
OCTOBER 2022 NWMES NEWSLETTER.

First of all, I'm sure all of us were saddened to hear the sad news about our monarch, Queen Elizabeth II. Highly regarded, she will be sadly missed by everyone. Having reached the grand old age of 96 it was inevitable that this would happen sooner than later. We can only hope King Charles 3rd will continue in the same manner as his dear mother.

Following the funeral, I wonder if model engineers will start modelling cannons, gun carriages and other militaria after what we saw on the streets of London. One of the earliest mentions in Model Engineer of who is regarded as the founder member of our society, - Brigadier Richards was an article on one of his models, a Howitzer gun.

OUR VICE CHAIRMAN KEITH.

Having caught the horology bug, Keith was also finding 5-inch gauge locomotives too heavy to handle these days. He's decided to make a bit more room in his workshop by selling three of his locomotives. The Manor, a locomotive we were all familiar with has gone to a main line steam loco driver from Machynlleth, his Lancashire and Yorkshire A class Aspinall has gone to another main line steam loco driver living somewhere close to Preston or the Ribble Valley. The third loco a Don Young Railmotor 3 has been purchased by our chairman Gary. Today the 14th Sept. he was seen circumnavigating our track at a great rate of knots with this fine locomotive. Don Young always said that the Railmotor was the "sportscar" of his designs as it handled so well. Happy steaming Gary.

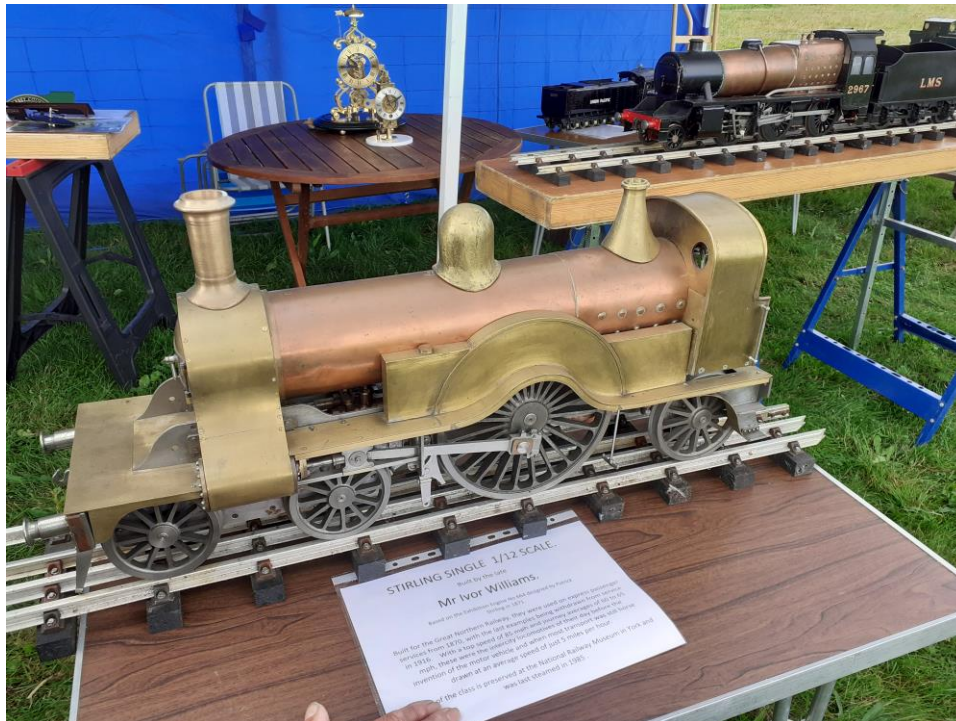


WHO DOES THIS DAVID DAVIES THINK HE REALLY IS? (Read on!!)

OUR TY GOBAITH CHARITY DAY.

Looking at all the photos that I've seen this was an excellent day with all the members that turned up enjoying themselves and socializing together. The quality of models on display was excellent, showing the civic dignitaries and general public what our society is all about. This definitely helped our cause in our application for a longer extension to the lease at West Shore Miniature Railway.

A big thanks must go to Frank (aided by others) for organizing this event. Not just prior to the event but during it. Other members and their wives supplied food in abundance catering for more members than actually turned up. Once again thank you all.



I've chosen a few photos so I can add a few "add ons" to them. This photo shows three models from three different members whom all I looked or still look up to.

The Stirling loco was built by the late Ivor Williams. (An exquisite self-trained model engineer and a former main line engine driver). He always had interesting stories about life on the footplate. Two of them always made me laugh. Both very similar. The fireman losing his firing shovel whilst the locomotive was in motion. One shovel fell onto the track, but the other went into the firebox!! I only wish that all the things he talked about were recorded.

The other model, a 3 ½ inch gauge Princess Marina by Owen Francis. Most members hadn't seen this loco at West Shore before. A lovely model.

As regards Keith's clock, I don't have to say much, do I?



This selection of aero engines was by our good friend John Feeney. My first encounter with John was at Ysgol Gogarth (our previous venue for track and clubhouse.) He was giving us a lecture on model aero engines; I was expecting to see the basic single cylinder glow plug type engines. Nobody expected to see his works of art. The tolerances that John works to are fine to say the least.

I can't comment on the other models, as I wasn't at the track due to family commitments in South Wales.

Last but not least, we managed to collect £600 for this very worthy cause.

Again, a personal thanks to everyone that contributed in making this day such a successful event.

GOING BACK TO THIS DAVID DAVIES BLOKE.

As many of you know I spend many an hour travelling up and down the A470 to South Wales to help out with my grandchildren's babysitting. Just a few miles south of Newtown is a small hamlet called

Llandinam. I keep waving at a gentleman there but he never acknowledges me. My wife can't believe that I still wave at him.



Here he is, David Davies (quoting that the statue was raised by public subscription). I'm still no wiser as to why his statue is located in the middle of nowhere.

Driving through Barry(The town!!) one day, I noticed a statue located in front of a rather grand building now being used as the local council's head office (Initially built as the Headquarters of the Barry Docks and Railway Company). I recognized the person immediately. He was my mate from Llandinam. In actual fact it was an identical statue. Could this be the first buy one get one free deal in the world.





This photo gives a bit of a clue as to who my friend was. From 1855 he was involved in the construction of the Llanidloes and Newtown Railway which eventually opened in 1859.

Nearer home he built the Vale of Clwyd Railway, in actual fact most of the Mid Wales Railways involved David Davies.

The Ocean Coal Company between 1866 and 1884 epitomized extraordinary enterprise under the leadership of David Davies. Park, Maindy, Dare and Eastern collieries were opened in the Rhondda Fawr Valley, and Western, Garw and Lady Windsor in adjacent Glamorgan valleys. Thousands of jobs were created to work the finest seams of coal in the world. New villages, Blaengarw, Cwmparc, Nantymoel, Ton Pentre and Ynysybwl were built.

For two decades the Ocean Coal Company was the coalfield's major coal producer. Due to David Davies serving as the "Arch Promoter" of the Barry Dock & Railway Company. They overcame obstacles to transporting Rhondda coal after 1899. The dock was known as "The Barry", it became Britain's greatest shipper of coal. Looking at various local maps, the railway complex at Barry Docks most certainly was major.

One of his other visions was to transport goods from the North West of England to a deep-water port at Milford Haven, so he started on the Manchester- Milford Railway in 1860 combining various minor railway companies. The time taken to travel across Wales, North to South made his idea rather impractical. I've purchased a book on this railway published by The Oakwood Press. A difficult book to digest due to not knowing the area geographically.

As regards difficult projects, one was traversing the Talerddig Ravine. Today we have one of the steepest gradients of tracks in the country at this location.

The other achievement was crossing the Tregaron Bog in the construction of the railway between Lampeter and Aberystwyth in 1866. It is reputed that he bought up the entire year's production of sheep fleeces in Ceredigion to lay as a foundation for the railway track over the bog. I don't know how much he paid but no doubt he was fleeced.

No wonder he won't acknowledge a commoner like me.

Working in mountainous terrain as in Mid and North Wales makes me think what he could have achieved if he was asked to construct a railway from London to the West such as IKB. From now on I'll look up to him (on his plinths) and salute him every time. I'll also look up to another DAVID DAVIES in our society for his guidance and help. Are they related I wonder? (By the way both statues are of my mate looking at the plans for Barry Docks).

OUR FIRST EVENING LECTURE OF THE WINTER.

Martin gave us a very interesting lecture on the construction of wind turbine towers. These were constructed by a company called CALMAC at Llandegai near Bangor. All the members present were very impressed at the construction technique. What a shame the Welsh Assembly would not support this company. The Scottish Government saw the potential and invited them over the border to Caledonia with open arms. Jim as usual provided our usual tea and biscuits, Diolch yn fawr Jim.

POLLY locomotive.

Shaun's Polly 0 6 0 locomotive has been giving us some head scratching moments recently. He was having problems operating the boiler drain valve. With the boiler full of water, the only way to drain it was to wait until the water cooled down, then remove the valve in its entirety. All drawings I've seen of a boiler drain valve have featured a cone making a seal into a hole. Not this one! It has a square ended screw to fit a square key but in place of a cone at the sealing end, it has some kind of bead manufactured out of PTFE. If you tighten the screw too much this bead expands. At this point if you want to open the valve, you'll find it very difficult, in some cases impossible. Bill Winter was there when this happened. Obviously, he was aware of this design fault on Polly locos. His advice, if you are thinking of purchasing one of these valves, consider one of the other ME suppliers.

Martin took the offending valve home to investigate, and to see if it was possible to improve the design. The answer is yes. The next time he turned up at the track, the drain valve had a cone at the end of the screw.

Another hiccup happens when the loco is in steam. With a full head of steam, once the regulator is opened there is a gushing sound of steam, but nothing happens. Give it a slight push and off it goes. The slightest resistance to its running even with one finger the loco stops. Obviously, steam is passing some important component!

Having had a long discussion between ourselves, the consensus of opinion thought that the loco had been stored over last winter without exercising it causing the cast iron cylinders to rust, thus causing the piston ring to get damaged. How wrong were we!

Shaun had made sure the valve chest was well lubricated for it's over wintering.

Both front cylinder covers were removed, there was no rust evident on the cylinder bores, only a slight scratch longitudinally at the top of one bore. Another old head in the form of Owen Francis had suggested the problem could be in the valve chest with one of the slide valves not seating causing the steam to pass the cylinders.

This is what was found next when we inspected inside the valve chest. (see photo). Having steamed the loco, we had a mixture of emulsified oil and moisture inside. Hopefully when Shaun has degreased the valve chest and checked the slide valves, this little locomotive will be seen circumnavigating our track and sounding like the proverbial Singer Sewing machine.

How many members of our society are aware that we have a connection with Polly Models? John Clarke the person who started this company was a member of our society. He used to advertise that if a lady could assemble his locomotives (His wife Maureen) any one could. I don't know if that would go down well these days. At the time, John only produced 0-4-0 locomotives. A few members of our society approached John with a view of building a club steam loco using his parts. John agreed to this so our members produced the first Polly 0-6-0 tank loco. To be honest it wasn't too popular, as it wasn't a scale model. One of our junior members at the time had mastered this loco, you could say he was its custodian. Peter Ridgeway lives in Penrhyndeudraeth these days, and he's still a member. The last time I spoke to him he still knows the whereabouts of this loco. I think he said it belonged to DERBY MES.(somewhere in the Midlands anyway!)



Thanks to Brian Haseler for this photo.



FFOS Y FRAN, MERTHYR.

Good news for steam enthusiasts, bad news for the local inhabitants living close to Merthyr. The owners have applied for an extension to their excavation activity. I'm not sure of the initial application, I think the extension would be 9 months, but they're hoping a further application would allow them to have three years total, before the whole area is landscaped to its original condition.

MEMBER'S MODELS.

Can I just say a few words about the joy I get going to the track at West Shore especially when someone turns up with a loco that I haven't seen before. I should get my Ian Allan ABC book out and underline the appropriate loco. In our case that's impossible.

Our past Chairman Dennis used the word "nugget" if he approved of any model seen at the ME exhibitions for his report for our Newsletter.

In the past few months, we definitely have seen a few nuggets at West Shore, David's Pannier, Richard's large Eastern Region Tank, Archie's Terrier and now Bill Winter's Narrow gauge BITZA. This loco is to his own design and you've guessed it, from various parts.



A real beauty, it shows what can be done in the home workshop. A credit to you Bill.

THE MIDLANDS ME EXHIBITION.

It's Sunday 16th October, I could have been writing something on the Midland Exhibition, it's a real shame the coach had to be cancelled, due to a lack of interest within our membership. I looked on YouTube this evening and watched one article on this exhibition. Some fine models on display, but not the crowds that used to be. I suppose this would suit a lot of members. It showed RDG's tool stand with no serious queues as in the past. I don't know when this report was videoed. It's worth watching.

CHRISTMAS DINNER.

Another reminder we have our Christmas Dinner at Conwy Golf Club on the 25th November 2022. In the past we've been made very welcome at this venue with lovely food. Details of the menu and costs have been sent out by Frank, and I've reminded everyone by re confirming the original details. It will be a good evening and I'm looking forward to seeing you all.

Hoping I haven't bored you too much.

Regards,

Harold.