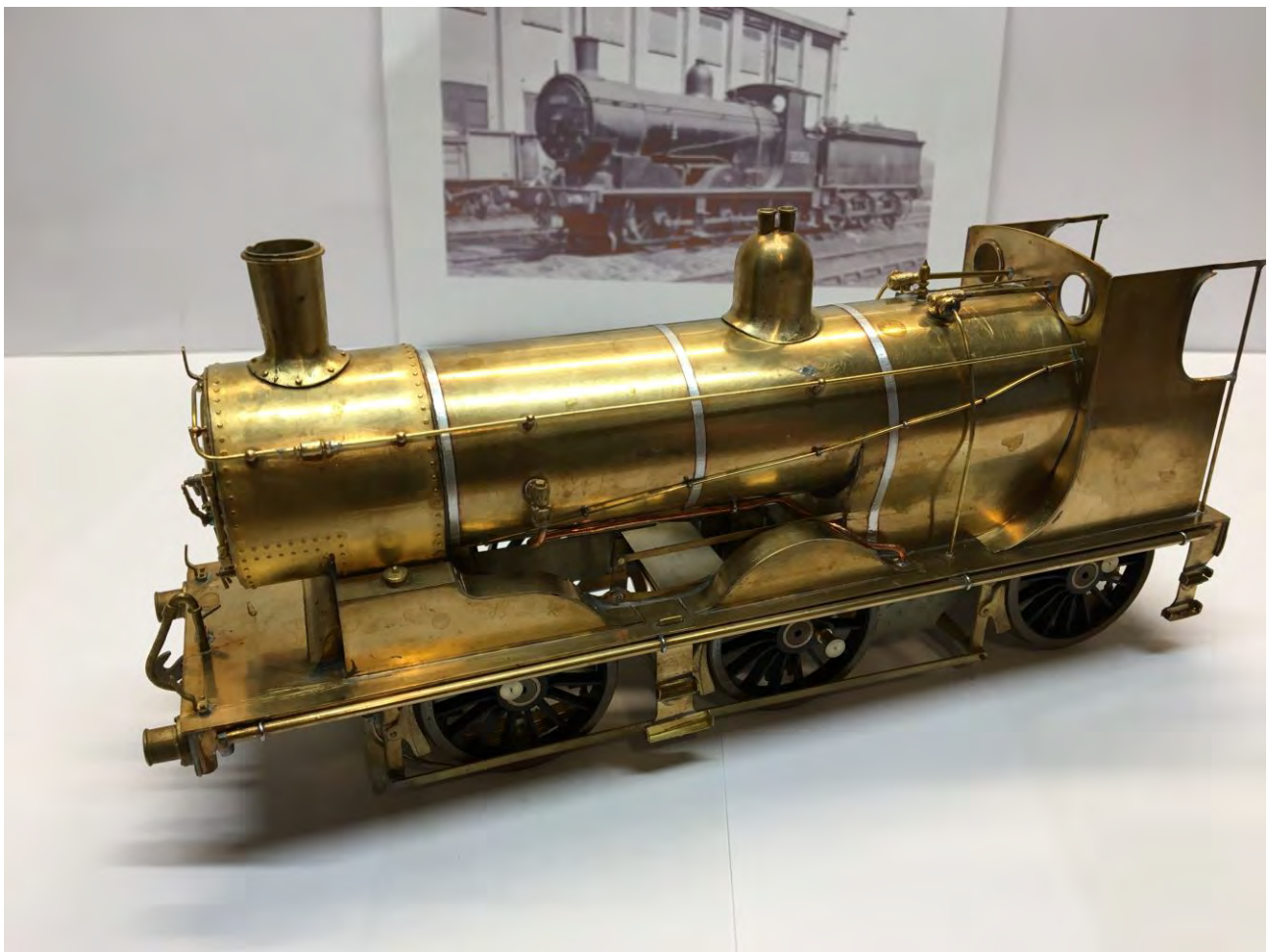


## BLACK MOTOR IN “0” GAUGE - continued

I knew from the outset this would be more of a challenge but this was partly the reason for choosing this kit, my interests lean towards the Southern in BR days, members of the class would have been seen at Templecombe and IF I build another layout it will be the Southern west of Exeter. The kit itself is from the Shedmaster range as now sold by Laurie Griffin but with origins way back in time, the instructions are pretty basic and some scratch building is required.

I won't give a blow by blow account of the construction but I started with the tender (as do many builders) and things progressed steadily until I arrived at the point of forming the curved corners of the tender sides – note 'curved not square'. My inexperience kicked in at this point, there were several false starts and the end result is passable rather than exquisite! Wherever possible I opt for suspension on both tender and loco and use a split axle arrangement on the tender for current collection. In this case there were no markings on the etches for hornguides so it was a DIY job using Slaters components and cast JPL wheels with Slaters axles (expertly split by Hobby Holidays). Much of the brake gear had to be scratch built.

Moving on to the engine, the chassis and body are built as two separate items which hopefully fit together at the final reckoning. I am not very good (but getting better) at getting things square, equal or matching and slowly but surely progress has been made to the point where the body is virtually finished and the chassis awaits the motor and gearbox ordered (but delayed by Covid) from ABC.





## BLACK MOTOR IN “0” GAUGE - continued

Seasoned builders will constantly tell you to ‘refer to photographs’ and this has been so valuable in getting detail identified and positioned correctly. Wherever possible I try to solder from the back of an item and this is where experience starts to count – don’t solder the smokebox door early in the build as the instructions suggest, in fact, leave it as late as possible so that handrail knobs, clacks and the like can be soldered from inside to leave a tidy finish. In this case, don’t solder it at all as it would have to be done from the outside, leaving much solder to be cleaned up, I cheated and used araldite! Rolling the boiler from a flat etch was a first for me, helped by the acquisition of some second-hand rolling bars.

Many of the original fittings have been replaced by Laurie Griffin castings and the laminated coupling rods by cast nickel silver ones. The next task is to ensure that the chassis runs smoothly with the rods in situ prior to the fitting of the motor. Some extra weight has been added to the boiler and it is intended that a sound chip will be fitted (the layout operates on DCC). Some photos are attached which show progress to date in late July. The tender has had a coat of etch primer and I am keen to get some primer on the loco chassis and body prior to painting in a dull unlined black.

A final challenge and something currently lacking on the previously built 2P is the backhead! When I relate that in my junior school days I was placed in a tall waste paper basket at the start of art lessons and taken out at the end (!) you will understand my apprehension in tackling something as detailed as a locomotive backhead! However, a man has to do.....



## **BLACK MOTOR IN “0” GAUGE - continued**

To conclude, I hope to have the loco up and running and finished during the autumn and I have already achieved considerable personal satisfaction from progress to date. I am never going to be Beeson or a Tony Reynolds but if I can build a kit to a reasonable standard, for it to look the part, and have it perform reliably then I will be satisfied and I will have enhanced my experience and ability along the way. To that end my next project will be a Gladiator kit of a Maunsell SR S15!

## **FURTHER DETAILS OF CHARLIE THE LAST SHUNTING HORSE**

**by David Mace**

Following on from my talk ‘*Horses that made the Railways*’ Andrew Ball kindly passed on a copy of part of an article from the April 1967 edition of *Railway World*. I thought it might be of interest to members so I have reproduced it below (taking out general items covered in my talk):

*‘Newmarket’s Charlie, a 24-year-old bay and white carthorse, 17 hands and weighing 16cwt, retired on February 21<sup>st</sup>, (... edited ...) For the past six years Charlie has been stabled at Newmarket Station, spending much of his time hauling horse-boxes containing his racing cousins, but now he is to spend his retirement in the fields of Clare Hall, Ston Easton, Bath, the home of Mr J P Hippisley, a retired railway officer. In his time, Charlie has worked in many parts of the country. His career on British Railways (BR) began at the age of six when BR owned about 8,000 horses; he has been stationed at Camden Town, Birmingham, Bolton, Bristol, Liverpool, Diss, Norfolk, before moving to Newmarket in 1962. Highlight of his career was in 1965, when he took his bow at the Horse of the Year Show at Wembley in the parade of Horse personalities.’*

Note Charlie’s age of 24 years which was a fair old age for a working horse. Perhaps his working life was being extended similar to steam locomotives at the time. He was also described as a carthorse but he was more likely a Clydesdale.

In everything that has been written about Charlie don’t forget Butch. He worked alongside Charlie and could have been the last shunting horse in place of Charlie except for a few days. From pictures I have seen of Newmarket shunting I believe he was a beautiful white version of Charlie but can’t be sure of this as his history was not set out in detail like the ‘*celebrity*’ that Charlie became at the time.

## **FAMOUS QUOTES FROM (RAILWAY) HISTORY**

This one comes from George Stephenson.

Standard gauge was adopted on the Canterbury & Whitstable Railway, a decision attributed to George Stephenson, who commented: “*I tell you the Stockton & Darlington, the Liverpool & Manchester, the Canterbury & Whitstable, and the Leicester & Swannington, must all be four feet eight and a half inches. Make them of the same width; though they may be a long way apart now, depend upon it, they will be joined together some day.*”

## PADDINGTON STATION

by Andrew Tucker

By way of a small 'filler' item I attach a photo taken by my son Simon at Paddington just before 8am on Tuesday 18 March. This was 5 days before the start of the official lockdown but the effect can already be seen. Travelling on the train he found himself to be the only one in that carriage and the refreshment trolley staff said that they had only seen 7 passengers in total!



## 2020 - 2021 PROGRAMME

### 2020

8 September	The Midland & South Western Junction Railway	Steph Gillett
13 October	Organising Special Trains in the 1950s	Hugh Davies
10 November	My Life in Transport	Jonathan Jones-Pratt
19 November*	Visit to the Titfield Thunderbolt Bookshop (to be confirmed)	
8 December	A.G.M. - <i>followed by</i> - Quiz, set by last year's winner, Andrew Ball	

### 2021

12 January	Developments at Midsomer Norton <i>followed by</i> Big Coal	Roy Kethro & Matt Cornborough Robin Harding
9 February	Freightliner	Speaker to be confirmed by the company
9 March	The Railway Navy <i>and</i> The Crimea Railway	Chris & Judy Rouse
13 April	The Railways of Portland 1865 - 1965	Brian Jackson
11 May	To Scotland for Steam – Part 2	Brian Arman

Except those marked \* all meetings are held at Wells Town Hall, 7.00pm onwards for 7.30 start.

## AND FINALLY :

Did you know that St Enoch station in Glasgow was the first public building in Scotland to be illuminated by electricity. Four (later two more were added) arc lamps were erected in 1879 working from dynamos driven by steam. Although the carbons lasted only about eight hours, they displaced no fewer than 464 gas lamps which took about 30 minutes to light.