



## NEWSLETTER 113 : Sep 2022

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**In Memoriam  
Frank Parkinson  
R.I.P.**

**Editorial**

**Andrew Chrysler**

When were you first bitten by the model railway "bug"? For myself, the bug first came at school, both from watching "Blue Peter" and visiting a friend's house who had a large layout that was lowered on pulleys from the dining room ceiling and featured a steam loco that puffed "real smoke" (or rather, heated oil that was dripped into the funnel). This video is from 1969 and reports on a large display built in a London store-

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=saved&v=406808804561589>

I suppose that many of us started from a childhood interest that developed into something more, and while Pete Waterman's layout is well known, James May also was a childhood model railway fan who went on to bigger and better things (although "better" is arguable, at least before his challenge was revisited.) In 2009, he went on an ambitious quest to show what is possible with old-fashioned toys by using them on a scale never seen before. Five toys were successful but one failed - model trains. The programme was first televised as episode 6 of James May's Toy stories on 25 December 2009, and it transpired that vandalism and theft were the reasons for the failure - things that full size railways are more familiar with. Track was stolen the night before the attempt was made, and coins were placed on some of the remaining track, short circuiting the line power. Linking two Devon towns, Barnstaple and Bideford, the last attempt saw no trains reach their destination and James' own model, a 1970's Hornby Flying Scotsman, failed to even make it out of the car park. A video of the failed attempt is on line at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VAeF1Lb470Q>



*Photo credit - BBC*

James and his team revisited the doomed challenge in 2011 and made another attempt at building the longest ever model railway track - nearly ten miles long. With sturdier track and a new power system, along with Oz Clarke helping out, the teams compete with three different model trains - a

steam locomotive, an electric train, and a modified model train with a unique power source - racing from opposite ends, as a contest between England and Germany, as represented by a team from Miniatur Wunderland. The renewed attempt proved a success, completing what was started in 2009, with the British beating the Germans by being the first to their destination with two trains. A full length video is on line at <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/xja5i0>

Finally - can I make an appeal for newsletter contributions. This month's newsletter is rather smaller than usual, my "article cupboard" having once more run bare.

Please consider contributing articles, photographs, updates on progress of your models, or whatever. Thanks.

I beg to be excused please for these short words. August has not been a good month. With deep sadness I reported that we had lost Frank Parkinson to an unexpected cardiac incident whilst in his armchair at home during the morning of August 11<sup>th</sup>. He had been given the all clear for a hernia procedure the following day. Frank had been a Member since moving up from London in the early 1990's. He was a consummate Modeller particularly in 009 and one of the original group who were building Talisker 1. In mid 2010's Frank was our Chairman for a couple of years and a regular Member of the Management Committee until a year or so ago. Whenever assistance was needed Frank was there.

These words are difficult to write as Frank was a close personal friend. We had enjoyed many holidays together in addition to the Annual Sleeper Trips. In recent years June had joined us (along with other spouses). Our most abiding memories are based around Colorado in September 2015. This was coast to coast USA with Amtrak from New York to the outskirts of San Francisco with over 10 days centred in Denver. Frank, Derek and I were due to be at Machynlleth this weekend for the Corris Exhibition. Barry has stood in as an able replacement.

This weekend is doubly sad as it is exactly one year on from Jim's massive heart attack. For a combination of reasons 2020's Sleeper Trip had various deferments into September 2021. Consequent upon withdrawal of participants including myself at late stage I handed over the bookings ticketing and leadership to Frank at short notice. Our Mr Reliable will be sadly missed.

Frank and Barry were (are) building Talisker2. This will be finished as a constant reminder to us of Frank as a colleague. There is another area we can assist June and family with. Frank was building a small boat – a model ship. Can we find a way to have this completed?

I have summed Frank up as the model of a "rounded person". Family came first, and then close friends, with his multiple interests and hobbies following. His personal qualities of joviality, calmness, thoughtfulness, generosity and respect for others are a beacon in these current times.

Thank you Frank. Rest in Peace.

Tony Kuivala, 25<sup>th</sup> August 2022

## Where's Andrew?

Congratulations to Ian Shulver and Tony Kuivala for correctly identifying the Bridgnorth Cliff Railway.

This month, I am at a model village. Unusually, it does not contain a model railway, because it is in fact an accurate representation of the town in which it is located. Equally unusually, there are no barriers, you actually walk down the streets between the buildings and can reach out and touch them (and possibly even fulfil your Godzilla fantasies). But where am I?



There is a standard gauge railway that is just 220 feet long in Bayside, New Brunswick. It goes from nowhere to nowhere, but it forms a crucial part in the transport of fish from Alaska through the Panama Canal to the eastern United States. For clarity, , I'm not referring to the metals that the "Mules" travel along to draw ships through the canal locks. This railway is much further north, in Canada.

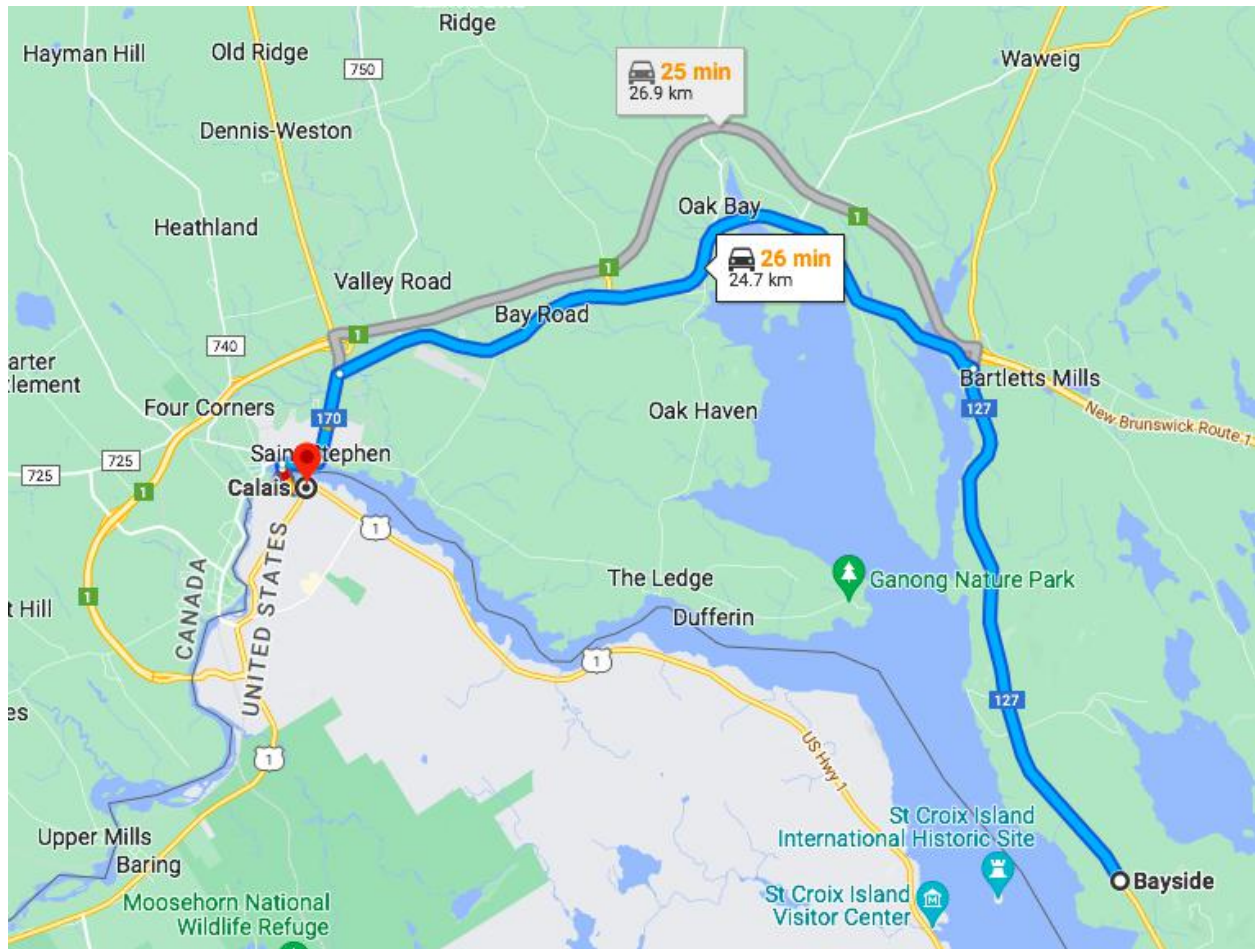


*Above - the Bayside Canadian Railway. Photo:Google street view*

The "Jones Act" forbids the use of foreign flagged vessels to ship goods between two US ports - somewhat akin to the requirement that means that cruise ships must stop at one Canadian port in an Alaskan cruise starting and ending in Seattle. To avoid this requirement, American Seafoods offload their cargo of frozen fish onto trucks in Bayside, which drive up a loading ramp to board a flatbed trailer, which is then shunted up and down the track (a journey of under 1 minute) and then continue their journey by road to cross the border at Calais, Maine, a road journey of 25 minutes, and onwards to the eastern US.

Up until 2012, the New Brunswick Southern Railway had carried the same loads some 30 miles, but American Seafoods changed their operating practice, and it was only in 2021 that the US Customs & Border Patrol took action, by issuing a total of \$350million in penalties for alleged violations of the Jones Act. The company sued in federal court, claiming that the penalties would prevent them from delivering their product and stating that their pollock is a vital part of school lunches (although it is also used in

McDonald's "Filet-o-Fish") and a judge allowed the current practice to continue pending litigation. A switch to imported Russian fish was apparently the first solution considered, but this was in late 2021 and the current conflict with Ukraine means that this is now in doubt.



*Above - the route by road. Source:Google maps.*

Apparently the dispute is because the "third proviso" of the Jones Act permits foreign flagged vessels to transport the cargo part way of the route if a "through route" over a Canadian rail line is also involved in the delivery. CBP argues that the new route is not a "through route". The judge's interim ruling is that CBP must refrain from imposing any further fines or taking enforcement action until the case is fully resolved.

I imagine that a second loading ramp at the other end of the line would be a solution, but no doubt hordes of well paid lawyers would disagree - and who am I to argue. All I will say is that it all sounds like a load of Pollock.

And finally...

