

Issue No. 831

March 2021

# The News Sheet

North London Society  
of Model Engineers



March 2021

You can see this News Sheet in colour by visiting our web site  
at [www.nlsme.co.uk](http://www.nlsme.co.uk)

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## Front cover photo

The snowdrops continue to be the star of the show at the site.

This picture was taken by Martin                      on 6<sup>th</sup> February whilst undertaking a site security check.

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With little or no club activity at present your editor is especially grateful to all those who have contributed to this edition. My sincere thanks to all. The contributions received each month are much appreciated by all the members of NLSME. This News Sheet would not be possible without your help.

If you have any photographs taken recently like these captured during recent site security inspection by Nigel on a cold icy day or from the past showing club activities, people or models please send them to your editor.



For the first time since taking on the editorship I have run out of articles for future editions. So, to avoid the April edition being a slim volume please help.



What have you been building in the workshop?

Articles long or short on any subject which would be of interest to club members will be gratefully received for inclusion in future editions.

If you don't want to put pen to paper but have a suggestion for a topic which would be of interest let the editor know and we will do the rest.

**Remember, your news sheet can only be as good as the contributions received from members.**

**IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING NLSME ACTIVITIES  
RELATING TO CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) PANDEMIC**

This news sheet, being a monthly issue, can never provide members with up-to-date decisions on how the pandemic impacts on our club activities. It is therefore important that members always follow the latest government advice.

**PLEASE NOTE**

**The following restrictions currently apply to our activities**

**Head Quarters**

All meetings at HQ are cancelled until further notice. The building is currently closed to all activities.

This will be reviewed if and when the Government make any further announcements which amends their current advice and restrictions.

Members should assume HQ will remain closed until you are informed by NLSME Council of any change.

**Tyttenhanger**

The site has been closed due to the current Government restrictions.

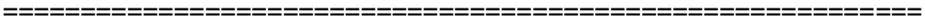
This will be reviewed if and when the Government make any further announcements which amends their current advice and restrictions.

Members should assume the site will remain closed until you are informed by NLSME Council of any change.

On reopening to members, the Tyttenhanger Site rules Rev 2 published in the November News Sheet will be revised and re-issued as necessary to comply with new regulations effective from December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**Fetes and Fairs**

All future events should be assumed to be cancelled until you are informed by NLSME Council of any change.





## Chairman's Comments

Les

At time of writing (23<sup>rd</sup> Feb) the UK Government have just announced a four-stage plan for release from lockdown.

Given that our editor has held publication to enable a "stop press" comment it seems, after quick review, the impact on us of each of those legally binding stages is as follows: -

Stage 1, from March 9<sup>th</sup>. No change, HQ and Tyttenhanger remain closed to members, the requirement to stay at home remains in place.

Whilst UK Gov will permit two persons to meet outdoors, we have no effective means of managing this, so Tyttenhanger remains closed.

Stage 2, from March 29<sup>th</sup>. HQ remains closed. Tyttenhanger opens for members only use (including immediate household and bubbles) but subject to rule of six. No gatherings at all permitted inside buildings.

This is same situation we operated under last summer so all should be well versed in it by now.

Stage 3, from May 17<sup>th</sup>. HQ opens but subject to rule of six. Tyttenhanger open to members with maximum of 30 in each gathering, access now allowed inside buildings subject to rule of six.

No external parties or club visits allowed.

Stage 4, from June 21<sup>st</sup>. HQ and Tyttenhanger open for normal use. However public access and running would be subject to membership agreement and preparedness to undertake stewarding in consideration of Covid situation at the time.

My personal opinion at present is that we should not allow public on site before Autumn and quite possibly not at all during 2021.

I trust you all understand and are aware that UK Government will be reviewing progress toward each of its four declared stages.

As a consequence, **THESE TIMSCALES MAY SLIP DEPENDING ON THE R-rate.**

Also please note that NLSME Council have yet to review the four-stage impact on us, any changes to the above plan will be advised to the club membership.

On other matters: -

Your council held the February meeting courtesy of Zoom. We avoided the shenanigans widely reported for a certain parish council and got through the agenda with all present, not a bad result! Whilst, in my opinion, zoom falls way short of meetings in person, it is better than the Covid alternative - no meeting.

One item discussed was the forthcoming AGM. Since last years was cancelled, we are keen not to miss this year. Council considers alternatives to be, delaying the AGM, moving to a Zoom meeting or maybe a combination of both. We are mindful that not all members may be able or willing to participate in Zoom and there will in any case inevitably be teething problems, not least of which is how to manage voting. But as the alternative is no AGM this year, it's worth considering. Feel free to let us know your thoughts. The arrangements will then be advised in the April news sheet.

In this issue you will find the call for Council nominations. As Covid impacts our customary procedure, this year, by exception, proposers and seconders need not sign the applicant's statement but instead mail their support to the club secretary Malcolm who's e-mail address can be found on the back page of this news sheet. The call for nominations including this requirement is elsewhere in this issue and must be submitted by 7pm on 15<sup>th</sup> March.

We are intending hosting a general meeting on Zoom during April. Owen has kindly offered to present photographs of interest. Unfortunately, the first Friday of the month is, this year, Good Friday. We are therefore planning on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> April – which for many years was the loco section meeting slot. More information will be in the April news sheet.

In the meantime, I trust you are all making the best of the current situation, I for one am eager to get back into normal club activities and mixing with you all at HQ and Tyttenhanger. The home workshop is a great refuge but only partially compensates for the loss of camaraderie being a member the NLSME bestows.

See you at track or HQ, soon, I hope.

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## Treasurer's Report

By Mike

This past year has been a horrendous one for all of us in our Society, the country and the rest of the world. We have all endured three lockdowns and in between them very restricted access to our facilities. Hopefully, 2021 will see an improvement and we will be able to get some time to move around a bit more.



Unfortunately, whilst we have been locked down the same cannot be said for our outgoing expenses. The News Sheet has been the link to all members, thanks to the efforts of our Editor, Keith , but still comes at a cost, printing and postage. We are fortunate that the printers also do the mailing using their

commercial franking machine, which makes a considerable saving on the postage, about 20%.

Other regulatory inspections still have to be done and paid for. For example, all the Fire Extinguishers at both sites have to be certified or replaced as required each year, this is arranged for the 1st March. Another big inspection that has just been completed is of the electrical installation at HQ, this will require a thorough improvement to bring it all into line with current IEE Wiring regulations 17th edition.

Coincidentally with this inspection the electrical inspector was 'dripped' upon whilst in the OO room. It revealed that the flat roof above had developed leaks in a couple of places and water had been dripping onto the railway over quite a large area and carpets. Emergency steps were taken, thanks to Mick and Jonathan and Geoff immediately putting in an appearance, by putting surplus roofing sheets over the affected area. We are now looking into cost estimates for remedial work to cure the problem.

Various other projects at Colney Heath are also in abeyance, although some additional materials were brought onto site during the time when we were allowed to do anything. When we are released from the 3rd lockdown those jobs can resume as can progressing the grey water project and the construction of the washroom building at the steaming bay.

With no income coming into the Society, except for subscriptions and donations, I cannot offer the prospect of any reduction in the annual subscription rates for the forthcoming year. Fortunately, we have sufficient reserves to keep us going for the present for the existing agreed projects, our regular expenditures and to cope with emergencies.

Ordinarily I would propose to the March general meeting, possible changes in the annual subscriptions for members approval. Under the present circumstances Council do not consider a change in rates is appropriate and in the absence of a March meeting this year, I'm sure that members will be happy to agree to the proposal that subscription rates remain as they are.

As usual the yellow Subscription Renewal form will be sent out with the April News Sheet and I would appreciate a rapid response from you all. Remember, that in addition to paying by cheque or cash, I will be quite happy to receive your subscriptions by BACS transfer in one payment to our bank account, or by a Standing Order, quarterly or in monthly instalments. The renewal form will give you all the details you will need to make your decision on making payments.

**Mike**

## AGM: Call for NLSME Council Nominations 2021

Nominations are invited from members of the Society for the elected positions on the Society's Council to be elected at the forth coming AGM on the 7th May 2021. However due to the Covid-19 restrictions the Council has changed the process in line with current lock down restrictions.

The elected positions are Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, and five Committee members.

Nominations are to be submitted by e-mail by 7.00pm 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021 to the Secretary, whose e-mail address is listed on the News Sheet back page. Nominations after this date will not be considered.

Submitted e-mail nominations should include the Nominee's name and supporting e-mails from the proposer and the seconder, and the position for which election is sought.

In the past nominations from all candidates required a brief statement describing the Nominees interests, reasons for standing and vision for the future of the Society this will be only necessary for any candidate who has not served on the 2020-2021 Council and wishes to stand for the 2021-2022 Council.

Candidates' nominations and statements will be circulated to all members in the April News Sheet

**Nomination deadline: received by the Secretary by 7.00pm 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

**The NLSME Council**

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## Forthcoming General Meetings

Unfortunately, general Meetings at our Legion Way Headquarters in North Finchley remain cancelled until further notice.

Any questions please ring, Ian

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## Bookworm Writes

Well after my New Year adventure it's good to be home. You find me though this month a little disconcerted and this is for two reasons.

First of all, as I was finding my way back up from the desktop to the Model Engineer bookshelf, I took a shortcut through the lower shelf where the big books are kept. Whilst making a mental note of one or two titles that I thought might be of interest in the future, my eye was caught by what I thought was the title, Fifty Sheds of Grey or Fifty Grey Sheds something like that. The dust jacket said something about it being a 'steamy' read, so 'great' I naturally thought I'll be telling you this month about loco sheds of the nation, and in I went!

Two embarrassing hours later I left the pages.....no I don't think I could tell you about this volume. I can definitely inform you though that it is NOT about loco sheds! It will be enough to say I don't think I'll be able to read the word lubrication in future without feeling a little uneasy.

The second reason for feeling a bit unsettled came about after I arrived back on my shelf. Looking to find something to re-orientate me I made straight for the nearest ME magazine, 1941 as it happens and I found a section called "Inventions.....Successful and otherwise". Very interesting as it mentioned a loco wheel sanding device (very good by the way) and a novel pipe connector that allowed two cut pipe ends –water etc- to be pushed together without any other fixing, using just the water pressure between the pipe ends to push a rubber seal against each pipe and making the joint effective – don't plumbers use a devise like this today? BUT WHOA! The last item was how to make a Hand-grenade (well not actually how to, more a detailed drawing), but in the ME!!!! I know the war was happening at this time but a Hand- grenade!

Source: ME 1941 Aug14 p136

Finding all this a bit surreal I toddled off to volume 100 and settled down to a light bite. Here at last I thought my mind would no longer be in turmoil....."Motorising a 6-in. Lathe" the article was headed. "*After some thought, an Austin 7 (car gearbox) unit was picked out*". "*A reverse gear of considerably lower ratio is also available and proves surprisingly useful*" the author said, complete with sketch of same and showing the gear lever still in situ. HEEEEELP! I cried.....I am going to lie down somewhere.

Source: ME 1949 Feb17 p193

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## Work in Progress from club members workshops.

With the current restrictions in place, we thought it a good idea to find out what project's members are working on with all this enforced spare time. So, we asked and several have responded.

If you have a project or just a picture or two of your latest projects please send them to the editor.

### Dust to Dust

By George

Living in a Georgian house built in 1819 with a stair case 4 floors tall there is a lot to do to get it looking good. Hence the title of this item because there is an awful lot of filling and sanding to all surfaces both walls and wood as the house moves in different weather conditions and small cracks appear everywhere but that's another story.

All this filler needs rubbing down and I have several types of electric sanders all creating mountains of white dust that enters every room in the house even with all the doors closed.

As I have a two Tub or wet and dry vacuum cleaner, I decided to use this to collect the dust. This works well until the paper bag or cylinder filter becomes blocked with the very fine dust this then makes the cleaner run under excess load that then instead of going into the cleaner blows all around the sander. Also, the hose is not long enough to allow working on stairs and I had 8 staircases to work?

I had seen on YouTube some time ago a Cyclone system and constructed one using a plastic dustbin from a cheap hardware store and a plastic cyclone from online Ebay. (Photo 1)

This worked well until the input hose blocked or there was a large amount to collect and the dust bin would collapse caused by the vacuum with a disturbing crunching noise, completely useless in the long term.



Now with my wife on my case and all this dust flying around I decided to put serious thought into correcting the cyclones deficiencies.

First things first, find a cyclone that had a good flange plate and again I found this on everyone's favourite web site Ebay. (Photo 2) This arrived and I then set about searching all sites for a small barrel shaped receiver with a flat top lid.

I found such a plastic barrel 600mm high and 300mm in diameter with a metal band retaining clip and it was blue, that matched my eyes.

This was on the South American river site (get it) so this only left me with finding a longer hose 38mm dia to allow working away from the cyclone plus vacuum cleaner.

I found a 5metre hose from a Mr. Henry vacuum cleaner and ordered this from the same site.



Now with the 3 components I started to assemble the revised cyclone: Drill a 67mm hole into the centre of the lid and 6 x 5 mm holes for the fixing roofing screws and nuts for attaching the cyclone to lid.

Then take the ends of the 5-metre hose and luckily the screw fitting boss on the hose fitted exactly into the cyclone what a result! That was not planed.

Attach a cleaner hose to the cyclone then the 5-metre hose and you are in business. (Photo 3)

I have used this for over 2 weeks now on all types of waste or loss of

suction and 98% of the stuff goes into the barrel and not the bag or Tub of the vacuum cleaner.

Now the bags that go into these cleaners cost around £2.00 each and the cylinder filters around £10 each so if you clog these with fine dust, they become useless within minutes.

So now if you are doing woodworking, metal milling/drilling or turning or decorating this cyclone will fill your needs and, in the metalworking mode, using cutting oils no need to worry about your paper bag becoming soggy all the swarf goes into the plastic barrel.

Now I would judge that most members have one of these work cleaners so do think about having ago and as Mr Dyson states about cyclones “enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century”.

Costs: Cyclone around   £12.00  
Plastic Barrel       £15.00  
5mtr cleaner hose   £12.00

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## Update; - new raised track passenger carriages

By Les



Six of the bogies now painted and assembly as most finished. There are another two to strip, paint and assemble. They can then be assembled along with the braking systems on to carriage frames.

Great Northern Railway 1920's advertising poster.

**G · N · R**

SCOTLAND YORKSHIRE LONDON

**FOR THE BUSINESS MAN**

**SPEED, COMFORT, CONVENIENCE.**

A booklet containing details of Express Services between London (Kings Cross) and the Chief Commercial Centres, can be obtained from any Great Northern Railway Office

ARTWORK BY H. H. HARRIS



## G.L.R. News March 2021

By Peter

Hi gang and fellow members.

Ain't it been cold!! Not a lot going on up the track so here's what I have got up to last month. It has been so cold I have had to put an extra log on the stove to drive the time machine, still once down the shed I did not venture out too often and as the "super seven rebuild" project I started last month has now nearly reached completion.

I cautiously made my first bit of swarf just to prove it still worked. Taking a fairly heavy cut on a piece of bright steel using a round nose tool set at centre height removing about twenty thou on auto cut, a nice curl of swarf started to dance off the sacrificial metal. Three passes later I thought I've cracked it off here when suddenly the lathe stopped dead. That's handy I thought (b^!#\*\*\*) and on inspection I found the spindle had seized in the bearings.



The journals were not even warm so I guessed I must have tightened or adjusted the shaft thrust bearings up too much.

The thrust bearings are adjusted by means of a very fine threaded pair of castellated nuts and are crucial to the setup. Not having a maintenance manual, I set them where I thought was about right. Obviously, they were just a tad too tight so I backed them off around five degrees give or take and gave the back of the mandrel a sharp tap with a soft mallet. This had the desired effect and freed the chuck (big sigh of relief). I checked the oil level and off we went again no damage done.



The ID numbers on the bed of the lathe indicate that my machine was conceived between 1955 and 1959. I have owned it for around thirty-five years approximately half its life and have had good service from it throughout! Being as I was born around the same year maybe I need a tap on the back of the mandrel to free me off any offers? The lathe was taken apart to the last nut and bolt. Oil ways were cleared, drive motor stripped apart, points cleaned, windings blown out, new drive belts, broken oil nipples removed. The old paint was stripped off and the whole thing re-sprayed using a high build primer and top coated with a 2k finish before re-assembly and final adjustments.

On re-assembly the saddle, cross and compound gib strips were taken up and now feel as tight and free running as a new machine. The only job I could not



repair was the belt guard that had a crack to one corner I did try to MiG weld the aluminium casting but it really needs to be TiG welded alas I don't have a TiG welder?

All in all, it has been a productive and worthwhile month born out of being stuck at home.



Hopefully the lathe will do me for another thirty-five years!!

The pictures look a whole lot better when viewed online. Stay safe see you next month.

As ever in the muck

## What was going on in February 2000?

Taking my inspiration from bookworm I decided to have a look back at some earlier editions of the news sheet to see what was going on in the club 20 or so years ago. Looking through the news sheet for February 2000 the answer is clear, there was a lot of activity. The 'Work in Progress' meeting gives an indication of only some of what must have been going on in members workshops at that time.

**Jim** had in the previous 12 months completed the chassis and wheels for a 5"g Butch. The design had no provision for dropping the grate; Jim hoped to make that possible. I wonder how it went?

**Ron** was making a freelance 0-6-0 which he had decided to call Bitsy as its design was taken from many other models. It was at the chassis and wheels stage after only two months. The only castings used up to that point were for the wheels and eccentric straps. Knowing Ron, the Loco was probably completed by the June of that year.

**Marcel** was making a warrior twin cylinder double acting steam engine to MAP design.

The dog clutch for the Fowler 2" scale ploughing engine was proving to be a problem for **Maurice**. He had sought suggestions of how to machine the dog, which was a cube of metal against a shoulder. The solution was a little complicated to describe but the next operation was to be cutting a thread on the shaft of the component. With the risk of a mistake the screw cutting was to be practised on wood first.

**David** was building a GWR 1400xx from a kit by Winson. David described the many modifications he was making to the kit as assembly progressed.

A superb tender in 5" gauge for **David** Britannia was on show. The coal plate was fitted after a cardboard one was tried first to finalise the complex shape.

**Frank** was building a 5"g Jubilee from a Winson's kit. They were intended to be just fitted together almost on the kitchen table which would prove to be far from the case in the months that followed.

**Mike** highly polished items on the table were for a Great Westernised Simplex. Mike explained how he had made various components.

**David** described the making of the crossheads for his 5"g Chubb, which he described as a four-wheel version of the Butch design.

**Derek** was in the process of constructing the bogies for a class 23 Baby Deltic. Only ten in full size were made as they were not very successful. Derek explained that a fibreglass body from 'Compass House' was planned to complete the model.



## Narrow Gauge Garden Railway March 2021

By John

Greetings narrow gauge fans, I hope your keeping well and despite the recent “Beast from the east” version two you are enjoying the lengthening of daylight which is bringing the promise of spring and warmer days to come. Hopefully we will at last have the chance to get back to what we like doing best, running trains, sailing boats, racing our slot cars etc! Of course, this is all dependent on “you know what” but there is definitely a light at the end of the tunnel!

So, as there has been no activity at Colney Heath to report I thought I might bring you one of my occasional brief looks at an actual railway. This time the Ffestiniog railway where I had a magical visit some years ago.



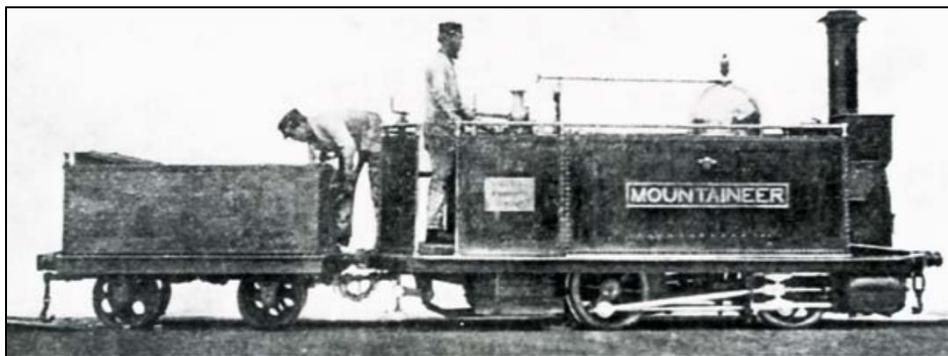
The Ffestiniog railway as I'm sure your aware is located in north Wales in fact most of it is actually within the Snowdonia national park so as you can guess the scenery it runs through is spectacular. Construction of the line started in 1833 in fact the “Ffestiniog railway company” (note that the official company name only has one F in it) is the oldest surviving railway company in the world. And three years later the railway opened in 1836. The line is 13½ miles long running from the harbour at Porthmadog to the slate mining town of Blaenau Ffestiniog. It was built to the 1ft 11½” gauge and is single track throughout with 4 passing places. It was built initially to convey slate quarried at Blaenau to the port at Porthmadog where it was loaded onto ships where it was exported around the world. The line

was engineered such that it has a gradient of around 1 in 80 so that wagons could run down by gravity a practice which is still performed to this day for demonstration purposes. To get the wagons back up a horse which enjoyed the trip down in a “dandy” wagon which then had the onerous task of pulling them back up. In the early days there were 6 trains each way downhill journey time was 1½ hours. Uphill it took 6 hours! Obviously up and down trains used one of the four passing places along the line.



*Double Fairlie;- David Lloyd George at Blaenau Ffestiniog*

Although of course we now know it as a tourist line there is evidence that as early as 1850 tourist passenger trains were being run apparently without the knowledge of the Board of Trade. No doubt the downhill trip was a very early “white knuckle ride”! It was during the late 1850's that it became obvious that to keep up with demand steam locomotives had to be introduced.



*The original Mountaineer 0-4-0ST+T built 1863 scrapped 1879*

At that point narrow gauge locos had been built but very few to such a small gauge. And so, in 1863 “mountaineer” followed a few days later by “The Princess” both built by George England & Co started work on the line.

Despite the introduction of steam engines down trains travelling from the quarries at Blaenau Ffestiniog to Porthmadog were still worked by gravity alone, in fact slate only trains were still worked by gravity up to when the line closed in 1939.

The Ffestiniog was the first narrow gauge railway in the UK to carry passengers as depicted in this photograph taken in about 1900.

It's interesting to note if not downright scary to consider that some of these gravity slate trains could consist of over 80 wagons and these required 3 brakemen sitting on a wagon hauling on the brake handle to keep the speed down however speeds of over 40 mph were not uncommon!



The locomotives that were built for the Ffestiniog may be a good subject for a follow up article as they included the decidedly odd double ended Fairlie articulated locomotives so they can wait for a future newsletter.

From the 1920's demand started to drop off and the line started to fall into decline, passenger services were closed in 1939 and eventually all traffic ceased in 1946. Of course, the line could not be allowed to just fade away and from 1949 various groups were formed to save it but it was in 1951 that the well-known railway enthusiast Alan Pegler stepped in, paid off some outstanding debts left on the railway company so that restoration could begin by a band of dedicated volunteer workers. The work involved was not helped by reservoirs being built on part of the upper part of the line which involved new work and deviations. However, it was to be many years before the full length of the line could reopen. The first passenger train left Porthmadog for Boston lodge a comparatively short distance in 1955 and after a very long story of construction and deviations including the construction of the famous Dduallt spiral which is unique in the UK the railway eventually reached its target of Blaenau Ffestiniog alongside the British rail station in 1982, 150 years after the Royal assent to the original line being built.

I hope you have enjoyed this very brief look at a fascinating railway which I can thoroughly recommend a visit too. And that is without mentioning the tortuous

relationship it had with the Welsh Highland Railway, another narrow-gauge railway which also terminates at Porthmadog but that's another story completely! Finally continue to keep safe and let's hope we can all meet up again soon. Happy modelling/engineering everyone.

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## A point work puzzle.

By Keith



I thought I had seen just about everything. This picture was sent to me by an old colleague with the question, can you work out what it is? The answer can be found on page 26.

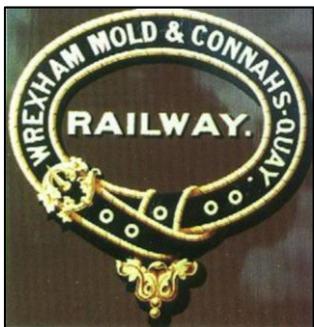
## A second railway on the Wirral.

By Ian

When in this journal I finished the account of the GWR Railway from Paddington to Birkenhead in the last issue; I left a Post Script regarding a second railway in the Wirral, it read:

*"When I was perusing the 1948 maps of British Railways, I was surprised to see an LNER line from Wrexham to Birkenhead! The line called at Shotton, with a spur to Chester, and Bidston Dock. I wonder about its history and whether any reader with more knowledge of railways in that area than me can explain. Why is there is a duplication of the route that GWR had bitterly fought over for years? Was it the work of Watkin and the GCR?"*

Much to my surprise an answer came from someone who is not a member of the society as follows: - *"The Shotton Line would have been for John Summers' Steelworks. That line ran along the end of my parents' garden. In the 50's, and we used to sit on the wall to wave to the trains going past (and climb down onto the line!). It was a short cut to the 'slipway,' at the sailing club end of West Kirby".*



Our member Geoff Burton replied: -

*"The LNER line at Wrexham was the old Wrexham Mold and Connah's Quay Railway, bought by the Great Central in about 1906. It became the LNER in 1923 The shed immediately north of Wrexham Exchange station "Rosedieu" was the GCR shed"*

And much to my surprise, our member Peter Gooch informed me that at an earlier stage of his life he actually lived at Rock Ferry, Birkenhead. That was where 'my' training ship *HMS Conway* was anchored before it 'sailed' to North Wales to escape the Nazi

bombing of Liverpool during WWII.

One of Peter's interests is the Cheshire Lines Committee (CLC) which has had an extremely complicated history both economically and politically. He has invested in a number of books about the area; a snippet of his extensive summery is as follows: -

*"In 1942 a new junction was put in at Mickle Trafford at Government cost connecting the CLC with the GWR LMS joint line, the object being to make greater use than previously obtained of the route via Bidston (LNER) and so relieve the other routes into Birkenhead.*

His book further tells us that the line to Wrexham served the North Wales coalfields and Flintshire industries. In reality we know that its main user was John

Summers at Shotton Steelworks. It is also likely that coal and ore were transported to Birkenhead.

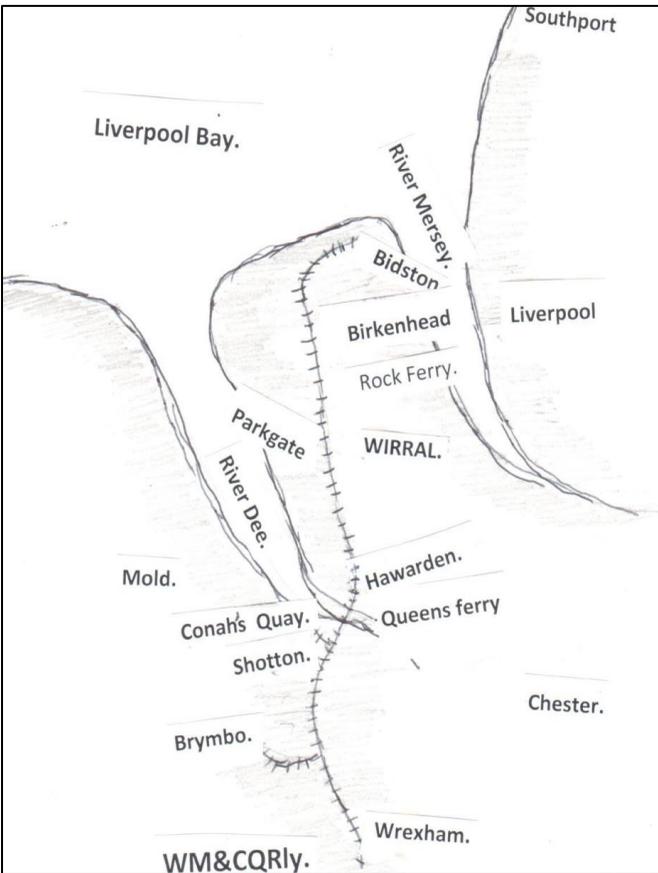
The phenomenon of 'Railway Mania' took place from 1845 to about 1850 when there was excessive speculation into raising money to finance schemes to build railways. Many schemes were downright fraudulent and raised money for railways that the promoters had no intention of building. Many promotions would never make money and were then often bought for a pittance by the big boys.

The **Wrexham Mold and Connah's Quay Junction Railway** was promoted in

1860, so it is some time after the Mania. After the Act of Authorisation from the Government it failed to raise as much cash by subscription as envisaged. AND it never went anywhere near Mold!

I think the idea was that the Wrexham area was near to the North Wales Coal field which was productive but had little market except locally. The W.M.&CQ could take coal to the small port of Connah's Quay where it could be loaded onto coasters and barges for further distribution and sale.

The area was also rich in iron ore, lime and clay for bricks and pottery. Hence the



happy Shotton Steel Works, which needed plenty iron ore, coking coal, lime and clay. The Salt Industry of Cheshire needed the powdered coal (slack) which had no sale elsewhere. One million tons of coal slack were needed to produce one and threequarters million tons of salt by about 26 producers.

The W.M&CQ joined in with the Buckley Railway and effectively worked as one, with the tracks going to the edge of the Dee at Hawarden. Money was always short. Two Piercy brothers (Ben and Robert) stepped in and became managers; they paid off a debt to the Railway Clearing House from their own pockets. The Clearing House was essential to every Railway Company's finances because through bills of lading had to be shared out between all the many small carrying railways. Otherwise, life would be impossible if nothing were forthcoming of their W.M&CQ share just because of that unpaid debt to the Clearing House.

Later the Piercy brothers asked for payment for their services but very little was forthcoming. The W.M&CQ Railway had authority to raise £1,153,200 but only £545,106 was raised, which obviously reflects the lack of confidence the investing public had in the Railway!

In 1869 a telegraph system was installed and in 1873 there was a boom in the Flintshire coalfield and our little railway, the WM & CQR was busy day and night.

Ben Piercy was disillusioned with the W M & CQ R and had gone to Sardinia; to manage the construction of the Royal Sardinian Railway. In 1882 he returned with Henry Robertson from Banff. Robertson had constructed the magnificent viaducts for the GWR on the Shrewsbury Wrexham route and would help in the organisation and running of the W.M. & CQ R.

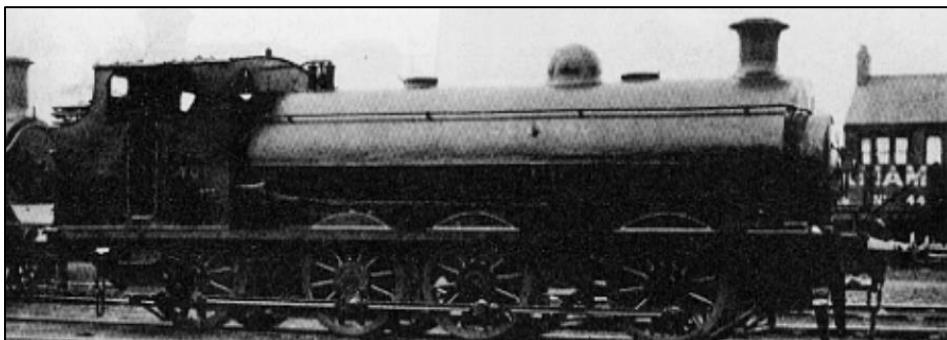
The little Railway struggled on with the track ending at the River Dee. The managers felt that the Railway should go up the Wirral to Parkgate to ship the coal and ore. The Dee at Connah's Quay was silting up fast and Parkgate offered a substitute export port and soon that was also silting. But the new docks at Bidston, (Birkenhead) offered a much better alternative. The little Railway had not the finance to construct the line so they joined forces with the Wirral Railway Companies and would provide for the construction of a line right up to the midpoint of the Wirral. However, neither Company could find the money so in 1889 Watkin's Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway stepped in to complete the Line the first sod being turned by no other than Gladstone. Lines to Chester and the 'salt' area were laid for the delivery of the slack coal. Watkin was ruthless and stopped all associations of the W.M&CQR with the LNWR. Watkin also demanded the use of a new bridge which was still in the hands of the contractor. The centring had been removed but the concrete had not cured. Watkin's train carried Gladstone across the bridge but it collapsed just after his train had passed over! So, Gladstone had to be returned by road which did not please Watkin one little bit. As a result, William David the W.M&CQ engineer resigned and one of Watkins men stepped in and the W.M&CQR and became the M.S.&L. which morphed into the Great Central Railway (GCR) in 1905. Until under Railways Act of 1923 when it became the LNER and was then swallowed up by BR in 1947.

The W.M.&CQR never had much in the way of cash so many locomotives were bought second hand on hire purchase! But they did have quite a skilfully manned workshop at Rosedieu which was situated just north of Wrexham Central Station.

One most remarkable locomotive was purchased in 1872 from LNWR. She was originally a second hand 0-6-0 tender engine built in 1846 by Sharp Roberts, in 1858 she was rebuilt as a 0-6-0 saddle tank locomotive by LNWR.

In 1880 W.M.&CQR *no.6 Queen* was rebuilt as an 0-8-0 saddle tank at Rosedieu but after 8 years the long wheel base had destroyed many curves on the track and caused derailments to the locos. 1888 *Queen* was converted to a 0-6-2 ST at Rosedieu using wheels of another loco tender. That loco with that wheel arrangement and inside cylinders was apparently unique in the railway world.

1892 *Queen* had a severe accident and eventually reappeared with larger bunker and increased tank capacity. In 1903 *Queen* was rebuilt into an 0-8-0 ST again at Rosedieu but with new dome and a boiler pressed to 170 lbs per sq. inch.



The long, coupled wheel arrangement required a large amount of lateral play in the axle boxes. *Queen* was successful in this role and was withdrawn in 1923 after a 'respectable' 77 years! Well done Rosedieu Works!

The WM&CQR passenger services were surprisingly plentiful... Ten per returns a day from Wrexham to Brymbo. Five a day to Chester. Eight each way to Connah's Quay. Four trains a day from Wrexham to Seacombe with 16 stops in 78 minutes. There were several guest passenger trains per day by the *Cambrian Railways* to and from Aberystwyth in season. There were at least eight booked goods or mineral trains per day mainly from Brymbo. Added to that there were frequent specials of coal for Birkenhead Docks.

So, the Wrexham, Mold and Connah's Quay Railway was busy, but was never profitable and never reached the place intended. It seemed to be a happy railway with good loyal and enthusiastic labour relations between the staff and as was said by an old former employee: - **"It was a grand little railway"**.

## Postscript; - The Last Steam train from Paddington to Birkenhead - 1966.



This photo was taken at Banbury by Geoff who went on the last steam train from Paddington to Birkenhead. Today we can't go by steam locomotive or even modern train along the same route because eleven miles of the track have gone north of Chester.

*The Birkenhead Flyer* at the 'Down' Platform at Banbury. Looks like Geoff was standing on the up line with his camera.

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## The answer to; A point work puzzle on page 21

Despite all my years in the profession I must admit to only getting my answer partly right.

It is triple gauge track consisting of Metre, Standard and Russian Broad gauge and is described as follows;

Purpose; to allow the change of the common rail to facilitate technically simpler turnouts of individual gauges at other locations.

The crossings are equipped with run-on grooves, the meter gauge track has tram dimensions, recognizable by the significantly narrower wheel guide groove widths.

This Multi-rail track layout is at Škoda which is near Prague.

[https://commons.m.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Škoda\\_gauntlet\\_track2.jpg](https://commons.m.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Škoda_gauntlet_track2.jpg)

## A day out to Haywards Heath

By Chris (Romney Marsh MES)

When compiling a Zoom club night for the Romney Marsh MES I scanned some of my old colour slides amongst which there was a couple of Geoff Cashmore and Peter Dupen driving their locos at Beech Hurst in, probably, 1971. However, it is possible that it could be 1972 or 73. I just can't remember as it is 50 years ago now!

I can't be certain but suspect it was the summer of 1971 when I had recently bought my first motorcycle, and Beech Hurst at Haywards Heath was an easy trip from my parent's house in Hove (I only had a Honda C50).

It would appear that it was either a North London Club visit to Beech Hurst, or perhaps a Southern Federation Rally and in addition to the pictures of Geoff Cashmore driving his George the Fifth and Peter Dupen with his Midland Compound



there is also one of Bill Carter in traditional "pipe in mouth" pose driving his famous 5" gauge Atlantic.

I also found pictures of Lionel Woodhead driving his 5" GWR 47XX and Don Young driving his (presumably?) Rail

Motor which must have been taken at the same event so it may just have been a Beech Hurst Open Day?

I am particularly pleased that I have the pictures of Geoff Cashmore, because as a teenage "oik" I went to one of the London Model Engineering Shows, probably

at the Seymour Hall in London in 1968 or 69 and the SMEE had their portable track there. Geoff very kindly allowed me to drive his George the Fifth up and down the track, a real encouragement to a young 14-year-old Model Engineer.

I hope that they are of interest to your North London members.

They surfaced as I have just done a Zoom Club night presentation to my local Romney Marsh



Club members entitled "A Lifetime of Trains & a few other odds and ends along the way" not exactly a snappy title but it does was it says on the tin.



## Some useful information about boiler markings

### Boiler Pressure vessel markings

Anyone purchasing a new boiler should be advised that from 1 January 2021, UK pressure vessel manufacturers may be using the UKCA mark instead of the EU CE mark. This new mark shall be treated under the boiler test code as a CE mark, as permitted under the Pressure Equipment Regulations Act.

For vessels made after 1 January 2022, the EU CE mark will be the only valid mark for boilers made in Europe and the UKCA mark is the only valid mark for boilers made in the UK.

Owners of models should be aware that the position of recognition of the UKCA mark within Europe is not yet clear. This may affect those in the future if they are planning to take their model to Europe or to sell it there.

For the latest information including details of the form of the new mark, visit

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/using-the-ukcamark-from-1-january-2021>

*Note; courtesy of SFMES News Letter Volume10 Issue4 December 2020*

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## A long forgotten North London Station

The lines approaching King's Cross station, have been remodelled several times since the station was built at Maiden Lane and then its present site. The layout is again undergoing remodelling to bring the disused tunnel back into use. The York Way platform came and went as did many other features around the area as traffic patterns, the conveyance of goods and public demand changed. But there was a less well-known passenger service from a station built by the original GN railway company for the conveyance of the dead away from London.

The Necropolis railway at Waterloo Station conveyed the departed to a cemetery in Surrey and is quite well known. The Great Northern Railway Kings Cross Cemetery Station is not so well known and little evidence remains.

The Station at Waterloo transferred the dead a considerable distance to a cemetery near Woking. In direct competition the GNR established the Great Northern London Cemetery Company in 1855 and offered a cheaper alternative much closer to the city at New Southgate. The shorter journey allowed them to reduce the cost of that final journey.

In the mid 1800's it was the custom for the dead to be left at home for a few days during a period of mourning. The Great Northern Cemetery Station offered a morgue and mourning rooms which provided a much more acceptable arrangement for the poor families living in the cramped dwellings of the city.

Kings Cross Cemetery Station was to the north of the modern station, on Randell's Road / Rufford Street and opened in 1861.

A review shortly after its opening described the new station as being located in a dilapidated area, with mud and squalor all around.

The building was impressive with an unusual spire at its southern end which was wedge shaped.

The entrance was on the upper story which gave direct access from street level.

There were two separate entrances provided for coffins and mourners. The platforms were on the lower level, with a flight of stairs for the mourners, and a hydraulic lift for the coffin. A mortuary was provided free of charge by the company in an attempt to encourage the populace to remove bodies quickly from their homes. Within the mortuary, gas jets were continuously lit under exhaust ducts to make sure there was a continuous flow of air. Remember these were the days before refrigerators. The lit stained-glass windows must have made an impressive sight for rail passengers coming out of gasworks tunnel after dark.

The building itself survived until the 1960's when the site was acquired by Cemex.

The arched retaining wall and the plain wall above are all that still survives of the original station.

Although the service opened in 1861, it seems to have



Cemetery station in poor repair in 1954



not attracted enough custom to remain viable and closed in 1873. So, despite the lower cost intended to appeal to the poor of the city, it never gained their favour.

Twice a week a train would collect the mourners, and the dead to convey them on their final trip to a dedicated station called Cemetery Station which was on a spur of the main line approximately ½ mile north of the current New Southgate Station.

The coffins were then loaded onto horse drawn carts for the short journey for burial at the then named Great Northern Cemetery which had been opened in 1855 as a joint venture between the GN Rly and the Colney Hatch Company.



The local area is now called New Southgate but was at that time known as Colney Hatch and the cemetery has also been renamed; New Southgate Cemetery.



Nothing now remains of Cemetery station to indicate the sites former heritage. The land between the railway and the cemetery was sold off to Standard Telephones & Cables and is now just an office complex and car park.

*With thanks to Brendan*

*for suggesting the subject for this article*

## Scenes from the site “spring” 2021



Dingley Dell halt has seen very little patronage in recent years with trains passing by without stopping. The station sign could do with a little TLC though which is an ideal shed job for a volunteer looking for something to do during lockdown? Please let your editor know if you can take on the task.



Skating on the ice could have been a new club pastime during the recent cold spell.

Perhaps a member of the marine section would like to build a model of the RRS *Sir David Attenborough* in time for next year's big freeze.

## Club member Charlie Ledden

It was with much regret that we have learnt of the passing of Charlie.

Charlie was a member of our club for over 20 years. Although not attending so much after he moved to Mablethorpe in Lincolnshire. His wife has told us he enjoyed every minute of being part of NLSME.

Sadly, Charlie passed away after sudden illness on Wednesday 29th January. His wife has said he would have wished members to know.

The Chairman has expressed our condolences on behalf of the club to his wife Valerie and the family at this difficult time.



There is potential for more colour at the site in the near future. The two Johns planted Hyacinth's on the left just before the gate leading to the toilet block.

A couple of years ago they looked really good. We are hoping for a similar show this year.

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## Gauge 1 Group – March report

By Geoff

Workshop weather!

Like many of you this time of year is workshop orientated.

The quicker projects involve rolling stock, so here are some progress pictures from members.

The first picture shows the initial stages of build of my second wagon being made from Laser cut parts. This is a GWR Iron Mink, I have always wanted an iron mink, but I think they are a rather difficult thing to model due to the rounded corners and rounded roof corners too. With a laser cut roof it should be easy to get a symmetrical roof, but I won't be able to complete this part until I can use the club rollers, and who knows when this might be.



As you can see, I have made the main body structure from Steel plates, the upper and lower are actually the same plate, but the slots are only used in the top one for the curved roof supports while the groups of 4 holes are used for attaching the axle guards in the lower ones only. I am using bits of bar at the corners to give support to the rounded shape and also as strong support pillars for the upper

structure. I think it is turning out to be a pretty robust wagon – like the full size ones. The main difficult is the side/ends. I have had these cut as a single piece



side/ end as shown, I thought it might be a bit difficult to get the corner folds in exactly the right place and so it has proved. But I couldn't see how to do them as separate parts as there is no easy place to have a join and you want a decent length to hold to put the curve in. I don't think it is going to turn out quite symmetrical, but it's difficult to see both side at once, so hopefully it won't matter too much. Incidentally, I was quite surprised when researching Iron Minks that virtually none of the GWR ones had the DC brake, being originally fitted with just a simple single side lever brake and later on a single brake on the other side – which will be the way I build mine, together with the later wooden doors.

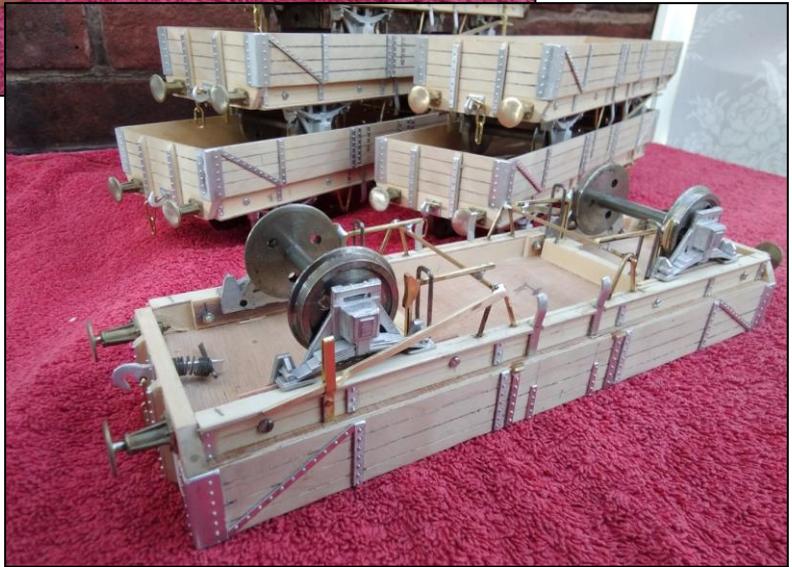
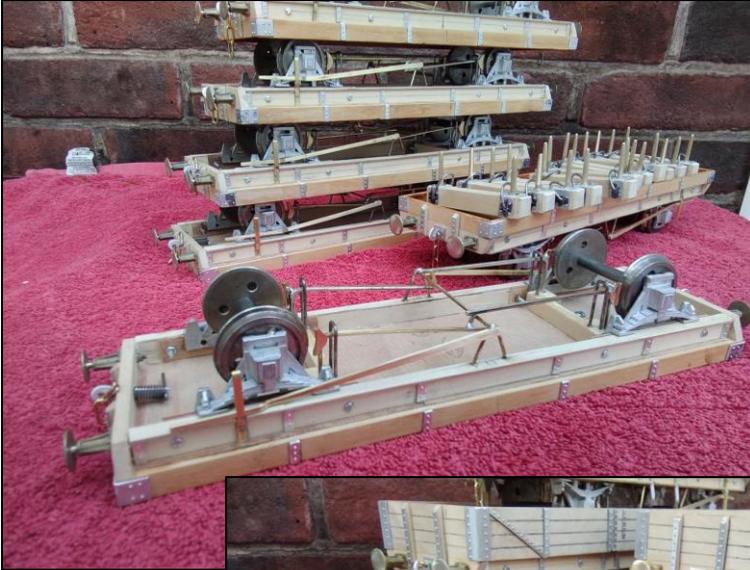
Apparently, the main Minks that were fitted with the DC brake were those built for some of the Welsh railway companies, but most of those were Steel minks rather than Iron. In fact, I came close to building one of these thinking they were the same, luckily, I found an excellent second-hand book called "All about GWR Iron Minks", published by the HMRS. This gives all the details needed, together with some good drawing. What would I do if I showed David a newly build GWR Iron Mink, only for him to point out that it was to the dimensions of a Rhymney Railway Steel Mink.

The following two Photos are Geoff scratch-built models. These have aluminium sides and roof with applied wooden angle & Tee sections and other detailing. The under-frame gear replicates both timber solebars and steel

channel. The interesting thing is that to be a gunpowder van, the inside faces of the body were covered with timber to reduce any possibility of a spark igniting the contents. Whilst Iron Minks were a GWR design many were built for other railways over the years, both pre & post grouping.



Malcolm has been building a batch of long wheel base trucks in this current lock down consisting of 8 tube trucks, 30ft long and 6 twin bolsters. The models are constructed from plywood & other scraps and brake gear made out of bullhead rail, which looks the part. Floors of the trucks planked from Venetian blinds cut down.



Metalwork is aluminium with a riveting tool used to add detail, purchased items being buffers, axleboxes and wheels only!

Next stage painting and weathering

## Railway / Car colour matches

Halfords aerosol paint colours can be a close match to railway colours.

BR coach carmine	LMS Coronation blue
Ford Rosso Red	Rover Pageant Mid-blue
BR coach cream (well worn)	LNER garter blue
Peugeot Antelope Beige	VW Pargas Blue
BR coach cream	LNER garter blue/BR diesel blue
Vauxhall Gazelle Beige	(but slightly bluer)
BR diesel blue	Ford Fjord Blue
VW Pargas Blue	LNWR coach bluey-white upper
BR diesel light green band	panels
Ford Highland Green	Daewoo Casablanca White
BR loco yellow warning panel	LNWR/LYR coach plum lower
Vauxhall Mustard Yellow	panels
BR maroon Ford	Daewoo Dark Red
Rosso Red	LYR coach upper panels
BR steam loco blue	Plastikote Nut Brown
Peugeot Royal Blue	MR/LMS/BR red
CR dark blue	Rover Damask Red
Rover Midnight Blue	N. Staffs maroon
CR steam loco	Vauxhall Gambia Red
Peugeot Royal Blue	NER coach red
GWR coach cream	Vauxhall Gambia Red
Rover Primula Yellow	Roof grey
GWR or Pullman coach brown	Halford's plastic bumper
Rover Russet Brown	SDJR blue
GWR/BR loco green	Rover Midnight Blue
Ford Laurel Green	SR dark olive-green
GWR/BR loco green	Land Rover Coniston Green
Rover Brooklands Green	Stanier Coronation blue
LBSCR umber	Peugeot Royal Blue
Vauxhall Brazil Brown	Stroudley LBSCR ochre
	BMC Tan

## Dates for your Diary

The current government restrictions resulting from the COV-19 virus has resulted in all NLSME organised events being cancelled until further notice.

<b>March</b>	<b>2021</b>
<b>Tue 2<sup>nd</sup> March</b>	<b>Council meeting Location &amp; Time TBC (see note below)</b>
<b>Sun 21<sup>st</sup> March</b>	<b>Deadline for copy to Editor for February News Sheet</b>

The current Government Covid-19 restrictions have resulted in Council having to hold the March meeting via an on-line platform.

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## And Finally – Oxford University researchers have discovered the densest element yet known to science.

The new element, Governmentium (symbol=Gv), has one neutron, 25 assistant neutrons, 88 deputy neutrons and 198 assistant deputy neutrons, giving it an atomic mass of 312. These 312 particles are held together by forces called morons, which are surrounded by vast quantities of lepton-like particles called pillocks.

Since Governmentium has no electrons, it is inert. However, it can be detected, because it impedes every reaction with which it comes into contact. A tiny amount of Governmentium can cause a reaction that would normally take less than a second, to take from 4 days to 4 years to complete. Governmentium has a normal half-life of 2 to 6 years. It does not decay, but instead undergoes a reorganisation in which a portion of the assistant neutrons and deputy neutrons exchange places.

In fact, Governmentium's mass will actually increase over time, since each reorganisation will cause more morons to become neutrons, forming isodopes. This characteristic of moron promotion leads some scientists to believe that Governmentium is formed whenever morons reach a critical concentration. This hypothetical quantity is referred to as a critical morass.

When catalysed with money, Governmentium becomes Administratium (symbol=Ad), an element that radiates just as much energy as Governmentium, since it has half as many pillocks but twice as many morons.

*I think this is called political satire.*