

DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER.

As we approach the end of another year, our passenger carrying days have ended but members are still busy maintaining our track, and conducting other tasks at West Shore, Llandudno.

To enhance the station area, Colin and Frank have started constructing some new picnic tables. These are of excellent quality, constructed with the West Shore weather in mind. Hopefully, when the warm weather returns, we will be able to take advantage of these brilliant tables.

Colin and Frank proof loading one of the new picnic tables, both looking reasonably happy with their efforts!!



Frank, and we must not forget his darling wife Barbara, have also been busy organizing our annual Christmas Dinner. Members and friends enjoyed a lovely meal held at Conwy Golf Club. It was so nice to mingle with people that you don't meet too often. Thanks to you both, your work was very much appreciated by everyone.

OUR ANNUAL MINCE PIE EVENING/ EVENING LECTURE.

Gary our Chairman gave a very interesting talk on how his company installed a 400-ton press inside their workshop located in Rhyl. (The 400 ton meant the thrust this machine could produce onto a certain item).

Initial thoughts were to build a plinth outside the factory building, locate the item onto the plinth then construct a building around the press. Initially, it was impossible to dig a hole for the plinth as the water table in the locality was too high. Plan B was to excavate a large hole inside the factory, hours of calculations, loads of steel re-bar, meant the concrete could be poured.

Moving this large press into its final resting place was also a mammoth task having to negotiate many hurdles as expected in any factory. Finally, after connecting the cables, commissioning to cover all eventualities started and completed successfully. It was another chapter in Gary's success story.

We were then shown other machinery in his workshop and how they operated.

The water jet used to cut steel up to 12 inches thick with unbelievable accuracy was very impressive. Gary told us one of the only things it couldn't cut was toughened glass. The only reason for this being the glass would shatter.

We were also shown how multi-function machines were programmed. All very interesting, the only question I've thought of afterwards. Working to such accuracy, on hot sunny days, or as we are now, at the other end of the temperature scale. Is there a need for strict temperature control inside the workshop?

Another part of the mince pie evening is the various food (other than mince pies) donated by various members. Thanks to everyone who contributed to some of the food.

A few members turned up with current projects from their home workshop. We're getting quite used to Keith's masterpieces from the Horology Workshop. Richard Stoddart turned up with a few parts for his five-inch gauge Merchant Navy class loco.

These two images show Richard's inside cylinder assembly for the Merchant Navy. As with most photos, they don't show you the size (and the weight!)



Other parts Richard displayed included parts of the motion etc., all manufactured to the highest standard. A credit to you Richard.(and Keith)

IMLEC 2024

The last time IMLEC was at SOUTHPORT was about 10 years ago, a few of our members attended. We all thoroughly enjoyed ourselves there not just looking at the models but looking at different ideas as regards the track etc.

Can I recommend that we pay another visit there next year.

Mark your calendar Friday- 19th July 2024 through 'til Sunday 21st July 2024.

ER COLLETS.

During our Saturday meeting at a very wet and windy West Shore, Mike Brown made quite an interesting statement. Those of us that have ER collets on our machines can use these to hold square section material. I don't know if this is general knowledge or not. I hadn't heard of this before.

WEST SHORE MINIATURE RAILWAY LEASE.

At the moment our Society are at an advanced state of negotiations with our council regarding a new lease for our land. As with most councils they are desperate to get their hands on our pennies but hopefully there will be a light at the end of the tunnel soon. An official announcement will be made when something positive happens.

PUBLIC RUNNING AT WEST SHORE THIS YEAR.

My good friend Bill Winter keeps feeding me various snippets for the newsletter for which I am extremely grateful. The latest is from a narrow-gauge magazine but describes quite a few days that we have had this year down to a tee. Things can only get better when it comes to mind.

North Wales Model Engineering Society, West Shore, Llandudno, Conwy. (3½" and 5" gauges)

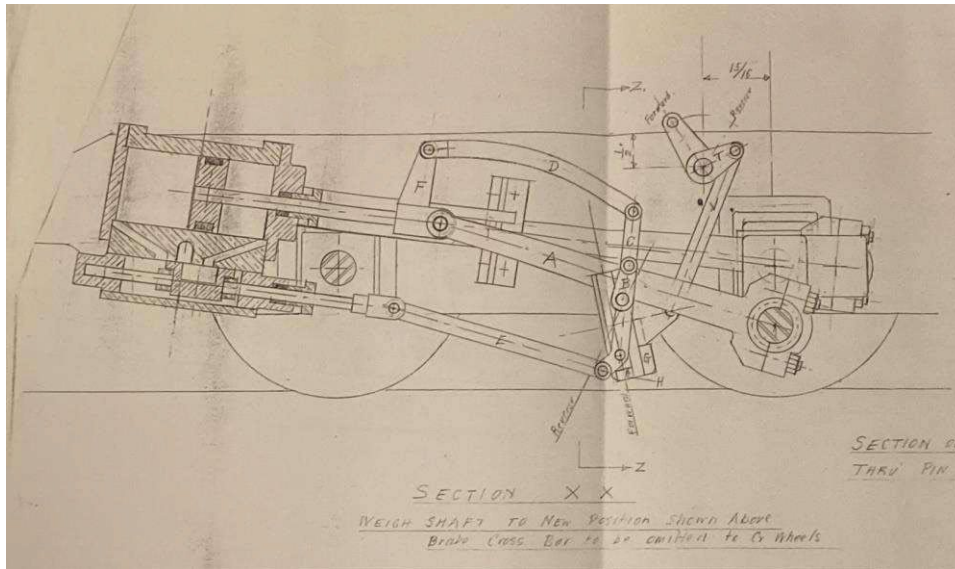
Visit 14/10/23. On a blustery October afternoon, we were the only passengers for the public running session. Indeed, they seemed surprised to see us! We set off behind an eight wheeled battery electric loco, in British Rail Blue and named,



appropriately, *St. Tudno*. The track is located near the seafront on the less frequented West Shore of Llandudno. The site is well equipped and the track is dual gauge, 3½ and 5" gauge, on a sit astride track bed on concrete blocks. The ride is around 1/3 mile in length on a serpentine route. The station area has a signal box and the line is furnished with colour light signals. The storage of stock has an ingenious track formation, utilising the space to best effect. The railway has public running from April until the end of October on Saturday afternoons between 12.00 and 16.00, with fares at £2 per person.

LOCOMOTIVE VALVEGEARS.

Having been scratching my head as regards the valve gear on my LBSC Molly (3F JINTY) for quite a while. The various articles printed recently in Model Engineer on various valve gears have been very interesting. I never knew there were so many. The one on my loco built by one of our founder members in 1964 (Sid Owen) is JMG valve gear. I didn't see any mention of this in the series, I've always thought it could be JOY, MODIFIED GREENLY. The original LBSC design was regarded as rather poor, so quite a few model engineers experimented with alternative designs. My little engine with JMG gear went excellently on the track, but I can't say if it was an improvement on the original design.



The expansion links are straight slides and pivoted at the centre point. I always thought they might be a version of Henry Greenly's design, but to be honest, they could be a variant of Joy's gear. I think I'll have to find a back issue featuring this gear. ME 3205. Does anyone have this issue I could borrow?

I've finally reached what I was intending to start with-CHAS.BROWN's valve gear. I'd never heard of it, but the more I read, the more interesting things became. Who was this Mr. Charles Brown?

Born in Uxbridge, trained at Maudslay's, then went to Winterthur, Switzerland and established the Swiss Locomotive and Machine Works.

Having been quite intrigued by these locomotives that have been going up and down Snowdon for years, especially how the valve gear worked I appreciated this bit of "Swiss Engineering". Was I right (or wrong?) It could be British Engineering!!

As model engineers, does anyone know if there is another design other than Ken Swan's KOPPEL of a rack loco. Do we have any members building one of these locos so we could ascertain the type of valve gear on the KOPPEL loco.

I know Don Young designed SWISS MOLLY, but this was not a rack loco even though it roughly resembled the Snowdon locos.

Even though I'd heard of Maudsley's as a company, I had no idea what they manufactured.

Their first commission was to produce wooden rigging blocks for sailing ships.

They invented the first Bench Micrometer capable of measuring up to a tenth of a thou. 0.0001". (This was called The Lord Chancellor, as it was used to settle any questions regarding accuracy of workmanship)

They also produced marine steam engines along with lathes and other machine tools.

FIRE QUEEN.

The construction series on Fire Queen, a 5-inch gauge Padarn Railway locomotive has come to an end in Model Engineer. As far as I'm aware the tender is the only article left. By now this might have been printed as well.

Not a straightforward build, I can safely say it's a model for the more experienced model engineer. LUKER, the gentleman who produced this article along with building the model must have been influenced by Eric Lander's in-depth investigations into all aspects of this loco whilst working as a volunteer at Penrhyn Castle. For those who don't know Eric, he was a member for many years until he decided to join Mold MES during our transition from Ysgol Gogarth to West Shore, Llandudno. I'm so glad he has rejoined our society, so he's back where he belongs.

I'm not too sure if Eric started constructing a model of Fire Queen, but I'd like to hear some of his personal comments on this model. When will we see the first photo of a completed model taken outside the Fire Queen shed at Gilfach Ddu, Llanberis?

AND FINALLY!!



Being a bit of a petrol head, I've always admired the Coca Cola Xmas advert featuring the American articulated wagon.

During my visit to Bergen last week, I saw the actual wagon on one of its promotional visits. The photo shows my nine-year-old twin grandchildren along with my wife telling Santa what they wanted for Xmas. The tractor unit was an American Peterbilt, the whole wagon was immaculate, registered in Norway, so I don't know if they have more than one of these fine lorries located in other countries.

After seeing Santa last weekend, I've learnt one thing about myself. I do believe in Father Xmas.

EVENING LECTURES.

Please note our next lecture will be at Craig y Don Leisure Centre on

9th JANUARY 2024. (the second Tuesday in January).

I have now run out of steam so on behalf of our hard-working committee and myself can I wish you and your families the Merriest of Christmas's, and the Happiest of New Years.

Best Regards,

Harold.