

NARROW GAUGE WORLD

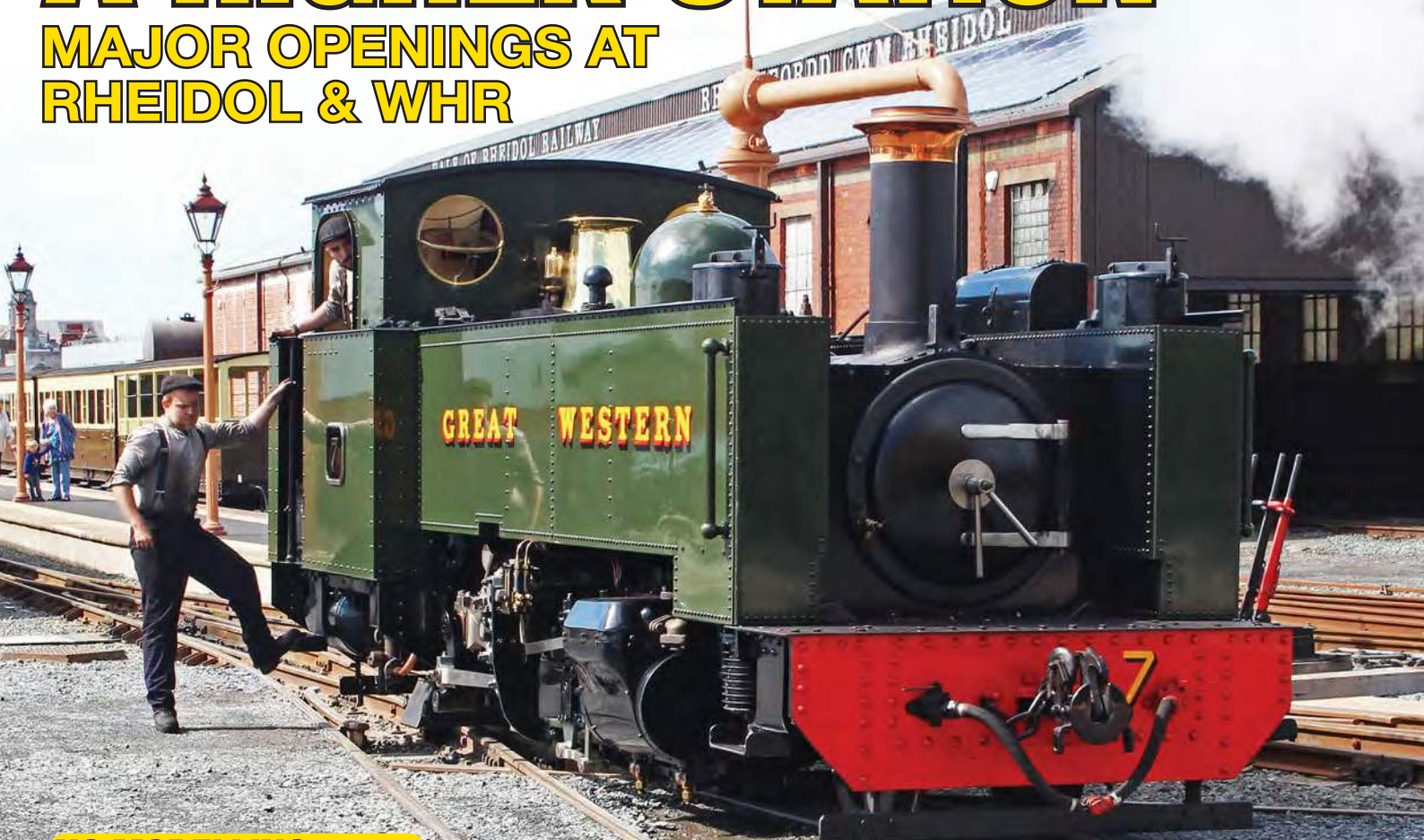
ISSUE 140
JULY 2019



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W&L Coaches



L&B Bogie Open Wagon



L&B Bogie Van



1:13.7 Bagnall 0-4-0ST



L & B 'Yeo' 2-6-2T



I.O.M. 'Mona' 2-4-0T



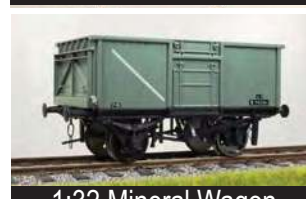
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Cover: The Vale of Rheidol Railway's immaculately restored 20602 tank 'Owain Glyndwr' now has an equally impressive facility to start its trains from following the opening of the new station – fully covered in this issue. The inset shows a remarkable 'coffee pot' loco still working hard in Australia. *Main photo: Andrew Charman, inset: Michael Chapman*

NARROW GAUGE WORLD is published nine times per year.

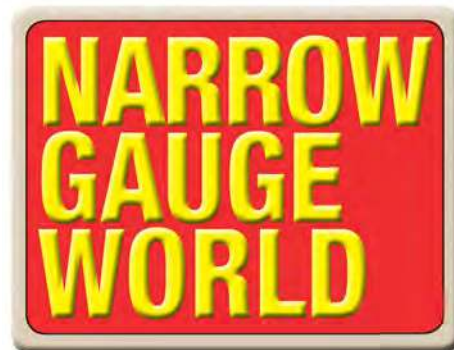
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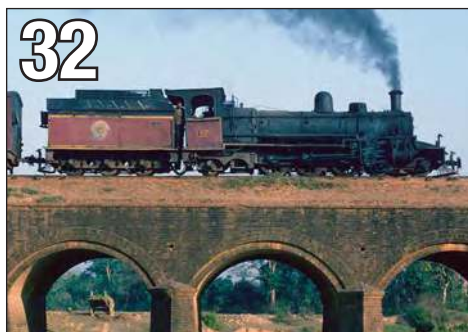
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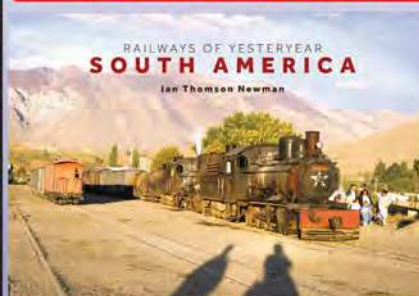


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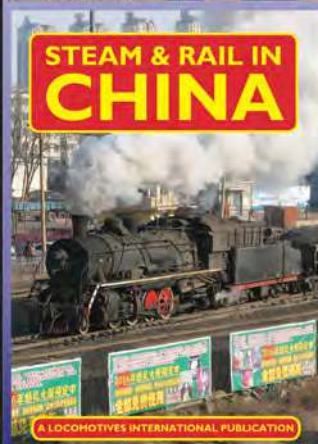
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Building a strong future



"It was clear from talking to local dignitaries from Caernarfon at the launch event that the town is very proud of its station..."

Photo: Caernarfon is an impressive modern station, but Waunfawr is equally impressive for faithfully replicating the original built 140 years earlier. Completing this picture is England 0-4-OST 'Prince and the Ffestiniog heritage stock. **Photo:** Andrew Charman

Welcome to *NGW* and deadline week has been particularly manic this month, but for the very best reasons with two outings that demonstrate the health of the UK narrow gauge.

As editor of the only UK newstand magazine specialising in the narrow gauge, I'm not surprised to be invited to special events, such as the opening of a rebuilt station – once every couple of years on average. But to go to three station openings in the space of one week was a little unusual to say the least!

First it was a short trip west to Aberystwyth and the opening of the Vale of Rheidol's new facility. I've said it before but the way this line has erupted out of the shadows in recent years to become one of the most exciting UK narrow gauge venues is nothing short of amazing.

And we know that the pace won't be slowing – before long we will be going back to Aber to see further developments, the complete remodelling of the former standard gauge shed, eventually a large new museum. And personally I'm looking forward to the first steaming of the line's recently acquired Garratt, which we were able to view under overhaul in the impressive workshops.

Caernarfon statement

Just a week later and it was a trip north this time, for firstly the opening of the Welsh Highland Railway's head-turning new station at Caernarfon. Now I had passed

by this site while it was under construction, but not seen inside it and it was something I was really looking forward to, particularly as the design of this building has caused quite some controversy.

The argument, expressed in the letters pages of this magazine, is that such a building is inappropriate for a heritage railway. Except that in this case such arguments don't hold up. The Welsh Highland Railway is not a typical heritage line by any means, and to be honest there is little heritage to be protected on a location that before the revived line was built had never been a station, and which is served by trains hauled by former South African Railways Garratt locomotives.

The new station building is certainly very impressive – it has been designed to be an integral part of a regeneration of the quayside area in which it is sited, and it was clear from talking to local dignitaries from Caernarfon at the launch event that the town is very proud of its station. And for that the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway should be congratulated.

Heritage in action

Anyone with lingering arguments that the FF&WHR values its heritage had their doubts erased the very same afternoon, when a special train pulled out of Caernarfon heading a few miles down the line to the small station of Waunfawr.

When the line was rebuilt, it was decided that the trains planned, far bigger than anything seen in the

days of the old WHR, required the building of an island platform at the very tight location of Waunfawr. The old, derelict station building was in the way of this platform, but it wasn't demolished, it was dismantled, stone by stone, and these then carefully stored.

Now they have been incorporated in a new building, which while totally constructed to modern standards, visually faithfully replicates the original. It is completely right for its location – just as the new station at Caernarfon is completely right for its location...

Finding a future fuel

I was pleased to receive news from the Statfold Barn Railway detailing plans to restore a locomotive as a test bed for researching more eco-friendly oil firing. Talking to Statfold founder Graham Lee at the Caernarfon event, it is clear that ensuring our railways are able to continue running in the face of growing environmental pressures is greatly exercising his mind, and it is good to see that he is making every effort to find a solution.

The cold hard fact remains that steam locomotives are not exactly environmentally-friendly machines, and the pressure to burn less coal is going to grow, at the same time as coal becomes steadily more difficult to get hold of. This is very likely the biggest challenge facing heritage railways in the future, and we will be taking a more in-depth look at the issue soon in *NGW*.

Andrew Charman



Eight days – three new stations open

In an unprecedented display of the health of today's UK narrow gauge three new station buildings were opened over the space of eight days in June.

First was the Vale of Rheidol Railway, where a totally remodelled terminus at Aberystwyth was opened on 6th June by Lord Elis-Thomas, Welsh Government Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport.

Even a torrential downpour could not dampen the enthusiasm as Lord Thomas cut the ribbon celebrating completion of the first phase of a £2.1-million programme at the station. "The experience here in Aberystwyth is truly fantastic, it celebrates the history of this railway which is extremely important to Wales and our culture," he said.

On 13th June the scene switched to the Caernarfon terminus of the Welsh Highland Railway where the new and striking station building was opened by Sir Peter Luff, chair of the National Heritage Lottery Fund. The building has been part

funded, like the Aberystwyth project, by the European Regional Development Fund which forms part of the European Union's EU-funded TAD Destination Program and the TMF Regeneration Fund.

"What has happened here today is very exciting indeed," said Sir Peter. "It is a 21st century gateway to centuries of industrial heritage, a big boost to the economy, jobs and the whole of Caernarfon, it's a great day for the whole of north-west Wales."

Later the same day a special train on the WHR conveyed guests to Waunfawr station for the opening of its new building, which in total contrast to the modern station at Caernarfon is a faithful replica of the original structure built by the North Wales Narrow Gauge Railway in 1877.

A private benefactor provided the funds for the FF&WHR to construct the station building, and GM Paul Lewin stressed the importance of such projects. "We are proud to be opening a wonderful new facility in Caernarfon but we must be



mindful of our heritage, which is why the new building at Waunfawr is so important," he said.

Three new stations – News Focus page 14

New station 1 (top left); Vale of Rheidol CEO Robert Gambrell holds a vital umbrella as Dafydd Ellis Thomas opens the new Aberystwyth station on 6th June. New station 2 (top); De Winton 'Chaloner' provides a suitable backdrop as National Lottery Heritage Fund chairman Sir Peter Luff opens the Welsh Highland Railway's Caernarfon station on 14th June, and new station 3 (above); later the same day Waunfawr station building is opened by Lord Dafydd Wigley. Photos: Andrew Charman

Statfold to restore Tamar as eco-friendly oil burner

Visible in the workshops at the Statfold Barn Railway Enthusiasts Day on 8th June was the boiler of Hunslet 'Tamar' 0-4-2T no 3756 built in 1952. The start on restoring this locomotive also commences research by Statfold to find an answer to increasing pressures on the use of coal.

The loco is to be restored to run on oil, but while Hunslet did build one Tamar to burn fuel oil, the Statfold example will be a platform to test alternative types of organic oils that could be used in the fuel process.

"Here at Statfold we are looking to experiment with all these different types of oils to try to limit the effect of steam locomotives on the environment, looking to reduce their carbon footprint," an SBR spokesman said.

No 3756 was one of four Tamars purchased by the Cameroon Development

Corporation, the central African nation's national agricultural organisation. After withdrawal it was displayed for several years on a banana plantation before Statfold acquired it in March 2017.

Machining and boiler work will be undertaken by the Trust, while help with the restoration will also be provided by the

team at a private workshop in Killamarsh, Derbyshire, already responsible for past restorations including Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0WT no 1238.

Below left: Works picture of the Tamar and (below) shortly after arrival at Statfold.

Photos: SBR and Andrew Charman





Rheidol to reveal three hidden locos at Gala

Three steam locomotives out of public sight for decades will be the centrepiece attraction of the Vale of Rheidol Railway's 'Forgotten Engines' steam festival on 14th-15th September.

Quarry Hunslet 0-4-0ST 'Nesta' (704/1899) will be seen in public for the first time since being rescued from a swamp in Puerto Rico and repatriated to the UK in 2016 by VoR CEO Robert Gambrell. Nesta, the last remaining unrestored former Penrhyn slate quarry Hunslet, will be returning to Wales for the first time since it was exported from the quarry to the USA in July 1965.

Also making their UK public debut will be Maffei-built 'Brigadelok' 0-8-0T 4766 of 1916 (DFB no 968), built for the

German military and imported by the VoR in 2002 after being purchased in a French auction, and Borsig 0-4-0WT 20HP Type 2 5913 of 1906. This engine was built for the Briqueteries, Modernes N.V., Knokke - zvevegem in Belgium and purchased by the VoR in 1994. A second Borsig is privately owned by VoR chairman Peter Rampton.

All three engines will be displayed in the Aberystwyth workshops, viewable on guided tours of the facility as part of the festival. Also on show will be work in progress on other restoration projects, likely including the line's Hanomag 2-6-2+2-6-2 NG/G13 Garratt (10551/1927) no 60, which is undergoing overhaul ahead of working on the railway.

Also expected to be on show will be the

Welsh Highland Heritage Railway's Baldwin 10-12-D 4-6-0T WDLR no 794 (44699/1917), currently under restoration, and the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway's Beyer Peacock 0-6-0T No. 822 'The Earl', which was set to arrive in Aberystwyth for major overhaul in June.

The three VoR 2-6-2Ts will work an intensive timetable during the festival while also offering 'Driver for a Fiver' experiences at Aberystwyth. Hunslet 0-4-0ST 'Margaret' will continue its summer roster on similar opportunities at Devil's Bridge.

Above: 'Nesta', the Brigadelok and Borsig will all be on display in public for the first time in the UK at the VoR's festival in September.

Photos: VoR

Queen's Award 'is Llanfair line's MBE'

The Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway has been honoured with the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, the highest accolade a voluntary organisation can receive in the UK.

The award, often described as 'the MBE for volunteer groups' was announced by Buckingham Palace in a special edition of *The London Gazette* published on 2nd June, the anniversary of the Queen's coronation.

The citation reads that the W&LLR is honoured for "Operating an eight-mile steam railway to demonstrate how it served its rural Mid-Wales community from Edwardian times."

The W&LLR is an almost entirely volunteer organisation, with only five salaried staff. A total of around 290 volunteers work in all areas of the line from crewing of the trains, to maintenance and restoration of the rolling stock and track to keeping the lineside vegetation at bay.

The railway was nominated for the award by Stephen Kaye, the Mayor of Welshpool, and he highlighted the educational value of the railway's activities and the benefit to the area of the more than 26,000 visitors which the line brings to the region each year.

Two long-standing volunteers of the line were advised of the impending award in confidence and invited to a Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace on 21st May. John Jacobs, who volunteers on the line

four days a week and regularly performs a duty manager role, said, "the railway draws volunteers from all walks of life, and it was an honour for steam fireman John Meekums and me to represent all of them on this very special occasion."

W&LLR chairman Steve Clews described the award as "a real honour for all those volunteers who have worked so hard over the last 60 years to make the railway what it is today."

The award will be presented to the W&LLR by Tia C Jones, the Lord Lieutenant of Powys at an event on the line later in the year.

The Queen's Award for Voluntary

Service was created in 2002 to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee, and aims to recognise outstanding work by volunteer groups to benefit their local communities. The Welshpool & Llanfair is one of 281 charities, social enterprises and voluntary groups to receive the prestigious award this year. Previous winners have included the Tallylyn Railway, Leighton Buzzard Railway and the Metropolitan Water Board Railway Society.

Below: Track gangs, train crew and all the other volunteers on the Welshpool & Llanfair have been recognised with a Queen's Award.

Photo: Kevin Heywood/W&LLR





Nancy brings back steam 60 years on

Newly restored Avonside 0-6-0T 'Nancy' (NGW138 page 6) has steamed again at a station that last saw trains 60 years ago – but sadly not on rails.

The loco's owners, the Cavan and Leitrim Railway took it on a low-loader to the Ballinamore Vintage and Family Festival on Sunday 2nd June. This event was held on the site of the original CLR station, once the headquarters of the last purely narrow gauge Irish railway.

Nancy, built in 1908 for the Northamptonshire ironstone industry and owned by the CLR since 1997, was on its first outing since being returned to the Irish preservation project following the completion of restoration by Alan Keef Ltd.

The loco proved a major attraction at the festival, the first steam loco to stand in

front of the former station building since the line was closed in 1959.

Michael Kennedy of today's CLR described the invitation to Ballinamore as a privilege. "We had a very successful day – a lot of people saw their very first steam engine," he said.

Michael added that many visitors to the loco remembered the old CLR, and some had family who had worked on the railway.

Nancy will be making further visits across Leitrim as part of commemorations of the closure of the line – its next appearance was set to be at the Tóstal festival in Drumshanbo on 30th June.

Above: 'Nancy' in steam on its low-loader outside the Ballinamore station building that last hosted trains 60 years ago. Photo: CLR



■ After a long period with seemingly little happening progress on the Glyn Valley Tramway revival at Chirk is ramping up. The latest Glyn Valley Tramway Trust working party at the station has exposed a short stretch of double-width trackbed while a significant length of the original platform edge has also been revealed.

GVTT spokesman *Rick Wilson*, who took the picture, told NGW that some of the lower courses of bricks of the original demolished station building have been uncovered and the original bricks recovered – these will be used in reconstruction of the station.

Extremes at Corris Gala

Chances of a successful Gala on the Corris Railway on Sunday 26th May looked bleak when the first train left Corris in steady fine rain with a single passenger.

However by lunchtime trains were leaving Corris with every seat occupied and passengers waiting, resulting in the line cancelling a pair of planned demonstration freight trains in favour of extra passenger services. Corris school also kindly offered the use of its car park to relieve pressure on the railway's limited facilities.

By the time of next year's Gala construction of carriage 23 should have been completed by the volunteer workforce at Maespoeth Junction – visitors were able to see progress on this vehicle and the steelwork of a further example, no 24.

Extension work for Apedale Gala

As NGW went to press final preparations were underway ahead of the Moseley Railway Trust's 'Swords to Ploughshares' event at the Apedale Valley Railway on 29th-30th June.

Competing the quartet of events which included 'Tracks to the Trenches' galas in 2014, 2016 and 2018, Swords to Ploughshares marks the centenary of the Versailles Treaty, which formally ended the First World War. It is described as a military-themed weekend but with a difference, focusing on how military railway equipment was used after the guns had fallen silent.

As in previous events all the facilities at Apedale will be utilised, with three engines operating on the main running line, models and traders in the Aurora North building, and the Field Railway in operation. Last-minute work has been underway to complete an extension to this line which includes building an embankment and turning the two parallel sidings at the far end of the line into a proper loop.

Admission to Swords to Ploughshares is £6 adults, £3 children and it is open from 10.30am each day.

Meanwhile the MRT is seeking to boost contributions to a £1500 appeal to repair its 1931-built Deutz diesel, described as one of most popular non-steam locos in the collection at Apedale.

The only one of its kind in the UK, the former sewage works loco was noted to have a 'wobbly flywheel' when last operated and investigation showed a significant crack in one of the flywheels requiring a specialist weld repair.

Donations can be made at www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/apedaledeutz



Brecon's second Baldwin almost ready for service

The Brecon Mountain Railway's second large Baldwin tender locomotive has steamed for the first time, the long-term restoration of no 1 'Santa Teresa' (15511/1897) now virtually complete.

The loco was built as a 2-6-0 with tender for the Mogyana Railway in Brazil. This line later sold it to the Santa Teresa Sugar Mill where it was converted to 2ft 6in gauge and worked until 1976.

The Baldwin arrived in the UK in 1990 and restoration, including a return to 2ft gauge, began but was soon abandoned. The BMR purchased the engine in 2002 and

began a long restoration, including building a new boiler and converting the loco to a 2-6-2 wheel arrangement.

Resplendent in a Brunswick green finish, the Baldwin will be undergoing final testing in coming weeks. Its entry into service will be much awaited – unspecified issues with Baldwin 4-6-2 61269 of 1930 has seen the line operating with its 0-4-0WT 'Graf Schwerin-Lowitz' and only running to Dolygaer as the Jung tank is not powerful enough to work up the steeper grades to the south Wales line's terminus at Torpantau.

Photo: BMR

■ The Bala Lake Railway's combined maintenance shed for rolling stock and heritage centre is now open at the line's Llanuwchllyn terminus. Phase one of the BLR's Red Dragon project, the shed attracted funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. *Photo: Peter Johnson*



■ The double firehole door gives it away – this is the boiler for the new double Fairlie 'James Spooner' that is currently being built by the Ffestiniog Railway. *Peter Johnson* pictured the boiler in build at Powys Steel Fabrications near Oswestry, Shropshire – it will be completed at the FR's Boston Lodge workshops.



BRIEF LINES



Chaloner at Caernarfon

Leighton Buzzard-based De Winton 0-4-0VBT 'Chaloner' has been working on the Welsh Highland Railway ahead of its role in the WHR's 'Past, Present Future' Gala on 21st-23rd June. On 14th June the loco was at Caernarfon, across the road from where it was built in De Winton's factory in 1877, for the official opening of the station. Over the Gala Chaloner was set to be shunting and hauling slate wagons between Porthmadog Harbour Station and Boston Lodge works. *Photo: Andrew Charman*

Record days at Bala

The Bala Lake Railway broke two records over its late May Bank Holiday Gala, for the most passengers carried on a single day on the Sunday, three more than the equivalent Sunday two years ago, and for the railway's busiest May bank holiday weekend ever. Passenger numbers for May were up 17 per cent on 2018, year-to-date figures improving 16 per cent.

Cliff line's weight issues

Britain's steepest funicular, the 3ft 6in gauge Bridgnorth Cliff Railway in Shropshire, made national newspaper headlines in early June when it admitted that its carriages had required strengthening due to today's passengers getting heavier. Malvern Tipping, director of the 1891-built line, told the *Telegraph* that the extra weight of passengers had been jamming the doors.

Bala rescues Mini

The Bala Lake Railway's workshop came to the rescue of a Mini that damaged its exhaust pipe on a speed bump at the Bala Festival of Transport on 26th-27th May. The car was carefully backed over the pit in the empty loco shed and the exhaust pipe rapidly repaired by the BLR's Rob Houghton.



Talylllyn watering point project gets £4K boost

Talylllyn Railway plans to reconstruct the original locomotive watering point at Ty Dŵr between Abergynolwyn and Nant Gwernol have been boosted by a £4,000 sponsorship from leading railway holiday specialist PTG Tours.

The railway launched an appeal last November, aiming to rebuild the watering point built for the TR's opening in 1865. This appeal has now raised more than £1200 and added to PTG's sponsorship and other offers of support there is now sufficient finance available to move forward with the project.

The watering point was used to supply locomotives based in the railway's original locomotive shed at Ty Dŵr, before the current shed at Tywyn Pendre came into use in 1867. When the siding to the shed was taken out the watering point was extended so that locomotives could watered on the then mineral extension to the base of the first incline to Bryn Eglwys quarry, now Nant Gwernol station.

The watering point was demolished in the 1950s and the slate blocks used to build

a retaining wall where there had been a landslip further down the line at Dolgoch.

In the 1970s the original mineral extension was opened up for passenger services and a considerable quantity of spoil was deposited on the site of the watering point as part of the work. Much of this will need to be removed to allow reconstruction.

The project was conceived as part of the TR's contribution to Gwynedd County Council's bid for UNESCO World Heritage status for the North Wales Slate Industry. "We set up the Ty Dŵr Appeal last year expecting that it would take a lot longer to raise the money than it has," commented TR Preservation Society chairman, Ian Drummond.

"We are most grateful to PTG Tours for their sponsorship of this project and to Paul Spracklen who has facilitated it, which means the appeal has met its target. Now the challenge is to make the reconstruction a reality and make a little bit of our lost heritage live again."

PTG Tours plans to support further heritage projects on the TR in the future.

Talylllyn takes tourism award

The Talylllyn Railway was named 'Tourism Business of the Year' at the annual North Wales Tourism awards on 23rd May.

The prestigious and much coveted award was made in recognition of the contribution made by the TR to the tourism industry in North Wales.

The citation highlighted the line's progress "making it one of the main attractions in this area; working with the local community and schools; working with local environmental groups showing commitment to reducing its carbon footprint and working with sister organisations through the involvement with the 'Great Little Trains of Wales'."

TR general manager Stuart Williams was delighted to accept the award on behalf of the railway. "The award is a fitting testament to the efforts that have been put in over the past year to heighten the profile of the railway," he said.

Late last year the TR won an award for its marketing at the separate Go North Wales Tourism Awards.

Below: Talylllyn volunteer co-ordinator Jack Evans and general manager Stuart Williams show off the award plaque.

Photo: TR



■ The Apedale Valley Light Railway took delivery of its second bogie carriage purchased from the Ffestiniog Railway on 10th June. No 120, built in 1980 and known colloquially at the FR as a 'Tin Car' has been made redundant by more recent vehicles, and has now joined the similar no 117 in Staffordshire. Work will need to be done to make it suitable for use, notably the fitting of appropriate brakes, and it is unlikely to be operating at the Moseley Railway Trust's 'Swords to Ploughshares' Gala at Apedale on 29th-30th June.

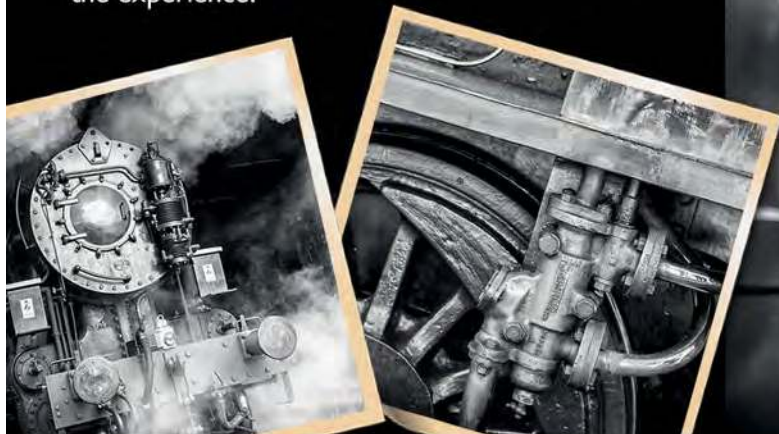
The same low-loader that delivered the carriage took away the line's Kerr, Stuart Joffre 0-6-0T that is to enjoy a brief holiday on the Bala Lake Railway.

Photo: MRT

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Duke sees progress on Lord Granby

The local history group cosmetically restoring Hudswell Clarke 0-4-0ST 'Lord Granby', built in 1902, has been able to show off progress to their patron.

The Duke of Rutland's residence at Belvoir Castle is just five miles from the workshop where the Eastwell History Group is working on the loco, featured in *NGW* 97, following an agreement with the Leeds Industrial Museum.

The Lord Granby name is that of the Duke's oldest son and heir and reflects that the loco worked its entire life for the Eastwell Iron Ore Company on and around the Duke's Belvoir estate.

Restoration has so far been underway for six years and dismantling of the loco has revealed a number of short-term 'fixes' from its later years of operation, which all have had to be corrected by seeking replacement parts or remanufacturing them.

The loco's bottom end is now almost complete with the frame refurbished and wheels, axles and bearings restored.

Meanwhile the cab, bunkers, smokebox, tank and chimney have been restored to

represent their final working configuration.

The team are now looking forward to the frame being lifted back onto the axles and Lord Granby starting to look more like a locomotive again

– a significant achievement considering those involved are not part of the heritage railway scene but a local history group.

Above: Much progress has been made in the cosmetic restoration of 'Lord Granby'.

Above right: The smokebox and saddle tank await refitting.

Right: The Duke of Rutland with the restored saddle tank bearing his son's title.

Below: Frames ready to receive their wheels.



■ Received just too late for inclusion in last month's issue was this picture of the length of track that Exmoor Associates has laid at Snapper Halt on the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway. The move is without doubt a statement of intent as the halt's location, 2.5 miles outside Barnstaple, means that it is unlikely to be connected to the revived L&B for some years. *Photo: Exmoor Associates*



■ The Statfold Barn Railway endured what many described as its wettest ever Enthusiasts' Day on 8th June. Numbers were well down on the norm both on the Saturday and the following day's family day, though SBR spokesman Henry Noon told *NGW* that more visitors came than expected considering the weather conditions.

A new addition to the Statfold fleet is the replica Sandy River and Rangeley Lakes Railroad Parlor Car, built for Adrian Shooter by the Ffestiniog Railway. Adrian has sold the carriage to Statfold ahead of the relocation of his Beeches Light Railway (*NGW* 138).

Photos: Peter Johnson



Manx lines ready for Heritage gala

Railways and tramways on the Isle of Man are gearing up for the island's annual Manx Heritage Transport Festival, which will offer a wide range of attractions to enthusiasts between 24th and 28th July.

The first two days will both feature parallel runs on the double track of the Manx Electric Railway (MER), while highlights of the 24th will include a vintage bus tour also featuring the Isle of Man Steam Railway (IoMSR), Groudle Glen Railway and MER, as well as following the routes of closed lines.

Bespoke tram and trailer combinations will feature on the MER over the first two days, while visitors will be able to try their hands at driving MER cars on the 25th, and enjoy a special evening event at the Port Erin Railway Museum.

Friday features tours of the MER's Derby Castle workshops, a bus tour of the closed IoMSR lines to Peel and Ramsey, trams in service paying tribute to cars that have been lost from the fleet and an evening photo session featuring MER 'Tunnel Cars'.

Among a packed programme on Saturday 27th are tours of the IoMSR workshop, running shed and signal box at Douglas, a travelling post office on the steam railway, a guided walk on the route of the long-closed Upper Douglas Cable Tramway and an evening photo shoot at the IoMSR's Douglas station.

On the final day, the MER will run an intensive service while its Laxey station and the IoMSR's locomotive 'Fenella' will both celebrate their 125th birthdays. Jurby Transport Museum in the north of the island will also get in on the fun, staging a vintage running day featuring its road vehicle collection.

Full details of these and other events throughout the festival's five days, together with prices for specific attractions, are available on a leaflet available from the island's public transport website at www.gov.im/publictransport

Horse trams get on track a month late

The Douglas Horse Tramway finally opened its 2019 running season on Friday 24th May, a month late. The delays were caused by relocation of the tram route as part of the major refurbishment of Douglas promenade, and initially the horse tram service is running over a length of less than half a mile, compared to the full 1.3-mile route to the island's Sea Terminal.

NARROW GAUGES NEWS EXTRA
See pages 42-43



■ Manx public transport manager Ian Longworth has revealed in a media interview his desire to restore the Isle of Man Steam Railway's final steam locomotive 'Mannin' (6296/1926), the most powerful of the Beyer Peacock 2-4-0Ts built for the line. Mannin has not been used since 1964 and has spent many years in the railway's museum at Port Erin. However Mr Longworth now wants to see it return to service in time for the 150th anniversary of the opening of the Douglas to Peel line in 2023. Mannin is expected to be removed from the museum during the coming winter for work to begin.
Photo (taken in 2011): Andrew Charman



■ The removal of Mannin from the museum will leave a large hole which is set to be filled by Beyer Peacock 2-4-0T no 1 'Sutherland', the line's original locomotive. This is currently under cosmetic restoration as the picture above shows.

■ Right: Alongside Sutherland in the Douglas workshop, diesel no 21 has now been back on its bogies for some time following remedial work on them by Hunslet. It is expected to be out testing shortly but following the controversy surrounding this locomotive the railway is expected to conduct the trials as much as possible away from the public's gaze.

Photos: David Lloyd-Jones





Station to station on the NG

Andrew Charman enjoys a whistle-stop tour of a host of brand-new narrow gauge civil engineering.



Above: The new Aberystwyth station boasts a 'crinkly tin' Great Western look. The running shed/workshop built in 2012 is to the rear.

Upper left: Great Western pagoda style for the much praised new toilet block.

Centre left: The new platforms – plans are in hand for the former standard-gauge shed.



Lower left: A carriage shed will be built on the vacated space.

Below: Impressive new coaling tower.

Photos: Andrew Charman



As related in the editorial and the AUK news pages, the past few weeks have seen an unprecedented three rebuilt stations officially opened, and in this feature we are taking a slightly deeper look at them.

First of the three was the Vale of Rheidol Railway's terminus at Aberystwyth, which was officially opened by Lord Dafydd Elis Thomas on 6th June and forms phase one of a major redevelopment of the site.

The VoR won a £1.6 million grant from the European Union for the project, dubbed 'Wales to the World' and seeing the line collaborate with tourism body Visit Wales.

Traditionally VoR trains have left from the former Carmarthen platform of the standard gauge main line station, while both locos and stock have been maintained in the former standard gauge engine shed.

All change at Aber

A new workshop was built in 2012 and one end of this now forms the line's running shed. Over the past winter the tracks from the standard-





gauge station have been cut back and a completely new facility built adjacent to the line's existing car park.

The new structures are very attractive, in Great Western Railway corrugated iron style, with the toilet block in particular attracting many positive comments at the launch for its pagoda-form exterior and period style interior.

Loco crews also now have it easier on the line, with new ashpits and an impressive overhead coaling facility.

However the work carried out so far is just the start of the plans. Future additions will see a carriage shed built on the space released at the former platforms, and the former standard gauge engine shed turned into a cafe, museum and multi-purpose facility, with a target date of March 2021 for its completion.

Longer-term plans include adding a much larger museum alongside the new workshop to display locos gathered by the VoR and the Phyllis Rampton Trust that owns it.

Modern image

Eight days after the Rheidol event the Welsh Highland Railway opened its flagship Caernarfon station building. There was never previously a station at the spot where the revived WHR terminated in the coastal town when it was rebuilt over the former standard gauge trackbed, and ever since the line opened in 1997 facilities at Caernarfon had been temporary.

With no heritage to replicate the railway decided on a modern structure and similarly to the VoR the new £3m station was part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund through the Welsh Government. It forms a key part of the £16m Waterfront Development Project led by Gwynedd County Council to boost the historic area around Caernarfon castle.

The railway held a number of public consultation events in the town to canvass ideas and

“With no heritage to replicate the railway decided on a modern structure...”

Top: The exterior look of the new Caernarfon station has attracted some controversy but is certainly a striking structure.

Upper right: The WHR now has an overdue proper station in Caernarfon.

Centre right: The bright and airy interior should impress visitors.

Right: Plenty of space for displays of vital sales items.

» All photos: Roger Dimmick/FFWHR





suggestions from local residents and visitors into the new two-storey design, which includes retail space, a spacious modern interpretation area showcasing the history of the quayside area and the railway, and a new 'Caffi De Winton' adjacent to a display featuring locomotive 'Watkin' built yards away at the De Winton works in 1893. **NGW**, meanwhile is

particularly impressed by the inclusion of bespoke facilities for loco crews to take a break between turns.

Construction commenced in February 2017 but suffered delays, notably when a long forgotten gas main was discovered under the site, and the pipe had to be re-routed before work could resume.

All at the opening ceremony



Top and left: The new Waunfawr building is a faithful replica of the original.

Above: Minimalist interior – winter track crews will welcome fire!

Photos above Chris Parry/FFWHR, below Andrew Charman

agreed the wait was worthwhile, FF&WHR Company and Trust chairman Dr John Prideaux emphasising the importance of the style of structure built. "It deliberately looks to the future, it provides the space needed for those using our trains," he said, adding; "we have tried to make sure it is in a form that is useful for other things, it has great acoustics and it has already hosted artists. It will bring economic cultural and social benefits, and a great community space to Caernarfon."

Faithful replica

Those not convinced by the new Caernarfon structure would have been much happier with the new building at the WHR's Waunfawr station, that was opened on the same day. This faithfully replicates the original structure built by the North Wales Narrow Gauge Railway in 1877 and which was dismantled when the WHR was revived to provide an island platform on the cramped site.

The remains of the original building were labelled and stored for future use and incorporated in the new building, construction work on which was able to commence during the autumn of last year following a donation from a benefactor.

The new structure includes a waiting room area, toilets and space for signalling equipment. **NGW**



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The loco that refused to die...



Resita 0-8-0T no 764.423 has been successfully returned to steam in **ROMANIA** – despite having previously been cannibalised and then dismantled in the UK.

The former forestry locomotive, built in 1954, was imported into the UK in the mid 1990s for the proposed Ystwyth Valley Railway scheme, which would have seen a narrow gauge railway built on the former standard gauge trackbed toward Carmarthen south of Aberystwyth. After this scheme failed, the loco was stored for a short time in the open at the Teifi Valley Railway and then



donated to the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway in 2004.

Any plans to restore 764.423 to service were ended by the W&LLR's acquisition of sister Resita 764.425, which was overhauled by CFI Criscior in Romania prior to its delivery to Wales in operating condition. However this engine experienced problems and component failures on the steeply graded Welshpool line, and 764.423 became a source of spare running gear parts for its sibling, being steadily cannibalised.

Eventually the loco's boiler was separated from the chassis and sold to a company researching new methods of water treatment for steam locomotives, being moved to the Vale of Rheidol Railway at Aberystwyth. The chassis was left rusting at the W&LLR, but when 764.425 was sold back to CFI Criscior in 2016 the company also acquired the chassis and the boiler of 764.423.

Remarkably, the locomotive has since been completely rebuilt by CFI Criscior, and has entered service pulling tourist trains at Moldovita in Eastern Romania – a true case of a locomotive refusing to pass into history!

Above: 764.423, fully restored and pulling trains at Moldovita.

Photo: Ralf Kirion/CFI Criscior

Left: The loco was in a rather less healthy condition when it arrived at the Welshpool & Llanfair in pouring rain in 2004.

Photo: W&LLR

Selfie-taking tourists force fitting of safety rails



Inconsiderate passengers are being blamed for the fitting of guard rails to semi-open carriages on KiwiRail 3ft 6in gauge tourist trains in **NEW ZEALAND**.

The measures were taken after several instances of passengers ignoring warning notices and leaning far out of carriages to take 'selfie photos' with the train, scenery or both as a background.

While there have been no injuries in the eight years the trains have been operating on three highly scenic routes, according to reports in New Zealand KiwiRail was warned by the Health and Safety executive that the viewing platforms in the carriages would have to be closed and modified by the fitting of the safety rails – a modified vehicle is shown on trial at left.

One traveller told *NGW* that pictures he had previously taken without leaning out, featuring the train on sharp curves, would now be impossible following the fitting of the guard rails.

Alishan Shay on the move – to Slovakia?

Pictures on social media in early April showed the Alishan Forest Railroad's Shay locomotive no SL17, which has long been on static display outside a hotel on the **TAIWAN** line's mountain route, on a low loader apparently heading for the workshops in Chiayi.

No news was released regarding a future for the 18-tonne two-cylinder articulated loco, built in 1913, though reports in the Far East island nation suggested it was heading for an inspection ahead of potential restoration to full working order.

Currently of a fleet of 20 Shays still on the Alishan line just two,

SL25 and SL31, are operational on the line, and these are both the larger 25-tonne type so the restoration of the smaller 17-tonne version will excite enthusiasts. No SL14, a 17-tonne Shay, is displayed at the Puffing Billy Railway in Australia.

However no-one in Taiwan is commenting on rumours that the movement of the loco might be ahead of it going to the Cierny Hron Railway in Slovakia. This line signed a 'sister railway agreement' with the Alishan in December, and at the time officials of the Slovakian line expressed a desire to acquire a Shay for restoration.



Main line regulations put Sandstone under threat

The future of the Sandstone Heritage Trust's locomotive collection, one of the largest and most extensive in the world, has been thrown into doubt by new regulations imposed by the **SOUTH AFRICAN** rail regulator.

Currently the collection and railway is described as 'mothballed' as founder Wilfred Mole takes a stand against increasingly draconian and expensive regulations.

Sandstone is currently in what it describes as "a very high level dialogue" with the rail regulator, insisting that a Heritage Railway specification version of the regulations needs to be developed, specifically for 2ft gauge railways that are isolated from the rest of the rail network in the country.

"The Rail Safety Regulator (RSR) has only one specification in South Africa and we are being treated as a main-line railway," Sandstone stated. "Therefore we are having various restrictions placed on our operations and we are having to upgrade parts of our infrastructure, at enormous costs to levels that we believe are entirely unnecessary to the axle loading and speed of operation of our railway."

Sandstone's current RSR permit expires at the end of this year and the Trust has advised the regulator that it cannot comply with demands made on it concerning civil engineering, or a requirement that all locomotive repairs are

placed under the control of the RSR and subject to its inspections. Sandstone adds that every one of the regulations is accompanied by "enormous costs."

Having worked hard over many years to accommodate RSR demands Sandstone says it has reached the stage where compliance is unsustainable for the line of its type.

As part of its dialogue, the Trust has forwarded UK Heritage Rail specifications to the RSR, urging that something similar be adopted in South Africa.

Meanwhile the recent highly successful Stars of Sandstone Festival held in April is looking increasingly like the last. No future events are currently planned, and reports suggest Mr Mole is unlikely to authorise the mass certification of boilers for a future event in the current situation.

However Sandstone is keen to quash rumours that heritage assets could be sold off, describing these rumours as entirely incorrect; "We are simply in a state of limbo while we negotiate with the authorities to take a more realistic view of operations like ours."



What lies in the future for the very extensive Sandstone collection?
Photo: Michael Chapman

BRIEF LINES

Shimla cut by boulders

The Kalka-Shimla Railway was severed between Sanwara and Koti on 23rd May when boulders fell on it from road works on the hill above the line. A passenger train was stopped before the damaged section while repairs were undertaken, with rail traffic restored at around 6:45pm.

Diesel aids rail project

The Korostiv narrow gauge railway project in **UKRAINE** has acquired a diesel locomotive, Tu8-0472 formerly serving a now-closed factory at Maidan Vyla. The *New Europe Railway Heritage Trust* reports that working parties on the 750mm gauge line are due to resume in July.

Storm-hit line reopens

A special train celebrated the reopening of the route from Napier to Wairoa in **NEW ZEALAND** on 14th June. The 3ft 6in gauge line, an important route for logging trains, had been closed in 2012 following storm damage, and had received \$5million from the Provincial Growth Fund for KiwiRail to reopen it.

Zig Zag adds golden spike

Volunteers rebuilding the Zig Zag Railway in New South Wales, **AUSTRALIA**, added a golden spike when they finally reconnected the track over the entire 7km route on 7th June. The line was ravaged by bush fires in October 2016, and has not operated since.

Yesterday, Today and maybe Tomorrow...



Michael Grimes relates the story of the West Clare Railway and future plans for the Irish line, which sadly do not have universal support.

The West Clare Railway originally operated in County Clare between 1887 and 1961. This 3ft gauge line ran from the county town of Ennis, via numerous stopping points along the West Clare coast to two termini, at Kilrush and Kilkee, with the routes diverging at Moyasta

Junction. Intermediate stops included the towns of Ennistymon, Lahinch and Miltown Malbay.

Building began in 1884 with Charles Stewart Parnell cutting the first sod at Miltown Malbay – originally intended to be the terminus of the line from Ennis. The directors appointed William Martin Murphy as contractor and his first act was to order four locomotives from Bagnall of

Above: On the West Clare Railway of today, no 5 'Slieve Callan' heads into Moyasta from the Kilkee direction.

Below: Custodians of the revival – Stephen Whelan on the footplate and his father Jackie Whelan.

Stafford. While fine as contractor's engines on the 27 miles of railway being built, they proved useless on the 48 miles eventually completed (Murphy later became a major newspaper owner and caused the infamous worker's lockout in Dublin in the early 20th century.)

The West Clare Railway was opened between Ennis and Miltown Malbay on 2nd July 1887. Whilst it was being built, a number of the directors who owned lands in the far west of the county formed a second company to promote a similar railway serving Kilrush and Kilkee. These





Above: Oiling the motion of Slieve Callan before departure. Photo: James Waite

towns had always been the targets for the original plans. However, no agreement could be reached as to the direction of the railway with many believing it could be built across the tidal Poulmasherry Bay. It was suggested that the resulting land reclamation would provide rental incomes to defray construction costs.

Eventually it was concluded that Clare weather would make this impossible so the directors finally decided that the South Clare Railway should go via Moyasta. From here a line would be built to connect with the West Clare at Miltown Malbay. Work on the South Clare Railway from Kilkee through Moyasta to Kilrush, Cappagh Pier and Kilrush docks started in October 1890. The line opened on 11th May 1892 with the route to Miltown Malbay being completed in December.

The two railways worked closely together from the start and became one company in June 1893. Many of the officers were common to both lines. George Hopkins was appointed to design and supervise the rolling stock and gave Dübs & Co of Glasgow a specification for three locomotives. The first was no 5, named 'Slieve Callan', and which still operates on the line today. They were designed for a speed of 25 mph over gradients as fierce as 1 in 50. Large and powerful engines, they were built to the limits of the permitted loading gauge and were ideal for the line.

The timetable of three trains each way rose to five by around 1900 but subsequently reverted to three. Direct services ran between Ennis and Kilkee with Moyasta to Kilrush as the connecting branch line. More than 200,000 passengers and 80,000 tonnes of freight and livestock were carried each year but with two-thirds of the passengers travelling during the summer months.

Fuel issues

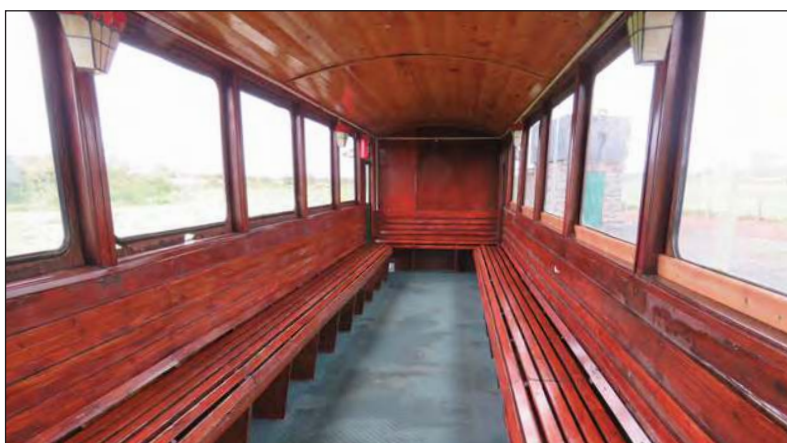
In 1925 the West Clare was merged into the Great Southern Railways, which in 1945 was taken over by »



Upper right: Moyasta station is little changed and retains much of its atmosphere.

Right: The carriage interiors are spacious but rather basic!

Uncredited photos by Michael Grimes, taken September 2018. Photos by James Waite taken August 2010



Steam Locomotives of the West Clare Railway

The line operated 18 steam locos. Some historical confusion is caused by fleet numbers being reallocated when locos were withdrawn. Each entry below is a separate loco, even where fleet numbers are repeated.

Number	Name	Class	Class (GSR)	Wheel arrangement	Built, maker	Withdrawn
1		Original		0-6-0T	1866, Bagnall	1912
2		Original		0-6-0T	1886, Bagnall	1900
3	Clifden	Original		0-6-0T	1887, Bagnall	1915
4	Besborough	Original		0-6-0T	1887, Bagnall	1901
5	Slieve Callan	IN1	5C	0-6-2T	1892, Dübs & Co	In service
6	Saint Senan	IN1	5C	0-6-2T	1892, Dübs & Co	1956
7	Lady Inchiquin	IN1	5C	0-6-2T	1892, Dübs & Co	1922
8	Lisdoonvarna	PN1	2C	2-6-2T	1894, Dübs & Co	1925
9	Fergus	PN1	2C	2-6-2T	1898, T Green	1954
2	Ennis	PN1	2C	2-6-2T	1900, T Green	1955
4	Liscannor	PN1	2C	2-6-2T	1901, T Green	1928
10	Lahinch	BN1	10C	4-6-0T	1903, Kerr Stuart	1952
11	Kilkee	BN2	11C	4-6-0T	1908, Bagnall	1953
1	Kilrush	BN3	1C	4-6-0T	1912, Hunslet	1953
3	Ennistymon	BN4	3C	4-6-0T	1922, Hunslet	1953
7	Malbay	BN4	3C	4-6-0T	1956, Hunslet	1956
6T				2-6-0T	Hunslet	Secondhand
8T				2-6-0T	Hunslet	Secondhand



“Whether more of the line is restored, particularly between Moyasta and Kilkee, depends on Clare County Council and politicians who have fought every attempt to restore the railway...”

Córas Iompair Éireann. The Second World War (or ‘Emergency’ as it was known in Ireland) brought special problems for the railway. Ireland had no coal reserves and little enough could be imported from Britain. Fuel became a serious concern and the West Clare Railway used a substance that was plentiful locally but totally unsuited to a steam engine’s boiler – turf. Two firemen working on each engine threw vast quantities of the stuff into the fireboxes, but the locos could not make steam quickly enough and often came to a grinding halt for a blow-up.

After the war, the West Clare was recommended for closure along with all the remaining narrow-gauge lines in Ireland. Owing to local opposition

to such plans, it became the only one to receive significant investment in diesel traction as well as signalling and operating improvements. From 1952, passenger services were largely operated by four new articulated diesel railcars, built by Walker Brothers of Wigan and almost identical to units supplied to the County Donegal Railways. These were followed in 1955 by three 107hp Walker Brothers diesel locomotives, F501, F502 and F503.

The use of diesel traction reduced operating costs, yet the investment in new rolling stock would largely be wasted by early closure of the line.

Above left: Slieve Callan safely tucked away in its purpose-built shed at Moyasta. Photo: James Waite

Slieve Callan on a train out in the countryside – a scene that has little changed since the line was completed in 1892.

County Clare was still losing population and emigration was increasing. There was just not enough traffic and the line was eventually and inevitably closed on 31st January 1961 with CIÉ starting work on dismantling the following day.

By the time of its closure the West Clare was the last narrow gauge railway in Ireland offering a passenger service. Various lines operated by Bord na Móna continue on a freight-only basis in connection with the peat industry, but the writing is also on the wall for them.

Re-opening and opposition

From the mid 1990s Jackie Whelan, a very successful local entrepreneur, worked with a group to reopen the railway and later became directly responsible for the venture. Some 1.5 miles are now operational and it is planned to have the four miles from Moyasta to Kilrush operating by 2020. Jackie initially carried out all the preparatory works for the restoration, including excavation, track laying and fencing. He also personally paid over €600,000 for the restoration of the locomotive Slieve Callan. A preservation society also maintains a railway museum at Moyasta Junction station.

Whether more of the line is restored, particularly between Moyasta and Kilkee, depends on Clare County Council and politicians who have fought every attempt to restore the railway and offer no support whatsoever. Their opposition has extended to removing the tourist road signs to the railway and directing closure of the museum coffee shop. It is sad that local politicians cannot see the tourist benefits of a fully reopened West Clare Railway but then neither railways nor tourists vote in Clare.

Jackie Whelan resumed passenger services in 2008 using two new steel carriages with bench seating, parallel to the direction of travel, built by Alan Keef Ltd and outfitted locally in wood by West Clare engineers. A small but powerful diesel locomotive originally built for Channel Tunnel construction work hauled the trains.

On 5th July 2009, Slieve Callan was returned to the West Clare Railway at Moyasta Junction following restoration in England by Alan Keef. The engine had previously been a static exhibit at the mainline railway station in Ennis and the occasion marked the return of steam to the West Clare after an absence of 57 years. The loco now provides visitors and enthusiasts alike with a look into the fascinating railway history of Ireland, and it is a fitting tribute to Irish narrow gauge heritage



The Museum

Premises planned for the museum comprise:

1. The new shed.
2. Fisherman's cottage.
3. Original Moyasta Junction station house with display and public toilet facilities.
4. Two carriages providing reception and refreshment facilities plus audio/visual equipped classroom/lecture room, cinema, library and office for archival research.
5. Outhouses for extra entertainment (model railways, virtual reality train driving, etc).
6. Station platform with water tower, crane.
7. Engine shed with pit.
8. Signaller's cabin.
9. Large car parks taking coaches and trucks.
10. Wharfage at nearby bay for boat displays.

Facilities at the new shed will include:

1. Storage for up to 12 standard gauge locos
2. Storage and display of vintage road transport vehicles
3. Public viewing area
4. Railway turntable operation.
5. Loco and rolling stock static displays.
6. Loco fuelling facilities.
7. Wall-mounted displays and explanations.
8. Eco-friendly water recycling and display.

and to the hard work of all involved.

In addition to Slieve Callan, the railway owns 12 diesel locos. In service are a four-wheel Channel Tunnel shunting engine and a four-wheel former Bord na Móna shunter. Awaiting restoration are a further nine Bord na Móna locos plus a six-wheel mine shunting engine dating from around 1948.

The latest proposals are to dual gauge the Moyasta to Kilrush section to both 3ft and the Irish standard gauge of 5ft 3in – the first such development in Ireland – and to this end the Irish Traction group has stored on the premises locomotives nos A3R and A15 (class 001), 124 (class 121), 152 (class 141) and 190 (class 181). Also stored are Mk 3 carriages, including 7146 and push-pull control car 6105, as well as 6402 from the BREL international train, subsequently part of the IR 'Cu Na Mara' set. In addition there are three Mk 2A carriages, 4108, 4110 and 4402 (restaurant car), and a GSR side Craven 1325, all ex CIE.

To house all these plans for a rail museum shed and maintenance building have been submitted to Clare County Council Planning Authority. The erection of this shed, together with the accompanying cottage which will provide an extension and public entrance to the museum, is now urgent as many of the exhibits need secure housing.

Above: Steam is raised ready for the 'right away' at Moyasta. Photo: James Waite

Below: Plenty of passengers are waiting at the junction, cameras at the ready.



The museum collection will consist of most types of diesel engine used on Irish Rail since 1955 together with examples of rolling stock, both freight and passenger, and as much of the narrow gauge as can be found, crowned by steam loco operation. Furthermore, the railway company owns and would display a number of vintage road vehicles mostly of heavy commercial types. These would be supplemented by other vintage vehicles being placed on display for short periods by their owners.

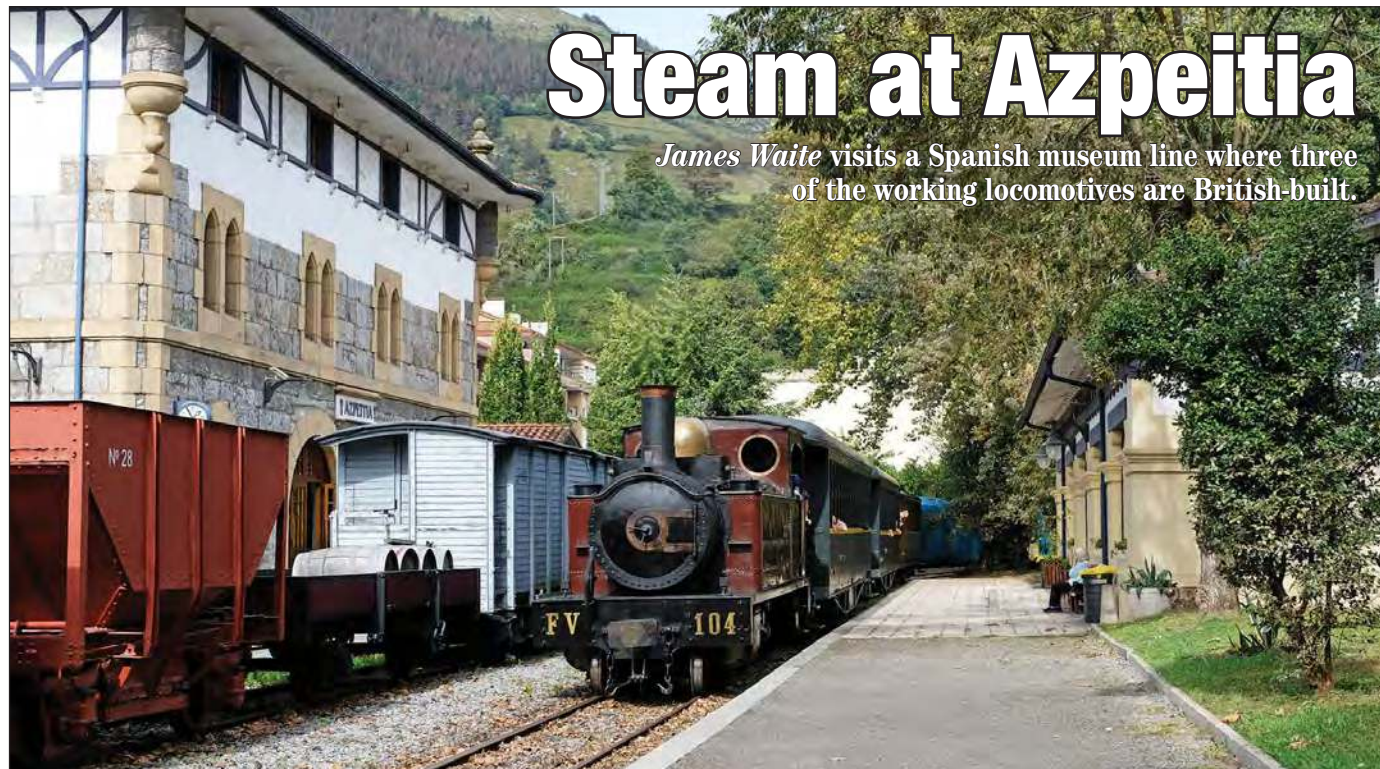
There is no other location in Ireland where so much rail equipment of such variety and Irish relevance will

have been collected. As this is the only EU country without a railway museum, it cannot be far-fetched to think that this operating enterprise could become Ireland's National Railway Museum. **NGW**

More Information

The West Clare Railway is open until September on Sundays and Bank Holidays, 1pm – 4pm. All other days are by appointment. Slieve Callan operates for pre-booked tours or by appointment in advance. A guided tour of the museum and train trip takes about one hour. Further details are at www.westclarerailway.ie





Steam at Azpeitia

James Waite visits a Spanish museum line where three of the working locomotives are British-built.

The first railways to serve the Basque country of north eastern Spain were the Norte broad-gauge main line between Madrid and the French border at Hendaye and its offshoot which diverged at Miranda de Ebro and headed through the mountains to Bilbao, the regional capital. Apart from some local lines around Bilbao all later railways were metre gauge and grew to become a fascinating system.

The first, and always the most important, was the line between Bilbao and San Sebastián or Donostia as it's called in the Basque language. Its first section east from Bilbao as far as Durango opened on 1st July 1882. The route through to San Sebastián was completed in 1901 and five years

later the three companies which built it merged to become the Compañía de Ferrocarriles Vascongados. Its operating centre was always at Durango where workshops designed by the engineer Luis Camiña were built in 1902 and remained in use until 2013.

Developments in other parts of northern Spain eventually meant that the line became a key part of a through metre-gauge route between El Ferrol, in Spain's north western corner, and Hendaye which was completed as recently as 1972. In its heyday the Vascongados was a stylish concern. Its predecessors started a Pullman service in 1902 but fell out over its operation and it ended only two years later.

Above: Azpeitia station, now the Basque Railway Museum, typifies the extravagant architecture of the FC Urola. No 104 'Aurrera', built by Nasmyth Wilson in 1898 is one of the three working British locomotives.

Below: Aurrera coupled to a carriage from the FC Bidasoa. This ran south-east from Irun on the border between Spain and France.

In 1929 the entire route was electrified and Pullmans reappeared, the cars being built in Leeds and operated by the Wagons-Lit company. Their silverware came from Elkington & Co, noted Birmingham silversmiths. The Pullman service only finally disappeared in the 1970s but the cars still traverse the line, now working the luxury Transcantábrico tourist service. The Vascongados was taken over by the Spanish state in 1972 and became the principal route of Eusko Trenbideak in 1982 when the devolved Basque government took over the region's state-run metre-gauge lines.

Many later railways were to a greater or lesser extent branches of the Vascongados main line. The last to be built was the FC Urola which was designed as a steam railway but opened in 1926 using electric traction from the start, the first such operation on the Basque metre gauge. This line ran southwards from the Vascongados main line at Zumaia to its operating base at Azpeitia and on to Zumárraga where it connected with the Norte main line and also made an end-on junction with a Vascongados branch. The route was particularly noted for the extravagant and varied architecture adopted at its principal stations.

Unlike most of the Basque lines it avoided takeover by the Spanish state but became a part of ET in 1984. Its new owners embarked upon a much-needed modernisation programme but soon abandoned this plan and two years later they closed the railway. In 1990 the regional





government adopted the station, the large railcar depot and the workshops complex at Azpeitia as the home for a museum devoted to the Basque railways. This opened on 20th January 1992.

The museum included a steam operation over the old line from Azpeitia as far as Loiola, less than three kilometres away and a place much visited as it was the birthplace of St Ignatius, the founder of the Jesuits and now home to a large basilica. Sadly this operation didn't last long as Azpeitia's steelworks, the district's main employer, needed to expand across its route. In compensation they paid much of the cost of rebuilding the section north from Azpeitia as far as Lasao.

Working steam

Steam trains now operate over this section every weekend and on public holidays between Easter and the first weekend of November. Three times a year there's a steam-up featuring all the museum's workable locos. Currently there are four, including three which were built in Britain.

The 2-6-0T no 104 'Aurrera' (Nasmyth Wilson 551/1898) was built for the FC de Elgóibar a San Sebastián, one of the Vascongados' constituents, and in 1904 was sold to the FC de Durango a Zumárraga, another constituent. After electrification it was kept at Durango works as a spare loco, served as a stationary boiler for some years and was plinthed in 1986. But it was soon rescued in time to play a starring role at the museum's opening celebrations.

Above: Aurrera is pictured midway between Lasao and Azpeitia.

Below: The rather attractive Sharp Stewart 0-6-0T no 1 'Zugastieta'. Delivered to the FC Amorebieta-Guernica in 1888, it served this line continuously until displaced by diesels in 1960.

All photos by James Waite, October 2018.

The FC de Amorebieta a Perernales y Bermeo opened its first section between a junction with the Bilbao-Durango railway at Amorebieta as far as Guernica or Gernika in 1888. Its 0-6-0T no 1 'Zugastieta' (Sharp Stewart 4345/1888) served it continuously until diesels arrived in 1960 and was then dumped at Durango works. By the time the museum rescued it in the early 1990s it was in appalling condition and it must have been a huge challenge to put it back into good shape.

One of the Bilbao district's numerous industrial railways was the Orconera Iron Ore Co Ltd's line which ran into the city's docks from iron ore mines to the west. The

company was incorporated in England and its shareholders included Dowlais Iron Co Ltd (*which among other things supplied the original track to the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway - Ed*) and Consett Iron Co Ltd. The latter firm's 0-4-0ST 'Espinal' (Robert Stephenson 2631/1887) was one of two similar shunting locos and it worked until 1965. It later went on display at a mining school at Barakaldo until moving to the museum in 1997 with the Lanbide Astapena engineering college collaborating in its restoration. It retains the Orconera's archaic side buffers and so can't be used with the centre-buffer rolling stock. The museum claims that it's the oldest »





Above: No 1 heads north in wooded country midway along the line.

Left: 1887-built 0-4-0ST 'Espinal' is claimed to be the world's oldest working Robert Stephenson loco.

Below: Awaiting overhaul is FV 2-6+4 Engerth no 56 'Urko'. It has been restored as class-mate no 50 'Euskadi' – the local name for the Basque country.



working Stephenson loco anywhere in the world.

A much bigger machine came from CP, the Portuguese state railway. 2-4-6-0 Mallet tank no E205 (Henschel 12280/1913) is one of several of these unusual locos which served the metre-gauge railways of northern Portugal for many years. I well remember seeing it in action on the Corgo line in 1977.

Cross-border pilgrimage

No metre-gauge steam locos have been preserved in working order in Portugal and the museum receives a steady flow of visitors from that country to see the Mallet and also a Portuguese railcar.

Also usually in working order but currently awaiting overhaul is the Vascongados' 2-6+4 Engerth no 56 (Krauss, Munich 7630/1920). Many of us who visited Spain towards the end of steam associate these machines with the FC Ponferrada-Villablino where many of them ended their working days but the type actually originated on the Basque metre-gauge lines.

There are also numerous diesel and electric locos to be seen at the museum, which owes much of its success to Juanjo Olaizola Elordi, its enthusiastic director and a knowledgeable railfan. When my wife and I visited on one of the steam-up days in October 2018 Mr Elordi seemed to be everywhere, from directing operations around the museum yard to driving the locos. It's fortunate that the region's railway heritage is in such safe hands. **NGW**

Special trains and special photos

A recent surfeit of one-off workings and special trains on the narrow gauge has offered some new opportunities for our wide-travelling photographers ...

Right: When all five members of the Raveglass & Eskdale Railway's main-line fleet were all steamed for a special 'Quintuple Header' working to Dalegarth on 1st June, Christopher Glover was on hand to capture a set-up shot between the walls of the station approach that he reckons will likely not happen again. From the front the locos are 'River Mite', 'Whillan Beck', 'River Esk', 'Northern Rock' and 'River Irt.'

Below: "Typical, every time you get to the station there's always a queue for the turntable..." Basic problems as the Quintuple Header reaches Dalegarth.

Photo: Christopher Glover

Following pages: Yes this photo dates back to early April but we received it late and it was too good not to use – Chris Parry of the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland gets his second centre spread in a row with this view of the Lynton & Barnstaple sisters 'Lyd' and 'Lyn' on the Snowdonian special train.





**NARROW
GAUGE
WORLD**





Above: "Darling, there's a steam train on the hedge". *Peter Johnson* captured the unique surroundings of the Beeches Light Railway for one last time on 19th May, the final open day before owner Adrian Shooter relocates the line to his new house. Darjeeling Himalayan Railway Sharp Stewart 0-4-0ST no 19 takes its train of Ffestiniog-built but correctly styled rolling stock past the front garden.

Below: Another in the greenery. The Vale of Rheidol Railway's recently restored 2-6-2T 'Owain Glyndwr' simmers in the attractive surroundings of Devil's Bridge having arrived with the special train for the opening of the new station building at Aberystwyth. *Photo: Andrew Charman*





Above: As reported in our UK news pages, the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway's Davey Paxman 4-6-2 'Green Goddess' made a triumphant return to service on 9th June. Part of the celebrations involved a parallel run with Mountain class 4-8-2 'Samson' and *Steve Town* was of course on hand to capture it.

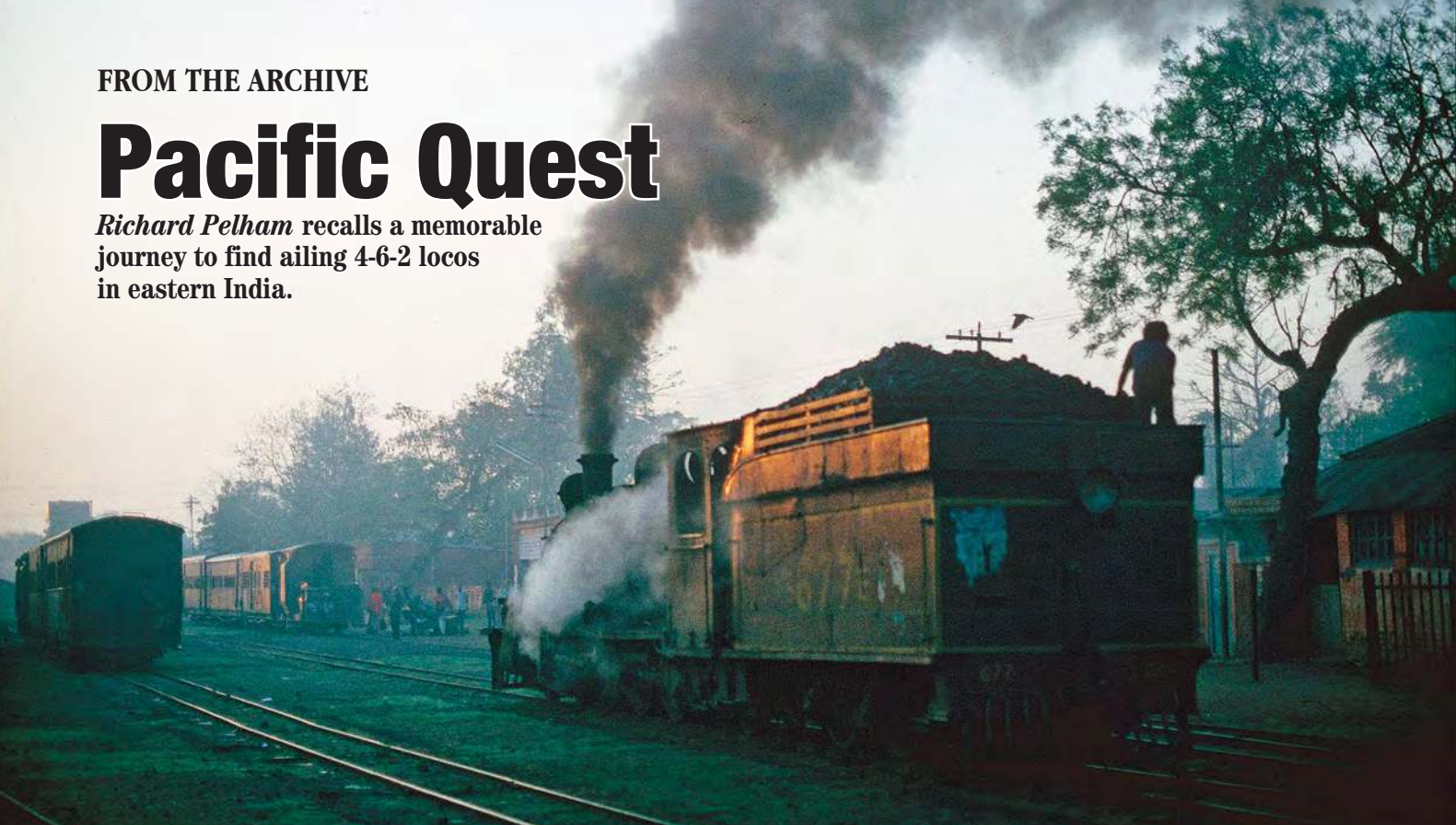
Below: And finally, "put your back into it!" The Pleasant Point Museum and Railway in New Zealand hosted the 2019 conference of FRONZ, the Federation of Railway Organisations of New Zealand, on 1st-2nd June and as part of the fun the museum ran its Model T railcar. Here it is being turned by its driver. *Photo: D L Turner*



FROM THE ARCHIVE

Pacific Quest

Richard Pelham recalls a memorable journey to find ailing 4-6-2 locos in eastern India.



The features editor said: "Would you write something else about your travels to search out narrow gauge steam in remote corners of the world, back in the last century?"

Even if I had been born 30 years earlier than I was, I would still have had the urge to explore far-flung narrow gauge railways, but the quest might have been achieved merely by crossing the Irish Sea to the shores of Lough Swilly or the slopes of the Blue Stack Mountains.

By the 1990s, longer and harder journeys were required to fulfil that

search. Tales of interesting locomotives still operating in distant countries filtered through to England's shores. Flights were just about affordable, so the genesis of the feature editor's request was born, and the result, in this case, was a 2ft 6in gauge railway in Eastern India, which became a bastion of Glasgow-built steam until as late as 1996.

My first visit to India, in 1984, was with a non-railway enthusiast friend (but sympathetic to the cause). He had first travelled there overland on a Russian 'Ural' motorcycle en route to Australia in 1974, and wanted to see the country again. We fitted in a lot of steam travel on every gauge, including a few remote gems like the Futwah-Islampur 2ft 6in gauge line run by a fleet of four decrepit Manning Wardle 0-6-2Ts.

We also travelled all the way to the

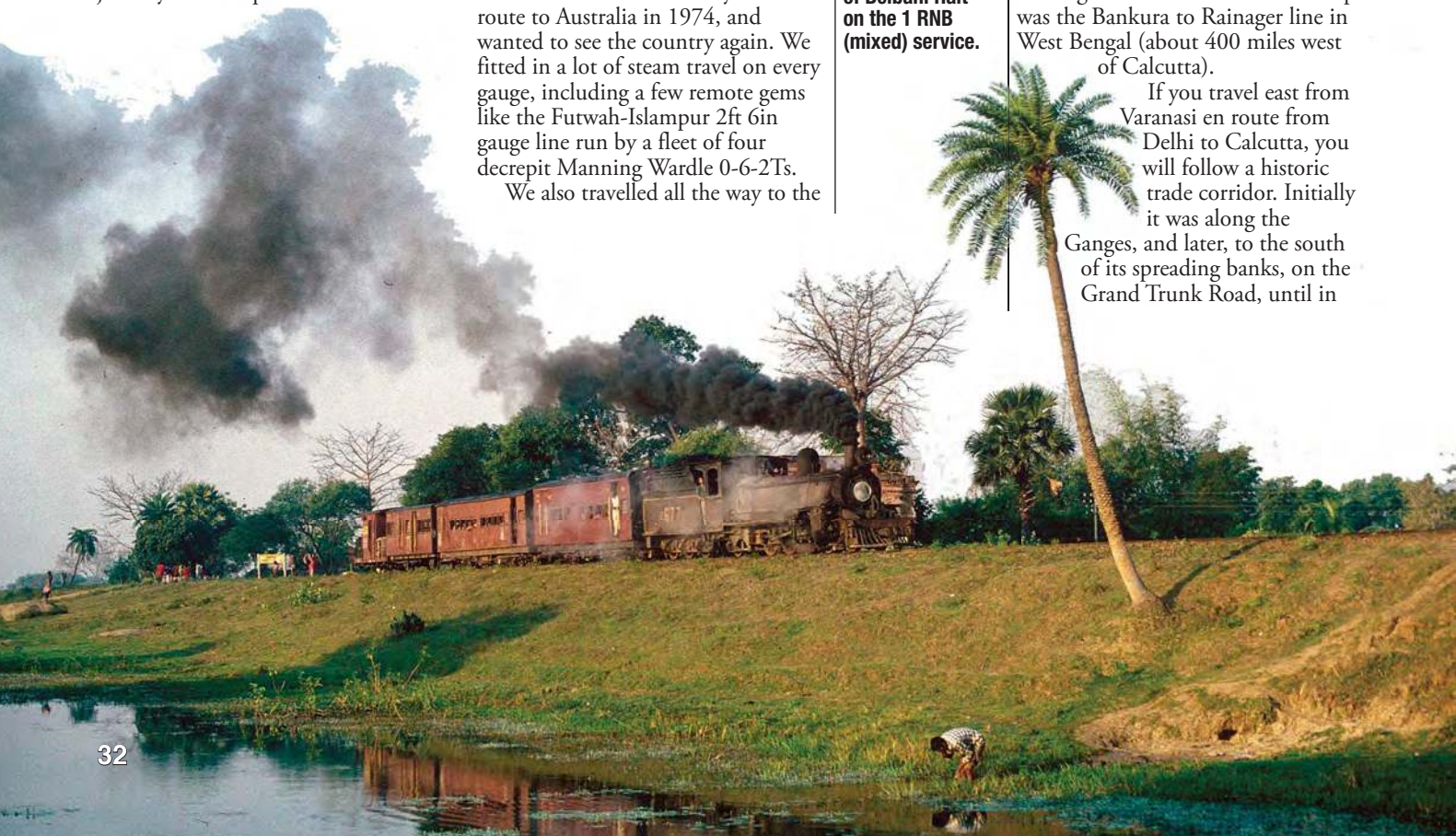
Above: Before the sun has come out, but well after due departure time, North British built Pacific no 677 of 1907 moves off shed towards the morning train at Bankura on 14th March 1990.

Below: Later the same morning no 677 pulls out of Belbani Halt on the 1 RNB (mixed) service.

Darjeeling line, believing, as so many railway enthusiasts did on their early visits in those days, that it must surely close imminently! On my return home I started to research Indian narrow gauge more thoroughly, though lines and locomotives were disappearing constantly, according to the pages of *World Steam* and the *Continental Railway Journal*.

It was 1990 before I could afford to return to India again, and I had a short list of narrow gauge lines with ancient motive power that demanded investigation. More or less at the top was the Bankura to Rainager line in West Bengal (about 400 miles west of Calcutta).

If you travel east from Varanasi en route from Delhi to Calcutta, you will follow a historic trade corridor. Initially it was along the Ganges, and later, to the south of its spreading banks, on the Grand Trunk Road, until in





1857 this was usurped by the main line of the East Indian Railway. On the route's right flank, once past the East Indian coalfields, lies a vast agricultural plain that stretches further away to the southeast which, with its poorer transport links, is a rural backwater.

Across a portion of this plain, the narrow gauge line wends its weary way from a broad-gauge junction at Bankura (not itself far from the eastern edge of the coalfields) for 60 miles to its terminus at Rainagar, only 25 miles south of the EIR/Grand Trunk Road at Burdwan. The line was originally promoted as the Bankura-Damoodar River Railway, its 2ft 6in gauge used merely to save costs in an area with limited development potential, as no significant gradients are encountered along the way. Further extension was envisaged at the start, but connection with the EIR was never achieved, and Rainagar remained a lonely terminus with few dwellings nearby.

Above: 1906-built no 670 has the standard cab for the CC class of a design inherited from the Sharp Stewart drawing office, pre 1903. The train crosses a substantial three-arch bridge near Brindabanpur on the morning mixed to Rainagar.

Below: Ex-Bengal Nagpur CC Pacific no 679 dates from 1908. It waits for time with 4RNB (mixed), the afternoon up train, at Rainagar.

Indian journey – 1990

My organisational attempts were plagued with misfortune: my mother died shortly before I was due to fly, and my visaed passport was lost in a sorting office during a Post Office strike, on its return from the Indian High Commission. Eventually, these matters were resolved, and with the funeral organised and completed, I flew into Delhi a week later than intended. This meant I had to abandon a visit to some interesting 2ft 6in gauge lines in the Central Provinces around Murtaajapur, but an evening departure on train 2304, the New Delhi-Howrah 'Poorva Express' at 16.30 finally saw the quest getting into its stride on 13th March 1990. I had booked second class open sleeper accommodation with air conditioning that was preferable (but the same price) to a first class compartment

without air con, as bedding was never available in the latter.

Before settling down for the night, I wandered up to the locomotive at the head of my broad gauge express, at the first stop, Aligarh. It was a green, battered looking, single-phase OHW 25Kv WAM/4, no 20669, ubiquitous, sturdy, built to cross a continent. As so often in India, the driver welcomed me into the cab, and I watched the road ahead unroll at a steady 100kph as the rattling co-co sped eastwards with the sun setting behind us. Heading into the dusk on the long straight EIR mainline, »





Above: The sun is high by the time no 670 on the early morning mixed from Bankura reaches Patrasear, only 35 miles down the line.

Left: Some vans to make a proper mixed train would have been greatly appreciated, rather than just a brake van for all that produce on the morning train out of Bankura, seen at Patrasear.

peering through a grimy windscreen with its stoneproof mesh, you could see the colour lights changing from yellow to green far ahead, and felt that sensation of actually and surely reaching a far-off goal.

At Tundla Junction, when night

had fallen, I retired to my bunk, sleeping soundly until I awoke to a distinctive noise the next morning. Walking down to a non-a/c coach, I leant out of the invariably open door and saw to my surprise that our 18-carriage train, now diesel hauled, was being furiously banked by a smoky WG 2-8-2 up a lengthy ghat section from Jha Jha to Simultala, south east of Patna. A good omen, I thought, even if it proved impossible to photograph!

By early afternoon I reached the modest station of Durgapur,

Below: No 679 on the late afternoon departure pauses at the lonely halt of Gopinathpur, four miles from Rainagar. This engine does not have its original cab, having at some point been fitted with one from an ex-BNR BS class 2-8-2 of 1915.

All photos by Richard Pelham

where I disembarked and persuaded the stationmaster to lodge my small suitcase in his office. This appeared to be the nearest point on the Eastern Railway main line from which one might be able to get to Bankura (by bus), which was on a different system, the South Eastern Railway—these being the names of two of the Indian Railways' divisions in this area. The Eastern incorporated much of the old EIR and the South Eastern the former Bengal Nagpur system of Raj days.

Bus travel, generally described as 'interesting' in India, lived up to its reputation, and I rode on the roof through rural West Bengal, past buildings daubed with hammers and sickles, reflecting the strength of the local communist party. By nightfall I had reached Bankura after more than 5,000 miles and 60 hours of travelling from Wiltshire, and checked into the Blue Star Hotel, where disappointingly, Newcastle Brown Ale was not on offer!

Waiting time

The friendly staff were utterly nonplussed by my request for an early start to catch the 05.05 departure, assuring me a 7 o'clock breakfast would be fine. They were right! After several hours of steam-wreathed shunting, train 1RNB mixed finally wheezed out of the station just before 08.00 behind Pacific no 677, built by the North British Locomotive Company in 1907. The intervening three hours I spent checking out the shed and waiting for the sun to come up. These CC class Pacifics had only recently taken over train services on the line after working on other more extensive narrow gauge systems (now dieselised) around Nagpur.

Traffic was previously handled by Bagnall tank engines ordered by the original operator, McLeod & Company of Calcutta, who formerly had a number of narrow gauge lines in eastern India. I found 0-6-4Ts nos 6 and 12 (WB 2017 and 2018 of 1916), and 2-6-2Ts nos 10 and 11 (WB 3054 and 3055 of 1953) out of use in the shed. Both were of McLeod's standard classes, the 2-6-2T type known as the 'Delta' as the very first obtained were from a cancelled order for the Nile Delta during World War One. All were of more recent build than the ex-BNR Edwardian-era Pacifics drafted in as replacements by Indian State Railways' South Eastern Railway division, which comprised nos 664, 666, 670, 672, 676, 677 and 679. **NGW**

■ The second part of this feature will look at several encounters with the Pacifics in action.



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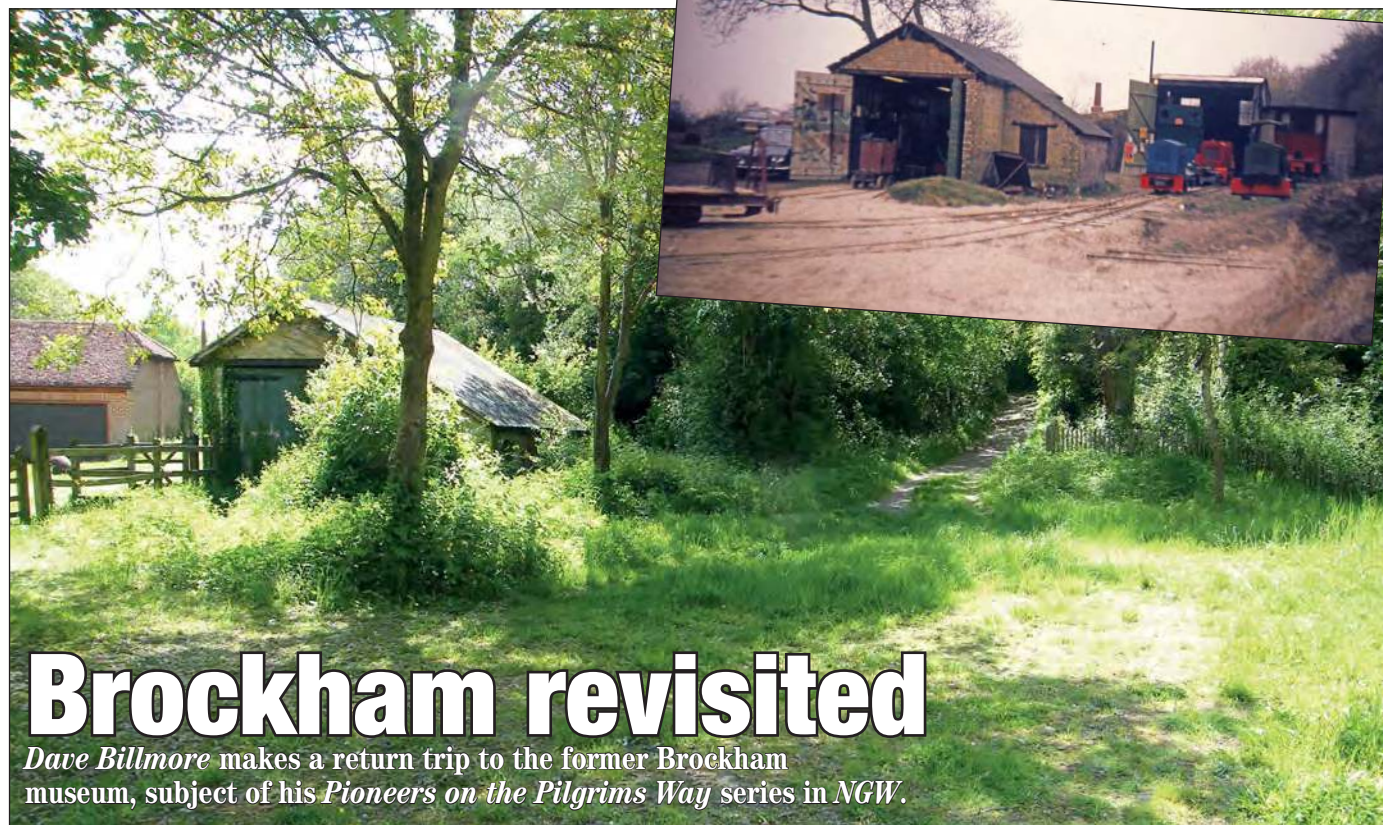
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Brockham revisited

Dave Billmore makes a return trip to the former Brockham museum, subject of his *Pioneers on the Pilgrims Way* series in NGW.

Writing the series *Pioneers on the Pilgrim's Way* for NGW, describing the short life of the Brockham Museum in Surrey between 1962 and its relocation to Amberley in 1982 (NGW109-111), caused me to think about going to see what was left today. My normal belief is to "never go back" to places enjoyed, they only disappoint.

However my wife Kate and I went on one lovely spring day in 2018. Arriving at Betchworth station we descended from the train and had our first shock, I couldn't find the footpath to Brockham Quarry. We discovered the old standard gauge loco shed still standing but in poor condition and saw the remains of the de Witt kiln towering over the site.

A friendly local put us on the right path and we walked up through Betchworth Quarry, realising that it had been heavily landscaped and 'improved', in other words all the industrial archaeology destroyed, to provide fill for the M25 motorway and a hole to fill with rubbish. No wonder I didn't recognise the path.

A steady walk uphill through the woods brought us to the lip of Brockham quarry, untouched as it is now an SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). We sat and had lunch looking out over a lovely landscape, before descending to the quarry floor and so to the old museum site. I was prepared for severe disappointment here, but in fact much remains.

Above: First sighting – the Goulds shed is at left with in front new boundary fencing for a very smart house, out of picture to the left, built on the site of Mrs King's old corrugated iron home.

As my inset photo shows, taken with my not very expensive camera while working at the museum, the 2ft gauge trackbed used to curve across the bare foreground with the three-way point giving access to the shed and loop. A public right of way crosses the site and goes through the gate onto the approach track from the A25.

The Pilgrims Way comes down through the trees to the right. On first seeing this view I thought the old loco shed had been demolished, but further investigation revealed that it was completely hidden in the middle of the rampant growth in the centre of the picture.

Below left and below. Closer inspection revealed the door of the loco shed, and considerable effort pushing through the rampant undergrowth and squeezing through a gap in the doors revealed the 1ft 10³/₄-inch track laid for the Guinness loco still in place. We even found the rails we erected still holding the roof up.





Above: The fireplace, scene of the great exploding rice pudding, still exists.

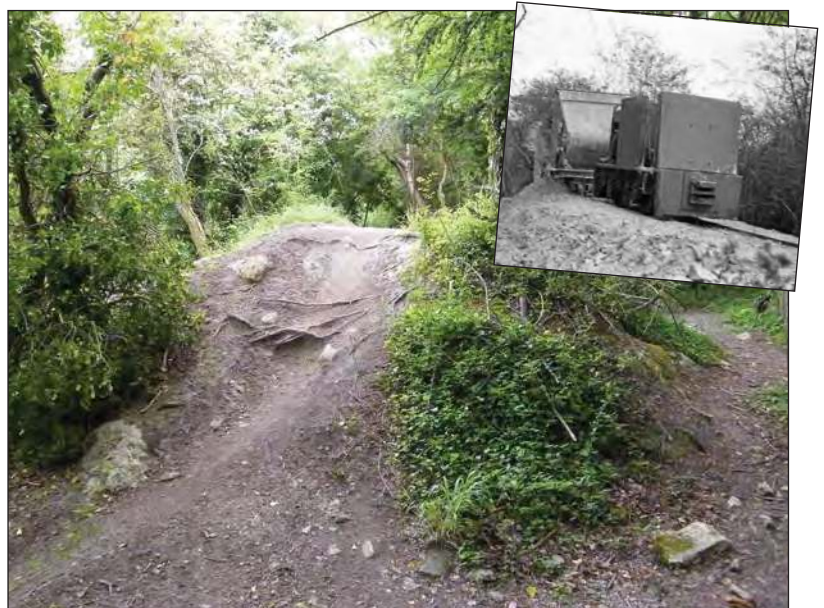


Above: The Eastern Kilns are getting some long overdue repairs. The flat area was part of the main outdoor exhibition of the museum (photo left). On the right by the tree can be seen a fenced enclosure. This protects a shaft dug to try and gain access to the hearthstone mines below the chalk by persons unknown. An information board on the left gives details of the site.



Right: The embankment for the demonstration line built by volunteer navvies with much sweat and effort was never finished before the move to Amberley and now appears to be part of a motorbike scrambles circuit.

Below: Your author takes a break on a suitably inscribed seat that Surrey Wildlife Trust countryside management have placed on the old exhibition area. They also produce a leaflet about the site with suggested walks and such. It is at www.surreywildlifetrust.org/nature-reserves/brockham-limeworks



And this is why the museum site is an SSSI – orchids, lovely....

Mixed emotions

So how did I feel at the end of the afternoon as we walked back to catch our train? I was a little sad that what we had worked so hard to create long ago had come to nothing, but equally delighted we had amalgamated with Amberley and the collection is safe and easily available to the public.

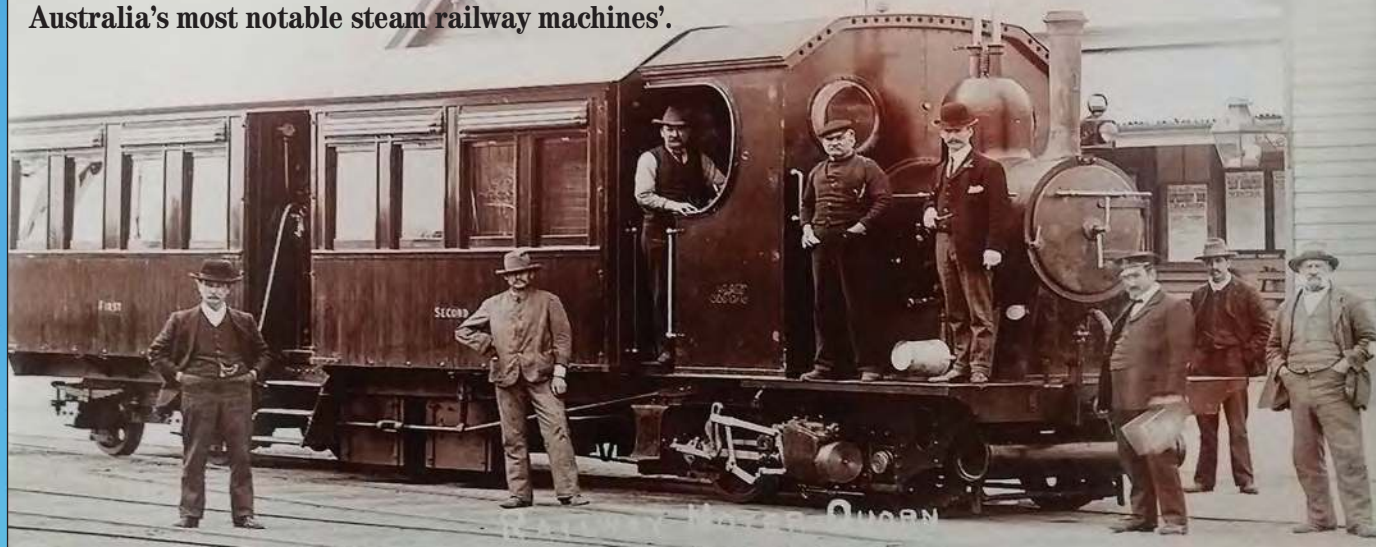
I was very pleasantly surprised that so much still stood on the Brockham site to bring back happy memories of working parties with friends who were my fellow volunteers. And I was delighted to see so many orchids. All in all it was a good day out. **NGW**



■ Digital back issues of **NGW** can be downloaded or printed versions ordered from www.world-of-railways.co.uk/narrow-gauge-world/store/back-issues/ or by phoning 01778 392484.

Coffee – Pichi Richi style

Michael Chapman has what he describes as ‘a brilliant day on one of Australia’s most notable steam railway machines’.



In 1998 I made my first trip to Australia to see the opening of the Puffing Billy Railway's extension to Gembrook – an event that celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2018. The place where I was staying had a poster on the wall showing a strange-looking machine – the ‘Coffee Pot’ at the Pichi Richi Railway in South Australia. I was intrigued and added it to my bucket list of railways and locomotives I had to see. In 2013 I was fortunate to be able to visit Pichi Richi, but alas, the Coffee Pot was stripped down for overhaul and

“The place where I was staying had a poster on the wall showing a strange-looking machine...”

the boiler was away from the frames (see *NGW*91, page 15).

By way of background the Coffee Pot is a small 2-2-0WT steam locomotive with a single passenger carriage body pivoted on the back from a point beneath the firebox on the rear of the locomotive frame. The engine unit was built by Kitson & Co in Leeds in 1905, works number 4356, whilst the carriage was manufactured by the Metropolitan Amalgamated Railway Carriage and Wagon Company of



Birmingham. The Coffee Pot is classed as a 2-2-0WT as the Walschaerts motion only drives the rear wheels. The well-tank is suspended underneath the second-class section of the carriage immediately behind the loco.

Two of these innovative units, the forerunner of modern commuter trains, were supplied to the South Australian Railways to provide a service on rural routes where passenger traffic was lighter. They were known as 'Steam Motor Coach No 1' and 'Steam Motor Coach No 2'. The latter differed slightly by also having a driver's cabin at the rear of the passenger carriage.

The preserved No 1 was based at Quorn for use on a regular weekly service to Hawker, where it became more commonly known as the Coffee Pot. Owing to a limited water supply, barrels of water were placed either side of the boiler and legend has it that someone labelled them 'tea' and 'coffee' and thus the nickname Coffee Pot was born.

The loco was sold in 1924 as part of the transfer of operations and control of the Central Australia Railway to the Commonwealth Government, becoming NJAB 1. It was then stored at Quorn depot from 1932 onwards and somehow it survived despite the

Main photo: A long sweeping S-bend at Willows Halt proved a perfect location for a run-past on The Coffee Pot Experience.

Left: The 'Coffee Pot' shortly after it was built by Kitson in 1905

Right: Close-up of the locomotive part of the combination as it awaits departure from Quorn station on the Pichi Richi Railway.

All present-day photos by Michael Chapman, taken on 30th September 2018.



scrapping of so many other Commonwealth Railways steam locomotives in the 1950s. When I visited Pichi Richi I was told the Coffee Pot had been spared as it was hidden beneath a supply of wood planking so enormous that the scrappers couldn't see it!

In 1960 the Coffee Pot was externally overhauled and displayed at Alice Springs station, even though it had never worked there, and placed into the care of the National Trust. In 1975 NJAB 1 was donated to the Pichi Richi Preservation Society which »





transferred it back to Quorn for restoration. All the old paintwork was painstakingly removed from the carriage and the clear varnish restored on the beautiful teak woodwork. It returned to service in 1984.

In 2007 the locomotive was withdrawn for overhaul when boiler and mechanical repairs were carried out. It returned to steam in April 2015 and has been available for the 'Coffee Pot Experience' ever since. Knowing I was visiting Australia again in 2018 I had to book a ticket.

More than a train ride

The carriage of the Coffee Pot only seats 22 persons and always sells out so to guarantee a place an early booking is recommended. I booked in January for my trip on 30th September. The morning had been spent chasing another train called the Pichi Richi Explorer and taking photographs. Then we drove back to Quorn in time for the midday departure. Upon arrival our names

Top: The Pichi Richi Explorer hauled by W22 class 'Justin Hancock' is passed at Summit Siding.

Above: The interior of The Coffee Pot carriage is well appointed.

Main photo: A broadside view was possible after the driver had obligingly moved forward from the telegraph pole.

were checked and we were welcomed with a glass of champagne and hors d'oeuvres – a very civilised way to start our trip. A sign on the platform proudly welcomed us to The Coffee Pot Experience.

Waiting at the dirt platform was the Coffee Pot, straight out of the 1998 poster – it was immaculate. What was immediately apparent was the size of the locomotive. It is tiny, weighing in at just over 19 tons with 2ft 4½in diameter wheels and only carrying 220 gallons of water and 840lb of coal.

Having pored all over the locomotive and taken countless photographs I boarded the second-class section of the carriage, immediately behind the locomotive. There was a high-pitched shrill whistle and we were off. The ride was 'interesting' but comfortable. As a railway enthusiast I always want to lean out of the window to take a photograph of the locomotive as it goes round the bends but on the 'Coffee Pot' there is no point as the train is too short!

All along the route of the Pichi Richi Railway the little train was pursued by cars of photographers and I have to admit feeling a little jealous. However, we soon paused at Summit Siding away from the main road. Framed against the bright blue sky it was a perfect location for photos but the train had stopped adjacent to a telegraph pole which sprouted from the carriage roof. If you don't ask you don't get so I asked and the driver

very kindly moved the Coffee Pot forward until it was clear! Several minutes later the Pichi Richi Explorer train hauled by W22 class locomotive 'Justin Hancock' passed and numerous photographs were taken.

Having re-boarded and backed out from the siding the little train proceeded on to Woolshed Flat where a fine quality three-course meal with wine and coffee was served. We were even allowed to keep the commemorative Coffee Pot spoon as a souvenir. Dessert was Quandong pie – I'd never heard of it either. It is also known as a 'native peach' in outback Australia and is a red fruit that has twice the amount of Vitamin C of an orange.

Whilst we were eating the Coffee Pot had traversed the turning triangle at Woolshed Flat and now faced in the direction of Quorn. After lunch the crew and hosts posed for photographs with the train and then it was time for the return journey.

There was another pleasant surprise as we paused at Willows Halt. This small platform is in the middle of a long sweeping S-bend. We disembarked and the Coffee Pot reversed then ran through to the delight of photographers. Just when I thought the journey couldn't get any better our train host asked if any of us would like a workshop tour when we got back to Quorn – okay!

The Coffee Pot Experience at Pichi Richi was a brilliant day out. As a railway enthusiast you couldn't ask for anything more. The Coffee Pot must rank as one of Australia's most notable preserved steam railway machines, representing an innovative early self-propelled railcar and the predecessor of various petrol and diesel railcars that would be operated all over the world. It was fantastic to see it and to cross it off my narrow gauge bucket list. **NGW**

More Information

Full details of the Coffee Pot Experience can be found online at www.pichirichirailway.org.au/train-services/coffee-pot

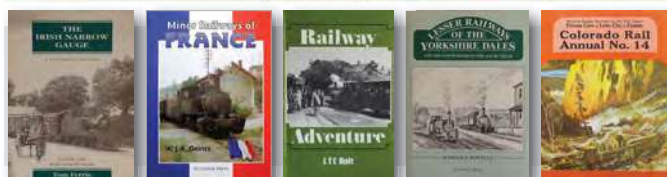




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Triumphant return for Romney's Goddess

The Romney Hythe & Dymchurch Railway's Davey Paxman 4-6-2 'Green Goddess' made a triumphant return to operation on the line on Sunday 9th June following the completion of a major overhaul that had included a boiler refurbishment, full bottom-end rebuild and new paintwork.

The loco had been withdrawn after a collision with a tractor on an unmanned level crossing, which left Green Goddess on its side and five passengers with minor injuries. An investigation by the Rail Accident Investigation Branch later concluded that the tractor driver had not used the crossing properly.

Following a ceremonial speech and the breaking of a bottle over the buffer beam, the loco departed New Romney station at 9.30am on a pre-booked ticket special to Hythe.

The 1925-built loco was the centre of attention on a day that included top and tailing a train with sister loco 'Northern Chief' with both running tender first, to taking on a parallel run on the RH&DR's double track main line with Mountain class 4-8-2 'Samson' running alongside.

Photos: Steve Town



Threat to original Romney engine shed

The original New Romney engine shed on the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway could be under threat of demolition as it needs extensive repairs.

The three-road shed dates back to the opening of the line, and was designed and built in 1926 by miniature locomotive engineer Henry Greenly for RH&DR creator Captain J E Howey. It was originally designed to hold six engines and built with a low roof, which Howey raised by five feet following the 1933 season after deciding not to install a pulley chimney system designed by Greenly.

The shed was extended in the 1960s and reroofed in 1976, when chimneys were added. Then in the winter of 2003 a new shed was built behind the existing one and to a size that could accommodate the entire Romney loco fleet.

Now the original shed is more than 90 years old and extensive renovation has become necessary, including structural repairs to the steelwork and a new roof.

Time could be running out for New Romney's original loco shed, seen here in 2014. Photo: Andrew Charman



Detailed quotes for the work required have not yet been obtained, but the cost is predicted to be in excess of £100,000.

A decision on the future of the shed is expected to be taken by the railway's board

and reports suggest demolition could be one of the options considered. However no work would be likely to be carried out before the end of the railway's main season in the autumn.



Katie goes back to Fairbourne

Star of the three visiting locomotives at the Fairbourne Railway's annual Steam Gala on 25th to 27th May was the 15-inch gauge Heywood 0-4-0 'Katie'.

Recently restored to steam and based in the museum of the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway, the 1896-built loco steamed at Fairbourne for the first time since 1926. Katie had originally been built for the Duke of Westminster's line at Eaton Hall, and had moved to the Ravenglass line in 1916, the Llewellyn Miniature Railway in 1919 and then to Fairbourne in 1923.

The loco was dismantled at Fairbourne in around 1929. Its remains, amounting to little more than the frame, lay at the beach line for several years until being donated to

the Narrow Gauge Railway Museum Trust at Tywyn. Restoration with new components began shortly afterwards and was completed by specialist Station Road Steam from 2014.

At the Gala Katie ran shuttles on the 15-inch gauge demonstration line with 0-4-0 'Mountaineer', making its third visit to Fairbourne from its home line of Windmill Farm. Owner Austin Moss also provided 15-inch gauge rolling stock for the event, consisting of a 1948 Fairbourne Wilkins and Mitchell carriage, a Fairbourne PW wagon and a restored Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch four-wheel carriage.

The third visitor ran on the 12¼-inch main line – 4wDE 'Albert' built by Madden

and Moss of Windmill Farm is normally resident on the Littlehampton Miniature Railway in Sussex.

Above left: On its return to Fairbourne 'Katie' gave a good account of itself on the 15-inch gauge demonstration line.

Above: Two locos, two gauges, as the 12.25-inch 'Sherpa' heads away from Fairbourne in front of Katie. Note the complex dual-gauge point in the foreground.

Right: Visiting from Littlehampton was the 12.25-inch gauge diesel 'Albert', seen here at Penrhyn Point with Fairbourne resident 'Yeo'.

All photos: Michael Chapman





A desirable double Fairlie...

Roundhouse Engineering has answered the pleas of many a 16mm scale modeller with a new model of an iconic locomotive type. *Steve Blackmore* was lucky enough to review it for us.

This must be one of the most eagerly awaited garden-railway locomotives for years. Ever since Roundhouse Engineering produced 'Taliesin', the firm's live-steam single Fairlie in 2008, speculation has been rife as to when one of its double-Fairlie Ffestiniog siblings would appear. After all, producing a 16mm/ft model of arguably the most influential narrow gauge locomotive ever built is surely a 'no brainer'. I mean how hard can it be?

The answer of course is 'very difficult'. Designer Rob Smith of the Doncaster-based firm faced a massive challenge squeezing all the required components needed for what are essentially two locomotives into a scale model of a prototype that itself had major problems

fitting within the Ffestiniog Railway's limited loading gauge.

The prototype chosen was 'David Lloyd George' which is currently the newest double Fairlie, built by the Ffestiniog Railway's Boston Lodge Works in 1993 (*A new one, 'James Spooner' is currently under construction – Ed*). The 'Dave' (as it is known on the FR) arrived at my Bole Hill Railway just as storm Hannah was sweeping in from the west so it was unpacked on the dining room table and my collection of Ffestiniog books and plans duly consulted.

First off, this model looks absolutely right. I had been expecting compromises to allow for the locomotive to be run on 45mm gauge as well as the 32mm gauge

track that is correct to the 2ft gauge prototype, but these were only identified by very close inspection of the prototype plans. Trust me the differences are so slight you won't spot them unless I tell you (and I'm not going to spoil it for you). So if you are worried about whether the loco will fit in your railway's loading gauge then the principle dimensions are:

Length over buffers	500mm
Length over footplate	470mm
Width over footplate	107mm
Width over cab top	95mm
Height over chimney	135mm *
Height over cab roof	130mm *

* Apparently the 45mm gauge version is slightly taller as it sits slightly higher on its bogies to allow sufficient swing to negotiate 3ft radius curves.

There are several lost-wax brass castings on top of the boilers and on the power bogie sides which impart a pleasing level of detail without being overly fragile (an important factor for the garden railwayman). The review SM32 model was supplied in Welsh Highland Railway Crimson Lake (unlined) but can be supplied in any of the standard Roundhouse paint colours.

Heading photo: The long-awaited double Fairlie is an impressively large loco in 16mm scale.

Photo: Roundhouse Engineering

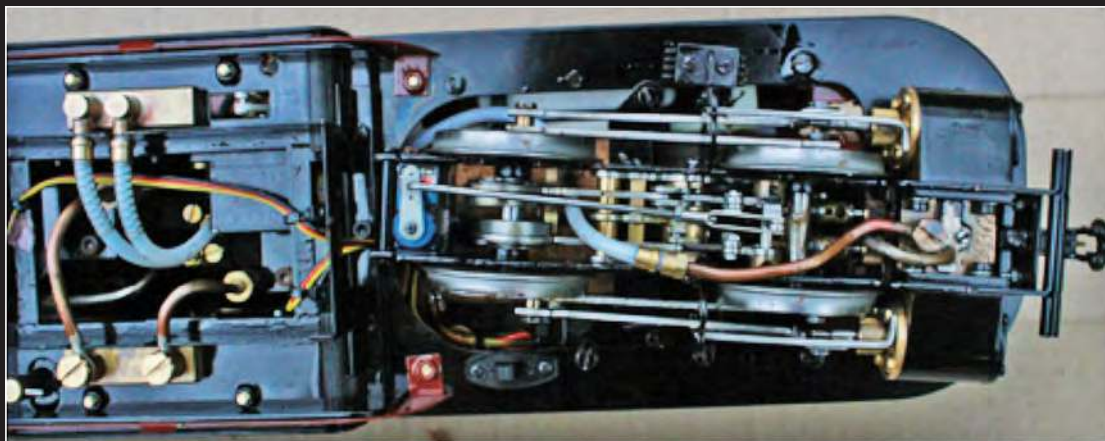
Left: Close-up of 'David Lloyd George' with the cab roof off. Note the very little spare space on the footplate!

All uncredited photos by Steve Blackmore



Right: View of one of the power bogies from underneath. Note the reverse linkage – radio control is highly necessary.

Below: Fuelling up the loco prior to the first test run. Not surprisingly every task, adding water, oil and gas, has to be carried out twice.



Two of everything

Turning to Dave's mechanical 'doings' – there are two separate boilers each with their own filler/safety valve, gas burner and water sight glass (more of this later). There are two gas tanks hidden in the side tanks which feed into a single gas (manual) regulator mounted just behind the cab sheet. The gas is then fed back to the gas burners on the boilers which 'shoot' their single flame down a 12mm diameter central flue in the boilers.

The cab roof lifts off and is held in place by a couple of strong magnets. It is good that this works well as you do need to be able to remove the roof every time you need to top up the water level.

Steam is fed from each boiler into a single manifold where the pleasingly small steam pressure gauge is mounted and then via a single (servo-controlled) regulator to the power bogies. Connection to the power bogies is by flexible (neoprene?) tubing so you have no worries about steam leaks here.

The power bogies are in fact the same as those used by Roundhouse on the Taliesin model and the inside-mounted valve gear is a marvel of model production engineering. Valve timing is taken from two eccentrics on the 'cab end' axle and reversing is controlled by a micro servo. Exhaust steam is fed up the chimney through a pair of Roundhouse 'exhaust enhancers'.

The Dave is only available with radio control by the way, a mechanical linkage from the pivoting power bogie back to the cab proved impossible! The setup is rather novel as well. Three channels are used, one for the regulator and one each for the two reversing gears. The right-hand transmitter stick has a 45-degree gate attached to it so when you move the stick both channels move in sync with each other. This means it is possible for the factory to tune each channel to match exactly its power bogie giving very smooth control.

So enough of the preliminaries you say, how well does it run?

First run

By this time the rain had actually stopped but it was still pretty windy. Undeterred your intrepid reviewer sallied forth to give it a go. First step is to give all the motion a good going over with the oil can before the

loco is placed on the rails and BOTH gas tanks are filled with butane gas. Then both boilers are filled with 'distilled' (in other words condensate from a dehumidifier) water. The trick here is to completely fill the boiler and then draw 30ml of water back out to leave a little steam space. Finally the displacement lubricator is filled with steam oil (NOT motor oil!).

Next the transmitter was turned on and then the loco was turned on to test the batteries (always do it this way around).

To assist with all this Roundhouse supplies with each Fairlie a water top-up bottle, a water top-up syringe, a lubricator-draining syringe, a bottle of steam oil, a butane gas cartridge and a gas filler adapter which screws onto the gas cartridge.

Chris had warned me to take care lighting up the locomotive. So following his advice, I opened the gas valve gently, held the lighter over the top of each chimney (until I heard a gentle pop) and waited a minute. A finger on both smokeboxes confirmed that both ends were getting warm and the gas was then tuned up until Dave was producing a muffled roar. Chris needn't have worried, despite the gusty winds Dave lit first time, every time, all weekend.

I took eight minutes to raise steam pressure from stone cold (later runs when

warm took about five minutes). The gas was then turned down until the burners were just audible; forward gear was engaged and the regulator opened gently. Without any fuss, Dave simply trundled off. No priming; no jets of hot oil shooting skywards from the chimneys. Very impressive – Roundhouse at its very best.

Quickly a light train was coupled to the loco and I spent 20 minutes running around my level 'top circuit' getting used to things before the gas ran out. I had been told to keep a strict eye on both water level gauges as sometimes the level drops on one faster than the other. Roundhouse water gauges have come a long way from those fitted to my now 17-year old Darjeeling Class B and now feature a white backing to the water cavity and are very easy to read. I quickly gained enough confidence in them to start topping up the water and gas while the loco was in steam, so was soon able to enjoy significantly longer runs than my initial 20 minutes.

Super hauler

Next day, the weather being kinder, I admit we got a little silly. I had borrowed some Ffestiniog rolling stock from the Wasdale Wagon Works because I thought they would look better in the photos rather than my predominantly Darjeeling rolling stock. »





It is thought that Franklin Prestige (the DHR principal engineer) had a hand in the construction of the Bole Hill railway. So aided and abetted by two friends we decided to see exactly how many wagons Dave could pull up my 1 in 50 main line (including a loop of course).

Starting with a train of eight slate wagons we built up to a maximum load of 38 axles (five carriages; one open goods and eight slate wagons). The Dave could have handled a few more but we were starting to suffer from broken wagon couplings. What the pictures can't of course show you is the lovely sound you get from the twin exhaust enhancers on a climb like this.

One nice touch is Roundhouse's new cast buffer. This is firmly attached to the power bogie with a top-mounted hook for the usual chain link couplings. It also has a pair of bottom-mounted lugs which I found were just right for attaching the slate wagons via a pin and chain. Dave is very sure footed and smooth and at one point I was able to propel a rake of wagons up around my spiral without any derailments.

Now nothing in life is perfect, so there must be some problems surely? Well one very minor snag is the reversing gear linkage. This is mounted very low in the power bogie and at one point I realised that

one bogie's wheels had locked solid and the other was happily dragging it along. This was due to a small twig getting caught in the linkage, locking it in mid gear. Garden railway modellers who like to have tall moss growing between the rails might experience a few problems.

Also the footplate space is non-existent and it will be a challenge to site a driver and fireman in the cab and still leave access to the sight glasses and water top-up valves. Another issue might be having to keep an eye on two water gauges while running. Most Roundhouse locos have the fail-safe ability to run out of gas before the water level drops to the level of the central heating flue thus making them very suitable for the novice operator. The Dave needs a little more care than this, but then again I don't think this masterpiece is being marketed at the novice.

Costly, but worth it

Which of course brings us on to the list price, £4,100 including VAT. Considering that in effect you are buying two locomotives in one; it's not surprising that it's twice the price of most of Roundhouse's locomotives. I understand that within days of the order book opening more than 100 orders had been taken so clearly there are

Above left: The Dave on its first test run, with suitable rolling stock.

Above: The cast buffer coupling is just right for attaching correct period slate wagon stock.

Below: A cold day means impressive smoke effects. This load was far below the Fairlie's equally impressive hauling power.

many customers who think the price is fair and I don't think a single one of them will be disappointed.

Now it is customary for the reviewer to close with a remark about whether he or she returned the locomotive or a cheque after the review, but as SWMBO will be proof reading this review (*for novice modellers, this is an old phrase virtually adopted by the 16mm hobby and standing for 'She Who Must Be Obeyed'... Ed*) I will 'plead the fifth'. Certainly it was with a heavy heart that I drove back down Churchill road on Monday morning. One final snag I pointed out to Chris Lee; "How on earth do you follow this?" I asked. I'm sure I saw a gleam in his eye... **NGW**

More Information

Roundhouse Engineering, Tel: 01302 328035
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web: www.roundhouse-eng.com



Mary Jane's Mushroom Farm...

A criminal conspiracy gave *Martin Rich* the inspiration for his latest story-telling layout, in GN15 scale.

I like to build layouts that tell a story and what follows below is a true story!

"A mushroom farm based in disused railway tunnels was in fact a front for a sophisticated cannabis operation with a potential annual turnover of more than £2m. Police raided the underground business after a tip-off and found a warren of industrial-sized growing rooms hidden behind fortress-like steel gates.

Today four men were jailed for their part in the operation at the disused Faenol Tunnels on the Menai Business Park at Bangor, north Wales. Mr Recorder sitting at Mold Crown Court, said it was described by the police as one of the best cannabis factories ever found in North Wales in recent history. There were 1,207 plants in various stages of growth with blocks capable of supporting a further 1,600 plants. The potential yields was estimated at £254,000. The lighting and watering systems were all automated, and he discovered 88 lighting units, 11 fans and nine silencers; "The officer in the case described the set up as one of the best he had encountered in 22 years of service as a drugs officer."

Daily Mail, 3 December 2012

For my latest narrow gauge layout, I decided to use this story as the basis for 'Mary Jane's Mushroom Farm'. The gauge is Gn15, which means using OO track (16.5mm gauge) to a scale of 1:22 (approximately G Scale).

The layout is based around an abandoned railway tunnel where a constant temperature for growing mushrooms can be achieved – the entrance has been boarded up and the door opens remotely when the train enters or leaves the tunnel.

On the railway land there are a number of wooden buildings where the mushroom boxes are unloaded when brought out of the tunnel. Other traffic includes bags of compost and bins of manure (from chickens and horses), water and such, along with suspicious looking packages, which the police sniffer dog seems rather interested in.

Cameos include two men smoking

Above: The boarded-up tunnel in which is the farm, loco 'Shitake' emerging.



spliffs behind one of the sheds where they cannot be seen by the two policemen. To add some further interest there is a mobile Dunny Wagon (there are no toilet facilities in the tunnel itself) If one opens the door at the front of the layout, where police tape has been strung up, one can see the cultivation of cannabis plants.

Rolling stock

At present there are three locomotives on the layout. The two yellow diesels were acquired from a scratchbuilder on eBay who goes by the name of Iain. These two are named 'Button' and 'Shitake'. They each use a shortened Lima 0-4-0 shunter chassis with extra weight added. The third item of motive power is a battery electric locomotive, a Pepper 7 model on a Tenshodo motor bogie.

The rolling stock is all scratch built and includes either bogie flats or four-wheel flat wagons. Kadee couplings are

used to enable remote coupling and uncoupling of stock.

Infrastructure

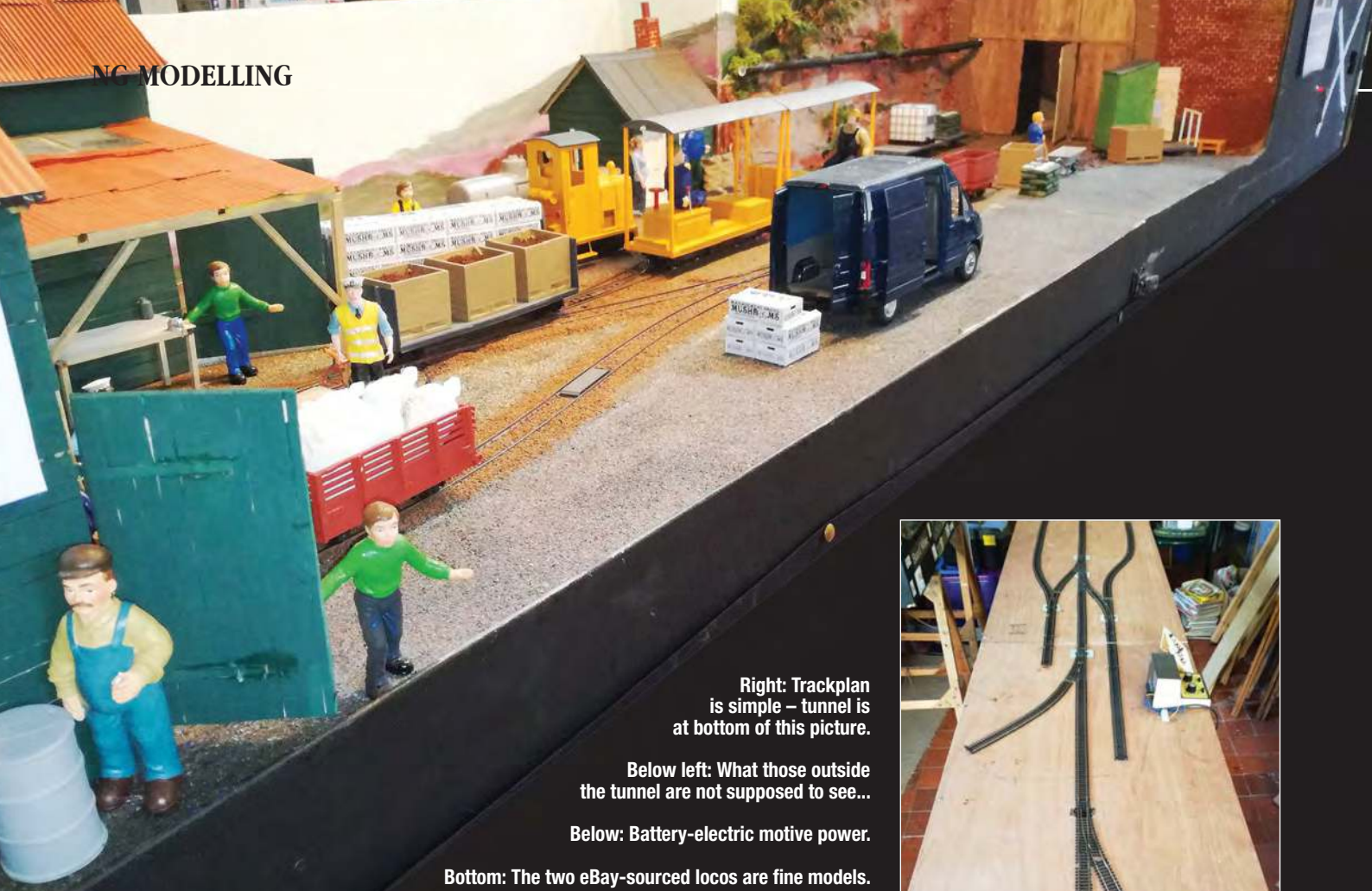
The boarded-up tunnel entrance and the buildings are mainly wooden structures made from coffee stirrers. The office was provided by a G-scale resin kit. The ground is covered in a variety of textures of ballast and other scatter material, while polystyrene covered in coloured filler produced the rocky cutting.

Operation

I did a lot of research into mushroom growing, in order to determine what wagon loads I would need. The mushrooms were made from balls of DAS clay. I did think about including stalks, but decided against it. If anyone asks, I say the stalks are all »

Below: Martin has done a fine job of modelling the boxes of mushrooms.





Right: Trackplan is simple – tunnel is at bottom of this picture.

Below left: What those outside the tunnel are not supposed to see...

Below: Battery-electric motive power.

Bottom: The two eBay-sourced locos are fine models.



facing downwards. The IBC water tank was acquired from 3dp Scalemodelshop. These 3D printed tanks are available in a variety of scales. I had to print and make up quite a few boxes for the mushrooms while other sacks and loads were acquired from a variety of sources.

Sourcing suitable figures has proved quite difficult. Most available G-scale people have an American or German appearance, particularly in the clothes or uniforms they are wearing. The scale is also quite variable and so the height varies between different manufacturers. I did enquire about having specially made 3D printed figures, but the price of each was quite expensive.

As can be seen from the track plan, there is no run-round loop, and trains are pulled or propelled as necessary. It all adds to interesting operational potential.

The layout made its debut at the Bloxwich Model Railway show in May and then went to the Bala Model Railway Show. Other exhibitions it is due to attend this year include the Ellesmere Model Railway Show and The Corris Model Railway show at Machynlleth in August, the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway Gala at Welshpool Raven Square station in September, and the Telford and Wombourne shows in October. **NGW**

21st Century Narrow Gauge

by James Waite

■ *NGW* readers will be very familiar with the author of this book – James has a monthly feature in the magazine and its title, 'Waite's World' reflects the globe-trotting that its writer has indulged in for some years now in search of narrow gauge, and in particular steam, action.

The book is described as a pictorial journey and that it certainly is, and a truly global one, starting off in the Americas, coming across the Atlantic to firstly the various constituent countries of the former Soviet Union and into Europe, of course including the UK, before striking out east to check out narrow gauge outposts in the likes of Eritrea, South Africa, India and the Far East before concluding in Australia and New Zealand – James must have rather a lot of stamps in his passport...

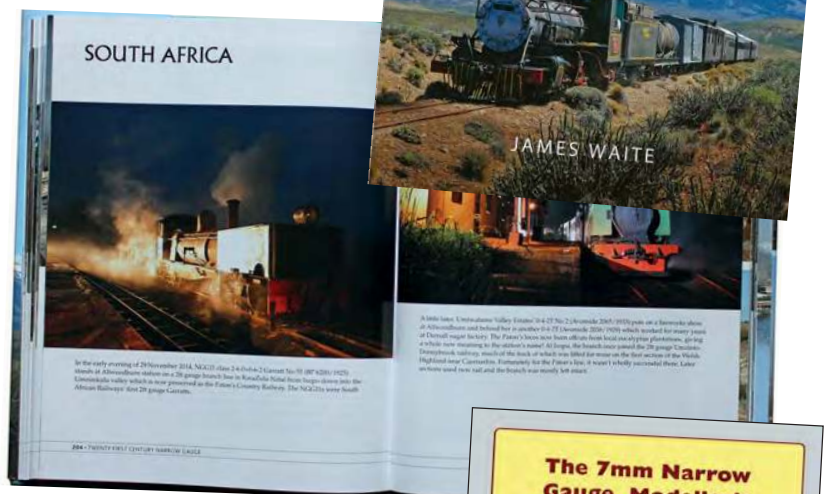
Long-time *NGW* readers will know that James is a skilled photographer and leafing through the pages of the book will recall pictures that have appeared in our pages, plus just as many that might not be so familiar. All are presented in a high quality format, generally one to a page with concise but detailed captions.

In summary this is one of those books to be left on the coffee table, to be leafed through at leisure, while also serving as a reminder that even today the world offers a tremendous variety of narrow gauge – James appears to have seen and photographed most, if not all of it! *AC*

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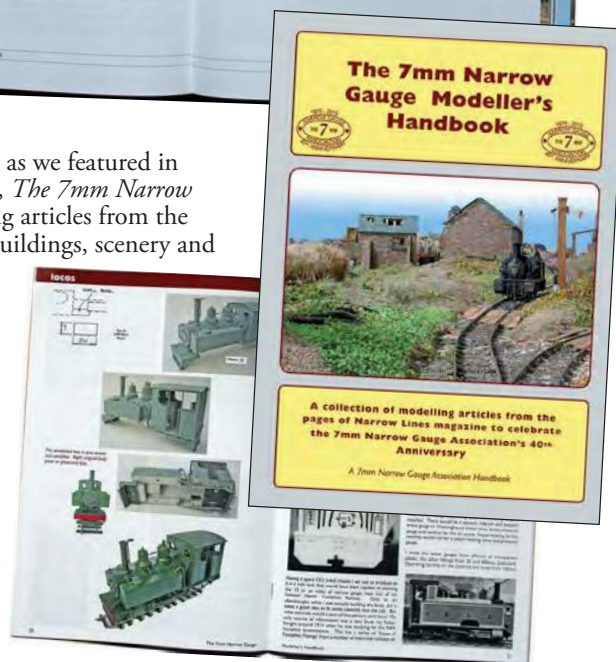
The 7mm Narrow Gauge Modeller's Handbook published by the 7mm NG Association

■ The 7mm Narrow Gauge Association clocks up its 40th anniversary this year, as we featured in *NGW* 137, and as part of the celebrations has produced this one-off publication, *The 7mm Narrow Gauge Modeller's Handbook*. Running to 68 pages it is a compilation of modelling articles from the Association's bi-monthly magazine *Narrow Lines*, covering rolling stock, locos, buildings, scenery and general modelling hints. The handbook is in full colour, although some of the original articles are in black and white.

The Association tells us that the purpose of the Handbook is to help with or encourage modellers to start in 7mm narrow gauge, and leafing through the pages we feel it will certainly do that. The articles have been selected as being well within the capabilities of the 'average' modeller, requiring only basic hand tools and certainly not a fully equipped workshop. There's certainly a lot of variety, from building a Baldwin loco in Plastikard to constructing realistic scenery and correctly painting models of horses!

All current Association members and those joining this year are receiving the handbook. It is also available to non-members at a special anniversary price. *AC*

Publisher: 7mm Narrow Gauge Association – available from Association stand at shows throughout the country, or from the website at www.7mmnga.org.uk/sales/publications
Price £2.50 plus £2.00 P&P.



■ Prolific provider of 16mm scale rolling stock Bowaters Models has turned its sights firmly on producing models of South African Railways 2ft gauge stock. Under development (right) is the Class 91 diesel which replaced Garratt locos on the Avontuur line out of Port Elizabeth in the eastern cape. Full specification is still to be confirmed but it will be designed to operate on both 32mm and 45mm gauges.

Also planned is a range of SAR rolling stock, such as the carriage below and various wagon types. Full details are on the website at www.bowatersmodels.co.uk





New-builds and the Llanfair

Inote that in the correspondence section of *NGW* 139 the topic of a new build loco for the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway is raised with the suggestion of a Leek & Manifold prototype. As you point out (*in the Editor's reply to the letter*) the W&LLR needs a locomotive with specific characteristics to cope with its gradient profile.

Clearly, however, loco availability is a key issue for the W&LLR, hence the timely decision to have 'The Earl' overhauled by the Vale of Rheidol workshops (*NGW* 139 page 6). There is a need to have at least four suitable operational locos at the start of the season with another on overhaul/rebuild and 2ft 6in gauge locos are rather thin on the ground in the UK.

There is then another obvious possibility for a new-build which is to build another Beyer Peacock like The Earl and 'The Countess' but to 21st century standards and construction. Not a 'replica' but an update, after all the GWR at Swindon built new locos for the Vale of Rheidol and doubtless incorporated its own modifications. It is clear that the Beyer Peacock

Above: Would building a third Beyer Peacock 0-6-0T be a good idea for the Welshpool & Llanfair? Peter Bowen states so in his letter. Photo: Andrew Charman

Below: In his letter Derrick Why advocates a new-build of the Snailbeach Bagnall 0-6-0T 'Dennis', a type that did not survive to preservation.

Next page: close-up of the distinctive Engerth motion, the arrow pointing to the expansion link mentioned in the letter from Eddie Draper. Photo: James Waite

configuration seems to be a good match with the line's characteristics.

This then also raises the issue of coaching stock and having sufficient carriages with visitor appeal. The Ffestiniog made a fine job of building the replica Pickering carriages for the W&LLR and so presumably could build additional ones. However for variety would it be possible to look at some of the Vale of Rheidol Swindon-built stock and assess their suitability for the W&LLR?

This fits in with the GWR theme and there is the interesting precedent that a couple of GWR cattle wagons built for the VoR were transferred to the W&LLR. What if the GWR had recognised the tourist potential of the W&LLR and decided on an upgrade instead of killing of the passenger service with a competing bus? Perhaps then they would have added to the coaching stock as they did for the goods stock and continued with the design for the VoR?

Clearly there is much happening on the W&LLR with its current infrastructure and buildings

development plan and financial resources are finite. However a longer view could be taken with an eye to future anniversaries for the line. The line will celebrate its 120th anniversary in 2023 and its 125th in 2028 so perhaps these dates could set the timescales for these projects and suitable fundraising.

So if there was to be a third Beyer Peacock, doubtless there will be plenty of views as to what it should be called. However recognising the original theme perhaps it should be named 'Powis' matching the Earl and Countess of Powis.

Peter Bowen

A Snailbeach new-build?

Amore suitable replica locomotive for the 2ft 6in gauge Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway would be, in my opinion, 'Dennis' from the nearby Snailbeach District Railways. This was a compact maximum adhesion Bagnall 0-6-0T of 1907 similar in size to the W&LLR's 'The Earl' and 'The Countess'.

I understand that it was originally intended that the W&LLR would have opened with a third engine but its finances were such that only two actually appeared.

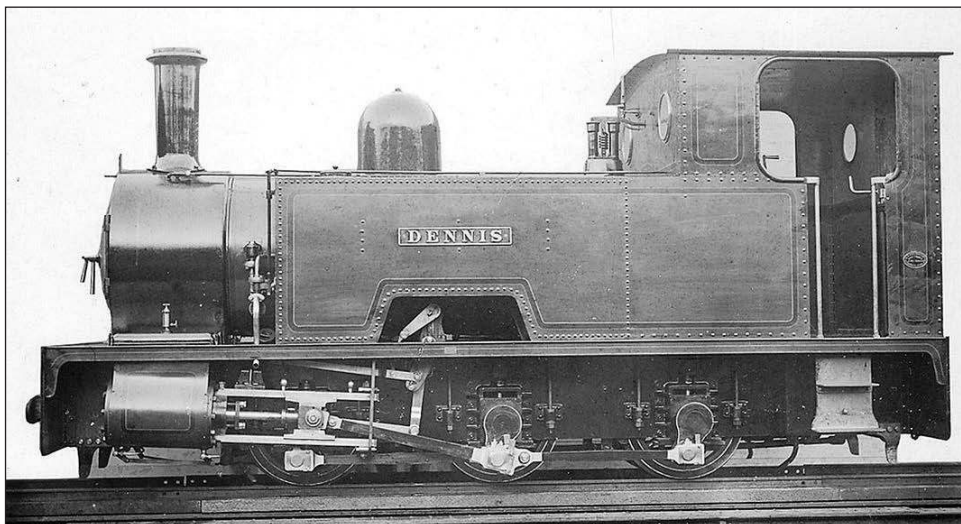
A cash-strapped, pre-Colonel Stephens, Snailbeach District Railways board post World War 1 might, just, have agreed to sell Dennis to the pre-grouping Cambrian Railways and to use horses instead for what little traffic remained on their line.

The Cambrian Oswestry works had the facilities to re-gauge and overhaul the loco (*Dennis was originally 2ft 4in gauge – Ed*) for use on the W&LLR line, becoming its third locomotive.

Derrick Why

Andrew C replies: I have to admit to being quite surprised to receive these replies and another couple on a very similar theme. If one reads Russell Snowdon's original letter, he was merely speculating what the next new-build might be, at no point mentioning any requirement for new locos on the Llanfair line – only my reply mentioned the W&LLR, and simply to suggest that as Russell was advocating a Leek & Manifold Kitson 2-6-4T, such a loco's 2ft 6in gauge would make the W&LLR the most likely line it would be aimed at.

I have to declare an interest here, being both a Trustee and a fireman at Llanfair, so everything following is my personal opinion and should not be taken as that of the railway. I can, however, say that there has been no official consideration of new-build engines for the line! For a start, the



cost of such a project (as well as the new-build carriages Peter Bowen advocates) would be a significant challenge to any such plans.

Yes the W&LLR loco fleet is stretched at present, due to the well-documented delays in the return of steam of Franco-Belge 0-8-0T 'Sir Drefaldwyn'. However there is light at the end of the tunnel – the railway has said that plans are in place to remedy the loco shortage in the near future. As Peter says the dispatch of 'The Earl' to the Rheidol for overhaul is part of this.

The subject of building a modern 'Super Beyer' comes up regularly amongst W&LLR members, usually of an evening chatting with a pint in 'The Goat' pub at Llanfair! Again emphasising that I speak personally, I don't see the appeal. Enthusiasts would no doubt love such an engine, but the vast majority of visitors to the W&LLR are not enthusiasts – they are families on a day out and another loco looking virtually the same as two others would not likely be a major factor encouraging them to return.

As regards Snailbeach engines, regular readers will know I've long desired the creation of a new-build Kerr Stuart Skylark, a type also used by the line, but I do like the idea of a new-build 'Dennis' – potentially a powerful loco and like the Kerr Stuart a type that was lost to narrow gauge preservation in the UK.

Engerth the UK lost

James Waite's article 'To see the Engerths in action' in *NGW* 138 was absolutely fascinating. I had no idea what had happened there since my visit to attempt to buy a loco (for the Golden Valley Light Railway) in the early 1990s.

In fact, it was no 1 that was sort of almost but not quite on offer at that time. James' article failed to mention

that no 1 is virtually guaranteed to be unique, in that it is not only an Engerth (that name was new to me) but equipped with Helmholtz valve gear. It may be the only set of Helmholtz motion in captivity.

Helmholtz draws heavily on the design of Walschaerts, but achieves that golden dream of production engineers, a straight expansion link, as can be seen in the side elevation view on page 22 (*see below – Ed*). The effect of having a curved expansion link is simulated by fixing the radius rod to the lifting link at a different point from the die block, so the for-and-aft motion engendered by the circular motion of the lifting arm also causes a for-and-aft motion of the radius rod.

In all other respects Engerth gear replicates the far better-known Walschaerts motion. Doubtless, some small additional error is thereby generated, but that won't be a patch on the errors inherent in some other cheap patent-avoiding arrangements such as Marshal (used by Oreinstein & Koppel) and Hackworth, featuring on many of Kerr, Stuart's products. If you need a sliding expansion link/dieblock arrangement and cannot machine a big radius curve on it, then this is the one to go for.

Eddie Draper,
CME, Golden Valley Light Railway

Andrew C replies: Fascinating stuff from Eddie, and interesting to hear of a 'might-have-been' that got away from the UK narrow gauge scene.

For all the wide variety of locomotive types on the British narrow gauge, I've often pondered, usually while looking at the fascinating motion on Statfold Barn's Corpet-Louvre loco, that one can't see some of the more esoteric types – especially the likes of Shays and Climaxes – without going abroad.



That was the year...

Looking back at narrow gauge news stories from the archives and their legacy...

From 25 years ago

Welsh Highland Railway, Porthmadog (1ft 11½in) April 9th saw the arrival of two more locomotives to add to the 1964 Company's ever-growing fleet. Both are 4-4-0 side tank Bagnalls built for the Tongaat Sugar Estate in Natal province in South Africa.

One of the machines is located in the Welsh Highland Car Park at Porthmadog, whilst the other can be seen stationed at Pen y Mount. The 'car park' loco is 'Sinembe' built in 1926 at a cost of £1485. She arrived in Porthmadog carrying the name of 'Edward Saunders', a sister loco built some years later. The 'Pen y Mount' loco was built in 1946 and named 'Charles Wytock' but was later renamed 'Prospecton' after a new township in Natal. (*NGN*, July 1994)

This is of course today's Welsh Highland Heritage Railway, in 1994 trading as the WHR and in battle with the Ffestiniog's rival restoration bid. The two locomotives remained at Gelert's Farm until 1997, when Graham Walton-Binns, who had acquired them from South Africa, moved the pair to a workshop near Middlesbrough for restoration.

Virtually complete at the end of 2013 (NGW90 page 6), 'Charles Wytock' subsequently spent some time at the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway but has since left the line, while Sinembe was last heard of as being for sale. We'd like to hear from any reader with an update on either.

'Sinembe' in 2013, when restoration in Middlesbrough was close to completion.



Lynbarn Railway, Milky Way, Clovelly, Devon (2ft) On 10th May the Lynbarn Railway was opened at the Milky Way Farm Park. The railway was built in two months by members of the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Association and consists of a 910-yard loop in 30lb rail around part of the park. Coaches and track are from the former Treasure Island Railway at Thorpe Park which closed in 1992.

Profits from the operation will go towards the LBRA for the next five years after which the railway will revert to the Milky Way. (*NGN*, July 1994)

Which is exactly what happened. The Lynbarn Railway provided both vital monetary contributions and also very useful railway operating experience in the formative years of the L&B. It still operates at the park today as the Milky Way Railway.

Extracts from *Narrow Gauge News*, the news journal of the Narrow Gauge Railway Society – for more details of the Society and how to join up, go to www.ngrs.org.uk or refer to the advert elsewhere in this issue.



Unexpected Narrow Gauge...



Regular *NGW* correspondent **Matt Ditch** has sent in three pictures which he took in Chopwell Woods, near Newcastle in the northeast of England.

The first image at left shows a blocked-up drift mine entrance, with its narrow gauge track still visible. The top of the brick arch of the tunnel is just visible in the upper part of the picture.

This drift is near the site of Victoria Garesfield Colliery and a short distance away lies the now disused standard gauge tunnel which Matt reports gave the standard gauge industrial locos access to the sheds.

Not far away on the other side of the woods lies a restored if somewhat overgrown section of the Victoria Garesfield tubway, complete with tubs. Tubways first appeared in the northeast in around 1650 as some of the earliest forms of UK railways, and were built to move coal from the faces in the extensive colliery workings to where it was needed, such as to the River Tyne for loading on ships. Power was generally by horse or by men simply pushing the wagons along the rails.

Much of the Victoria Garesfield system, built from 1860, was underground, and took the coal to the end of a 1.5-mile branch of the North Eastern Railway. The final colliery closed in 1961.

Special Events

Only events of interest to rail enthusiasts are included in this guide – for contact details see Diary on following page.

■ **Daily, Devon Railway Centre Open Day** Museum nr Tiverton, 2ft gauge line. <http://devonrailwaycentre.co.uk>

■ **6th-7th July, Evesham Vale Light Railway Steam Gala.** 'Katie' and 'Owl' from Kirklees visiting, intensive service, transport show

■ **6th-7th July, Rhiw Valley Light Railway Open Weekend.** 15in gauge line close to Welshpool & Llanfair. www.rvlr.co.uk

■ **6th-7th July, Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway Steam & Beer.** Real ales, ciders food, live music. Late Saturday trains.

■ **6th-7th July, Talyllyn Railway Beer Festival.** Real ales, ciders and gins from across Wales and UK, evening steam train.

■ **7th July, Bressingham Everything Goes Day.** All available steam locos in operation. Also Steampunk weekend.

■ **7th July, Bredgar & Wormshill Railway Enthusiasts day.** Kent 2ft line, all available stock running. <http://bwlr.co.uk>

■ **7th July, Corris Railway Gravity train.** 3.15pm departure.

■ **13th July, Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway 10th Anniversary Open Day.** Steam & diesel, Skegness Water Park, www.lclr.co.uk

■ **13th-14th July, Amberley Museum Railway Gala.** All available locos, intensive timetable, model railway exhibition.

■ **13th-14th July, Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway Steam & Beer Extravaganza.** All available locos, intensive timetable

■ **13th-14th July, Leighton Buzzard Railway Buzzrail Rail Ale Trail.** Real Ale bars at both termini.

■ **20th, 21st, 27th July, Lincolnshire Coast Lgt Rlwy Operating Day.** Steam 20th/21st, Skegness Water Park, www.lclr.co.uk

■ **20th-21st July, Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway Vintage train.** Period mixed stock, shunting at each terminus.

■ **24th July, Groudle Glen Railway Manx Heritage Transport Festival Open Day.** 11am-9pm

■ **24-30th July, Isle of Man Steam Railway Manx Heritage Transport Festival.** Detailed programme, also on tramways, details in leaflet – download from www.gov.im/publictransport

■ **27th-28th July, Kirklees Light Railway Katie & Sian weekend.** Former Fairbourne sister locos running together

■ **27th-28th July, Threlkeld Quarry Museum Steam Gala.** Visiting locos, excavator loading demonstrations

■ **28th July, Gartell Light Railway Open Day.** 2ft Somerset line, frequent timetable. 01963 370752, <http://newglr.weebly.com>

Miniature Railways

- **Audley End Railway** (10.25in): Essex 01799 541354, www.audley-end-railway.co.uk *Daily from 6th July, trains from 10.30am*
- **Beer Heights Light Railway** (7.25in): Devon 01297 21542, www.pecorama.co.uk *Daily from 10am.*
- **Lappa Valley Railway** (15, 10.25, 7.25in): Cornwall 01872 510317, www.lappavalley.co.uk *Daily from 10am.*
- **Littlehampton Miniature Railway** (12.25in): Sussex www.littlehamptonminiaturerailway.com *Weekends, daily from 20th July*
- **Moors Valley Railway** (7.25in): Hants 01425 471415, www.moorsvalleyrailway.co.uk *Daily, behind scenes open weekend 13th-14th July*
- **North Bay Railway, Scarborough** (20in): Yorks 01723 368791, www.nbr.org.uk, *Open daily from 10.30am, weekends and after 21st 10am*
- **Rhyl Miniature Railway** (15in): Clwyd 01352 759109, www.rhylminiaturerailway.co.uk *Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays, daily from 12th July*

Tramways

- **Douglas Horse Tramway:** Isle of Man, 01624 662525, www.rail.im/ *Daily - Heritage Transport Festival 24-28 July.*
- **Great Orme Tramway:** Conwy 01492 577877, www.greatormetramway.co.uk *Daily services from 10am.*
- **Manx Electric Railway:** Isle of Man 01624 662525, www.rail.im *Daily - Heritage Transport Festival 24-28 July.*
- **Seaton Tramway:** Devon 01297 20375, www.tram.co.uk *Daily services, every 20 minutes from 10am.*
- **Snaefell Mountain Railway:** Isle of Man 01624 662525, www.rail.im *Daily - Heritage Transport Festival 24-28 July.*

Running out of Steam...

Keith Chester looks back on a typical day in the challenging surrounds of Java in 1983.

By the 1970s the state railways of Indonesia, the PJKA, had become a byword for incompetence and inefficiency. A modern, well-organised system under Dutch colonial rule in the late 1930s, they had suffered from first the deprivations of Japanese wartime occupation and post-independence, a lack of resources and losing almost all traffic to the road; corruption added to the problems.

From the rows of new diesels lacking spare parts to a timetable that was essentially a fiction, everything spoke of neglect and visiting the island of Java to seek out surviving steam was a hit-and-miss affair. Though even in the last year of steam (1983–84) a surprising variety of locomotives were in service, the

question always was whether anything would be working on the day you turned up.

So we were pleasantly surprised to find a 2-8-2T in steam when in early August 1983 we arrived at Cianjar in western Java after nightfall. Tripods and flashguns quickly attracted the attention of railwaymen and, yes, a working to Padalarang was scheduled for 05.00 the next morning.

Somewhat sceptically, we got up at 04.30 and headed for the station. Hanomag no D1412 (9655/1921) was already blowing off and we were quickly invited up into the cab. To our surprise, the tank loco immediately set off light engine.

This was an occurrence not unusual in the dog days of steam in Java: a freight or mixed was booked, an engine was available but there was no traffic. The 'train' then consisted of a crew van and loco or, as in this case, just the loco with six to seven people crammed into its small cab. Such an arrangement may have offended the market economics then becoming fashionable in the West but for these railwaymen this seemingly pointless trip represented a small but



Main picture: Having stalled on a 1 in 25 bank, oil-fired no D1412 emits voluminous clouds of exhaust as its crew tries to recover pressure and continue to Padalarang. Photo: Keith Chester, July 1983.

Above: Hanomag works photo of no 1404. The 2-8-2Ts were built for heavy shunting and freight trains in the ports of Jakarta and Surabaya. They were modernised in the 1930s for passenger trains. Photo: Keith Chester collection.

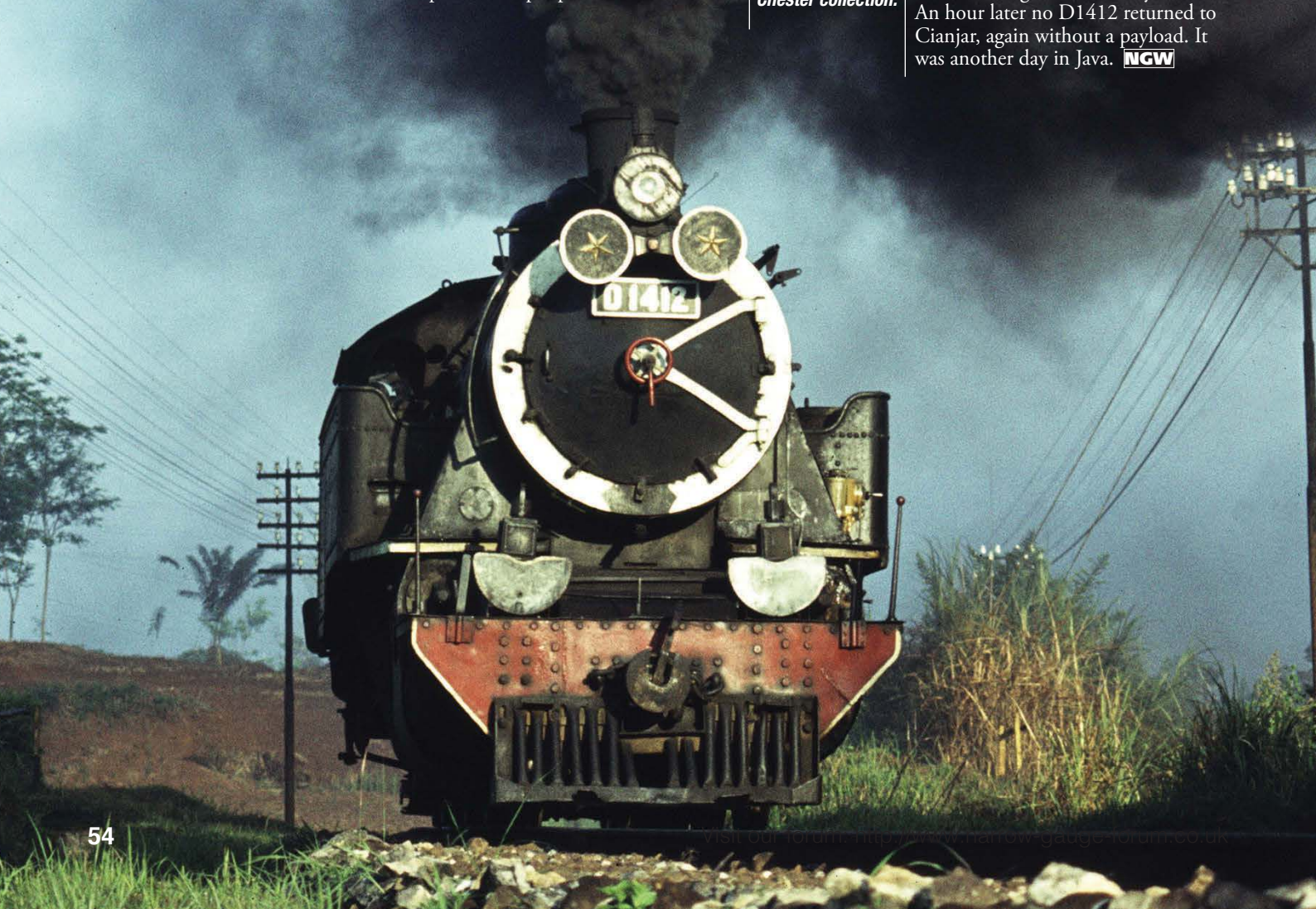
regular income in what was for most still a desperately poor country.

False promise

The abrupt tropical dawn broke the darkness, revealing rice terraces, jungle and the superb scenery of the Preanger Mountains. D1412 seemed to be steaming well and, with no wagons to pick up along the way, was making good progress. At a wayside station, however, we stopped, not to cross another train but for the crew to peer a little anxiously at the loco.

We departed less confidently than before and within a few kilometres our light engine finally expired on the 1 in 25 grade. With a roar, a column of thick black smoke erupted from the chimney as the crew struggled to raise boiler pressure. After 15 to 20 minutes standing mid-section, the 2-8-2T cautiously moved forward.

Padalarang was eventually reached. An hour later no D1412 returned to Cianjar, again without a payload. It was another day in Java. **NGW**



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