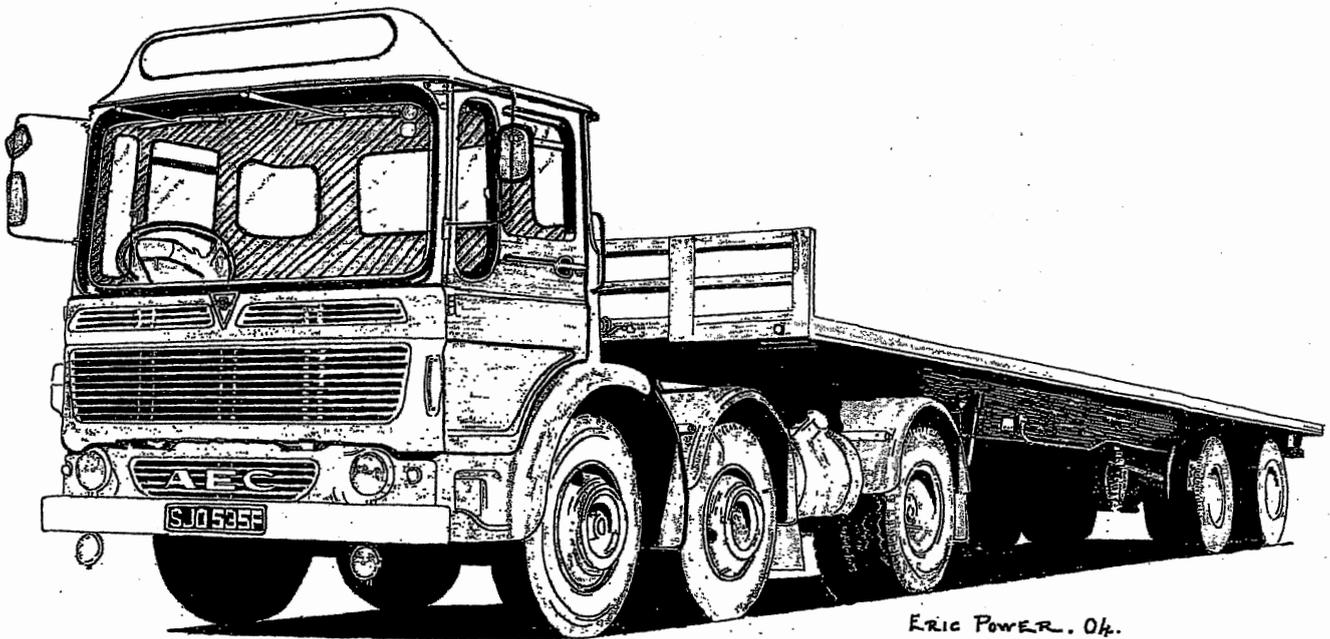


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# Barrowmore Model Railway Journal



Number 1

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Published on behalf of Barrowmore Model Railway Group by the Honorary Editor: David Goodwin, "Cromer", Church Road, Saughall, Chester CH1 6EN; tel. 01244 880018. E-mail: [david@goodwinrail.co.uk](mailto:david@goodwinrail.co.uk)

- Contributions are welcome: (a) as e-mails or e-mail attachments;  
(b) as a 3.5in floppy disk, formatted in any way (as long as you tell me if it's unusual!); disks can be provided on request;  
(c) a typed manuscript;  
(d) a hand-written manuscript, preferably with a contact telephone number so that any queries can be sorted out.  
(e) a CD.

Any queries to the Editor, please.

The **NEXT ISSUE** will be dated April 2005, and contributions should get to the Editor as soon as possible, but at least before 1 March 2005.

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Copies of this magazine are also available to non-members: a cheque for £5 (payable to 'Barrowmore M.R.G.') will provide the next four issues, posted direct to your home. Send your details and cheque to the Editor at the above address.

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**Cover illustration** of this issue is again by Eric Power of West Kirby. It shows an aspect of modelling for "Mostyn" that needs a lot of time and effort expending on it: road vehicles and the road transport infrastructure.

The subject of Eric's drawing is (he tells me!) an A.E.C. 'Mammoth Minor' 32-ton tractor unit with trailer. This model was first introduced in 1965, so examples would still have been common in 1977.

As well as commercial vehicles to populate the main (at that time) road which runs alongside the railway on our layout, we need to consider the rest of the road scene – street lights, road signs, carriage-way markings, and so on. It is all too easy for us railway modellers with our all-too-narrowly focussed expertise, to make silly mistakes with regard to things outside the railway fence.

We do have 'consultants' in some areas – Eddie Knorn on buses for example, Norman Lee who spent the latter part of his working life as an employee of the Cheshire County Council's Highways Department, Paul Breakwell, and Eric Power himself who spent many years in the road transport industry. What we have to try to do, is realise when we are in need of guidance! Easier said than done, of course.

## **Forthcoming events:**

**10 Jan. 2005:** "Railway civil engineering: scenes from a railway career and a professional view of the present infrastructure", by John Ryan. R.C.T.S. at Lever Club, Port Sunlight, 7.45pm.

**11 Jan. 2005:** "Crewe Works by lantern slide", by Norman Lee. H.M.R.S., at "The Stork Hotel", Price Street, Birkenhead, 8pm.

**22 Jan. 2005:** Llanbedr 7mm running track.

**27 Jan. 2005:** "From the slums to the sidings", by David Armstrong (a career in transport). Merseyside Rly. Hist. Group, at United Reform Church Hall, West Kirby, 7.45pm.

**5 Feb. 2005:** Swapmeet, Northgate Arena, Chester.

**5/6 Feb. 2005:** Stafford exhibition ("Mostyn" will be appearing).

**5/6 Feb. 2005:** Rochdale exhibition.

**7 Feb. 2005:** "LNWR lines: the past 20 years", by Reg Appleton. R.C.T.S. at Lever Club, Port Sunlight, 7.45pm.

**8 Feb. 2005:** "Dad had an engine shed, by Tony Robinson (Mold Junction shed). H.M.R.S., at "The Stork Hotel", Birkenhead, 8pm.

**19/20 Feb. 2005:** Bolton exhibition.

**26 Feb. 2005:** Llanbedr 7mm running track.

**8 Mar. 2005:** "Railway buildings and their architecture", by Harry Leadbetter. H.M.R.S., at "The Stork Hotel", Birkenhead, 8pm.

**12/13 Mar. 2005:** Kidderminster exhibition.

**12/13 Mar. 2005:** S4 North, Wakefield.

**19/20 Mar. 2005:** Epsom & Ewell exhibition ("Mostyn" and "Johnstown Road" will be appearing).

**19/20 Mar. 2005:** Nottingham exhibition.

**26/27/28 Mar. 2005:** York exhibition.

**2 Apr. 2005:** Swapmeet, Northgate Arena, Chester.

**9 Apr. 2005:** Llanbedr running track.

**12 Apr. 2005:** "Diesels nationwide", by Edgar Richards. H.M.R.S., at "The Stork Hotel", Price Street, Birkenhead, 8pm.

**16 Apr. 2005:** Chester M.R.C. 'West Somerset Express' rail-tour (see p16).

*(The Editor welcomes details of other events of railway interest for this column)*

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The official 'British Railways'

totem, as revealed by the

British Transport Commission

in 1949



## A visitor on "Johnstown Road"

by Emlyn Davies

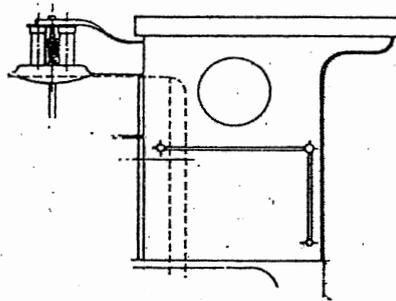
Some of you may have noticed a rather larger-than-usual locomotive running on the Johnstown branch at Manchester exhibition: no, not the "Royal Scot", but a Barry Railway 0-8-0, with a four-wheeled tender.

I know little of the history of the model, but when I saw it for sale I just had to buy it. From the first time I saw a photograph of the class many years ago I thought the locomotive rather appealing in a quirky sort of way, although unfortunately I never saw one in real life (even I am not that old!).

The prototype was notable for being the first eight-coupled tender engine to be used by a British railway, unless you count a rather primitive machine built by Grylls & Co. of Llanelly in 1847 as No.1 for the Monmouthshire Railway & Canal Company.

The Barry locomotives themselves had an interesting history. They were to a standard design by Sharp Stewart which they supplied to certain foreign countries. An order for 20 such engines was placed by the Swedish & Norwegian Railway; numbers 5-14 were delivered in 1887 and a further eight (nos.17-24) in 1888.

*Cab side sheeting  
as built by Sharp  
Stewart (not to scale)*



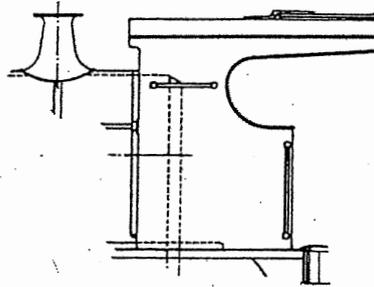
The railway company's finances were in a poor state and only one and a half of the engines had been paid for. Numbers 25 and 26 remained on the maker's hands until bought by the Barry Railway late in 1889; they became B.R. nos.35 and 36.

After legal battles, fourteen engines were returned to the makers in 1891 and two more followed, probably in 1892. These 16 were refurbished and sold to two German railways: ten to the Baden State Railway and six to the Palatinate. These were the last locomotives of British design and manufacture to be sold to German railways.

The remaining two engines were seized by bailiffs in December 1891, and after prolonged litigation shipped back to the makers in 1895. Late the following year they were offered to the Barry Railway and delivered in the Spring of 1897. The Barry must have had a more generous loading gauge than some railways, for the cylinders had to be removed for the delivery journey.

The locomotives were used for hauling coal trains from Cadoxton and Barry Town to the docks, a task which they continued to perform when taken over by the G.W.R. at the grouping. Under Great Western ownership the boilers were re-built, new chimneys and safety valves fitted. The cabs on three locomotives were modified, and only no.36 (as G.W.R. no.1388) retained its original cab with the 'port hole' side windows (these had a nasty habit of becoming unlatched and falling down onto the unfortunate crew).

*Cab side sheeting on the engines 'Great Westernised' by the G.W.R. (not to scale)*



All four locomotives were withdrawn by the G.W.R. between 1927 and 1930.

- [Further reading includes:--(1) *Locomotives of the Great Western Railway, part 10 (Absorbed engines, 1922-1947)*. Railway Correspondence & Travel Society, 1966.  
(2) *A pictorial record of Great Western absorbed engines*, by J.H.Russell. O.P.C., 1978. ISBN 0 902888 74 9.  
(3) *The Barry Railway*, by D.S.Barrie. Oakwood Press, 1962.  
(4) *The Barry Railway: diagrams and photographs of locomotives coaches and wagons*, by E.R.Mountford. Oakwood Press, 1987. ISBN 0 85361 355 9.]

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## **A Short History of Motorail GUV 96137**

**By Eddie Knorn**

This vehicle started life in 1959 numbered as 86748, built by Pressed Steel as part of Lot 30565. At this time, it would have conformed to the standard of a typical

GUV (General Utility Van) in having heavy duty BR2 bogies and vacuum brakes. Although recorded as being destined for the Southern Region, by the time the 1978 RCTS Coaching Stock book was published the number had a 'W' prefix, indicating a move to what used to be Mr Brunel's railway. By this time, the vacuum brakes were gone in favour of air, while provision for train heating included through steam piping and electric train heat wiring. The vehicle code was "NJA".

In 1983, British Rail moved their loco hauled coaching stock and DMU fleets onto the TOPS computer system; a consequence of this was that there were certain clashes of vehicle numbers, which TOPS could not cope with. So it was that 86748 became 93748, to avoid confusion with Class 86 locomotives.

Subsequently, in or around 1987, a dedicated pool of Motorail vans with dual or air brakes was created, numbered sequentially in the 96xxx series. Thus, 93748 became 96137. Some of the 96xxx vans gained Intercity livery, but 96137 retained BR Blue. Soon afterwards, there was an Intercity modification to fit the 96xxx series with either 'Commonwealth' or B5 bogies. A delve into the BR archives records the fitting of 'Commonwealths' during April 1989, but the overhaul date on the vehicle shows December 1988, which I believe to be a more accurate record. This work was done at Doncaster Works. Obviously the electric train heat wiring was retained, but steam piping had been disposed of. Coupling was still by means of screw link, rather than by buckeye.

At some point, 96137 was assigned to special duties at Bounds Green Depot at the London end of the East Coast Main Line. It was used to ferry cleaning materials between the main depot and the busy carriage sidings at Ferme Park, around 2 miles away. For this role, the sides were stencilled "Max Speed 30mph" and a suitable notice was added about its restricted use, to prevent it from roving too far from the depot.

From 1989 until 1992 I worked at Wembley Intercity Depot, doing my bit to keep the West Coast Main Line running. At some point, maybe even as early as 1991, BR Blue liveried 96137 appeared at Wembley with a TOPS defect relating to incorrect bolster clearances in the secondary suspension. Vehicles with bogie defects were sent to our "Heavy Repair Depot" and 96137 took up residence in the yard, clearly visible from my office window.

When I left Wembley in mid 1992, 96137 was still there, always at the bottom of the priority list – to be honest I doubt that it was ever needed to keep our established Motorail GUV fleet topped up.

Time and railway career moved on and by the end of the century I was working for one of the train leasing companies, latterly known as HSBC Rail. In the great carve-up of the passenger train fleets, this company had been assigned ownership of the Intercity Motorail GUV fleet, including my old friend 96137. This was identified as "for disposal", by this time residing in Wolverton Works.

Having made a few enquiries, I established that HSBC Rail would be happy to sell it to me for “not a lot” and all I had to do was sort out the removal from site. Oh, it helps to have somewhere to put it, too.

One option was to loan it to a preserved line, while another was to put the body in my garden, using the commonwealth bogies to offset the cost of low-loading. In the end, this option was discounted; just think how big the cranes would have to be. The final plan was to re-model the garden with a JCB and lay some track.

On the great day, in September 2001, I was expecting two lorries, one with 96137 and one with a pile of track components. Of course, 96137 arrived first. To position it correctly, it needed to enter our dead end bit of road trailer-first, but they drove in lorry first. In order to turn round, it was a simple case of reverse out again and approach the other way. The local motorists confronted by a 30-ton Rail Blue piece of sh\*t reversing towards them on the back of a lorry must have been amusing!

At the end of the day, 60ft of track had been built, using a gang of four assisted by me with an all-terrain forklift. The trailer with 96137 had not quite been aligned with the track, so the final unloading happened the following day; it was a simple case of align trailer, raise the front hydraulically, attach forklift to GUV with chain, drive forwards and apply handbrake on 96137. Easy.



*[96137 in its new home in Cambridgeshire, rapidly being surrounded by the local flora]*

As and when a bit of body corrosion is attended to, my GUV will hopefully get a repaint into BR blue, with the number 96137 applied. I am resisting the temptation to change the bogies to BR2s and apply an earlier number....

The finished result is that I now have a garden shed 58ft long and 8ft wide. At present it is mainly full of bus seats (don't ask) but could one day be a model railway room.

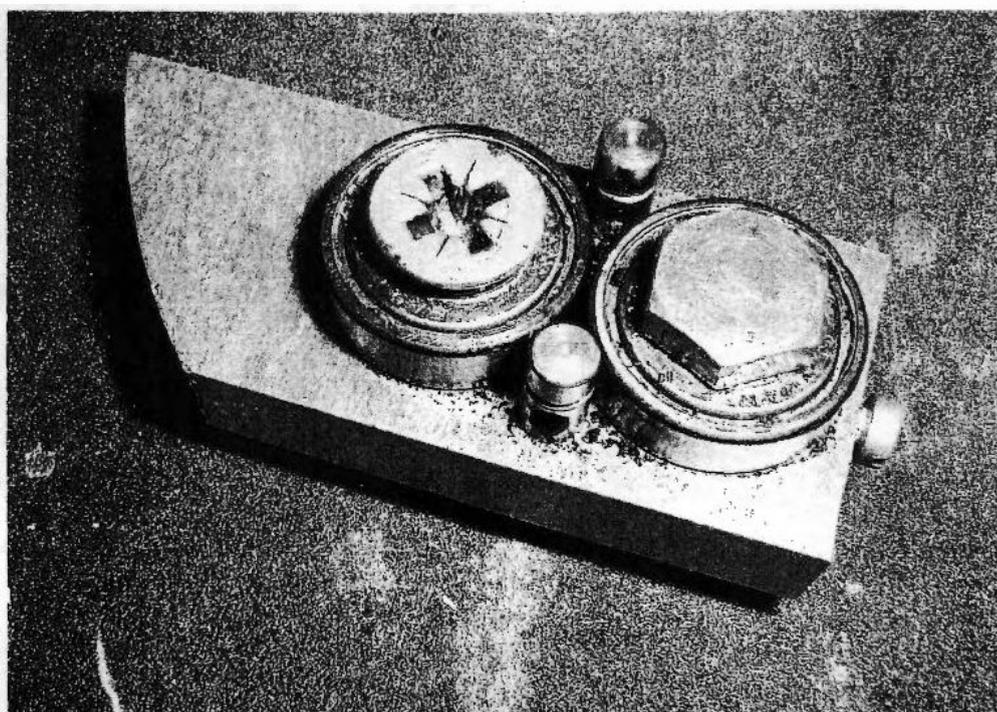
[Editor's note: we have made a 4mm-scale version of Eddie's GUV, based on a Lima body, and it will eventually join our existing B.R. GUVs on "Mostyn". Of course it will run under its pre-1983 number of W86748].

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## Workshop notes, no.1

Back in the 1980s when I dabbled in 7mm scale modelling, I discovered a firm called 'ScaleSeven Models' which marketed (among other items) metal strip: nickel silver 0.005in or 0.010in thick and in various widths, including some of less than 1mm. This material also turned out to be very useful in the 4mm scale work I was doing at the time. I bought what seemed a lot of the thinner widths, but of course my supply eventually ran out. Jim and Eileen Pitchforth (originators of 'Eileen's Emporium') managed on occasion to locate similar supplies from the continent. Today, narrow strip is still difficult to source: 1mm width seems to be the norm from such suppliers as Mainly Trains. So, 'make your own' seems to be the answer. I continue to be tempted by the precision guillotines that are on the market, but really most of what I want is catered for by a special tool I made on the prompting of Malcolm Genner of the group that runs the EM layout "Manafon Mills". I had initially persuaded Malcolm to describe this flattening tool he had made, for, firstly, the "Merseyside Express" [1]. A version of the article eventually appeared in "Modelling Railways Illustrated" [2]. I made one for myself, and can testify to its usefulness!

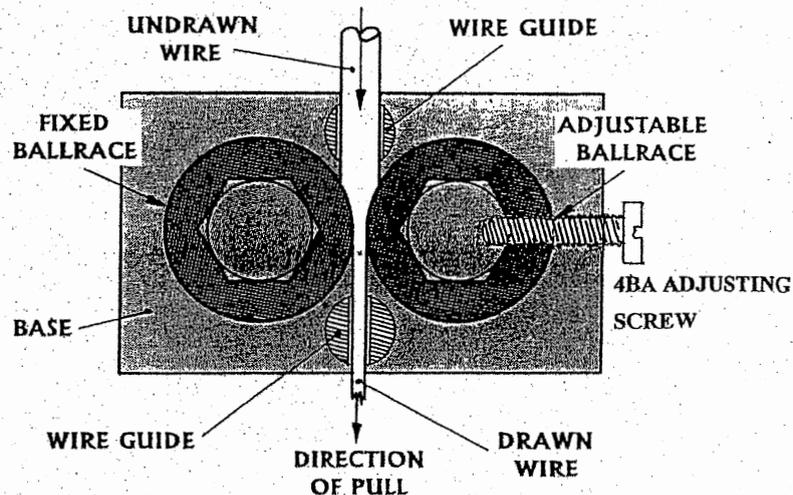
*[The elegant curve on the left-hand side of the base is not a design feature, but just happened to be present on the piece of scrap that I used!]*



So here is a much-revised version of Malcolm's description of some unknown modeller's idea which first appeared in print over thirty years ago: the first author's name is now lost in the mists of time, but his memory is honoured! (If anyone can throw any light on its provenance, please get in touch). Just as Malcolm did, I made a tool based on the description, meaning to improve on the design in a subsequent effort. And, not surprisingly, the original is still in use!

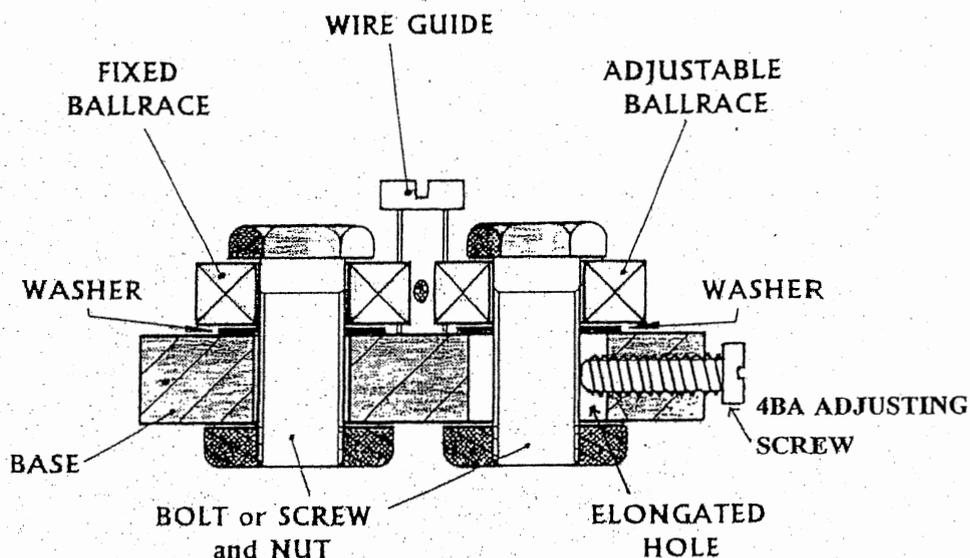
The **construction** of this tool is quite simple, the most important items being the ball-races. Any size is suitable, but I would recommend something in the region of three quarters of an inch to an inch in diameter. Of course you could buy new bearings (look in your local Yellow Pages under 'Bearing Stockists'): you should be looking for 'Single row deep groove bearings'. But a less expensive course (and more in tune with railway modellers' parsimony!), would be to beg second-hand bearings from a model engineer acquaintance. The base plate (perhaps 2½" by 1¼" by ⅜" thick) is cut to suit the size of the bearings and here again I would suggest a chunky lump of metal at least about a quarter of an inch thick, as it will need to act as a guide for the adjustment screw and will need to be placed in a vice for some operations: the machine-ability of light alloy is attractive here, and that is what I used. Some bearings may need a spacing washer between them and the base, so as to allow the outer ring to revolve freely in use. Having arrived at your chosen bearing size and found a suitable base plate, manufacture starts by drilling two holes in the plate at the centres of the bearings such that they are just

**PLAN VIEW**  
(not to scale)



touching. The size of holes and the size of screws depend upon the bearings selected, as the screws will act as spindles. One hole is elongated by a small amount to allow the bearing some lateral movement. Mark the base in some manner to show this - I actually drilled and tapped the base plate to accept an adjusting screw (see the diagram) for the movable bearing. A 4BA adjusting screw will have a screw pitch of 0.66mm, so that one full turn of the screw will potentially alter the position of the adjustable bearing by this amount - about 0.026in. Similarly, lesser rotation will make a smaller difference, so that half-a-turn = 0.013in, and so on.

**SECTION**  
**(not to scale)**



Mark and drill two further holes along the centre line of the base to accept the wire guides. For these, I tapped the holes 4BA to take a long shank screw with a hole drilled through for the wire. These wire inlet holes will need to be elongated a bit to allow some lateral movement in the passage of wire through the guide posts.

To use the device: grip the tool horizontally in a vice, slacken the adjustable bearing spindle and adjusting screw, set the gap required by using a gauge (either a feeler gauge or a pattern) and re-tighten the screws. Take a strip of wire and beat the first inch or so with a hammer so that the wire can be fed through the guides and the rollers of the tool. Pull the wire through the tool with a pair of pliers. Result: flat strip. I usually choose 26SWG copper wire (about 1/2mm), and with my usual tool settings, the thickness of the wire is reduced to about 1/4mm and the width increased to about 0.65mm. This size strip is suitable for both wagon lamp irons and brake safety loops in 4mm scale. Thicker gauges of wire may require passing through the tool several times at different settings: trial and error will show the limits.

What use is it? The short answer to this is: anywhere you want a thin flat strip. Wagon and coach under-gear, particularly brakes and truss rodding immediately spring to mind, together with items such as lamp irons and coal rails on locomotives; slatted station seats and fencing have also been made using the flattened wire. Your imagination will suggest answers!

Notes: [1] "Merseyside Express" (Merseyside Model Railway Society), issue no.276, March 1996.

[2] "Modelling Railways Illustrated" (Irwell Press), vol.3 no.8 (Apr. 1996).

[3] We hope to incorporate, in forthcoming editions of this magazine, descriptions of some jigs which use the strip.

*[The following very brief summary history of Barrowmore is an edited version of the text which appears on: <http://www.barrowmore.co.uk> ]*

## **Barrowmore's history**

Barrowmore is a registered charity established in 1920 by a Joint Committee of the British Red Cross and the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, as a sanatorium to treat soldiers returning from the First World War with tuberculosis. The colony of Barrowmore Village Settlement was established in the Barrowmore Hall, purchased from the Lyle Smith family in 1920 and later bombed and destroyed in 1940, with the loss of twenty patients' lives.

A new sanatorium was built over the period from 1942 to 1946, and it was taken over by the NHS from 1948 and continued to operate until its closure in 1982. A workshop providing sheltered employment together with a residential estate for employees of the settlement, were added in the 1930s. During the war years the workshops were engaged in the sub-assembly of aircraft parts. A hostel for single men was built in 1954. Following closure of the NHS hospital (it had become redundant by 1982), the building was converted into a nursing home which opened in 1993. On the site is a social club providing opportunities for meeting socially with local residents. This has given Barrowmore a unique range of facilities for meeting the needs of people with disabilities.

The Charity has responded to changes in the need for care in its area and has widened its scope to cover all forms of disability from all sectors of the community although ex-servicemen have primarily been given priority.

Due to unsustainable losses the nursing home was closed in October 2001, its residents and patients re-homed and the building was converted into supported accommodation for people with disabilities in line with the government's initiative of Supporting People. Its first new core intake were the residents of Hulme Hall and it now has a capacity for 32 people with a disability.

Barrowmore is managed by a Chief Executive reporting to a committee of Trustees, including members of the original organisations, which founded the charity.

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[Editor's note: Barrowmore now houses many small businesses and amongst them is listed 'Henry Wilson Books': of course it is basically Harry Wilson's fault that B.M.R.G. are here! The Editor has known Harry for many years – originally in his capacity of Area Organiser of the Historical Model Railway Society, and then as a bookseller specialising in railway/transport books. I had known that Harry rented space at Barrow for some of his book stock, but never visited Barrowmore until earlier this year (2004), when I had arranged to pick up some donations of potential for our library, using Richard Oldfield's large car boot. During the course of our visit, conversation got around to the subject of the search for club premises, and then to speculation about the possibilities of Barrowmore as a home. We were initially led to believe that there were currently

no suitable empty units, but there might be in the future ... This was back in the summer, and we heard nothing more until quite recently. We had drafted a letter (copied below) introducing our group and we sent this for the Charity's consideration at the end of last year. We hoped it would prove to be persuasive – and so it turned out to be; and the rest is history. As they say!]

(Copy of letter to Barrowmore Estates, dated November 2004)

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15<sup>th</sup> November 2004

To: Mr Barry Hulme  
Barrowmore Estates

Dear Mr Hulme,

Further to our telephone conversation last week we are writing to you, as agreed, to provide further information about our railway modelling group in connection with the possibility that we may be able to rent space at Great Barrow as a home for our layouts and activities. We hope this information will be sufficient to answer any questions that may arise at the forthcoming Charity Board meeting but please do not hesitate to ask if there are any queries.

Our group has three basic aims:

- To build and operate exhibition-quality model railway layouts
- To pass on our skills by writing articles and doing demonstrations
- To encourage young people and new entrants into our hobby

We are slightly different to a typical model railway club in that we aim to produce layouts that are amongst the best in the country and try to keep at the forefront of the hobby. A typical member of our group will not have his/her own personal layout but will invest most of their modelling effort on group projects that would be beyond the reach of any individual. This commitment has enabled us to rapidly produce two excellent layouts, "Mostyn" and "Johnstown Road", which have been extensively covered in the model railway press and are very popular at exhibitions. "Mostyn" is now fully booked until Autumn 2007 and our layouts will be seen in places as far apart as London, Glasgow, Newcastle, Birmingham and Porthmadog in the coming years. Both "Mostyn" and "Johnstown Road" will be fully-erected and operational at our new clubrooms when they are not at exhibitions.

Our members come from all walks of life varying from my daughter who is 15 and studying for GCSEs right the way through to our retired members who include a deputy headmaster, a dentist and a librarian. Other professions include a signalling engineer, author, carpenter, commercial magazine editor and safety manager. Our membership is open to all provided they enjoy model railways, are willing to share their skills, willing to learn from others, and will fit into a close-knit friendly team.

We need a base for our activities in order that we can maintain and improve our existing layouts, start new projects, make group-owned assets such as modelling equipment and books readily available to all and provide a location for meetings and social events. We also expect that our membership numbers will increase when we secure permanent clubrooms (judging from several expressions of interest that we have already received).

We aim to meet at least twice per week in the evening plus we will often work at weekends if an exhibition deadline is looming. We do not create a lot of noise apart from trains running round and the occasional power tool. Our energy consumption is very low and we are quite capable of carrying out any minor modifications that may be necessary such as extra power sockets and/or better lighting.

Our income is derived from three basic sources:

- membership subscriptions
- payments received for articles/photos published in commercial magazines
- charging ourselves for tea/coffee/biscuits

We forecast that our income for the coming year will be about £2200 (£1500 subscriptions + £500 articles + £200 Tea Bar. This is the background to my indication to you that we could afford to pay about £2 per sq.ft. for 1100 sq.ft. which

would accommodate both our layouts and provide space for a working area. We recognise that this is somewhat less than a standard commercial rental but this is all we can afford at this time.

Membership subscriptions are levied on those who can afford to pay and these will be maintained at a level that means we can offer free membership to young people (provided there is an adult member who is willing to take full responsibility for their safety and conduct) and reduced or free membership to people who cannot afford the full subscription. It is one of our aims that no-one should be denied access to our hobby for financial reasons.

Since our conversation last week we have spoken in some detail to our group about the potential use of facilities at Great Barrow and the possibility that we would be obtaining space at a reduced rate from a Charitable Trust. We can assure you that the unanimous reaction was "What can we do in return?" Our thoughts include an undertaking to pay an increased level of rental as soon as our group grows and our financial position improves. We have skills within our group (such as website design/maintenance and photography) that may be useful to the community at Great Barrow. We could run a mini-exhibition and/or Open Day that may prove attractive and gain publicity. We welcome visitors ranging from the simply curious to the potential new member.

We are looking to establish a firm base for our group which will provide a happy environment in which we can pursue standards of excellence in railway modelling and encourage more people to take up our hobby. We hope this letter provides enough information to answer any questions at the Charity Board meeting and that they will consider us to be a welcome addition to the organisations at Great Barrow.

We learned of the facilities at Great Barrow through Harry Wilson when we were picking up some magazines which he donated to our group – we have been purchasing books from Harry for many years and we are sure that he will be able to act as a referee should you require one.

Yours sincerely, etc.

*(And to bring us up-to-date ...)*

## **Barrowmore Model Railway Group – a short history**

It might seem a bit strange to be writing a history of our group when we have only been in existence for two months but I think it is important, before our attentions are drawn to other more mundane matters, that we record how and why Barrowmore Model Railway Group came into existence.

For me, although it was never intended that way, BMRG began with our regular sessions on "Johnstown Road" in Emlyn's garage. It seems crazy that the layout was stored in pieces for many months until we finally realised that we could erect it fully within the garage. We had some great times modelling there and 'talking trains' over tea and biscuits before retiring to a local pub. A big 'thank you' is due to Emlyn and Josie for letting us invade their home for five months. The contrast between the easy-going happy sessions working on "Johnstown Road" and the general unpleasantness that existed and persisted elsewhere within Wirral Finescale was very marked. It is no coincidence that everyone who worked on "Johnstown Road" at Emlyn's is now a founder member of BMRG. It is no coincidence that BMRG is now proving attractive to other modellers who want to work to high standards and do this within a friendly and supportive environment. We first learned about Barrowmore Estates when Dave Goodwin and I visited Great Barrow to collect some surplus books and magazines generously donated by Harry Wilson in the Summer of 2004. Observant visitors to our clubroom will notice that Harry is now situated in the unit next to us – wherever possible we buy all our railway books from Harry and would encourage others to do the same.

The clock then runs forward to late October 2004 when I was contacted by Barry Hulme, the Estate Manager at Barrowmore, to let me know that space would become available by the end of November and to check whether we were interested. Dave and I visited two Units including 7C

which is now our home. We could not afford the full rent and are indebted to the Charity Board for agreeing to let us have the Unit at a reduced rate (which is all we can afford at this stage). In return we are undertaking to help the activities of the Charity and a copy of our letter to them is included above.

It was a big decision to move to Barrowmore since we are some 20-25 miles away from where most of our membership live. It is therefore very pleasing to note that we have settled very rapidly into our clubroom and my own car can now do the journey here on 'automatic pilot'. We are committed to staying at Barrowmore and it seemed very fitting to name ourselves after our new home. You will shortly see the Mostyn fascias being re-painted and the Barrowmore logo appearing on them before our first exhibition as BMRG at Stafford in early February.

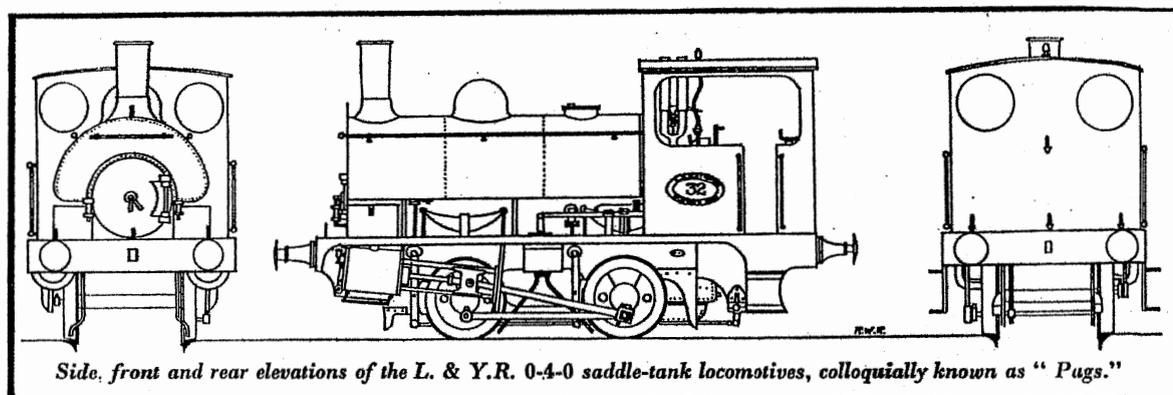
We received the keys to our clubroom on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2004 and immediately launched into a three-week brilliant-white blitz which has left us with a smart if somewhat bare home. We are 'skint' at the moment so further improvements will have to wait until there is more in the coffers. Everyone has been very generous with a great variety of donated equipment and I'm sure it will not be long before we are more comfortable. Our layouts moved to Barrowmore during Christmas 2004 and both "Mostyn" and "Johnstown Road" are erected and fully operational.

The highlight, for me, of the last few weeks has been the modelling sessions at Barrowmore. They're well-attended, productive and something to really look forward to. With very few exceptions, the best layouts on the exhibition circuit are the result of teamwork – seldom is it the case that one individual can be sufficiently skilled and motivated to complete a decent-sized layout. There is every sign that BMRG has got both the skills and the willingness to work co-operatively to produce sizeable exhibition layouts and I look forward to the date when the first 100% new BMRG layout is launched.

All in all I think we can be very satisfied with the developments of the last two months BUT, at the same time, we must remember that the reputation of BMRG will be built on what we do from now on. So, let's get out there, show what we can do and make new friends in the hobby.

Cheers,

Richard Oldfield





CHESTER MODEL RAILWAY CLUB and  
FFESTINIOG RAILWAY DEE & MERSEY GROUP  
Present the



**“WEST SOMERSET EXPRESS”**  
**SATURDAY 16 APRIL 2005**

**A SPECIAL EXCURSION TRAIN TO THE WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY & MINEHEAD**  
**via**  
**THE MARCHES LINE & THE BEAUTIFUL QUANTOCK HILLS**

Join us on our special class 67 diesel-locomotive hauled tour with Riviera Trains air-conditioned carriages. We will start from HOOTON (large car park/M53) at around 7.00am and pick up at BACHE, WREXHAM, GOBOWEN, and SHREWSBURY. The train then proceeds south down the Marches Line, passing through Hereford, then skirts Newport and through the Severn Tunnel. We drop off at BRISTOL, then cross the Somerset Levels before dropping off again at TAUNTON. We next leave Network Rail and our special train will carry on over the beautifully preserved West Somerset Railway before arriving at MINEHEAD. The return will be the reverse of our outward route.

Bristol has all the attractions of a cosmopolitan city including its historic quaysides, Victorian architecture, shopping centres and cathedral. Taunton is the county town of Somerset, with its castle, museums and market. The West Somerset Railway at twenty miles long is one of Britain’s premier preserved railways, running through the splendid scenery that forms the foothills of the Quantocks and the Bristol Channel coast. This is a very rare opportunity to see all of this from the luxury of a through train from your local station. Minehead is an ever-popular seaside resort, and a very pleasant place to while away a few hours on a spring afternoon.

For those with an interest in steam, there will be the opportunity to travel along the West Somerset Railway on one of their steam trains, usually hauled by an ex Great Western locomotive. This is at your own expense, but tour participants will receive a discount on the usual fare.

Expected arrival times are approximately 12noon (Bristol), 12.30pm (Taunton) and 1.30pm (Minehead). Leaving around 4pm (Minehead), 5pm (Taunton) and 5.30pm (Bristol), return times are expected to be mid to late evening.

*Fares: Standard Class: Adults £40, Children (5-15) £30, Children under 5 sharing a seat, free.  
First Class: Adults £60, Children (5-15) £50, Children under 5 sharing a seat, free.*

Each passenger will have a reserved seat, a free detailed route description and local plans. The first class is in open coaches around tables for two (first come, first served) and four. Most of the standard class is in fours around tables. Tickets, seat reservations and final timings will be sent a few days before the train runs.

Please enclose a large SAE with your booking,  
(two if acknowledgement of booking is required),

Telephone enquiries: 01244 678070  
01244 380504  
01286 673932

and send to: L J Wheeler, 12 Radnor Drive, Westminster Park, Chester. CH4 7PT

Email enquiries to: [laurence.wheeler@tesco.net](mailto:laurence.wheeler@tesco.net)

**\*\*\* BOOK EARLY TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT! \*\*\***

THE WEST SOMERSET EXPRESS

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

I/We will be joining at \_\_\_\_\_ station

\_\_\_\_\_

Our train will be made up of entirely no smoking accommodation

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Please state any special requirements/preferences (e.g. limited mobility)

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

To:  
LJ Wheeler  
12 Radnor Drive  
Westminster Park  
Chester  
CH4 7PT

Please send the following tickets:

	First	Standard
_____ ad. @£60 _____	_____ ad. @£40 _____	
_____ ch. @£50 _____	_____ ch. @£30 _____	

Total enclosed = £ \_\_\_\_\_

**CHEQUES/P.O.'s PAYABLE PLEASE TO "CHESTER MODEL RAILWAY CLUB"**  
*Please remember to enclose a large Stamped Addressed Envelope*

INT/EM

[ Iain Kirk is a potential recruit to our Group and this 'potted history' should put a little meat onto what is just a bone to most members ...]

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## “Who Are You?”

Well apart from being the title of an album by that ageing 'beat combo' “The Who”... **Who is Iain Kirk?**, you ask. For those of you who think I may have something to do with those coach kits (and I don't), read on.

Essentially, I'm an old MMRS member who once belonged to the S4 group. I live in Liverpool and work as a laboratory technician for Liverpool University. I left the 'Merseyside' some years ago due to other commitments and... Well, shall we say a certain feeling of unease with the move to Brassey Street and leave it at that. I've doodled with S4 for some 20 years or so and have actually built a reasonable amount of wagon stock, which used to trundle around “Plemsworth” and Dr Ian Clark's old pottery layout.

My own interests are essentially LNWR and 'Caley', flowing into pre-war LMS practice. I do tend to appreciate anything that is well done however, whatever and wherever it is... I tend to build wagons – they are easier to cope with. My modelling hiatus has left me with numerous items in varying states of progress; that is well as a sense of having a renewed sense of adventure... A TOPS code means 'naer' a thing to me however...

As regards other things, I sing in my Parish Choir (tour to the Czech Republic this last year); have a passionate interest in photography and like to watch a good game of Rugby. Either code, they're as good as each other to me - St Helens and Scottish Home games being my usual haunts...And I HATE country and western music; my tastes are very broad but please... Even I have some limits...

Iain Kirk

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**Book review by John Dixon: “The last Merseyrail signal boxes and their heritage. Part 1 – the Wirral line”.** Merseyside Railway History Group, 2004. £6.95 (or £7.95 post paid from: M.R.H.G., c/o Ted Lloyd, 22 Surrey Drive, West Kirby, Wirral CH48 2HP). A4 soft back, 64pp.

There have been previous publications [note] by this group, and this latest offering is compiled by a sub-group which has enlisted help from several Signalling Record Society members, two of whom were once employed on the Wirral Line. The area surveyed covers the electrified lines running between West Kirby, New Brighton and Rock Ferry and concentrates, as the title suggests, on those signal boxes which remained until the 1994 introduction of the Sandhills-based signalling system swept them away.

For each box (there were 10 block posts and two gate boxes if we include Carr Lane LC, abolished just months earlier) there is at least one exterior photograph

and for the block posts at least one interior shot. The black-and-white photographs are quite clear enough but what greatly enhances the appeal of the book are the interior colour views; after all, there is much colour in the signal lever frame itself and this is brought out to advantage with these well-reproduced pictures. Accompanying these photographs there is at least one box diagram, sometimes two of different dates for comparison. The diagrams are page-length, computer-generated images produced by Chris Littleworth and anyone who has seen Chris's L&YR signal box diagrams book will know how neat and clear these can be.

The compilers have not restricted their survey strictly to these last dozen boxes and have included a few earlier examples together with some outdoor scenes including an interesting cameo of pre-1938 shots around the Bidston junctions showing a host of signals. There are suitable captions to the photographs and many historical facts of signalling importance in the accompanying text, although one or two locations receive less said about them. It's not all technical though, as depicted in two views of the traditional box cat and a view of the S.R.S. secretary 'relaxing' in the favourite item of box furniture, the armchair!

Very minor niggles are that there are no dates provided to the photographs; Seacombe Junction box (closed 1988) is one of the extra ones photographed in the survey but there is not a box diagram to complete the picture; lastly, a general railway map of the area would be helpful to non-locals! The book is aimed at, presumably, signalling aficionados such as S.R.S. members but for those locals, modellers and any general readers who buy a copy it would have been appropriate to include an explanation of the box classification system, or they can go away with the idea that an 'LMSR 11b type box', for instance, was a railway company term when this designation is actually an S.R.S. term. Also, it did occur to the reviewer that for the little (!) extra effort it would entail, the inclusion of the half dozen or so earlier boxes missing from this North Wirral survey would be very welcome. However, admittedly, it would then have been another book with a different title! Produced on good quality paper the book is remarkably good value.

[Note: "The Hooton to West Kirby branch line and the Wirral Way" (Wirral M.B.C., 1982) is now out of print; but "Railway stations of Wirral" (Boumphrey, 1994) is still available at the same price as this, from Ted Lloyd at the above address].

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**Book review by Ian Clark: "Private owner wagons – a third collection", by Keith Turton. Lightmoor Press, 2004. ISBN 1 899889 16 7**

It is now almost thirty years since Bill Hudson's first essay on Private Owner Wagons was published by Oxford Publishing Company in 1976. In the interim period there have been precious few volumes published on this subject; especially for those with an interest in POWs from the north of England.

The current offering from Keith Turton is his third published volume on the subject in a two year period. The third collection follows much the same style and layout as the

previous two members of the series, the wagons are listed alphabetically with regards to their owners. Bill Hudson's first four volumes are arranged in geographical area, which for me, at least, makes it easier to find wagons of direct interest (my area being the West Riding of Yorkshire).

This third collection covers a little over sixty owners in England and Wales (there were few POWs in Scotland), mainly collieries or coal merchants. Each item contains a monochrome photograph of the wagon(s) with a little historical information and details of livery colour (where known). The book covers wagons from a broad range of builders (Bill Hudson's earlier works relied heavily on the products of Charles Roberts of Wakefield).

The book ends with a bibliography and list of sources of information. This should prove to be a useful book to swell the libraries of those interested in privately owned wagons of the pre-nationalisation era. Let's face it: any book which contains a photograph of a Rotherham area colliery wagon is worth having!

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### **Editor's page:**

It occurred to me today, that with a quarterly publishing schedule, and with just one "Who are you?" column per issue, it will take several years' worth of issues for even our current membership to be covered. So, it seems a good idea to cover two or more members per issue. The shortage of lead time for any other commissioned subject means that I will have to cobble-up something about myself for inclusion in this issue! Every one of us has a history – personal and modelling, and very often unknown to recent acquaintances – which colours our current thinking and attitudes to our colleagues. In a work environment several years back I had occasion to discuss the 'see- ourselves-as-others-see-us' scenario, during which I said I looked upon myself as a 'tolerant and easy-going character'. I was amazed to find that my colleagues thought of me as 'cocky, argumentative and arrogant'! Others were similarly disenchanted. Which points to the difficulty of producing an honest and objective personal autobiography. But I will try!

**"Who are you (David Goodwin)":** Born 1933 in Birkenhead, but brought up in a strongly Wesleyan Methodist village in North Wales by (nominally) Presbyterian parents who were probably more agnostic than theist. Father was an electrician, employed in the aircraft industry (remember this was then WW2 days) and mother, who hailed from South Wales, was a trained Nurse: she was the stronger character in the family. Although I am not a Christian (never christened, baptised or dedicated, etc.), the non-conformist environment in which I spent my youth has left me in opposition to things like gambling; but alcohol and fornication, in moderation, do not worry me! One sister, two years my junior, who now lives most of the year in Portugal. Married Lorna in 1956 while I was still living in Flintshire, and moved to Saughall, where we have lived ever since. Saughall village (four miles to north west of Chester) is just about half-a-mile inside England: Saughall station, which closed in 1954, was actually in Wales, on the ex-M.S.&L.R. Chester to Dee Marsh Junction line. We have two sons and

two daughters and twelve grandchildren. Educated at an Anglican primary school (the only one in the village!), and then Hawarden Grammar School.

Started work as an agricultural labourer in the early 1950s, then had a spell as a civil servant (Inland Revenue), before getting work as a library assistant at Chester City Library. In the 1950s you could finish one job on a Friday and have a wide choice of jobs to go to on the following Monday: swapping jobs was easy! I found library work enjoyable although there were drawbacks such as unsocial hours and not very good pay. The 'plus' points included ready access to lots of books and the fact that the majority of my co-workers were young women!

Anyway, I persevered in library work, passing the necessary professional examinations which gave access to better-paid posts in other local authorities. By this time I was married and got a job at Earlston Road Library in the then independent County Borough of Wallasey. This suited me down to the ground, as in those days my main interest was not in railways but in ships and ship-modelling: every journey to work involved crossing the various bridges over the docks. In those days (late 1950s/early 1960s), Birkenhead docks were far busier than today – partly because turn-round was more protracted of course. And did I take any notice of the rail activity that was still going on at that time??? (You've guessed the answer!).

Next post was with Widnes Borough Council where my interest both in railways and music first started. As well as a large L.P. collection, Widnes Library housed a large number of books on land transport in general and rail transport in particular. This was part of a system whereby libraries volunteered to purchase (and store) a copy of every book published on a particular subject – you would have thought that of north west libraries suitable for housing a collection of railway books, Crewe would have been first choice. But no – Crewe's librarian when this subject specialisation started was not in the slightest interested in railways and neither was their library committee. So, the Widnes librarian at that time, who was a railway enthusiast, volunteered. By the time I got to Widnes, the scheme had been going for several years, and a substantial collection had accumulated which it was my responsibility to upkeep. Thus interest in prototype railways was aroused.

When local government underwent major re-organisation in 1974, and Widnes became part of Cheshire, I transferred to Cheshire County Libraries – working mostly in Chester, not far from Chester station. It was from here that I eventually took early retirement, at the relatively early age of 51, in 1985. I had become increasingly disenchanted with work in a Thatcherite-controlled environment. I finally realised that what I was short of in life was not money but time!

I actually dabbled in modelling (in OO) in the early 1960s, but quickly gave up when it didn't seem to work reliably. Then later in the decade I happened to read in "Model Railway Constructor" about a system called 'Protofour', and this seemed to me a sensible solution to the problems inherent in OO. At about this same time, I happened to be chatting to one of Widnes Library's railway enthusiast borrowers (Tony Miles) who lived in Warrington; he told me that a group of P4 Society members were building a model of the Great Northern Railway (Ireland) at the Birkenhead clubrooms of Merseyside Model Railway Society. Would I like to make some goods brake vans for the layout? I said "yes" – and this introduction to 'real' railway modelling (and also real ale) was the start down the slippery slope, leading via Merseyside Model Railway Society and Wirral Finescale Railway Modellers to Barrowmore Model Railway Group!

These scratch-built brake vans are still running on "Adavoyle Junction" today – the first of a number of wagons and other items I made.

When Tony retired to Shropshire, we persuaded him to take the layout and stock with him, so that we could use the space to build a new 4ft8.5in (as opposed to "Adavoyle's" 5ft3in) gauge model. After much discussion (i.e. argument) we decided to model the Cheshire Lines Committee railway in 1929, and we exhibited the resultant "Plemsworth" model throughout the country until we sold it (with most of the stock) to the Historical Model Railway Society in 1995. What next?

Largely as a response to articulated public demand for "more modern image layouts", a sub-group of the main 'S4 Group' had started a diesel era model based on Mostyn on the North Wales main line as it was in 1977. So we continued with this project, trying to ignore the fact that it had been designed to fit a continuous run into too small a room. There were other intrinsic faults as well, which meant that when we took it out for the first time, to S4 North at Wakefield, we realised that something drastic would have to be done. And it was! The baseboards were rebuilt entirely, using top-quality components, and with much relaxed radii (as befitted a new room), and utilising DCC control. You can see the result today: a quality layout which runs very well, and continues to be in demand throughout the country. Of course, we still have several years-worth of stock building before the layout can be considered 'finished'!

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#### Contents

Next issue .....	2
Forthcoming events .....	3
B.R. totem .....	3
"A visitor to Johnstown Road", by Emlyn Davies .....	4/5
"A short history of Motorail GUV 96137", by Eddie Knorn .....	5/8
Workshop notes .....	8/10
Barrowmore's history .....	11/14
L.Y.R. 'Pug' .....	14
'West Somerset Express' rail-tour (Chester M.R.C.) .....	15
"Who are you?" (Iain Kirk) .....	16
Book review by John Dixon: "The last Merseyrail signal boxes, pt.1" .....	16/17
Book review by Ian Clark: "Private owner wagons – a third collection", by Keith Turton .....	17/18
Editor's page .....	18/20
"Who are you?" (David Goodwin) .....	18/20