

NARROW GAUGE WORLD

ISSUE 148
JUNE 2020



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Cover: How does one take a photo in an area where there simply is no access? By being part of a private test run, and owning the locomotive concerned! In this issue Graham Fairhurst tells the story of his Baldwin's run on the Welsh Highland just before the COVID-19 lockdown stopped everything.
Photo: Graham Fairhurst

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CONTENTS

05 **First Lines**
The challenge of starting again

06 **Headline News**
Railways plan a reopening strategy

09 **UK News**
Bala puts its Gala online

14 **World News**
Global effect of COVID-19



16 **World News Focus**
Challenges in Romania

18 **Locomotives**
Grand day out on a Baldwin

22 **Waite's World**
Surviving steam in Costa Rica

25 **News Gallery**
A quick bit of time travel...

28 **Locomotives**
Travels of the Penrhyn Hunslets

34 **From the Archives**
1980s on the Welsh Highland



36 **NG Electric**
The tramways of Innsbruck

39 **UK Lines**
Long history of the Lincs Coast

42 **NG Modelling**
A larger garden scale

45 **NG Modelling**
A 3D printed loco body

46 **On the Shelf**
Models and new books

48 **Viewpoint**
All-change diesels

49 **Narrow Gauge Extra**
Yet more from the scrapyards...

51 **Encounters**
Times past in Greece



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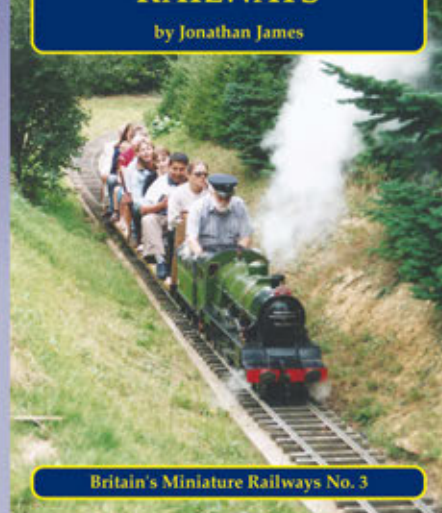


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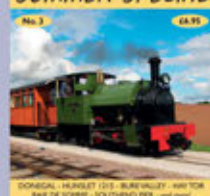


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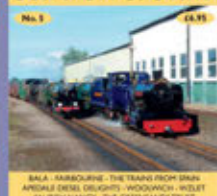
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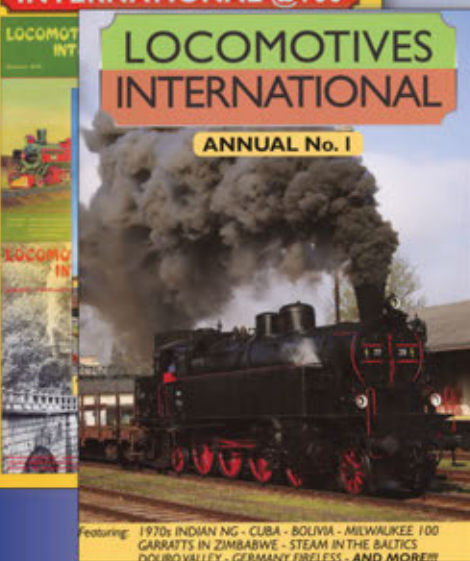
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LOCOMOTIVES INTERNATIONAL

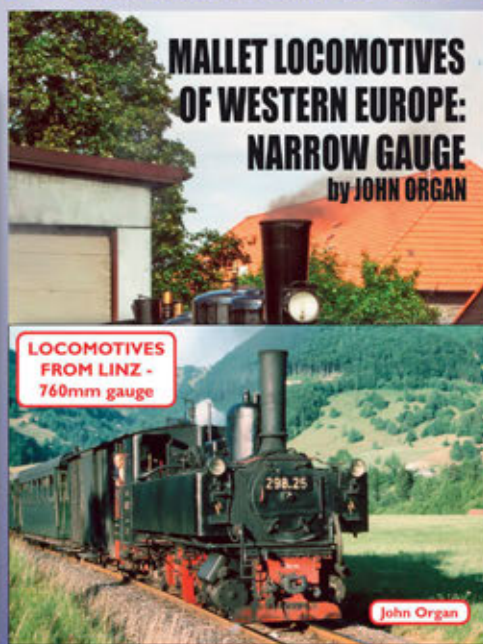
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by JOHN ORGAN



LOCOMOTIVES
FROM LINZ -
760mm gauge

John Organ

MALLET LOCOMOTIVES: NARROW
GAUGE & LOCOMOTIVES FROM
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So what happens next?



Main photo: Summer weather and crowds of visitors enjoying a day out at one of our heritage railways. This is the kind of picture railway management and staff really like to see, but for a while yet, even when our railways run again, these scenes will not even be permitted.
Photo: W&LLR

Welcome to **NGW148**, and we are still deep in the challenges of the coronavirus, eight weeks into lockdown as I write these words.

Firstly I want to thank readers who took the time to get in touch with words of appreciation after we published **NGW147**, your kind thoughts on our coverage of the virus effects on the narrow gauge scene, and the fact that we are still publishing, were much appreciated! As last month, we fully intend that it will be business as usual as much as is possible despite the serious challenges we are facing in our industry.

Secondly I want to repeat my words of last month – I hope readers are staying safe and that the virus and its consequences are not affecting you too badly.

As I finish this, the final page for this issue sent over the weekend of 16th May, it's a week since the Prime Minister slightly eased the UK's lockdown. There are the slightest signs of progress – some of the narrow gauge industry has gone back to work and as I pen these words I'm seeing the odd Facebook post from enthusiasts being allowed to resume just a little volunteering at their local line.

These green shoots are few, however – here at the home of **NGW** we are still very much locked down, Wales following its own

guidelines which it's yet to relax, and of course the majority of leading UK narrow gauge lines are in Wales.

Unfortunately, like last month, the first few pages of this issue make for sobering reading. Our world is moving on – the shock of coronavirus has passed, and now thoughts are turning to reopening, and how it might be achieved.

However the fact is that even when allowed to reopen, a return to any sort of normality is a long time away, and with the social distancing measures that are going to have to be enforced, even running trains with enough passengers to make them viable will be a huge ask.

Yet, we remain optimistic. As we talk to management, staff and volunteers at our railways and steam centres, the one overriding impression we get is a determination to face whatever challenges are put in front of them and beat them.

We all know that this is the biggest challenge our narrow gauge world has ever faced – but there is no getting away from it. The frankly amazing response to the various fund-raising appeals that have been underway, sums that would normally take years to raise achieved in weeks, demonstrates very firmly that there is a real appreciation for the narrow gauge – we will find a way to fully repay that faith.

Andrew Charman

How to stay at home and still obtain your NGW

■ In the current situation some explanation of our various options to order **NGW** online for delivery to your home might be helpful.

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www.world-of-railways.co.uk/store/digital-archive/narrow-gauge-world

Railways face challenges of reopening post-virus



As *NGW* closed for press on 16th May the UK's narrow gauge railways were completing an eighth week of lockdown closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the only movements occasional works and weedkilling trains at a time when several lines would normally have been running daily services.

Having absorbed the initial shock of closure and the financial implications, railway management and trustees have been planning for reopening, analysing when this might be permitted, what form it might take and whether measures needed to cope

with the aftermath of the virus would make services viable or even possible.

The Government decision to extend the furlough scheme until October, paying 80 per cent of the wages of employees with no work, has eased some financial pressure on railways trying to retain their paid staff.

The Chancellor added that after the end of July businesses would be able to bring some employees back to work part-time. But his comment that the Government will also seek to reduce the cost of the scheme to the taxpayer, which many believe means businesses will be asked to contribute some of the costs, is worrying to a sector that looks unlikely to be running trains and bringing in revenue at that point.

"Discussing the issue with my counterparts at other railways we see that we are going to be one of the last industry sectors to be released from the lockdown restrictions," Andrew Barnes, general manager of the 15-inch gauge Bure Valley Railway, told *NGW*.

A further complication emerging could be the different rate of change across the UK. While as we went to press England

had begun to ease lockdown restrictions allowing wider travel and a return to work for some, in Wales, where many of the leading narrow gauge lines are located, the lockdown remains in place with people told to stay at home.

Fit for purpose

The Office of Rail & Road (ORR) has produced guidance for heritage railways on reopening after lockdown. Advising the preparation of comprehensive recovery plans (which most lines have already been undertaking), the 11-page document highlights a wide range of considerations, from fully checking the state of track and infrastructure to ensuring rolling stock not used for several months is still fit for purpose and staff competency is up to date.

The two major factors likely to affect the ability of the UK's lines to reopen will be the availability of sufficient numbers of volunteer staff, and the need to impose social distancing measures.

Many railway volunteers are in the older group considered most vulnerable to COVID-19, and there are fears that even



Top: A sight rare in recent weeks – Porthmadog resident *Alasdair Stewart* discovered this scene on 5th May when a short rake of Welsh Highland Railway carriages were being readied to be taken to Dinas, where they could be housed in a shed. Both the loco and signal box were manned by local resident volunteers.

Above: The open compartments of typical narrow gauge carriages will pose difficulties for railways trying to impose social distancing.
Photo: Andrew Charman

Losses equivalent to 'three winters' without revenue

■ The financial aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic will be felt by the UK's heritage railways for a long time, suggests Talylllyn Railway general manager Stuart Williams.

"We at the TR are in quite a good place – because we have no borrowings and we own everything we've managed to get costs down to a reasonable level while the appeal we've put in place has been quite successful," Stuart told *NGW*.

But he added that all lines would face a succession of downtimes without the revenue to pay for them. "Just because you are covering costs doesn't reflect the health of your business. We are all facing three winters – you only make money for five months a year and what you make then

carries you through the rest of the year."

Stuart added that working life under lockdown had been novel. "It's down to two of us that haven't been furloughed, Lorraine the commercial manager and myself. We've become everything from HR advisers to security assessors, merchandise packers – our online shop is going very well and I now know how to pack a mug!"

"We've been reacting to whatever comes through. The railway is having virtual board meetings every fortnight, and it is clear the virus is going to change the way we do things, in fact the way the world does things, forever."

Stuart is painting a positive picture of the future, however. "I remain optimistic, but it would be nice now to see a train..."

when they are allowed to travel to their lines, they may be unwilling to put themselves at a perceived risk.

"Volunteers will be a big risk," Tallylyn Railway general manager and Great Little Trains of Wales vice-chairman Stuart Williams told *NGW*.

"There will be those who are being told to stay at home because they are in the vulnerable sector. And while our volunteer age profile is younger than many other lines, it beggars belief the thought process one has to go through in considering how best to protect our volunteers."

Carriage restrictions

Social distancing remains the major headache for railway management. While it should be possible to incorporate measures in station areas such as ticket offices and cafes, it will be much more difficult in the confined surroundings of train carriages – particularly as the majority of narrow gauge stock is very compact.

One railway has shown *NGW* its figures concluding that with a two-metre minimum distance rule imposed, a typical train could carry only 12 'unrelated parties'. Assuming most of these were couples, this could mean just 24 people on a train or in a worst case scenario just a dozen, in which case the train would not be viable.

"There is lots of scenario planning," Stuart said. "How do you socially distance in a narrow gauge carriage, on a footplate, in a shop or café? It's not easy – and unlike in England two-metre social distancing was put through as law in Wales, so get it wrong and you could be prosecuted."

Some lines hope that the makeup of their stock will enable them to put in adequate measures. "We at the TR are unusual in that most of our stock has a door per compartment so we can put up partitions in the carriages. But anything we do now will have to reduce the number of passengers we carry per train."

Tony Nicholson of the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway hopes that passenger social distancing will not be an issue. "All our carriages are compartment stock so once passenger trains are allowed to operate again, whenever that is, keeping families and individuals in separate compartments should ensure the distancing required."

"However asking the driver and fireman to keep six feet apart might be more difficult! At least they'll be in the open air, where we're told there's very little risk of infection anyway."

The Bure Valley Railway, which is leading the fight against insurers who have refused to meet claims arising from the pandemic, has a comprehensive plan for reopening in place.

"We will partition our coaches above waist height with Perspex screens and take every other compartment out of use so reducing capacity by 40 per cent – this will achieve the required social distancing," Andrew Barnes told *NGW*.

"We will make up three-coach sets so

"It is clear the virus is going to change the way we do things..."
Trying to figure out the practical implications of railways reopening following the COVID-19 pandemic is taxing the mind of Stuart Williams of the Tallylyn Railway and his fellow managers across the heritage industry.

Photo: TR



two can be in use and one being cleaned/sanitised, so the three sets are then rotated during the day, and we propose single-manning locomotives," he added.

Much attention will be paid to ensuring social distancing is observed while loading and more importantly unloading trains, while the line hopes to sell most tickets online to minimise ticket office interaction.

"We will also have a barrier vehicle between the train and the loco, so as to protect staff coupling and uncoupling, whilst still allowing the public to take pictures," Andrew said.

Follow, not lead

One major unknown factor is just how many potential travellers will frequent the railways once they reopen, predictions

ranging from nervous travellers staying at home to a boost from people wanting to holiday in the UK while international travel remains restricted.

"Some people will prefer to stay at home but others will be desperate to get out and about again," said Tony Nicholson.

"We won't be able to welcome visitors from outside the area, though, until hotels and guesthouses are allowed to reopen – not to mention places where people can eat. The railway's own plans are contingent on all these external unknowns."

Stuart Williams agrees; "We as an industry can't be the first to start attracting people to Wales, we will have to follow the likes of caravan park owners and accommodation providers – that PR will need to be managed very carefully."

Latest information and appeals

As last month there is no Diary page in this issue as at the time of writing it remains impossible to predict when lines will reopen and in what form.

The websites below will carry details of train services when they restart and also include links to fund-raising appeals many lines are running to help with costs while they have no revenue. *NGW* will also carry latest news of reopenings on its Facebook and Twitter feeds (see page 3)

Almond Vally Rly: www.almondvalley.co.uk/Railway.htm

Amberley Museum: www.amberleymuseum.co.uk

Amerton Railway: www.amertonrailway.co.uk

Apedale Valley Railway: www.avlr.org.uk

Bala Lake Railway: www.bala-lake-railway.co.uk

Brecon Mountain Railway: www.bmr.wales

Bressingham Steam Msm: www.bressingham.co.uk

Bure Valley Railway: www.bvrw.co.uk

Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway: www.cclr.co.uk

Corris Railway: www.corris.co.uk

Evesham Vale Light Railway: www.evlr.co.uk

Exbury Gardens Railway: www.exbury.co.uk

Fairbourne Railway: www.fairbournrailway.com

Ffestiniog Railway: www.festrail.co.uk

Golden Valley Light Railway: www.gvlr.org.uk

Great Whipsnade Rly: www.zsl.org/zsl-whipsnade-zoo

Groulle Glen Railway: www.ggr.org.uk

Hampton Kmpntn Rly: www.hamptonkemptonrailway.org.uk

Hayling Seaside Railway: www.haylingrailway.com

Heatherslaw Lgt Rly: www.heatherslawlightrailway.co.uk

Isle of Man Steam Rly: www.gov.im/publictransport

Kirklees Light Rly: www.kirkleeslightrailway.co.uk

Launceston Stm Railway: www.launcestonr.co.uk

Leadhills & Wanlockhd Rly: www.leadhillsrailway.co.uk

Leek & Rudyard Railway: www.rlsr.org

Leighton Buzzard Railway: www.buzzrail.co.uk

Llanberis Lake Railway: www.lake-railway.co.uk

Lynton & Barnstaple Railway: www.lynton-rail.co.uk

North Gloucs Rly: www.toddington-narrow-gauge.co.uk

Old Kiln Light Railway: www.oldkilnightrailway.co.uk

Perrygrove Railway: www.perrygrove.co.uk

Ravenglass & Eskdale Rly: www.ravenglass-railway.co.uk

Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Rly: www.rhdr.org.uk

Ruislip Lido Railway: www.ruislipidorailway.org

Sittingbourne & Kemsley Railway: www.sklr.net

Snowdon Mountain Rly: www.snowdonrailway.co.uk

Sth Tynedale Rly: www.south-tyndale-railway.org.uk

Statfold Barn Railway: www.statfoldbarnrailway.co.uk

Steeple Grange Light Rly: www.steeplegrange.co.uk

Tallylyn Railway: www.tallylyn.co.uk

Threlkeld: www.threlkeldquarryandminingmuseum.co.uk

Vale of Rheidol Railway: www.rheidolrailway.co.uk

Waterworks Railway: www.waterandsteam.org.uk

Wells Walsghm Rly: www.wells-walsinghamrailway.co.uk

Welsh Highland Railway: www.festrail.co.uk

Welsh Highland Heritage Railway: www.whhr.co.uk

Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway: www.wllr.org.uk

West Lancashire Light Railway: www.westlancs.org



■ **Power of social media** – a Facebook post from the Talylyn Railway, describing how local donkeys had been ‘employed’ to help keep the vegetation around the line in check while volunteers were unable to work, duly went viral, being reproduced across regional and national media in newspapers and even such journals as *Southwest Farmer* magazine! The publicity helped boost donations to the line’s Virtual Visit appeal. *Photo: TR*

Lines deploy power of social media

Online social media has proven a vital tool in the efforts of railways to keep in touch with members and supporters during lockdown.

Facebook, used widely as a source of information by many enthusiasts but considered an evil by others, has been deployed highly effectively as an instant promotional tool by many UK lines.

Posts made daily and in some cases several times a day have seen impressive results, particularly in highlighting appeals many of the UK lines have launched to try and alleviate the costs incurred while not making any revenue from visitors.

At *NGW* press time the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway’s ‘Tracks to Recovery’ appeal had passed £40,000 and the Talylyn Railway’s ‘Virtual Visit’ appeal had exceeded £85,000, while by the end of April the Ffestiniog Railway had raised well over £100,000.

Stuart Williams of the Talylyn Railway said that the Virtual Visit appeal, themed around a journey on the line from Tywyn Wharf to Nant Gwernol, was deliberately pitched with a positive message.

“I didn’t want to use an emergency or crisis theme as I didn’t think that was right,” Stuart said.

“My weekly walkabouts around the line have proven quite popular and now I’ve

started them I can’t really stop them, as we are getting around 6,500 people watching.

“Dan our marketing guy is on furlough so Ellis, one of our volunteers has come in and has put a breath of air into our social media presence, which is up by 40 per cent – and it was already pretty strong.”

The railway has reacted quickly to ideas, such as posting a series of *Titfield Thunderbolt*-themed messages when the classic film, inspired by the story of the TR, was shown on television during lockdown.

The results have been very different to normal appeals in which effects take time to become apparent. “We can see the instant results of our efforts,” Stuart said. “When we did the *Titfield Thunderbolt* thing it produced an immediate spike.”

Similar results have been seen at the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway, which has mounted an intensive Facebook campaign varying from period pictures to trips along the line, while also promoting a fundraising souvenir pack made up to help raise funds.

W&LLR trustee Oliver Edwards, who has been co-ordinating the posts, declared the resulting donations as “a great contribution towards covering our unavoidable expenses for the first couple of months of the shutdown, and protecting reserves to prepare for our reopening.”

Bure Valley leads insurance fight

Railways fighting the refusal of insurers to pay business interruption claims following the COVID-19 pandemic are set to see their cases taken up by the Financial Conduct Authority.

In *NGW* 147 we reported how the Bure Valley Railway was shocked when its insurance claim following the enforced closure due to the pandemic was rejected.

Despite having what the Norfolk line’s general manager Andrew Barnes described as “the most comprehensive cover available on the UK market, with a specific extension ‘for business interruption in the event of an unspecified notifiable disease within 25 miles of our premises’”, the claim had been thrown out. The insurer argued that the line’s losses were not due to the virus, but as a result of action taken by the Government to restrict movement.

One month on Andrew told *NGW* that the BVR is continuing to press the issue of the insurance claim and the conduct of insurance companies in general and the implications for railways.

Andrew said that he had been contacted by the Treasury Select Committee to confirm that following his experience with the BVR’s insurance company the policy wording would be included in the test cases being taken to court by the Financial Conduct Authority.

He added that the wording on policies

held by other lines that had seen their claims rejected would also be challenged.

“The problem with this is that the court case will take three months, and the insurance companies will doubtless appeal which will take a further three months,” Andrew said, adding that it therefore would be November before loss adjusters are appointed and March 2021 at the earliest before the line could expect to see any insurance payout.

“We are therefore looking at the best way to keep the railway alive until then – we received the ORR guidance document about reopening heritage railways which we are reading and looking at the best way to implement its recommendations.”

With the full 80 per cent furlough in place until the end of July Andrew believes the earliest the BVR might reopen is 4th July; “but I think that is optimistic.”

As reported in our main story like other railways the BVR has planned how it will be able to run trains with social distancing measures in place.

Measures to maintain the line while closed have included the running of two weed-killing spray trains and weekly full line-walks. All steam locomotives have been shunted on a weekly basis to prevent their piston rings rusting, while carriages have been shunted in rakes over a quarter-mile to rotate their roller bearings.

“As soon as we can we are looking to reopen our workshop, so as we can complete the retune of no 7’s boiler after we ground out and rewelded all the firebox stays in February,” Andrew added. “This will allow us to put the loco back together ready for pulling no 9 out of traffic for a heavy 10-year overhaul in January 2021.”

The BVR was due to celebrate its 30th anniversary with several special events in 2020; “We intend to run the same events in 2021 as a 30+1 Anniversary.”



■ **Some are benefiting from lockdown.** Bagnall 0-4-2T ‘Gelert’, slumbering at the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway, has proven a safe home for a mother to bring up her brood...

Photo: Michael Chapman

Fun and funding aim for Bala Lake's Virtual Gala



The Bala Lake Railway will hold a 'Virtual Gala' on 13th June after the mid-Wales 2ft gauge line's planned open days on the same weekend fell victim to COVID-19.

The Gala will be presented as an online event on the line's Facebook page, which the BLR's Tim Gregson told *NGW* will be full of video footage. "We have a packed timetable with over 20 departures (videos) planned throughout the day," Tim said.

Footage streamed will include full return trips on the line, recent galas and archive video and still footage stretching back to a time before the line was built when Llanuwchllyn station was devoid of track. Garden railways will also feature.

Ahead of the event a Virtual Gala e-guide with full timetable will go on sale at £5, from a new online shop which will also be open on Gala Day selling souvenirs and other goods.

Further fundraising efforts will include the ability to take a virtual 'Driver for a fiver' ride or visit the café to buy a virtual 'Driver's slice of cake' during the day. Meanwhile a photo competition will run throughout the day sponsored by the Bala Lake Railway Society.

■ The Cavan and Leitrim Railway has joined the list of railways running appeals to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. "At the time of writing it is the only such public appeal for a heritage railway in Ireland," said the line's manager Micheal Kennedy. "We need your support now more than ever, we have bills such as insurance and electricity that we need to pay, but we cannot open to the public as we want to protect our volunteers and members of the public".

Having recently completed the final fundraising and return to steam of Avonside 0-6-0T 'Nancy' the line had been undertaking a relay of the line with a view to operating services, but was forced to stop due to the coronavirus outbreak.

"The Cavan and Leitrim has a small membership base," Michael added. "We would greatly appreciate any support, members of the public can donate any amount they wish at: www.cavanandleitrim.com. We may not be the biggest, but every penny counts and those that donate over 50 Euros will receive free membership for a year."

The line had planned to celebrate the 25th anniversary of revival this year, it is now hoping to stage a celebration in 2021. *Photo: CLR*

The BLR recently joined other lines in setting up a COVID-19 appeal, with costs continuing to accrue while it is unable to open and produce revenue. As *NGW* went to press more than £7,000 had been donated. The appeal is a link on the BLR website at <http://bit.ly/BalaAppeal>

More information on the Virtual Gala will be released on the BLR's website and social media sites closer to the event.

Footage during the Virtual Gala will recall the line's earliest days (above), and earlier (below). *Photos: BLR*



North Bay goes back to work

The slight relaxation of lockdown measures in England announced on 10th May produced immediate results in some areas of the UK's narrow gauge industry.

North Bay Engineering, based in Darlington, returned to work on 11th May. NBE's David Humphreys told *NGW* that the company had taken various remedial measures and staff had been keen to return.

"We have plenty of work to do on locos such as the Llanberis Lake Railway's 'Thomas Bach'," David said, but added that one issue discovered on starting up again was the lack of a supply chain for materials needed by the company. He expected that this situation would rectify itself as days went on.

Donegal appeals

Donegal Railway Heritage Centre has joined the organisations making urgent appeals to permit reopening after the COVID-19 crisis ends, writes *Hugh Dougherty*.

The centre, which houses Ireland's major collection of County Donegal Railways artefacts, photos, records and rolling stock, generates most of its revenue during the tourist season between Easter and September.

"We are facing a significant shortfall," said centre manager, Niall McCaughan. "We are part-funded by government bodies and other sources, but the balance is generated by visitors, and as we are likely to be shut through a large part of the tourist season, the loss of that revenue leaves us in a serious situation as we have to meet standing running costs."

The centre had been progressing plans to return CDR 2-6-4T 'Drumboe' to the centre for display and an eventual return to steam.

Visitor numbers increased 25 per cent in 2019, and plans to re-open part of the CDR line through the Barnesmore Gap were underway.

Donations can be made at <http://donegalrailway.com/donations/museum-artefact-fund/>

Heritage skills put to use

NGW hears that the Ffestiniog Railway's Sam Hughes, a member of the booking office staff and famed for organising the volunteers that create the period costumes that add so much to the line's October Victorian Weekend, has been making good use of the skills of her team, producing hats and masks for the use of local health-care professionals during the coronavirus pandemic.



Embankment underway as Corris heads south

The long-awaited extension of the revived Corris Railway stepped up a gear in April, when work began to plug a gap in the new embankment needed south of the 2ft 3in gauge line's current limit of operations at Maespoeth junction.

The 440-metre embankment replaces part of the trackbed that was removed during improvement works to the A487 Dolgellau to Machynlleth road four decades ago. The embankment will include a bridge over the Nant Goedwig stream and will be steep-sided to provide flood protection to the Dulas valley.

Many years of preparation have been needed to obtain various permissions and licences ahead of building commencing and work has been carried out as resources and suitable materials have come to hand.

Sections of new embankment have been built but a 300-metre gap remains to be filled together with construction of the bridge over the Goedwig.

At the end of March a quantity of suitable material to extend the embankment was located near Dolgellau, while a local contractor with the required plant and machinery was available and able to work within current Government restrictions.

Work has therefore begun with some of the rock being used to create gabions (baskets filled with stone) to support the base of the embankment.

Corris Railway Chairman Richard Hamilton-Foyn is keen to point out that while the work is very welcome progress, there is still plenty to do before trains can travel over the new section of line which will include gradients of up to 1 in 30.

"We have built up financial reserves for the Southern Extension and thank the many people who have supported us with donations over the years," Richard said.

"Although these reserves amount to a six-figure sum the present works are costing at least £70,000 and that means that most of our funds will have been spent with

more very costly work, including the bridge, still to be done," he added.

Richard concedes that the project is not the longest proposed extension in the world of heritage railways; "but it is very important for the future revival of the Corris Railway and will take us a good way towards our next target of doubling the length of our operating line."

The line intends eventually to extend southwards at least as far as the Centre for Alternative Technology tourist attraction; "This will provide a splendidly scenic journey along one of the most attractive valleys in mid Wales with steep gradients and riverside scenery. We already maintain the former Corris station at Esgairgeiliog and it awaits its first trains since 1948."

Donations for the Southern Extension can be made via the website www.corris.co.uk or cheques payable to Corris Railway can be sent to Corris Railway, Station Yard, Corris, Machynlleth, Powys, SY20 9SH.

Above: Work on building the embankment got underway in April.

Below: Gabions of stone will support the weight of the embankment – the current Corris line is behind the trees at the rear centre.

Photos: Alf Oxford/Corris Railway



Anger at delays to horse tram reinstatement

The Isle of Man Government was forced into a rapid correction on 12th May after an update issued on the £25m regeneration of Douglas promenade stated that the Horse Tramway was to be cut back to half its original length.

The 1.6-mile long 3ft gauge tramway, which dates back to 1876, had been under threat since the regeneration of the Manx capital's promenade was announced, with proposals to significantly cut its length and even closure mooted at one time.

Facing heavy criticism from supporters of the line, members of the island's Tynwald parliament voted to retain the entire route from Derby Castle, terminus of the Manx Electric Railway, to the sea ferry terminal. However it was agreed that for half its length the double-track would be reduced to a single line on a new alignment at the edge instead of the centre of the road.

Since the promenade work began the trams have been using only a third of the route, and residents were shocked to read in a newsletter issued on 12th May that "(the new kerb line) should be completed ahead of schedule with the decision made to remove the single track Horse Tram line. The horse tram line will now terminate at the war memorial."

Incorrect information

The statement caused uproar and within hours a spokesman for the Government's Department of Infrastructure insisted that it was "incorrect information," and that it was the intention for the horse tram to be reinstated to Broadway (shy of the war memorial) by March 2021.

He added; "The project will then stop, allowing hoteliers and other stakeholders in the tourism sector badly affected by the coronavirus pandemic to resume activity free of any disruption caused by the construction scheme. Work required to install the horse tram track further south is planned to be completed in due course."

No date was given for full refurbishment and later in the Tynwald infrastructure minister Ray Harmer said that work to extend the tracks to the war memorial might have to wait until the winter of 2021, and work on the final section might not start until the following winter.

This statement attracted fierce criticism, Douglas East Member of the House of Keys (MHK) Chris Robertshaw describing the situation as "a total and utter shambles," and Garff MHK Daphne Caine asking if the minister was "setting up the horse trams to fail for several years."

As *NGW* went to press, some Manx politicians and supporters of the Horse Tramway were publicly doubting that it would ever be restored to its full length.

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■ The viaduct remains a constant headache for the S&KLR. Photo: Andrew Charman

Sittingbourne fears funding dip for viaduct

The Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway has launched an appeal for donations towards the upkeep of the Milton Regis viaduct.

The kilometre-long, 118-span reinforced concrete structure was built in 1914-15 and has been a constant problem for the preserved line – it currently costs around £20,000 every two years for the line to maintain the viaduct.

In 2016-17 extensive additional repairs were carried out to Skew Road Bridge, on the route of the viaduct, as a result of damage from over-height vehicles striking the bridge during a road-lowering project carried out by Kent County Council.

The railway is now concerned that the enforced closure resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic will seriously affect funds available for viaduct maintenance in the coming winter.

Anyone who wishes to donate towards the bridge repairs fund can do so at www.justgiving.com/sklr

SA Avonside bought by Richmond line

The private Richmond Light Railway in Kent has purchased Avonside 0-4-0T 'Renishaw No. 2' (1986/1926) and returned it to the UK for restoration.

One of a batch of 11 similar engines built for the South African sugar industry, the loco was last in operation around 25 years ago, after which it was plinthed outside the offices of sugar estate operator Crookes Brothers in Renishaw. Exposed to the salty atmosphere of its coastal location the loco has suffered from severe corrosion particularly on one side.

Renishaw No.2 is unusual among narrow gauge engines and its fellow Avonside class members in being fitted with inside motion.



Second Southwold loco build project launches

As work on the Southwold Railway Trust's new-build recreation of Sharp Stewart 2-4-0T 'Blyth' makes good progress at the workshops of North Bay Engineering, a project has been announced to replicate a second engine from the Suffolk 3ft gauge line.

The Halesworth to Southwold Narrow Gauge Railway Society (HSNGRS), formed in April 2018 by two former Trustees of the Southwold Railway Trust and based at the opposite western end of the line to the Trust's Southwold Steamworks site, intends to build a replica of Blyth's sister loco, no 2 'Halesworth'. The originals, built in 1879, were scrapped in 1941, 12 years after the line's closure.

The HSNGRS has obtained a quote from Statfold Engineering of £414,000 plus VAT for a full-specification loco and will seek two more quotes once the funds have been raised to make the project viable.

The Society adds that the new loco will be a genuine Sharp Stewart product as the

two co-chairmen own the company.

The project has been officially inaugurated by the ordering of name and numberplates for the new loco, paid for by the co-chairmen. However they admit that it will be a long-term project as attention must first be focused on current work. This includes tracklaying over around 70 metres at Halesworth, restoring a diesel loco formerly employed on Channel Tunnel construction and restoring rolling stock.

"You may ask why we are doing this now, when we are all on lockdown, with no income," a HSNGRS release stated.

"It is necessary to keep us in the public eye, and keep moving forward, or we stagnate, lose faith, and fail. No-one will deny that we will need a steam locomotive in the future: it's best that we make a start, in however small a way."

The Society is welcoming donations to the loco project which it says will be ring-fenced – details are at www.halesworthtosouthwoldrailway.co.uk



■ The Southwold Railway Trust has completed construction of the extension to the engine shed and visitor centre at its Steamworks base in Southwold. Progress on adding the doors and fitting out the interior have been delayed by the onset of the coronavirus, while 3ft gauge track needs to be laid into the shed. However the Trust's replica Southwold van no 40 has now been stabled inside where it is protected from the weather.

Photos: John Ridgway/SRT





Ratty tenders a bid for River Mite

The Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway Preservation Society has launched a Gofundme appeal to help fund the 10-year-overhaul of 2-8-2 'River Mite' – the Society funded the construction of the loco in 1966 and still owns it.

River Mite is currently under overhaul at John Fowler Engineering in Bouth, Cumbria and work includes the building of a new tender, with a total cost of around £80,000. Normally the Society would have been able to fund-raise at the line's events including the 60th anniversary 'Still a Lot of Fun' Gala that was planned for 8th-10th May, but this had to be postponed a year due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Instead the railway ran an Armchair Steam and Diesel Gala over the same weekend, posting a full three days of celebration, memories and even a quiz on its Facebook page. "We don't want anyone to miss out, especially with so many needing something to enjoy at this difficult time," said the line's visitor manager Stuart Ross.

Anyone wishing to donate to the River Mite appeal can do so at www.gofundme.com/River-mite-overhaul-fund More information and updates will be published on the Preservation Society's new Facebook page @RERpreservationsociety.

Photo: A new tender is among work scheduled to 'River Mite'. Photo: Andrew Charman

Lynton misses out on Bratton Fleming sale

The Lynton & Barnstaple Railway's supporting Exmoor Associates has failed to acquire the former Bratton Fleming station, which was put on the market in March. Since the line closed in 1935 the property had been converted to a private house and extensively modified and the owners were seeking offers of around £325,000. EA was preparing a bid when it was revealed that it had been privately sold.

World narrow gauge waits on the virus



With the COVID-19 pandemic continuing to grip the world few narrow gauge lines were operating as NGW went to press on 16th May.

The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway was among the majority of lines closed by the pandemic but on 1st May the UK-based Darjeeling Himalayan Railway Society received promising news from the district, which has seen very few coronavirus cases and only two deaths.

Jalpaiguri, bottom end of the DHR, is in the Government's 'Orange Zone' and was expected to be opened in early May, having seen no cases for 26 days.

Darjeeling was expected to take a little longer as there had been one family affected but they have all recovered.

The DHR is not expected to reopen in the near future, however, the line part of an entire Indian Railways shutdown that by 1st May had lasted 40 days. Local sources expect the railway network to be closed until the end of May.

Fears remain as to the economic impact of the shutdown, the Government having been unwilling to commit to a stimulus package, while there are also fears of the effects should a second wave of the virus strike the area.

In AUSTRALIA the Puffing Billy

Railway has been closed since 22nd March, fans of the line kept in touch with it by extensive Facebook postings including virtual tours of the workshops and sheds.

In the USA the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad has extended its closure until at least mid June, though is planning for a resumption in services soon after. The White Pass & Yukon Route Railroad has also suspended all its steam excursions while most heritage sites remain closed, a typical example being the Wiscasset, Waterville & Farmington Railway museum in Maine which has announced closure until 7th August.

One bright spot is in HUNGARY, where forestry lines closed by the virus have scheduled reopening dates. Lillafüred ÁÉV, Pálháza ÁÉV and Almamellék ÁÉV were expected to reopen on 9th May and three lines operated by Egererdő at Gyöngyös, Szilvásvárad and Felsőtárkány planned to run again from 15th May. Officials planned to impose conditions for opening including obligatory advance booking and the wearing of face masks.

Photo: A visit to India in March organised by Darjeeling Tours saw some of the last trains on the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway. Martin Eady pictured the train approaching Tindharia.

Still a future on the Achenseebahn rack?

A possible lifeline has emerged for the Achenseebahn rack railway, the AUSTRIAN metre-gauge line having filed for bankruptcy on 25th March after the regional government of Tyrol cut its financial support.

Following widespread calls to save the line including a petition, the regional government has put up £3.4 million Euros to try and secure its future. Meanwhile a report commissioned by Austria's Federal Ministry of Art, Culture, Public Service and Sports Department for Monument Protection has recommended protecting the line in its entirety, describing it as "a

typical example of a tourist mountain railway with largely intact original technical equipment and rolling stock."

The Achenseebahn is expected, however, to lose its entire 2020 operating season to the coronavirus pandemic.



Photo: James Waite

Durango buys White Pass diesels



The Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad (D&SNGRR) has purchased four 101-class diesel locos from the White Pass & Yukon Railway (WP&YR) in Skagway, Alaska in the **USA**.

The deal, the cost of which has not been revealed, follows the WP&YR's acquisition of six new diesels as reported in *NGW* 147.

The new White Pass locos are 30 per cent larger than the engines they replace and the sale of six of these increases the Durango & Silverton's diesel roster to 10.

The locos are members of a batch of 10 Worthington C-14 class co-co units ordered by the White Pass line from Montreal Locomotive Works between 1969 and 1971. Nos 101 and 107 departed from Skagway by barge on 11th April and the second pair are expected to be selected later this year and delivered sometime in 2021.

Speaking to local media, D&SNGRR management insisted that despite the new arrivals steam will remain the primary

motive power on the line. Initially, nos 101 and 107 will be used for permanent way trains and on short-trip Cascade Canyon Express summer excursions.

"Reliable narrow-gauge diesels of this size, design and efficiency are few and far between, so the D&SNGRR jumped at the chance to acquire them when we were first approached last year by the WP&YR," the line's general manager Jeff Johnson commented, adding that the additions will increase the line's flexibility and enable development of new excursion trains.

The D&SNGRR is also scheduled this Autumn to receive two 75-ton diesels being re-engined for it by Motive Power & Equipment Solutions, based in Greenville, South Carolina.

Photo: The two locos already on route to the Durango & Silverton line are identical sisters, but two years older, than White Pass no 108, photographed by James Waite in 2011.

BRIEF LINES

Taiwan diesel under overhaul

Diema diesel locomotive no 185, which was imported into **FRANCE** in 2005, is currently undergoing a heavy overhaul. Based in recent years at the Musée des Transports de Pithiviers, the loco is receiving a complete refurbishment of its engine as well as pneumatic and electric repairs. Subject to COVID-19 delays, completion is planned in time for the summer season. Built in 1979 for the Taiwan Sugar Corporation, the 230hp loco is one of two to operate outside the Pacific nation, the other being no 175 which is on the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway in Wales.

Trucker badly damages bridge

A truck driver was arrested following an incident in which a road vehicle, thought to be a log hauler, struck the Runk Road bridge on the East Broad Top Railroad in Pennsylvania, **USA**. The incident occurred sometime between the line's weekly inspections on 25th April and 5th May and the damage caused was severe enough to kink the track over the bridge. According to local media while the incident was not reported by the truck driver, information from witnesses helped police locate the perpetrator.

Mk1s in New Zealand

A \$1.2bn rail budget for the next year announced by the **NEW ZEALAND** government as *NGW* closed for press on 14th May is focused on post COVID-19 recovery. The money, equivalent to £589.1m, includes increasing regional commuter services using former British Railways Mk1 carriages mounted on 3ft 6in gauge bogies. We'll have more on this in next month's issue.



■ The Association du Musée des Transports de Pithiviers (AMTP) in **FRANCE** has rescheduled the 150th anniversary celebration for its Schneider 0-4-0T to the 22nd-24th May 2021. The anniversary event for the oldest narrow gauge locomotive in France, seen above left in March being painted in preparation for its big party, was due to take place in May this year but was cancelled due to coronavirus. The loco, built to 50cm gauge and later regauged to 60cm, originally worked in a quarry.

The virus has also caused delays for the museum's overhaul of its Gmeider HF130 diesel locomotive, built in 1944. The chassis and the body have been painted (above right) but wheel repairs contracted out to a specialized workshop were stopped when the a lockdown was imposed.

Following the example of UK railways the museum has launched an appeal to try and alleviate costs incurred while it remains closed to visitors, stating that if closed from April to the end of June it will lose around 20,000 Euros.

Group makes bid to revive Ida Bay tourist railway

A new bid has been submitted to reopen the Ida Bay Railway in Tasmania, south **AUSTRALIA**.

The 4.3-mile long 600mm gauge line was built as a timber tramway and upgraded to transport limestone in 1919. Closed in 1975, it was purchased by the Tasmanian Government and leased to various operators to run as a tourist line from 1978, rolling stock including attractive railmotors.

Throughout its tourist operation the line attracted safety concerns and after a derailment in 2018 the lease was terminated and the line was closed.

Now the 25-strong Ida Bay Railway Preservation Society wants to revive the line and has applied to current caretaker owner the Parks & Wildlife Service to take over responsibility for the railway.

IBRPS secretary Dave Collins told local media that the Society has already raised enough funds to restore a third of the route to safety accreditation standard, enabling it to run small tours in summer (December to February) if permission is granted.

Previously the line had been run as a business by the various leaseholders but IBRPS member James Shugg, who previously worked on the line, believes a not-for-profit basis proposed by the Society will be more sustainable. "If you look at every tourist railway in Australia they are run as non-profits," he said.

Cost condemns tourist train plan

Proposals to run a tourist train service on the 140km long 3ft 6in gauge route between Westport and Hokitika on the west coast of **NEW ZEALAND** have been abandoned after a study concluded the costs would be prohibitive.

According to the Government-funded study, which itself cost \$250,000, \$91 million of investment would have been needed to run the service – upgrading the line from Hokitika to the halfway point of Greymouth and building facilities would cost \$45 million – running to Westport would inflate costs to \$91.6 million.

While there was some tourist demand for the service, a drop in passengers of just five per cent would make it unsustainable.

Bay line goes again for funds

The Bay of Islands Vintage Railway in **NEW ZEALAND** is making a second \$16m effort for funding to extend its 3ft 6in gauge line and replace the boiler of its 1927-built Peckett loco 'Gabriel'. The first bid for Government funding was rejected without discussion in December.

■ Thanks to **Alan Smith** for assisting with information on New Zealand news.



Museum counts cost of fire in signal box

A historic signal box on the Kaohsiung Harbor railway line in **TAIWAN** was significantly damaged after fire broke out in it on 13th May.

Serving a 1.067-metre gauge line built in 1900 principally to give the military of the then occupying Japanese convenient access to Kaohsiung harbour, the box continued in operation after Kaohsiung station was superseded by a new facility 4.8km further south-east in 1941.

The original 1920-built station was renamed Kaohsiung Harbor and the line between the two became the Kaohsiung Harbor Railway, handling freight traffic until 2005, followed by a last enthusiast special in 2008.

The Kaohsiung Railway Museum opened in the former station in 2010, and the Northern Signal Building was registered as a heritage artifact at the same time – the designation including the building, exterior linkage switches and other facilities.

The two-storey brick-wood building is typical of Taiwan's former signalling structures which were gradually replaced by central control and computerised traffic management.

The box includes the lever signalling system and train control apparatus on the upper floor with the lower floor divided into a

personnel lounge and a mechanical room and storage space.

The Kaohsiung building is the last-surviving box with all its mechanical equipment still in place and restoration by the railway museum, had started as recently as the end of April.

Investigations after the fire, the cause of which is still being determined, showed that the main structure of the building had escaped serious damage, and will be restorable. Some cypress wood trusses may have to be replaced, but the museum is hopeful that the iron mechanical components remain sound and are confident that the signal building will be fully restored.

■ Thanks to **James Chuang** for supplying information for this story.



Kaohsiung Harbor Northern Signal Building before the fire (above), with its impressive set of mechanical levers (right).

Photos courtesy of Chihwen-Hung

25-year lease boosts Sibiu revival



While unable to hold any public events on the Sibiu to Agnita Railway (writes *Alasdair Stewart*), the Association of Friends of the Mochantia were not idle during 2019 and much preparatory administrative work for the future was undertaken, the positive outcome being the securing of a 25-year lease on the line.

The lease was an important step towards being able to access European Union grants, applications having since been submitted. While the lease does not give the group powers to operate the railway, it does legitimise their efforts somewhat, an earlier arrangement between a consortium of mayors and communes along the line having reached an apparent conclusion.

The concept of a volunteer-run heritage railway operation in Romania is not universally recognised by officialdom, especially one that thrives on a seemingly endless need for paperwork and permits...

Electrical needs

Boundary plans and property titles have been dug out from national railway Căile Ferate Române (CFR) records, as the group seek authorisation to apply for a permit for an electricity supply. Currently extension leads are run out over or under fences to neighbouring properties as and when required. Such ad hoc arrangements have



ROMANIA

sufficed to date but will not be sustainable in the longer-term future.

The documents from the archives are often handwritten in Hungarian, as the area was part of the 'Dual Monarchy' at the time the 123km long, 760mm gauge railway was built between 1896 and 1910.

On the line a shed has been built to house rolling stock and protect it from the elements. Some general 'care and maintenance' was carried out on the track between Cornatel and Hosman, the two stations where activities have been focused in recent years. During this period there was an inevitable decline in the number of volunteer days recorded by the project team.

In early October, a small group of British volunteers under the SARUK banner contributed to the shed building project that we had started a year or so earlier, with the pouring of concrete for the foundations. It was gratifying to see the progress that had been made during the intervening year and the end of the construction phase was clearly in sight at the time of our departure.

The shed is a real example of what can be achieved with limited resources and plenty of energy and determination. The need for undercover storage capacity for rolling stock has come about because of the donation of vehicles to the project from

the Waldenburgerbahn in Switzerland (a line that runs from Liestal to Waldenburg in Basel-Landschaft canton). The stock was made redundant by the Swiss line's conversion from 760mm to metre gauge.

A pair of drop-side open wagons and a 16-seat, four-wheel carriage dating from 1880 were delivered during the year and a further four vehicles are on their way, as soon as funds can be raised to cover the cost of transportation to Transylvania.

The Association of Friends of the line already has one of the four carriages which remained in Sibiu at the time of the line's closure in 2001, in secure accommodation and is well on the way to restoring it to a condition suitable for occasional use. A second vehicle was acquired privately by a member for eventual use and is in long-term storage at the Agnita end of the line.

Historic stock

Of historical interest, a drasine used to carry out inspections of the track during CFR days has also been obtained for the railway, though given its poor mechanical condition, it is definitely not going to be a quick or easy job to return it to service.

Right up until the time of the COVID-19 lockdown commencing in Romania, our friends had been busy on the line, with a focus on clearing litter, weeds and tree growth from the track on the approach to Sibiu station. A new shopping mall has been built adjacent to the railway and the consensus view is that the impression should be given of a railway that 'sleepeth' rather than being dead...

One of SARUK's members was able to attend, so there has been some 'hands on' British effort in 2020 if international travel restrictions prevent a proper autumn bash.

Above: All involved hope to see more trains like at this special event in October 2018.

Left: Concerted efforts, including on an October 2019 visit from the line's UK-based supporters, have resulted in the building of a shed to safely house rolling stock.



Photos: David Rowbotham/SARUK



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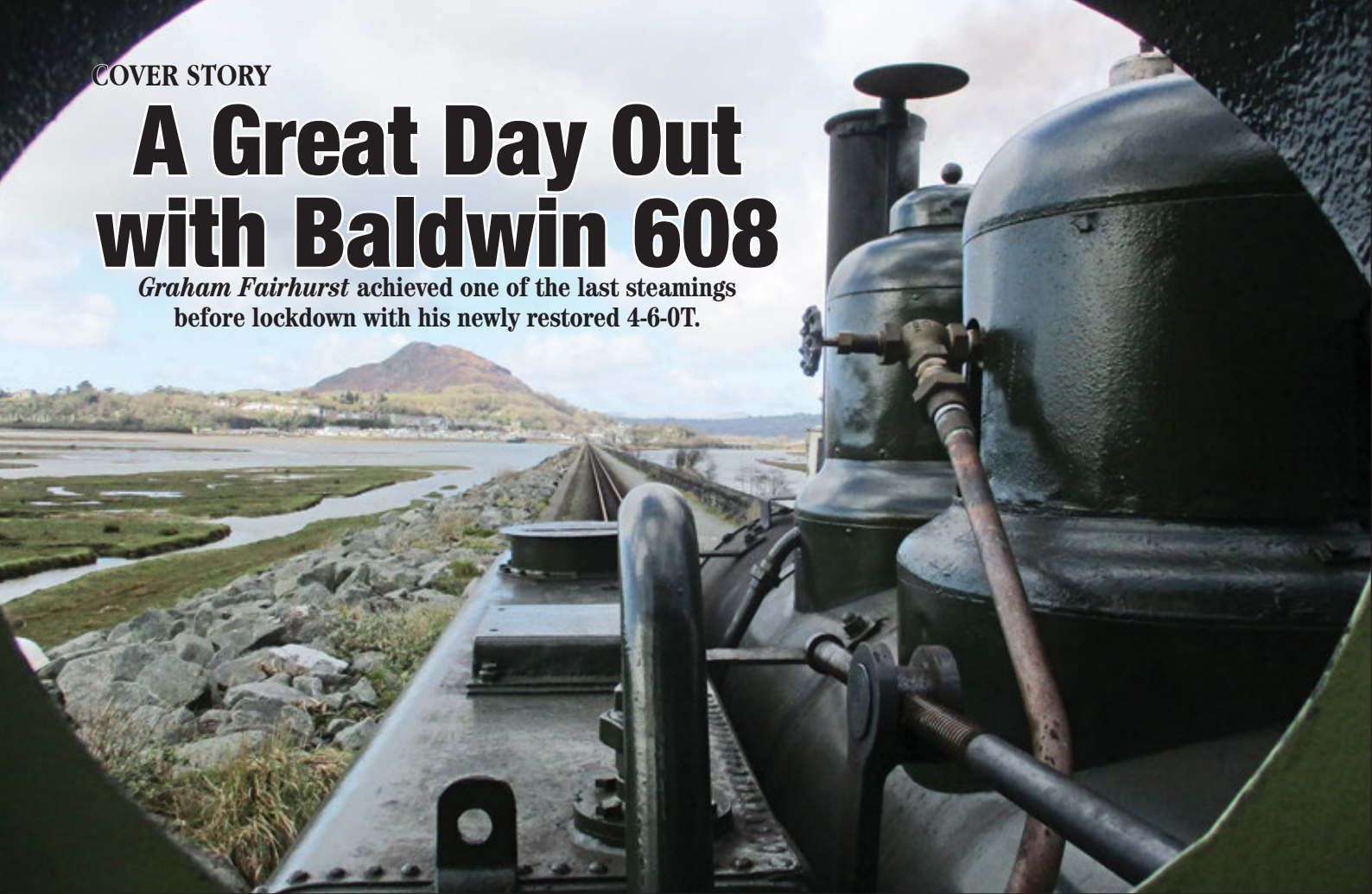
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A Great Day Out with Baldwin 608

Graham Fairhurst achieved one of the last steamings before lockdown with his newly restored 4-6-0T.



Ever since acquiring my World War 1, Baldwin 4-6-0T (WDLR 608) I have thought I should write up something of the challenges (and sometimes joys!) of its restoration. The complete story will have to wait for the future. However, as the Covid-19 crisis has closed down activities, I realised that the test steaming of 608 on 2nd March was probably one of the last outings of a steam locomotive on our narrow gauge railways for some time and a brief account might be of interest.

The restoration of Baldwin 608 was largely undertaken at the workshop near Leyland of a friend, Jack Cuerden, with Jack himself doing most of the work over a six-year period. During 2019 Paul Lewin, general manager of the

Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways, and I had agreed that we should attempt to get 608 to the Welsh Highland Railway for a photographic charter in November. To try and meet this challenge the loco was moved to another workshop near Southport for steam testing, final assembly, motion work and painting. This work was led by the young, but experienced 'steam man' and good friend, Graham Townsend.

Following an intensive month there, the loco was moved to the FF&WHR's Boston Lodge works with a reduced list of detail work still to be done. Whilst some of this was able to

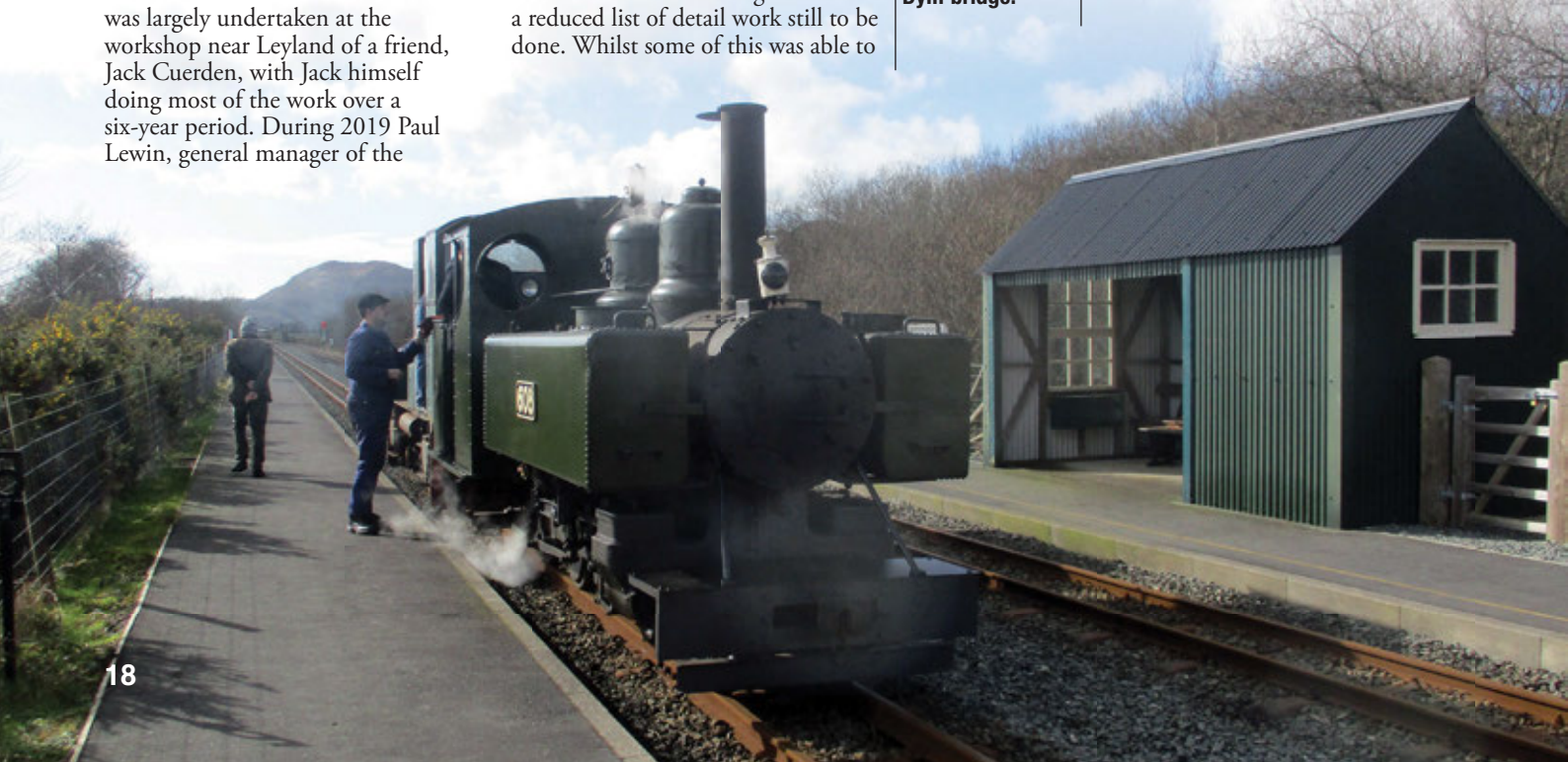
Above: Driver's eye-view of setting off from Boston Lodge across the Cob.

Below: Arrival at Pont Croesor. An extended stop was made here for a thorough check of 608.

Facing page, top: A photo stop was made at Afon Dylif bridge.

be completed prior to the November event there were still some tasks remaining. The biggest of these was to fit the new piston rings which had been obtained and to carry out some more work on the motion.

The locomotive has a skilled and enthusiastic support group which has met for working weekends at Boston Lodge and one was scheduled for a 'long weekend' from 28th February to 2nd March. Unfortunately, the developing Covid-19 situation meant that Jonathan Whitehead, who has also contributed a lot to the





restoration of 608, was faced with cancelling his planned trip from California to the UK at the last minute and a couple of other team members could not make it.

Despite the pre-season, 'day job' pressures on the permanent staff at Boston Lodge, they had managed to find a track in the erecting shop for 608 for the weekend. For this we were very grateful as it was a civilised workplace whilst the gales and rain lashed around outside. Our depleted, but no less enthusiastic, team set to work and the cylinder covers were taken off and the pistons removed before lunch on the first day. Ted Foulds and Adrian Strachan then set to with the task of fitting the new piston rings. These had come from HP Rings in Chesterfield and had been ordered against dimensions taken by Jonathan some time previously. The rings were found to be of excellent quality and dimensionally precise so that only the slightest filing was necessary to get the ring gaps correct.

By the end of Sunday 1st March, the pistons had been refitted and the

connecting rods and coupling rods reassembled on both sides of the engine as well as the lighter valve gear. Ahead of the November 2019 event, there had not been time to fit a proposed front damper door to the ashpan and the loco had then operated without this door. In view of the experience in November we had decided that this additional damper door was definitely not necessary and the opening in the ashpan was plated over by Ted, welding in cramped conditions under the engine. The primary air flow was now controlled through the rear damper door only.

Onto the Welsh Highland

Extensive track relaying works were in progress on the Ffestiniog Railway between Porthmadog and Minffordd over this weekend, but provisional arrangements had previously been put in place to allow 608 access through this track possession to the Welsh »



Above: View from the footplate in Aberglaslyn Pass – one of Britain's most attractive stretches of line.

Below: Taking water at Beddgelert.





Highland on 2nd March if we were ready. Over the weekend, Adrian had been liaising with the railway operating office and key individuals to confirm that a test run to Beddgelert could take place.

Therefore, on arrival at Boston Lodge early on the 2nd, we met up with Alex Eyres, an experienced Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland driver (as well as being a driver on the national network), and the loco was prepared for service and the fire lit. Notwithstanding all his excellent work over the previous two days, Ted was not able to join the test run, but I am sure he will get some time on the regulator of 608 in the future.

All trains on the Welsh Highland are vacuum braked and we wanted to test 608 with a load. However, a vacuum ejector has yet to be fitted to the loco. It had therefore been decided we would take vacuum fitted Planet diesel 'Upnor Castle' with us

as a representative WHR heritage train load and traction back-up.

At 11.30am we were ready to leave Boston Lodge yard under clear skies and received the authority to pass through the civil engineer's possession from Julie Stirland before setting off across the Cob accompanied on the seaward side by a drone belonging to Dave Thurlow. The run over the Cob was made at slow speed to give the new piston rings chance to bed-in.

At Porthmadog Harbour station we stopped to pick up the token for the section to Pont Croesor and Martyn Knight who would assist in crossing the Network Rail Cambrian line at Cae Pawb. We stopped again just after the crossing over the High Street so that we could buy a 'meal deal' each from the adjacent petrol filling station. One can only do this sort of thing when one has the railway for the day!

A stop was then made at the

Above: A pause at Beddgelert with the driver, Alex Eyres, on the footplate and Adrian Strachan on the platform.

Below: Distinctive broadside view of Baldwin 608 on arrival back at Harbour station.

Facing page: Homeward bound across the Cob as seen from the cab of the diesel 'Upnor Castle'.

Photos by Graham Fairhurst, 2nd March 2020



telephone ahead of Cae Pawb rail crossing, and Martyn secured permission for us to cross. Following this, we stopped again alongside the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway to wait for Martyn to rejoin us and to go through an extensive checklist over the locomotive.

Satisfied with these checks, we then went straight through to Pont Croesor. An extended stop here allowed for token exchange, for another thorough check over the locomotive and for the 'meal deals' to receive attention as well as the opportunity for some of the local enthusiasts and photographers to catch up with us for a chat.

Apart from a photographic stop at the Afon Dylif bridge we then went straight through to Hafod y Llyn where 608 was checked over again. This is the point, heading north, where the line becomes more challenging. Fairly soon, the 1 in 40 gradient is encountered on the embankment up to the bridge over the A4085 road and this continues up to and through Nantmor.

After the exertions up this gradient and as a precaution against a highly undesirable stop in the long tunnel just beyond, another check over the engine was made in the platform at Nantmor. A good standing start on the 1 in 40 was made with some application of sand. Getting rapidly into our stride, a long blow of 608's rather nice whistle was greeted by a cheery wave from some walkers heading up the path to Cwm Bychan before we blasted into the stygian gloom of the tunnel.

I had walked the whole of the Welsh Highland Railway trackbed over a number of years before the line was reinstated. The section through the long tunnel had been a memorable experience for our whole family when we had made our way through it on foot, especially so since the tunnel has a bend within it. Our run on 608 was a no less memorable an experience, not just the pitch darkness but audibly as well.

Stops at Aberglaslyn

We had pre-agreed that we would take advantage of the fact that we had the Welsh Highland Railway to ourselves for the day and stop at all the tunnels in the Aberglaslyn Pass for photographs. These stops also gave me, as a civil engineer, the opportunity to admire the work involved in creating what is certainly one of Britain's most attractive stretches of railway. The checks over the engine during these stops showed that everything continued to be in order and we decided to press on right through to Beddgelert.

The section from the tunnels to Bryn y Felin bridge has a falling gradient, but the 1 in 40 uphill returns immediately after the bridge. This section up to Beddgelert is deceptive and comprises numerous curves superimposed onto the 1 in 40. It ends in a tricky level crossing over the access road to the cemetery followed by Goat Tunnel on the entrance to the station. Our dramatic exit from the northern end of the tunnel brought lineside residents to their adjacent lounge widows to watch us pass by. As the 1 in 40 continues through the station, 608 was made to work hard all the way up to the water column.

After water had been taken, a well-earned break was declared and there was time to relax and for pleasant conversation with local enthusiast friends who greeted our arrival. There was no need to run round here as Upnor Castle would be used to take us back to the long tunnel at the beginning of Aberglaslyn Pass so that we could have another steam run through the pass and some more photographic run-pasts.

A couple of runs were then made from Bryn y Felin bridge up to Cemetery crossing to test different speeds and cut-off positions on 608 while working with this load on the 1 in 40 gradient. The loco seems very happy climbing at 10-12 mph with short cut-offs, presumably as its designers intended!

After this, we headed back to Hafod y Llyn where we swapped the

“A long blow of 608’s rather nice whistle was greeted by a cheery wave from some walkers heading up the path to Cwm Bychan before we blasted into the stygian gloom of the tunnel...”

lead engine back to 608 using the loop line and hauled Upnor Castle back to Porthmadog. Running bunker first with a strong wind blowing into the open cab we were certainly glad it was not raining. One could easily appreciate why the rear of the cab on the original Welsh Highland Baldwin 590 had been enclosed and why some engine crews had also done the same to their Baldwins on the Western Front.

Whilst we waited alongside the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway for the mainline crossing at Cae Pawb to clear, good friends from that organisation, Steve Currinn and Dave Rushton, appeared by the boundary fence and we had time for a chat. The topic, unsurprisingly, was ‘Baldwins’! However, the conversation had to end when Martyn said that Network Rail had given us permission to go.

After an uneventful run through to Porthmadog Harbour station a stop was made where we said goodbye to Martyn, obtained permission and continued across the Cob to be met by Julie again at the yard entrance.

Our arrival back at Boston Lodge was at 16.00 and the culmination of four and a half hours of superb footplate experience in the excellent company of Alex and Adrian. We then dropped the fire, ashed-out, gave 608 a final check over and cleaned off her motion before running into the vacant space in the engine shed. All in all it was a very successful weekend and day of testing. 608 had performed very well

and we now have good experience of its capabilities and driving and firing techniques for the Welsh Highland.

To encourage others

It has been the intention that 608 will operate at some of the Welsh Highland Railway events and run some special trains this year. However, all we now know about such things is the uncertainty. While the NHS is under huge pressure and so many people are dying in the UK due to the virus epidemic, our frustrations at not being able to participate in our hobby are obviously hugely irrelevant.

For the present we can only play our parts in concentrating on reducing the impacts of the virus. Andrew, as editor, may be embarrassed by my saying this, but I also feel that if we want our hobby to thrive into the future we need to support our journals such as *Narrow Gauge World* at a time when there is little for advertisers to offer. I hope we can stoke up these journals with interesting articles and through our contacts we, at the very least, can encourage others to take out subscriptions (*mildly embarrassed, but Graham is not wrong! Ed*).

Looking back, I am grateful we were able to make the trip to Beddgelert when we did. I hope this article and photos help to sustain readers’ interest in the narrow gauge and enthusiasms for what we will be able to experience on the Welsh Highland and Ffestiniog Railways and other railways in the future. **NGW**



Steam Relics in Costa Rica

James Waite found a variety of locomotives large and small during a visit in 2012.



Above: FC del Pacifico 2-4-0 no 1 'Maria Cecilia' (Dickson 1020/1898), first loco to run on the railway, on display outside the Pacifico works in San José.

Centre left: The mysterious 0-4-2ST no 14 'Gandoca' at San José.

Left: Northern Railway of Costa Rica 2-6-0 no 59 (Baldwin 31880/1907) displayed at Atlantico station in San José.

Photos by James Waite, April 2012

Costa Rica's railways date back to 1871 when construction work began on a 3ft 6in gauge line through mountainous country to connect the Atlantico station at San José, the capital, with Puerto Limon on the Caribbean coast. After many difficulties it was completed in 1890 and eventually became known by the English name the Northern Railway of Costa Rica.

A separate concern, the FC del Pacifico, was built between 1897 and 1910 to connect its own station at San José with Puntarenas on the Pacific coast. The two railways were connected by a line more than 2kms long through the streets of the city. Branches also met at Alajuela though there was no physical connection here. The Pacifico was electrified in 1930 and much later the electrification was extended through to Puerto Limon after the two railways were brought under a single state-run administration in 1977.

This was clearly a progressive system but it suffered earthquake and hurricane damage in the early 1990s and was closed abruptly in 1995 under pressure from the country's external creditors. The wiring was dismantled but fortunately the track was left in place.

More recently passenger services have been reintroduced at San José for commuters and for a short distance at Puerto Limon for tourists visiting from the many Caribbean



cruise ships which now call there.

At both places the trains consist mostly of elderly wooden carriages drawn by diesels dating from the 1970s, although a number of metre-gauge diesel railcars have arrived secondhand from Spain and, after regauging, are increasingly taking over. There has also been some freight operation between San José and Caldera on the Pacific coast but in 2011 the route was breached by motorway construction and there's an ongoing dispute about who should pay to renovate it.

Steam operation on the state railway ended many years ago and in 2012 I had the opportunity to explore what remained of the country's steam heritage. Two interesting locos have been preserved outside the Pacifico's works at San José. One is 2-4-0 no 1, the Pacifico's first loco and a really delightful machine. The other is the curious-looking 0-4-2ST no 14.

The builder of this engine is unknown as is much of its history, although it is thought to have been captured from a Panamanian concern that had built a line in the early 1900s on the Costa Rican side of what was then a disputed border. It ended up as the Pacifico shops shunter in the early 1970s. At the Atlantico station in San José is Northern Railway 2-6-0 no 59, built by Baldwin in 1907.

South of San José

The last user of steam locomotives in the country was the Ferrocarril del Sur, an isolated 3ft 6in gauge railway based at Golfito, on the Pacific coast not far from the Panamanian border. Construction of the line began in 1938 and at its greatest extent it operated some 315km of route.

Above: FC del Sur 2-8-2 no 84 (Baldwin 72669/1946) on a short length of track at Palmar Sur. These locos' enormous tenders perhaps were due to a lack of watering points on this lengthy line.

Below: Sister loco no 82 (Baldwin 62445/1940) and a short train at the old engine shed at Golfito.

The line was a common carrier but was funded by the US United Fruit company operation. Its *raison d'être* was to carry bananas from their new plantations near the Pacific coast to the fine natural harbour at Golfito for shipping to the US. Baldwin built four Mikados for the railway in 1940 and two more in 1946. Diesels took over many years ago but they couldn't cope with the floods to which the line was prone and three of the Mikados were kept in reserve. They were still there when the system closed in 1982 and shipment of bananas through Golfito came to an end.

The journey along the old road through the mountains south from San José was notoriously difficult and slow and I thought hard before setting off to visit them. In the event I needn't have worried as the

alternative route along the coast, reportedly still a dirt track in places, had just been converted into a proper main road. It didn't appear on any maps that came my way and was so new that the management of a hotel where I stopped for the night didn't know it had been completed.

Golfito is now dominated by a huge tax-free shopping complex built to revive the local economy after the loss of the banana trade. Especially at weekends it attracts large numbers of shoppers from as far away as San José and Panama City. No 81 is now displayed in a park next to the town's municipal offices.

In 1982 no 82 had just been parked up in the engine shed nearby and left there. Officially it's supposed still to be serviceable though quite a number of its cab fittings have been vandalised. It can't have been steamed »





"Officially it's supposed still to be serviceable though quite a number of its cab fittings have been vandalised"

for many years – and anyway there's no longer any track for it to run on.

Nos 81 and 82 date from 1940. No. 84, built in 1946, is on display at Palmar Sur, the line's northern terminus a good 80km or so away; it stands next to an oil tank wagon, one of many built for the US military during the Second World War. They were intended to help rehabilitate Japan's railways after the

damage which was expected to be inflicted on them in the event of an invasion though in the event they weren't needed there. It still carries its original wartime paint scheme and is in very good shape considering its age.

A tiny and truly delightful 22in gauge 0-4-0 tank loco is on display at Las Juntas de Abangares in the north west of the country. It spent its

working life at a gold mine outside the town and is coupled to a short train of the mine's tub wagons. It was built at Alco's Dickson works in 1904 and is in fairly skeletal condition but still carries its works plate. Weighing only six and a half tons, it must be the smallest loco I've ever seen! A museum has been set up at the old mine and houses the even more skeletal remains of a sister loco. **NGW**

Above left: The tiny 22-inch gauge 0-4-0T (Alco, Dickson 30196/1904), once employed in a gold mine, on display at Las Juntas de Abangares.

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A month of delayed exposures...

A *Gallery* section reduced in size this month – like many others, *NGW*'s photographers are resting their cameras as they are not allowed to travel and there would be nothing to capture if they were permitted to...

It would simply not be an issue of *NGW* without some superb narrow gauge photography, so with a lack of new material on offer due to the coronavirus lockdown, we've gone back to around a year ago and given a second chance to a couple of excellent pictures that just missed the cut at the time.

Right: On 23rd March 2019 *Andrew Robinson* was at the first Statfold Barn open day of the year, and captured two of the Staffordshire centre's more distinctive engines, Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0 'Fiji' (972/1912) waiting for Corpet-Louvet 0-6-0PT 'Minas de Aller No. 2' (439/1884).

Below: A couple of months later, on 25th May, *Matthew Ditch* was installed near The Green on the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway to catch 2-6-2 'Northern Rock', built at Ravenglass in 1976, heading into the country with a well-loaded train to Dalegarth.

Centre pages: This shot is from 2020. *Ian Evans* was among the enthusiasts in India on a visit organised by Darjeeling Tours earlier in the year. Scheduled to last from 12th to 20th March, the tour had to be cut short due to the outbreak of the coronavirus, but the participants still enjoyed some time on the Darjeeling Himalayan line as this delightful slice of life shot demonstrates.





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Travels of the Penrhyn Hunslets

Andrew Charman traces the subsequent history of the 17 Hunslet engines that worked for the Penrhyn quarries, and the variety of locations they ended up in.

Back in *NGW*80, in 2012, we documented the travels of the many Hunslet 0-4-0 saddle tanks employed at the Dinorwic Quarry in Wales, once they had left quarry service. In fact looking back at that feature now it's fascinating to see how it has dated with the various locos adding to their histories since.

The piece was headed by a letter from the quarry, replying to a young enthusiast who had enquired after buying a loco – he was offered several for £500 each. At the time similar enquiries were being fielded just a few miles over the mountain from Dinorwic at the other mass user of small Hunslets, the Penrhyn Quarry – this follow-up piece on these locos is better late than never! Their story is equally as varied and fascinating.

Our start point for any survey of

such motive power is the seminal work on the subject, *Quarry Hunslets of North Wales* by Cliff Thomas, published by Oakwood Press in 2001. It lists 16 locos from the Leeds-based Hunslet Engine Co ordered for Penrhyn – not quite as many as Dinorwic, but the latter remained almost exclusively loyal to Hunslet products throughout its life whereas Penrhyn management went in for a lot of secondhand buying. This process added one more Hunslet, 'Lilla' plus several other locos of varying manufacture which perhaps we will look at in a future feature.

The first Hunslet ordered for Penrhyn was also one of the three largest – its two sisters would become by far the most famous of the quarry engines. 'Charles' (Hunslet works no 283) was delivered in 1882 to work

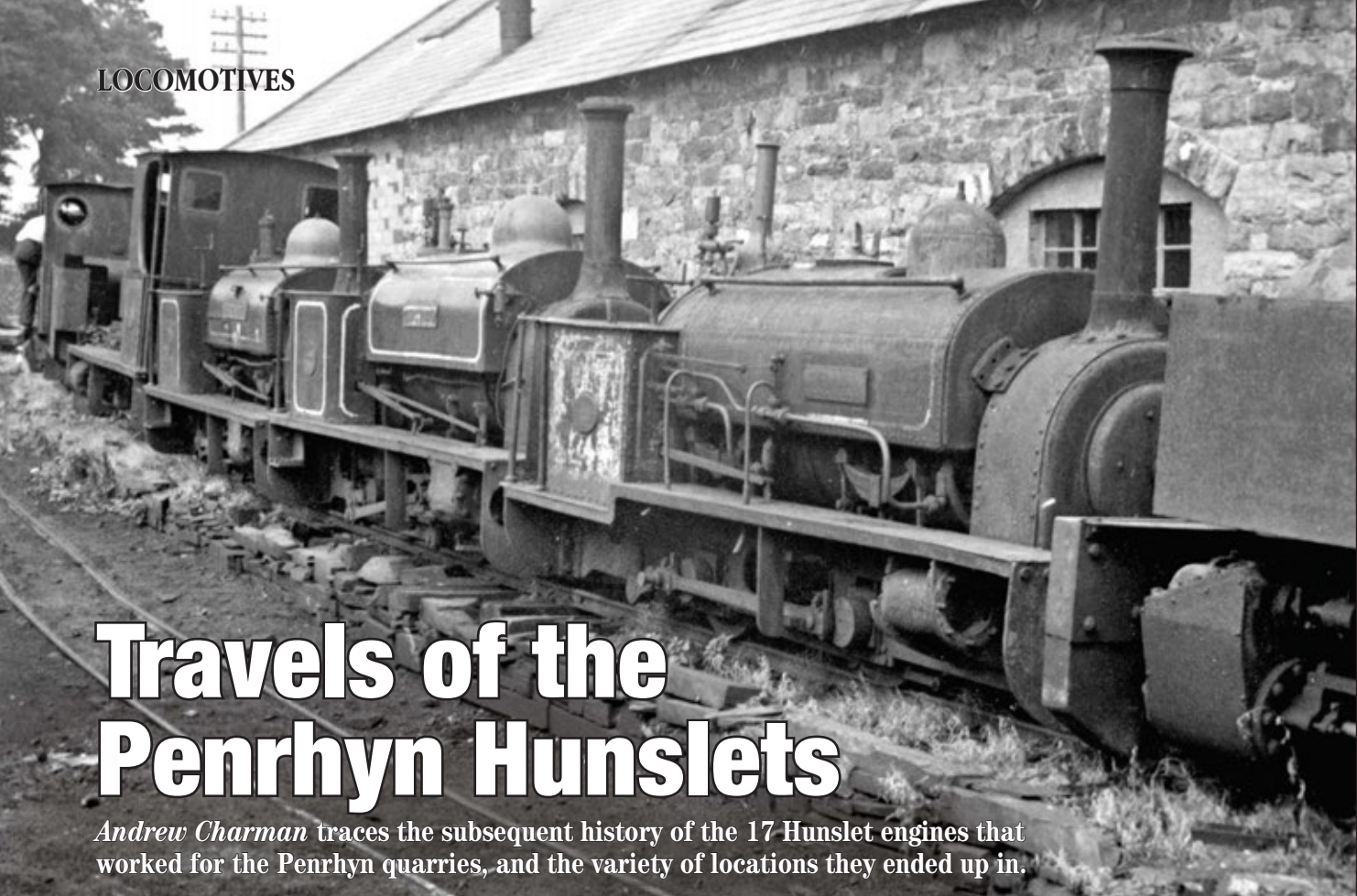
Above: Then – Hunslet locos on the somewhat wrongly named Penrhyn 'scrap line' in the 1960s – visible are 'Lillian', 'Edward Sholto', 'Gertrude' and 'Lilla'.

Below: Today – The Penrhyn Hunslet locos 'Winifred', 'Hugh Napier', 'Gwynedd' and 'Margaret' rest in Minffordd Yard during the Ffestiniog Hunslet 125 event in 2018. Photo: Roger Dimmick/FF&WHR

the six-mile long 'main line' between the quarries and the coast at Port Penrhyn. A distinctive difference to what would in many ways become standard quarry Hunslet specification were the loco's angled cylinders.

Charles worked until 1955 when it was withdrawn in need of a new boiler and stored in the shed at Port Penrhyn, steaming just once more to work a final train in 1958. Surviving a threat of scrapping in 1960, the loco was cosmetically restored and placed in the industrial museum at Penrhyn Castle. It has been there ever since, save for a brief outing for display at the Ffestiniog Railway's Hunslet Hundred Gala in 1993.

Charles remains in basically original condition, unlike the two famed sister locos 'Blanche' (589) and 'Linda' (590), which have been



radically altered in their new life. Ordered together in 1893 they were very similar to Charles but not identical. They had half-inch larger cylinders, frames three inches longer and bigger grates – a visual identifier was their circular cab spectacles, those on Charles being square.

Engine for hire

Both locos worked on the Penrhyn main line until it closed in 1962, and then Linda was hired by the Ffestiniog Railway, the then recently preserved line being seriously short of motive power. Despite an early and dramatic derailment which saw Linda hanging off the line over a drop, the loco proved a success and by the end of 1963 both it and Blanche had been purchased by the FR.

The 'Penrhyn sisters' have proven mainstays of the FR to this day, though in significantly modified form. An early change was to add tenders to both, while to counter the locos' long front and rear overhangs they gained pony trucks, the wheelset for Blanche's coming from the scrapped Welsh Highland Railway single-Fairlie 'Moel Tryfan.'

Other changes included a swap from right to left-hand drive and for a period a conversion to oil firing – in fact the two have undergone so many modifications during maintenance over the years a Penrhyn fitter would likely hardly recognise them today. Visually they are easy to distinguish from each other as Linda has an open-backed cab whereas on Blanche a rear cab is built onto the tender.

The next three Penrhyn Hunslets were to what would become the familiar quarry design. 'Gwynedd' (316) and 'Lilian' (317) were built in 1883 and joined two years later by a sister 'Winifred' (364). Intended to work the quayside at Port Penrhyn the trio were known as the Port Class – this group being distinct from the Dirorwic version of the Port class.

Gwynedd spent its entire working life at the port until withdrawn in

1954. Bought by a private enthusiast in 1965, it passed on a year later to florist Alan Bloom for his planned 2ft gauge line at Bressingham nurseries in Norfolk. Following a year-long restoration the loco entered service in 1967, running on both the Nursery Railway and the short-lived Woodland Railway, later converted to 15-inch gauge. Gwynedd's home has been in Norfolk ever since though visits elsewhere have included a return to Wales on the Ffestiniog Railway.

Lilian also worked mainly at the Port though made occasional forays into Penrhyn's quarries. Withdrawn in 1956 and joining the famed 'scrap line' (from which little if nothing was actually scrapped) outside the workshops at Coed-y-Parc, Lilian was bought by Nigel Bowman. Rebuilt by 1968, the loco was steamed on a short length of track until Nigel built his Launceston Steam Railway. Lilian hauled the first train on this line on Boxing Day 1983 and has been based there since, though is yet another to have visited the Ffestiniog.

Winifred's story is the most

interesting of the three as having spent most of its working life at the Port, it was one of six Penrhyn locos bought and shipped to the USA in 1965 by antiques dealer Charles Annette, after he saw a TV news story about the quarry selling off engines.

Once in America the engines were auctioned and Winifred ended up in the 'Hall of Fame' collection of Tony Hulman at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, home of the world-famous Indy 500 motor race. Later the loco went into store and following Mr Hulman's death all efforts to secure and repatriate it were rebuffed.

Then in 2011, as featured in *NGW81*, a team comprising



Top: 'Charles' has found a home in Penrhyn Castle museum. Photo: Mark Smithers

Above: 'Blanche' on the Ffestiniog Railway in 1966, showing the long front overhang. Photo: David Bott

Below: The Penrhyn ladies after working a special on the Welsh Highland Railway in 2012.





enthusiasts Julian Birley, Martyn Ashworth and Graham Fairhurst succeeded where others had failed, “a year of emails” resulting in Winifred, Avonside 0-4-0T ‘Ogwen’ and Barclay 0-4-0T ‘Glyder’ returning across the Atlantic. Winifred went to the Bala Lake Railway and following overhaul returned to steam in 2015, running for a season in its original paintwork before a repaint that winter. The loco is now a core member of the fleet at Bala, the ‘Quarry Hunslet Retirement Home.’

The first two of the Penrhyn Small Quarry class were supplied in 1894, ‘Margaret’ (605) and ‘Alan George’ (606). Margaret worked in the quarry galleries until its boiler was condemned in 1950. Over the following decade the loco was raided for spares until in 1960 enthusiast Colin Pealling purchased the remains,

Above: ‘Gwynedd’ recently returned to service at Bressingham, shown here with Dinorwic Hunslet ‘Maid Marian’.

Below: A steamy ‘Lilian’ during the loco’s early days on the Launceston line. Photo: Paul Fletcher

Below right: When repatriated in 2012 ‘Winifred’ was in the same condition as when sold from Penrhyn in 1965.

intending them to be a source of spares for other Hunslets. However he stored them at the Cadeby Light Railway owned by the enthusiastic Reverend Teddy Boston, and Teddy became determined that Margaret should be rebuilt.

Plans were underway for a joint funding of a new boiler when Teddy died in 1986 and Colin then sold his loco collection to Mike Hart, best known for his involvement with the Ffestiniog Railway. He duly sold the loco on to Alastair Lamberton, who shipped it to the Isle of Man.

Patience pays

Work progressed only slowly and by 1999 Margaret had a new owner, the Vale of Rheidol Railway. The loco was then stripped back to components and given a full rebuild, but this suffered delays and not until 2015 did Margaret return to steam, the first loco completed in the Rheidol’s new Aberyswyth workshop. Since then it has been steamed mainly on summer weekends, on ‘driver for a fiver’ duties at Devil’s Bridge station.

Alan George’s subsequent history

is rather simpler. Laid up at Penrhyn in 1953, the loco was bought in 1965 by two enthusiasts, and was initially intended to be restored as a static exhibit until they discovered the stack of spare parts supplied with it!

A five-year restoration put Alan George into working order for use on a short-lived private line of just 230 yards in length, the Howdenclough Light Railway. This was dismantled when the loco was sold to the Teifi Valley Railway in 1983. It’s been at the south Wales line ever since, working regular trains until the TVR suffered its trackbed issues in 2014.

Two more small quarry class locos were ordered in 1899 and one, ‘Nesta’ (704) has perhaps the most remarkable story of all, which we tell at the end of this feature. The Penrhyn career of sister ‘Elin’ (705) ended as early as 1954, the loco having since 1928 presented a very different appearance due to the replacement of its boiler with one built by Marshall Ltd, better known for its traction engines.

In the following years many of Elin’s fittings were removed before what was left was sold to a director of the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway in 1962. As pictured in our feature on page 39 Elin was restored and steamed on the LCLR, but being really too heavy for the lightweight track, in 1986 it was sold to the new Yaxham Light Railway in Norfolk.

After rebuilding but still with the Marshall boiler, Elin ran at the Yaxham line until 1997 and was eventually acquired by Jeremy Martin for his private Richmond Steam Railway in Kent. Here restoration is currently underway.

In 1904 the first of the Large Quarry class arrived at Penrhyn and ‘Hugh Napier’ (855) was not destined to travel very far. Its quarry career ended sometime between 1954 and 1962 after which it was stored in



the carriage shed at Bethesda. During a scrap drive in the last days of Penrhyn, quarryman Iorwerth Jones managed to save the engine for the collection in Penrhyn Castle, Hugh Napier passing into the ownership of the National Trust which now administered the stately home.

A very long restoration then commenced, overseen by Iorwerth who was now curator of the castle's industrial collection. Initially there were plans for a short demonstration line but these were never pursued.

Loco on Trust

In 2011 a long-term loan of Hugh Napier was agreed between the Trust and the Ffestiniog Railway. The FR completed the rebuild at Boston Lodge works with a new boiler and the loco became an ambassador for the Trust, running on the FF&WHR but also being displayed at King's Cross station in London. The loan has since been extended until at least 2029 to include a 10-yearly overhaul.

Two further Large Quarry class engines were supplied together in 1906, 'Pamela' (920) and 'Sybil Mary' (921). Pamela needed a new boiler in 1946 and was eventually rebuilt with several parts of the Hudswell-Clarke loco 'Bronllwyd'. In this new hybrid form the loco worked well at both the port and quarry until withdrawn in 1958.

The stored loco was purchased by the Cornish Traction Engine Club but before it could be collected it was sold on to enthusiast John Vernon. He rebuilt it over a five-year period at Church Farm in Newbold Verdon, Leicestershire, eventually running the loco on a 200-yard demonstration track. Sold in 1984, Pamela went to the Old Kiln Light Railway in Surrey and is still there today, a fund-raising appeal for a replacement boiler having been launched in 2018.

Sybil Mary's quarry career was

"The loco was initially intended to be restored as a static exhibit until they discovered the stack of spare parts supplied with it..."

Above right: The Vale of Rheidol line completed a 55-year long restoration of 'Margaret', here entertaining the editor's daughter on 'Driver for a Fiver' duties at Devil's Bridge.

Below right: 'Alan George' has spent the entirety of its preservation life at the Teifi Valley Railway, seen here in 2015.

Below: 'Hugh Napier' was restored by the Ffestiniog Railway as a roving ambassador for the National Trust.

All photos in this feature by Andrew Charman unless stated



spent almost entirely on the Red Lion level until the engine was withdrawn in 1955. Purchased by Colin Pealling in April 1966, it followed Pamela to Church Farm. Little work was done for many years as Colin focused on other projects including Penrhyn Hunslet Margaret and in 1988 Sybil Mary moved to Landkey in Devon, home of the then fledgling Lynton & Barnstaple Railway project.

Later that year the loco was part of the Pealling collection bought by Mike Hart. He sold Sybil Mary on to Paul Martin, who moved the loco to his home, again in Leicestershire, for restoration. Eventually it arrived at the Statfold Barn Railway, which today of course owns the Hunslet Engine Co name, and in 2014 restoration was completed, Sybil Mary joining the museum's ever-growing operating fleet.

A further three Large Quarry class locos, 'George Sholto', 'Gertrude' and 'Edward Sholto' formed the final batch of Hunslets ordered by Penrhyn in 1909, taking works numbers 994 to 996. George Sholto has perhaps the simplest post-working story of all. Withdrawn in 1947, it was purchased in 1966 for the Bressingham line by Alan Bloom, who considered it the best-condition of the surviving locos. Restoration was completed by the end of the year and George Sholto has been on the Norfolk line ever since.

The other two in the batch were both the last new engines ordered for Penrhyn and the first to leave. Both went across the Atlantic in October 1961, part of the batch of both Penrhyn and Dinorwic quarry engines acquired by Charles Matthews of Canada, and Gertrude's subsequent story is the saddest. »





What's in a name?

While Dinorwic Quarry named its locos mainly after race horses, Penrhyn took the simpler route, virtually every loco given the name of a member of the Pennant family that owned the quarries. 'Gwynedd' was an exception, while the used Hunslet 'Lilla' arrived with the name given it by its previous owners.

Incidentally when sold to Penrhyn Lilla travelled much of the distance on its own wheels, hauled along the Welsh Highland Railway before travelling on a standard-gauge wagon from Dinas to Port Penrhyn.



Top left: A rebuild of 'Pamela', seen here at Newbold Vernon in 1974, gave the loco a distinctive visual appearance. *Photo: Donald Brooks*

Upper left: 'Sybil Mary' has found a happy home on the Statfold Barn Railway.

Lower left: 'George Sholto' is a long-time resident at the Bressingham Steam Museum.



Bottom left: An outing or two to the Ffestiniog Railway has featured in the preservation life of 'Edward Sholto'.

Below: Sectioned for display, 'Gertrude' has returned across the Atlantic from Canada to Statfold Barn Museum.

Acquired in 1965 by what is today the Ontario Science Centre, the engine was sectioned for display. After many years on show it was deemed surplus to requirements and put in store, from where it has since been acquired and repatriated by Graham Lee, founder of the Statfold Barn Railway. Today Gertrude, still in sectioned form, is a prime exhibit in the Hunslet collection at Statfold.

Edward Sholto, out of use since 1956, joined Gertrude on the boat to Canada. Escaping its sister's fate the loco passed through several owners and indeed for some time its location was uncertain. Well-known bookseller and narrow gauge enthusiast Andrew Neale eventually tracked the loco down and he succeeded where others had failed, Edward Sholto becoming the first of the Atlantic emigrants to be repatriated in 2006. Sensitively restored since and retaining its original boiler, it has run at locations such as Apedale and more recently Beamish, where as reported last month it has now been withdrawn to static display to protect the authentic original condition of the loco.

The used one

Gertrude and Edward Sholto were not, however, the last Hunslets to arrive at Penrhyn. This was 'Lilla' (554), built in 1891 for the Cilgwin quarry near Nantlle in north Wales. Purchased secondhand for Penrhyn in





May 1928 (curiously both Dinorwic and Penrhyn bought a single used Hunslet) Lilla became the second oldest loco at the quarry after Charles.

Lilla worked briefly at the Port and then the quarry until 1955, after which the loco became the easiest recognised member of the scrap line due to having a cab. Lilla was one of three narrow gauge engines purchased by enthusiast Bernard Latham, who over several years cared for them in the garden of his house in Woking, Surrey. Lilla was returned to steam here in May 1972 and after display at a steam fair in Battersea Park, London, spent the season on the then newly opened railway at Knebworth House in Stevenage.

Over following years the loco also ran at Kew Bridge Steam Museum and then the Bala Lake Railway, from where in May 1993 it went to the Hunslet Hundred Gala on the Ffestiniog Railway and stayed there, eventually purchased by a consortium of Ffestiniog personalities. Since then Lilla has been a regular performer on both the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland lines, and has recently returned from a major overhaul.

Above: The one that nearly got away, 'Nesta' is currently on display in the interpretation centre at the Bala Lake Railway. Photo: Robin Willis/PQRS

Above right: As an ambassador for the Ffestiniog Railway 'Lilla' has run at such unusual venues as the Shrewsbury Flower Show. Photo: Chris Parry, FF&WHR

Below: A Penrhyn loco back at Penrhyn – 'Hugh Napier' pulls away from Coed-y-Parc works during the short-lived revival of the Penrhyn Quarry Railway.



Caribbean crusade

And what of the remarkable Nesta? After a working life in the quarry this was another of the six locomotives sold to Charles Annette and shipped to the USA in 1965. Passing through several owners Stateside, Nesta ended up on the Caribbean island of Puerto Rico, though at the time of Cliff's book, and for many years after, its fate was only rumoured, with many attempts to find its resting place proving fruitless.

Eventually finding Nesta became an obsession for Rob Gambrill, CEO of the Vale of Rheidol Railway, and at the rededication of Edward Sholto he learnt that Nesta and Barclay 'Cegin' had been sold to effectively the Puerto Rican version of the National Trust, which planned a tourist railway in connection with a restored beam engine. The plan floundered and even once UK enthusiasts located the engines the Puerto Ricans were adamant they would not be sold.

Rob joined forces with Statfold Barn, for whom Martyn Ashworth

was leading efforts to repatriate the locos. The pair flew to the Caribbean in November 2011, and were shown the engines, Rob describing Cegin as looking like it had just finished work whereas Nesta was missing many parts, several of which were found by searching the sheds.

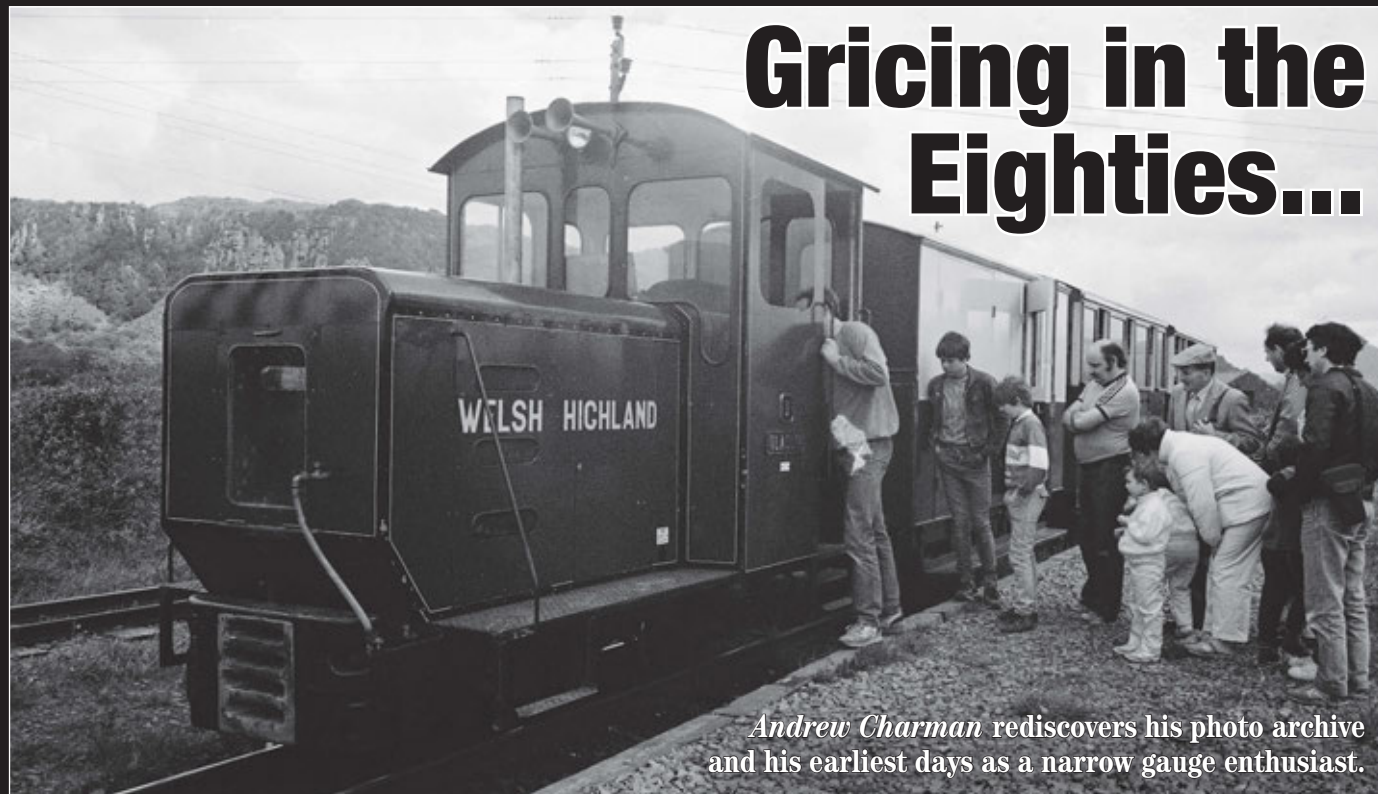
Negotiations to secure the two took rather longer – two complex years in fact, and it was not until 2015 that they were shipped home. Nesta is currently on loan to the Bala Lake Railway, displayed in the line's new Interpretation Centre.

With the arrival of these two every one of the exported quarry locos had returned to the UK and not a single Hunslet that worked at Penrhyn quarry had been scrapped – a remarkable story of survival. **NGW**

■ Next month's **NGW** features a pictorial visit to the Penrhyn and Padarn railways made in 1961 by our regular contributor David Mitchell, his first and only experience of these two lost lines.



Gricing in the Eighties...



Andrew Charman rediscovers his photo archive and his earliest days as a narrow gauge enthusiast.

New scanning technology recently delivered to Charman Towers, plus the spare time imposed by the lockdown, has enabled the editor to delve into his own photo archive, and selections of UK narrow gauge

subject matter will be an occasional feature of future editions of *NGW*.

I'm one of the steadily increasing percentage of enthusiasts born too late for the pioneer days of preservation – for me searching my

Above: Curious visitors look on as 'Glaslyn' uncouples at Porthmadog.

Left: From the train Gelert's Farm was a scene of organised chaos that to us enthusiasts was intoxicating...

Below: Pen-y-Mount halt, limit of operations, was a bleak site in 1986 with no more than a simple platform.

All photos by Andrew Charman, May 1986

early narrow gauge memories takes me back to the very end of the 1970s and particularly the 1980s.

It was a time of teaming up with my friend John Clark, a fellow rail enthusiast I'd met at school – I recall introducing myself by persuading John to donate a pound to a Bluebell Railway loco appeal. I was a young Bluebell member, because it was the closest steam railway to home, before the shortaxe bug truly bit...

John and I had both passed our driving tests which meant taking at least one week off from work each year to head from our Surrey homes to Wales, and to squeeze in visits to and rides on as many narrow gauge railways as possible.

Setting the tone

Why black and white you may ask? By the 1980s colour film was the norm and indeed I shot quite a bit on our trips – some will feature in future episodes. But I had done an O-level photography course at school, in which I learnt that proper photographers shot colour on slides, which were less easy to view. Meanwhile I'd found I really enjoyed the black and white printing process, and was happy to spend hours in the darkroom making my own prints – I loved the tones and contrast one could get in black and white. And by the time we went to Wales in '86, I was just under a year into my first photographer's job on a local paper. There everything was shot in black and white and I had a big darkroom to play in all day...



This particular day was part of the 1986 Grice, that also took us to the Brecon Mountain, Talylyn and Welshpool & Llanfair lines. A couple of years before I'd briefly visited the then Welsh Highland Railway at Porthmadog (today the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway) while on holiday with my parents, without time to ride it.

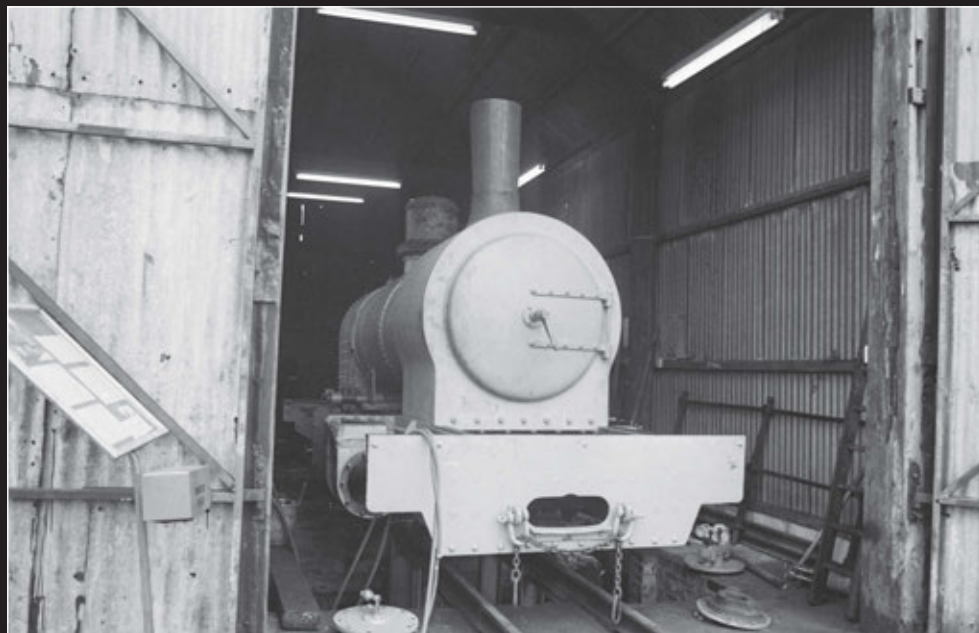
When John and I visited in '86, we took the short three-quarter mile ride behind Ruston diesel 'Glaslyn' (297030/1952) – we had managed to choose a day when recently restored Peckett 0-4-2T 'Karen' (2024/1942) was not in steam – and spent much of the afternoon exploring the Gelert's Farm works site.

Inspired by a mess

As the photos show, Gelert's Farm was then nothing like the tidy, well-maintained museum that it is today. Basically, it was a mess with bits of locos and rolling stock all over the place. But this enthusiast was duly enthused!

Unlike all the other railways, this was a preservation effort just getting underway, a line still to be rebuilt, and I duly became a member of the WHR '64 Company. And then not long after, the famed trackbed fight between the preservationists and the Ffestiniog Railway erupted into the open. I spent a couple of years taking a little display stand for the '64 Co around model railway shows in the south-east and telling anyone who would listen what rotten people the Ffestiniog lot were...

Yet as the arguments wore on over several years my enthusiasm waned. The final straw was one day when I opened a copy of *Steam Railway* magazine and read on one page that '64 Co members were helping the FR lay carriage sidings at Boston Lodge, and on another page that the two



Above: Pride of the WHR, Hunslet 2-6-2T 'Russell', then nearing the end of restoration – it returned to steam in 1987.

Right: Inside the big shed were Peckett 'Karen', the only operable steam loco, and two Bagnalls still to be rebuilt.

Below right: John surveys a pile of metal that includes two Ruston diesels and the frames of a well-tank.

Below: The way ahead onto the proper WHR trackbed looked tempting in 1986...

companies were threatening to take each other to court over use of the Welsh Highland Railway name. I did not renew my membership, and in due course joined the Welshpool & Llanfair, a favourite destination on our Grices. Little did I know that decision would one day lead to my becoming a Trustee of the W&LLR and moving to live next door to it!

Mind you, one of our Welsh grices

included a walk along the former Welsh Highland trackbed in the Aberglaslyn Pass near Beddgelert. As I mentioned in last month's *NGW*, even when I repeated that walk with my fiancée a couple of years later, and even though I'd enthusiastically promoted the aspirations of the '64 Co at those model railway shows, I never really believed I'd one day travel through the pass on a train... **NGW**



Innsbruck Lokalbahn



David Mitchell outlines the development of three inter-urban lines and the opportunities for memorable journeys in highly scenic surroundings.

Innsbruck, capital of the Tirol, is set in the Inn valley and is surrounded by mountains rising to 3300 metres. It is a crossroads with rail and road routes to Germany, Switzerland and Italy, and was once served by three metre-gauge inter-urban, Lokalbahn, lines, two on the south side of the city and one to the north-east.

Hall in Tirol

This was the oldest line and ran between Innsbruck and Hall. It started near Berg Isel, on the south side of Innsbruck, crossed the city and then extended eastwards down the Inn Valley for 12km. Opened in June 1891 it was worked by small 0-4-0 tank engines with the motion enclosed, built by Krauss of Linz, and a number of small four-wheeled trailers with open balconies. The company was called Lokalbahn

Innsbruck-Hall in Tirol (LBIHiT)

In 1905 the LBIHiT opened the first of the electrically operated tram routes within Innsbruck. The Hall line was electrified in 1909/10 and to work it eight bogie power cars were supplied by Graz/AEG in 1909. They could haul up to four of the four-wheeled trailers.

The capacity of these cars was given as 14 seated and six standing inside, plus two seated and seven standing on each platform, making a total of 38. They continued to work route no 4 until it closed on 8th June 1974, due to major road construction for the 1976 winter Olympic Games.

Mittelgebirgsbahn

The second line was built to serve a number of small villages on the Mittelgebirge plateau to the south east of Innsbruck and some 300

Above: Train on the Hall in Tirol line loading in central Innsbruck, July 1966. The first trailer car is no 122, formerly no 10, built by Graz in 1891. The second trailer was rebuilt in 1937/38 and twin-arched windows fitted.

Below: Igls terminus on the Mittelgebirgsbahn looking towards Innsbruck.

Photos by David Mitchell – all taken in May 1980 except where stated.

metres higher. It was 8.4km in length and ran from Berg Isel to Igls with a very sinuous route. Worked by LBIHiT, it opened in June 1900 and had three 0-6-2Ts and four-wheeled trailers like those on the Hall line.

Loss of traffic to buses resulted in closure in October 1928 but it reopened in April 1930, still steam operated. In 1935 it was agreed to electrify the line using a number of Hall bogie cars and electric working commenced in June 1936, the power cars hauling four-wheeled trailers. General modernisation in the 1980s resulted in the use of single-ended cars, the installation of a turning circle at Igls and the extension of the service into the city centre.

Stubaitalbahn

The third line is in some ways the most interesting. Highly scenic, it



was unusual in using a single-phase AC current until 1983. Heading south, the main railway line to the Brenner Pass follows the Inn valley of the River Sill. The Stubaital (Stubia Valley) branches south-west about 10km south of Innsbruck and serves an attractive and serene area with picturesque villages.

There was some mining in the late 18th century and in 1895 plans were made for a steam-worked line. After a change of route at the southern end, the line was approved in 1897.

At this time most electric railway installations used direct current, the motors being much easier to control. However they were usually limited to below 1000 volts and this produced transmission losses.

Some installations used three-phase alternating currents with higher voltage but this required twin overhead wires with return through the rails, which necessitated very complex arrangements at junctions to keep the two live wires separated. Single-phase AC was not used because there was no suitable motor.

In 1902, however, a suitable motor was designed and AEG-Union was keen to promote its use. It submitted a bid to build the Stubaitalbahn using its unproven system with a single contact wire and with 2.5-volt, 42.5-hertz electrification. To gain a showground for its system it invested in the company and supplied three motor cars at no cost. Construction began in May 1903.

The line started near Berg Isel on the south side of Innsbruck. Stubaital Bahnhof was at right angles to and south of Pastorstrasse, close to the terminus of the Hall and Igls systems. The line climbed from about 600 metres above sea level to Telfes Wiesen at 1001 metres. There followed a fairly level section to Telfes



Above: Car No 3 at Igls station is one of eight supplied by Graz for the Hall line in 1909. It was upgraded for the steeper line to Igls when it was electrified in 1936.

Right: Stubaital Bahnhof with AC car no 1, built by Graz in 1904 for the line's opening. At left is the new depot and works, opened in 1977 for trams, buses and trolleybuses.

Below: Stubaital Bahnhof shed and works. Car no 3 is being painted in the yard and no 4, built by Graz in 1905, is in the shed. The line to Fulpmes goes off to the right.



from where there was a descent to the terminus at Fulpmes (936metres). There were two tunnels on the line, which was built as single track with passing loops, and also two

impressive high viaducts. The journey time was about one hour.

The service started with the three power cars, six trailers and four goods wagons, supplied in 1904. A fourth »



power car of similar design was purchased in 1905 and additional passenger trailers and goods wagons. When the Hall in Tirol line was electrified it used 550 volts DC so through running from the Stubaitalbahnhof to the city centre was not possible.

Ownership and operation of the various Innsbruck systems was connected in a rather complex manner. Full details are in the excellent book *Innsbruck's Alpine Tramways* by Ray Deacon, published by LRTA in 2015. The Stubaitalbahnhof continued to operate in a generally unaltered way through the changes that affected Austria in two world wars. There were times of uncertainty for the future of the tramway system, but it survived. In 1963 new bodies were built for the original trailers. In 1979 the Stubaitalbahnhof celebrated its 75th anniversary and it was announced that more modern cars would be provided and the line converted to DC supply, which would allow through running to the Hauptbahnhof.

Modernisation of the tramway system had begun in the mid-1970s using secondhand cars from Hagen in Germany. Staff training began on the Igl line and the AC operation ceased on 23rd June 1983 with DC starting on 2nd July. One of the original cars, no 3, ran away unmanned in the depot area in May 1982 and the body was scrapped after usable components had been retrieved. After changeover, the AC stock was stored in the Stubaitalbahnhof depot.

Heritage saved

Once through running began the Stubaital Bahnhof was no longer used and the whole area was handed over to the Tiroler Museumbahnen (TMB) as a museum. Cars 1, 2 and 4 were transferred along with a couple of trailers and a few wagons. TMB has also since acquired trams from the city system and other Austrian tramways. These include one of the Hall bogie cars and four of the small



Above: Stubaital no 2 (Graz 1904) entering Mutters with a Fulpmes to Innsbruck train. It is towing no 15, a four-wheeled trailer rebodied in 1966 and withdrawn in 1982. It went to the museum tramway at St Florian, near Linz.

Right: Mutters – Stubaital no 1 (Graz 1909) is on its way back to Innsbruck. No 2 with trailer no 15 is departing for Fulpmes.

Below: Fulpmes terminus of the Stubaitalbahnhof, No 1 ready to return to Innsbruck. Traffic was light but the trailers in the headshunt could strengthen trains later in the day.



four-wheeled trailers, which were a feature of the Hall in Tirol operation. Two of the Stubaitalbahnhof cars have been altered to be able to work off the DC current and can be used on the line for special workings.

These lines, and the rest of the Innsbruck tram and trolley

bus system, are well worth a visit when circumstances allow. They offer great journeys through a very scenic area and at times it is possible to experience the vintage trams. **NGW**



From Potatoes to Passengers

The Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway achieves its 60th anniversary this summer. *Donald Brooks* reflects on its early success, gradual decline and recent revival.

The present Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway (LCLR) at Skegness Water Leisure Park is the third incarnation of the 60cm gauge line, its predecessors serving a completely different part of the Lincolnshire seaside at Humberston, south of Cleethorpes.

The LCLR dates back to the early days of preservation when a group of Lincolnshire narrow gauge enthusiasts, finding the revived Welsh lines a little remote, decided to create something more local themselves. This was not going to be a preserved railway but a completely new build on a greenfield site and the Lincolnshire group was determined that their railway would serve a genuine passenger need, not just provide a ride.

Above: 'Jurassic' at Beach on the 'new' line with a train for South Sea Lane, photo date unknown.

Below: The first North Sea Lane station and yard was much smaller than its 1966 replacement but rich in atmosphere – photo taken 26th September 1965.

Both photos: Bill Woolhouse Collection/LCLR

The original LCLR opened on 27th August 1960 and ran in a straight line, roughly west to east, for a little under a kilometre parallel to and north of Anthony's Bank Road, in an area near the southern terminus of today's 15in gauge Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway.

The LCLR's western terminus was called North Sea Lane but it was actually one or two hundred metres south of the roundabout at the end of the lane, where the local buses terminated. The eastern terminus, Beach, was a short walk from the shore and both termini served holiday camps, the railway therefore providing transport between beach

and camps as well as a connection with buses into town.

The railway proved extremely successful in 1961, its first full season, with a frequent service operating for up to 12 hours daily. Although the railway itself was new, the track and stock were not, and a second purpose of the LCLR was to preserve something of the atmosphere and equipment of Lincolnshire's narrow gauge railways, mainly those of the potato industry.

In the late 1950s the Lincolnshire potato lines were closing down. Nocton Estate, the largest and best known system, located a few kilometres south east of Lincoln and »





latterly owned by Smiths Potato Crisps, had converted its field lines to lorry operation by 1960 though a short section at the processing plant lingered on until 1969. The Nocton railway, established just after the First World War, used surplus War Department track and wagons, which became redundant at just the right time for the embryo LCLR to benefit.

Track from Nocton was used to build the new railway and Humberston also provided a home

for some of the estate's locomotives and wagons. While Nocton's motive power consisted predominantly of Simplex machines, these were not WD surplus stock but built new for the line.

The LCLR's first loco, which worked almost every train in 1960 and 1961, was Nocton 5, Motor Rail 3995 of 1926. It was rebodied at Humberston and later named 'Paul'. Nocton 1, MR 1935 of 1920, joined it in 1969 gaining the name 'Nocton'.



Above left: No 1 'Paul', ex-Nocton 5, and 'Elin' outside the sheds at North Sea Lane. The bow frame reveals that under the locally-built bodywork Paul is a Simplex. Blue was the standard livery for LCLR i/c locomotives.

Above: Two locos in steam at North Sea Lane was unusual – Elin and Jurassic were being prepared for a special event. Note the ungainly saddle tank on Elin's non-standard boiler.

Centre left: Elin and Jurassic at North Sea Lane. Elin was said to have a tendency to spread the track, so was likely restricted to offering footplate rides in the yard on this occasion. The platform building would have pleased Colonel Stephens.

Left: Wilton is about to pass Jurassic as it propels a train, including an Ashover carriage, into the station at North Sea Lane.

Uncredited photos by Donald Brooks, July 1974



For the very short first season in 1960, one of Nocton's WD D-type drop-side open bogie wagons was rebuilt as a simple open carriage with a second conversion added in 1961.

The steam locomotive most associated with the LCLR is 0-6-0ST 'Jurassic', Peckett 1008 of 1903, which arrived in 1961 from the Rugby Portland Cement Company. The first steam locomotive on site, though, was 0-4-0ST 'Peter', Bagnall 2067 of 1918. It was a non-runner on arrival in 1961 and little work was done before it returned to its owners, the Narrow Gauge Railway Society, in 1963. It is now at Amberley.

Jurassic worked the weekend service when possible while weekday trains were diesel-hauled, sometimes by another local Simplex, 'Wilton', MR 7481 of 1940, which had been acquired in 1963 from the nearby Humberston Brickworks.

Real narrow gauge

After the 1965 season local authority development plans for the area resulted in the railway being completely rebuilt. It was moved to the south side of Anthony's Bank Road and at the new Beach station it turned sharply south to terminate at South Sea Lane, doubling the length of the line.

Although both railways were newly built they exuded narrow gauge atmosphere from the start. Simple wooden platforms, sheds made of corrugated sheeting, slightly overgrown track and push-pull operation, despite the existence of loops, evoked the feel of a bygone era even if the paid staff and the intensive service made the LCLR very definitely a real railway.

In 1969 the LCLR acquired ex-Penrhyn 0-4-0ST 'Elin', Hunslet



705 of 1899, an unusual quarry tank because of its non-standard boiler, made in Lincolnshire by Marshall of Gainsborough. Elin saw little service on the LCLR, ultimately leaving for Yaxham and then the Richmond Light Railway, where it is currently being refurbished.

Extra passenger stock included two Gloucester-built 1924 Ashover Light Railway carriage bodies on WD bogies and the 1924 Hudson carriage from the 18in gauge Sand Hutton Light Railway near York.

In the 1970s passenger figures, which had always been erratic, started an inexorable decline. Bus competition, fewer holidaymakers and increased car ownership all contributed to a reduction in services and ultimately the end of steam traction even at weekends. In 1976 the Railways Inspectorate gained

Above: Busy scene at North Sea Lane with Elin, Jurassic and Wilton. The latter is standing at the passenger platform that extended into the shed. The stock enjoyed extensive covered accommodation in the surprisingly large shed complex. The somersault signal adds atmosphere.

Below: The LCLR today, on a new site but with the same atmosphere. Photo: LCLR

additional responsibilities for pleasure lines and, following a couple of incidents (*one of which sadly proved fatal, Ed*) there were temporary interruptions to service on the LCLR, leading to the end of push-pull working.

The end came after the 1985 season and by 1987 the track had been lifted, with the stock going into store. It was 24 years before it was possible to ride an LCLR train again, the current line at Ingoldmells finally opening in May 2009 and doubtless feeling quite at home among all the nearby caravans. The new railway may no longer have a transport function, but since 2017 it has been possible to recreate the original LCLR experience riding behind the newly-restored Jurassic.

To mark the LCLR's 60th anniversary, celebratory events were

planned for 18th July and 27th August, the railway's birthday. Sadly at the time of writing the Covid-19 pandemic had resulted in the cancellation of the 18th July event as well as a Motor Rail celebration scheduled for 6th June, so it is important to check the website or ring the Water Park for the latest information before travelling.

The website also lists the dates of the railway's regular summer open days which provide possibly the best value narrow gauge steam experience in the country at only £1.00 a ride.

I am extremely grateful to Dave Enefer, Chris Bates and John Raby for their generous help with information and photographs. **NGW**

More Information

Web: www.lclr.co.uk
Skegness Water Park: 01754 899400





Larger scale for smaller steam

The still young scales of 7/8ths and 1:12th offer new possibilities, particularly for the narrow gauge garden railway modeller wanting to run live steam, as *Andrew Charman* details.

Few narrow gauge modellers, even if they run 009 in their loft, can be unaware of 16mm scale – primarily concerning garden railways and particularly (but by no means exclusively) live steam, the scale has been one of the largest growth areas of the railway modelling vocation over the past couple of decades.

Today the Association of 16mm Narrow Gauge Modellers (www.16mm.org.uk) has well over 4,000 members and the scale enjoys plentiful trade support, more than 80 traders attending its annual show in Peterborough, this year

postponed from April to 14th November.

The concept that saw the birth of 16mm scale in the late 1970s was a simple one based on using the track of one of the longest-established modelling scales, 7mm to the foot or O-gauge. Track in this scale is 32mm wide so if one imagined it as the base of a typical 2ft gauge narrow gauge line, such as the Pfestiniog, Vale of Rheidol, Lynton & Barnstaple et al, then in the new scale 16mm represented a foot. Simple!

This formula, actually 1:19th, resulted in pleasingly chunky, large models eminently suited for running in the garden.

Live steam locomotives were a practical option and the rest, as they say is history.

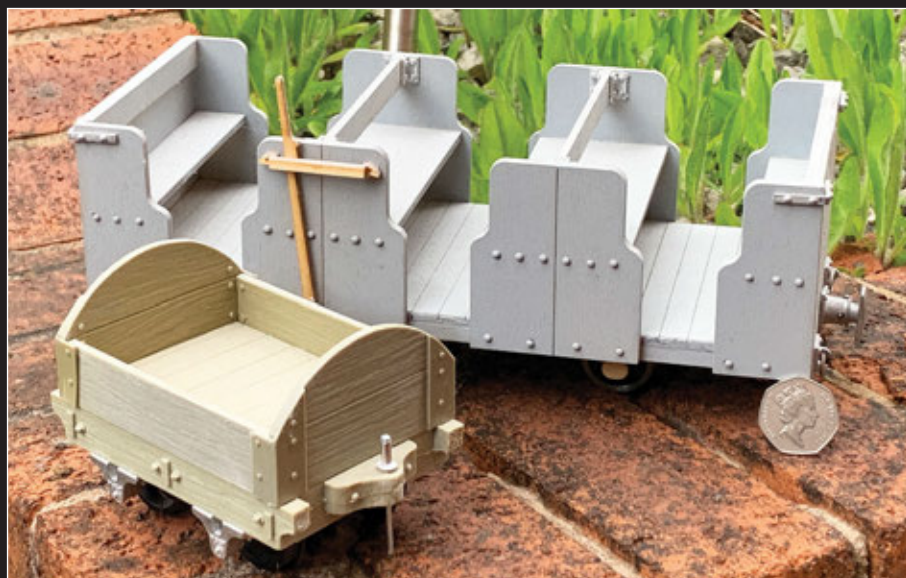
While over the years 16mm scale live steam engines have encompassed prototypes across the narrow gauge world, from the smallest quarry saddle tanks to the large Darjeeling C-class tender Pacifics, ready-to-run manufacturers in particular have tended to lean towards larger prototypes, for the practical reason that the smaller in size a live-steam locomotive is, the more precise control it requires and the more fussy it can be in running. It's basic physics, the one thing you can't miniaturise is water and steam which remains at 1:1 scale!

So not surprisingly locos such as the Welshpool & Llanfair Beyer Peacocks, War Department Hunslets and the like are popular as they allow the use of a fair-sized boiler generating lots of steam and giving a reasonable run-time between attention.

With modern technology this is

Above: The sheer realism of 7/8ths scale – this is the Highlands Hill & Monkebbobck Tramway, built by Peter Bakke and featured in our sister magazine *GardenRail*. The locos are Bagnall 0-4-OSTs sold ready-to-run by Accucraft UK.

Left: Two vehicles built by the editor for his forthcoming 7/8ths line. The Penrhyn workman's carriage is an I P Engineering kit, sadly not currently available, while the single plank wagon is a resin kit from Model Earth Design costing just £17.00 complete. The 50p piece gives a good idea of the pleasing size of models in this scale...



changing to an extent, Accucraft UK for example now offering 16mm-scale Tallylyn Railway locos and planning a quarry Hunslet in the scale, but generally those of us like your editor, who particularly like smaller narrow gauge locos, have much less choice in 16mm scale. What engines are on offer are produced in small, expensive batches by very specialist suppliers and can often prove tricky to actually run.

Expanding horizons

So not that long ago, someone thought, "why not apply the 16mm principle, but to the wider track of another ancient scale, Gauge 1?" Dating back to the earliest days of model railways when the choice was either clockwork or steam, Gauge 1 uses track 45mm wide. This gauge is already employed in 16mm scale to represent 3ft gauge lines or wider and is also the basis of a separate narrow gauge garden scale, G Scale or 1:22.5, which grew rapidly mostly thanks to German firm LGB with its track-powered electric models of German metre-gauge railways such as the Harz.

If one imagines 45mm as 2ft gauge, then you get 22.5mm to the foot, which is actually 1:13.7 or to give it a snappy title, 7/8ths... In this scale if 45mm Gauge 1 track represents 2ft gauge prototypes, 32mm Gauge O track is 18-inch gauge.

However there are quite a few out there who are fans of the 15-inch gauge, not just the likes of the Ravensglass or Romney lines but the estate railways championed by Sir Arthur Heywood. They soon worked out that in 1:12th scale, 32mm track equates exactly to 15-inch gauge. Sorted, and an additional advantage of this size is that 1:12th is the scale used by the wide-ranging dolls house hobby, so a host of detailing accessories are available.

So now we have two new scales, and in truth while I've thrown a lot of figures at you they are not very complicated. What they have in common is that even if your favourite loco is the smallest of prototypes such as the Groudle Glen Railway's Bagnall 2-4-0Ts or a Kerr Stuart Wren 0-4-0ST, in these scales they are quite substantial in size, equivalent to a typical 16mm engine, with plenty of room to install radio control



and therefore very easy to actually run.

Both of these scales have been around a few years now, but they remain to a great extent at the stage 16mm was in its early years, when the vast majority of stock was scratchbuilt and trade support not extensive. Having said that, 7/8ths in particular has steadily grown in popularity and attracted a major backer in Accucraft, (www.accucraft-uk.com) one of the two leading 16mm scale ready-to-run locomotive manufacturers. The company dipped its toe into 7/8ths with a Quarry

Hunslet launched in 2012 and while this is no longer available (the ready-to-run manufacturers tend to build their locos in limited-number batches), it has been succeeded by a Groudle Glen Railway Bagnall 'Sea Lion', a delightful little Decauville, a Bagnall 0-4-0ST and most recently a Kerr Stuart 'Wren' 0-4-0ST.

A long supporter of the scale in terms of rolling stock has been Model Earth Design (www.modearth.co.uk), with its range extending to inexpensive wagons built in resin and whitmetal (and including some »

Top right: This selection of 7/8ths locos shows how the scale suits smaller prototypes.

Above right: Yes, this really is a model! An excellent example of the Hunslet 'Jack', construction of which was serialised in *GardenRail*.

Right: These Model Earth figures clearly show how much larger than 16mm scale is 7/8ths...

Far right: Latest release onto the ready-to-run market, Accucraft UK's Kerr Stuart Wren 0-4-0ST.





Left: Another view on Peter Bakke's line.

Below: More realistic delights on the Dyfrdwy Tramway of James Hilton, set to feature in a future edition of *GardenRail*.

1:12th items) plus a host of useful accessories for the scratchbuilder. Meanwhile more recent arrivals in the scale such as Bole Laser Craft (<https://bolelasercraft.com>) are expanding their range with such items as slate wagons.

Others have come and gone – I P Engineering, one of the most prolific manufacturers of wooden rolling stock and loco kits in 16mm scale, briefly offered a host of 7/8ths kits including Ffestiniog 'Bug Box' carriages and even a Ruston diesel, but these are not currently available.

Bigger better body

For those prepared to do a degree of modification or scratchbuilding, there are many possibilities. Accucraft produces generic 16mm locomotives as does the other major ready-to-run supplier, Roundhouse Engineering (www.roundhouse-eng.com) and this firm also offers its locos as plain chassis and boiler kits. Onto these one can mount a body kit manufactured by Mikes Models (www.mikes-models.co.uk) under the Simply 7/8ths banner to create attractive 7/8ths tank locos, 'Baldrig', 'Dennis' or 'Henry'.

For those who are happy in a workshop there are further possibilities – one of the most attractive 18-inch gauge locos is the Hunslet well tank 'Jack' and this was recreated in 7/8ths scale in Australia by Brian Wilson Construction of the loco was serialised over several issues of our sister magazine *GardenRail* – combining Roundhouse Engineering components with laser-cut parts offered by specialist Model Engineer's Laser (www.modelengineerslaser.co.uk) the build was actually fairly simple, and several examples of Jack have appeared on garden railways across the globe since.

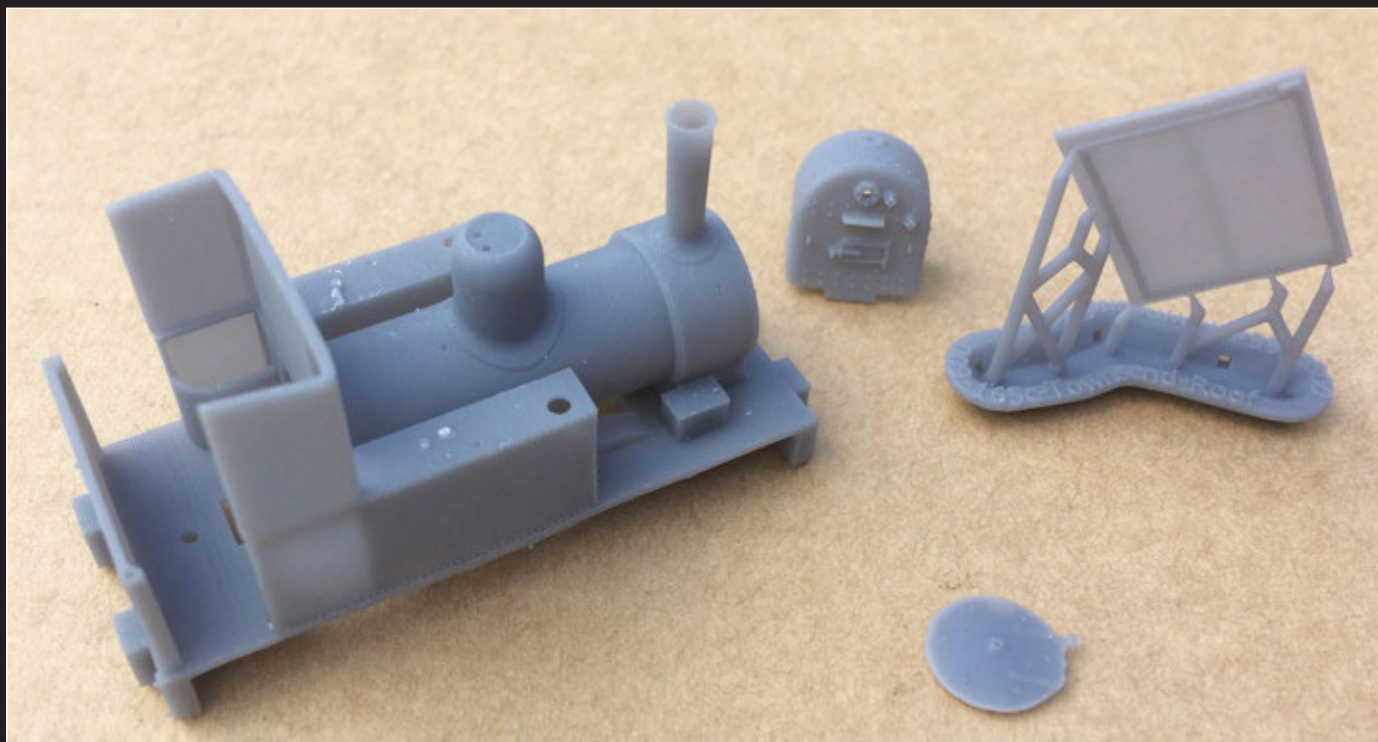
Now while buying or building live steam locos is not an inexpensive business – a typical loco will have a cost running into four figures – just like 16mm these scales do not have to be expensive. Model EarthDesign, for example offers ready-to-run battery-powered diesel locos from £200 and wagons from just £15, while it is very easy to take a battery-powered diesel chassis and build a loco body onto it. Especially as even in the real world i/c locos have often been quite basic (see page 40 of this issue for a prime example!).

So modelling in 7/8ths or 1:12th can be

as inexpensive, or expensive, as one wishes. What is certainly possible however is the creation of impressively-sized models that in a garden location are easy to make look highly realistic, as some of the photos on these pages show. Your editor's long-planned and delayed garden railway, now at last awaiting the arrival of a builder after lockdown, will be to 7/8ths scale and hopefully will feature in these pages. And I'm sure my line will be one of a growing number as the true attractions of going larger become more widely known... **NGW**

■ If you are considering starting in either 7/8ths or 1:12th scale there are two moves you should make – join the Association of 16mm Narrow Gauge Modellers (www.16mm.org.uk) and subscribe to our sister magazine *GardenRail* (www.world-of-railways.co.uk/Store/Subscriptions/garden-rail-magazine). Both *GardenRail* and the Association's quarterly magazine *16mm Today* regularly include features on 7/8ths and 1:12th, while other general content, such as tracklaying, carriage building and loco maintenance, is common across 16mm and its two larger sister scales.





Hooked on 3D printed bodies

009 Society member *Jim Paulger* was so impressed with the 7mm scale 3D printed loco body kit from EDM Models he persuaded the firm to shrink it...

Whilst wandering around the most recent ExpoNG show at Swanley I stopped at the EDM Models stand. I was impressed with the quality of the 3D printed loco body on display from the firm's new 7mm to the foot scale kit for the Dorking Greystone loco 'Townsend Hook', now at Amberley.

I asked Paul Martin of EDM Models if it would be possible to print the loco body as a 'Scratch Aid' in 009 scale, 4mm to the foot. He seemed to think that it would be possible and that he'd have a look at it when he'd got some time.

Earlier this year Paul contacted me to tell me that he could supply me with a Townsend Hook loco body as a 3D print for £22.50 plus the postage.

What appeared can be seen in the photos. It was sent packed with bubble wrap in a small sturdy box of the type used and sold by the 009 Society sales team.

The print is very smooth and no burnishing/filing is needed. The body is, of

course, not made for any particular 9mm or 12mm gauge chassis so I have included shots from below the body to give an idea what may fit.

Detail to be added

The four main parts are the bulk of the body itself, a roof, a firebox and a smokebox door. Further fine detail would need to be added for small pipework, the two braces for the cab frontplate and such like as needed.

For powering the model I wonder whether one could use the chassis of the Bachmann 009 'Rheneas' from the 'Thomas the Tank Engine' range, as the loco in the stories was based on the Talyllyn Railway's Dolgoch, a similar product of the Fletcher Jennings company.

I've produced this review as a satisfied customer and I have no other connection with EDM Models or Paul Martin.

EDM Models: <http://ngtrains.com/shop/>

Top: The contents of the 009 scratch-aid.

Far right: Underside shows plenty of potential flexibility to fit in a suitable chassis.

Right: The parts show a good level of detail.

Photos: Louise Bugg



Fourdees goes diesel with 009 Baguley

The latest release in 009 scale from Fourdees Ltd sees the manufacturer, renowned for its very finely detailed models, focusing on a diesel for the first time. The ready-to run model is inspired by the locomotive no 10 that was built by the Brecon Mountain Railway using parts from Baguley Drewry, and which today runs on the Vale of Rheidol Railway.

The VoR provided drawings to assist in the design of the model and additional assistance with researching details of the full-size loco whilst it was under overhaul in 2019.

Fourdees tells us that as with the firm's previous products, this model has been built using some of the most advanced additive manufacturing machines in the country, with a product finish similar to injection moulded parts.

The highly detailed body includes many fine separately fitted details, full representation of the cab interior and flush glazed windows. The cab roof is loose, to allow easy inspection of the interior detail and the fitting of a loco crew if desired.

Power is provided by a Graham Farish 08 chassis, with custom etch motion parts attached. NEM pockets are supplied fitted with Peco GR-102 couplings.

The No.10 plates, Vale of Rheidol, Rheilffordd Cwm Rheidol and Brecon Mountain builder's plates are included as an etch for the purchaser to fit if desired. Fourdees adds that

Produced by Fourdees Ltd
Web: www.fourdees.co.uk
E-mail: info@fourdees.co.uk



each model is hand-built and hand-painted in South Yorkshire, with the majority of parts sourced from within the UK. Each loco is supplied packed in a collectors' box with accompanying art card detailing a brief history of the prototype, including pictures for reference if choosing to fit the nameplates.

The model is available in two liveries, green and red (stock no 41-251) or grey and black (41-252). Each costs £214.50 plus insured and tracked postage at £8, and models can be ordered through the Fourdees website.



Accucraft shows its live-steam Talyllyn no 1

Accucraft UK has sent us the first images of its latest 16mm scale locomotive, the Talyllyn Railway's Fletcher Jennings 0-4-2ST 'Talyllyn', much desired by many a garden railway modeller and following the model of sister loco 'Dolgoch' released late last year.

The pictures show a pre-production

version and Accucraft says the final models will have more detail added, particularly rivet representation.

The highly attractive model will be to typical Accucraft format, internally gas-fired with a centre-flue boiler. It will be available in either 32mm or 45mm gauge, buyer to specify before purchase. Cab

fittings include steam and gas regulators, reverser, lubricator and boiler blow-down.

Three colours will be offered, Talyllyn Indian red, Talyllyn green and black. Price is expected to be from around £1650.

Produced by Accucraft UK Ltd:
Web: www.accucraft-uk.com



The Vale of Rheidol Railway Peter Johnson

■ Prolific author Peter Johnson's journey through the mid-Wales narrow gauge continues with this history of an unusual line, joining his volume on the Corris Railway published recently and one on the Welshpool & Llanfair that virus permitting is due later this year.

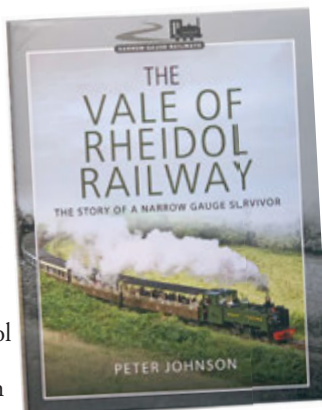
For many years the Vale of Rheidol made few headlines, especially after relinquishing its title as the last steam line operated by British Railways in 1989 when it became the first part of the national network to be privatised. So it has seldom attracted the attention of historians and the last standalone history of the line appeared back in 1986. With the line having undergone somewhat of a revolution in the last decade, this is an 'official' history well overdue.

Those who know Peter's work will be on familiar territory – clearly very many hours have been spent poring over archives and annual reports, even in cemeteries seeking the last resting places of VoR personalities, to produce a very detailed work that tells the complete story of this line's life right up to the end of last year.

The pictures are plentiful, giving a good spread throughout the line's existence and including passenger and freight rolling stock and ancillary views. They also take full advantage of the book's large format, with half a page the standard size for reproduction of pictures even from the earliest times.

Peter is to be commended for what now becomes an up-to-date standard history of the VoR. **AC**

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Turbulent Times 1970-1979 Rod Dingwall

■ Three years ago Rod Dingwall, effectively the official historian of the Leighton Buzzard Railway, published a book *Iron Horse Railroad* – it was aimed firmly at the Bedfordshire 2ft gauge line's members and told the story of the earliest years of preservation, when the passenger trains ran alongside surviving sand pit traffic and the line was initially planned to be operated as a US-style railroad.

Now Rod has done it again with this second volume – it's dubbed 'Turbulent Times' because it takes the story through a difficult decade as the Society tried to renew all the leases on land the track ran over as the fields around it were swallowed up by housing estates.

Rod tells us that in this period funds were so short that the Society's members magazine, *Chaloner*, was unable to publish any photos, so this book tries to redress that. And it certainly does – running to some 468 pages in hardback A5 format it includes more than 450 photos, mostly black and white but with a goodly smattering of colour, interspersed with text that combines items from various issues of *Chaloner* with memories from LBR personalities who were there at the time.

Okay this is not a polished publication like one might expect from a major publishing house, but the simple layout makes for easy reading and the photos are well reproduced on high-quality paper. Vitally, being produced by the people that actually preserved the railway, the book paints a unique picture of a pioneering period.

Note that if you want a copy you need to place your order quickly – this was basically a book for LBR members and the print run is very limited! **AC**

Published by Rod Dingwall, order by post for £25, cheque payable to Leighton Buzzard Narrow Gauge Railway and sent to Page's Park Station, Billington Road, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire LU7 4TN



Mainline's fund-raising books to boost railways

We at *NGW* feel that a much-deserved shout-out is due this month to Iain McCall, who runs publisher Mainline & Maritime Ltd – his books, to a greater degree focusing on the obscure and far-flung narrow gauge, often feature on these pages.

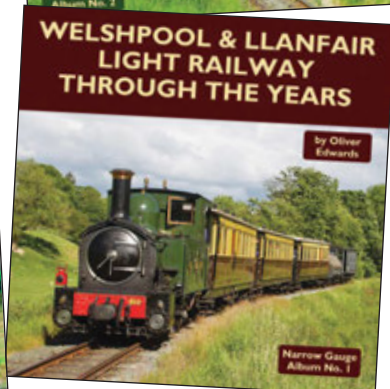
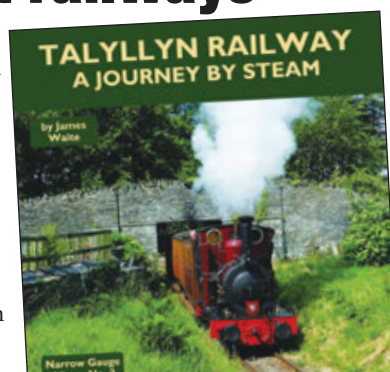
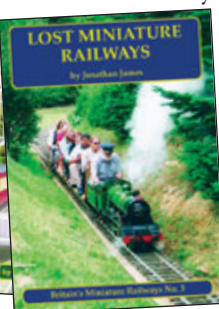
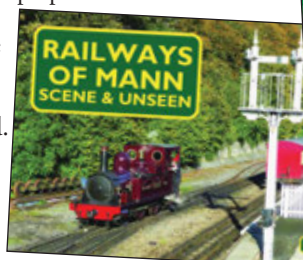
Iain has responded quickly to the coronavirus pandemic, and the resultant huge pressure on heritage railway finances that has resulted, by approaching various railways and offering to produce picture albums for them, making a significant donation from each book sold to the fund-raising appeal of the railway concerned.

Among the first two to appear are a pair of hardback albums focusing on the Talyllyn and Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railways – both are hardbacks, set to publish in June and costing £18.95 and £16.95 respectively, each copy sold generating a £5 donation to respectively the Talyllyn's 'Virtual Visit' and the Welshpool & Llanfair's 'Tracks to Recovery' appeals. The Talyllyn book features pictures by *NGW*'s own James Waite, while those in the W&LLR book are drawn from the line's extensive archives.

Also set to appear in June are a trio of softbacks – *Railways of Mann Scene & Unseen* and *Welsh Highland Railway 25 Years of Memorable Milestones* are £9.95 each with £2 donations from each sale to respectively the Welsh Highland Railway, while *Lost Miniature Railways*, featuring the work of another *NGW* regular, Joanthan James, costs £12.95 with £4 per sale going to support the Fairbourne Railway. We happen to know too that further volumes are in preparation.

This is an excellent idea by Iain, providing action-starved narrow gauge enthusiasts with some entertainment while also producing much-needed funds for the railways concerned – we hope to review some of the albums once they are published.

Published by Mainline & Maritime
Email: orders@mainlineandmaritime.co.uk
Web: <http://mainlineandmaritime.co.uk>





New bodies on old chassis

The oldest Ruston article in *NGW* 147 mentions that heavy rebuilds of locomotives causes problems in establishing their year of manufacture. It is mentioned that on some rebuilds, only the frames and wheels are original.

Forgive me for mentioning Russian-gauge locos in a narrow gauge magazine, but 5ft gauge is narrow compared to Brunel's 7ft gauge, so hopefully I can be forgiven.

In their modernisation plans, Latvia and Lithuania are updating their shunting locomotives by fitting new Caterpillar engines and bodywork onto their Soviet-era TEM series and ChME3 locos. The sleek new TEM TMH locos are being built in Lithuania and Russia.

The 2M62 double-unit locomotives were built in huge quantities in Russia in Soviet times to haul heavy freight trains. Lithuania is replacing theirs with new ER20 CF locos built by Siemens, but Latvia is updating their 2M62s with new engines and bodies.

Estonia, which imported Stadler EMUs for its passenger trains network, is rebuilding its fleet of secondhand American GE C36-7 freight locomotives in the same style as the Lithuanian TEM TMH.

Now for a real narrow gauge rebuild – the TU2 diesel-electric locomotive is the mainstay of 750mm gauge passenger railways throughout the former Soviet Union which included the Baltic States. The Small Moscow Railway (a 'pioneer' railway near Moscow operated by children under adult supervision) operates TU2-129 which has been modernised with snazzy new bodywork.

Apart from seeing it in action on YouTube, and a pre-modernisation picture in a loco register, I don't know who rebuilt it and when, but I'm investigating and will report back when I find something of interest.

Tony Olsson

Yet more on Eureka

To reply to the letter in *NGW* 147 from Alan Smith regarding the proposed visit to the Isle of Man of the US Baldwin 4-4-0 'Eureka', the island is not part of the UK. It is a Crown Dependency, and a self-governing country.

We pay an annual fee to the UK to cover our defence needs and to represent our interests overseas. We were not part of the European Union but we are tied into VAT through a Customs Agreement.

The loco's visit was tentative, as was the suggestion that its transport could be done as a military exercise. Any plane that could carry Eureka would have been unable to land here as the runway at Ronaldsway Airport was and is too short. The size of the loco would also restrict it to running only between Port Erin and Colby on the Isle of Man Steam Railway as it would not fit through the bridges.

The idea was quickly dropped and the NATO bit suggested to be the reason.

Richard Booth

Chasing Bagnalls

In the letters pages of *NGW* 145 Bob Brown asks whether a pair of African Bagnall 2-8-2Ts might have survived today.

The two CF do Amboim locos no 40 'Amboim' and no 41 'Cuanza-Sul' (WB 2637-8/1940) were still present at Porto Amboim in September 2009. They moved to an unknown location between May 2010 and January 2013.

Thomas Kautzor

Monarch – not an FR loco

With regard to 'That was the year' in *NGW* 147, the Welsh Highland Railway 1964 Co's Light Railway Order was made on 12th May 1980, not 12th June.

Also with regard to Donald Brooks' 'Encounters' piece on the Kitson-Meyer loco 'Monarch'. The Ffestiniog Railway did not acquire Monarch in 1991. It was purchased

Above: Changing shape of diesel electric traction – loco TU2-129, which has undergone a body update in Russia – see the letter from Tony Olsson.

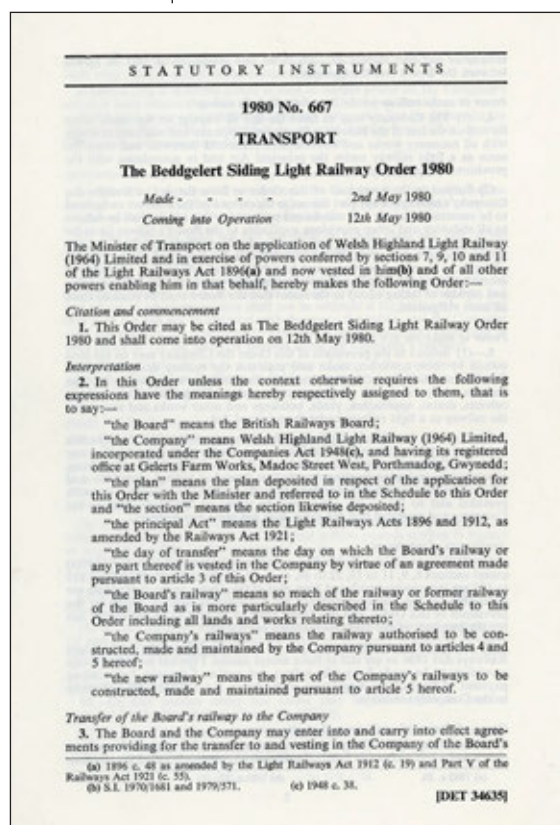
Below: Birth of a new railway – front of the Light Railway Order that saw today's Welsh Highland Heritage Railway come into being – see Peter Johnson's letter.

by Andy Savage and Gordon Rushton, who both have strong links with the FR – Gordon was general manager of the line at the time.

Soon after they had bought it, however, Andy Savage's priorities changed and Gordon Rushton bought Hunslet 0-6-0T 'Sgt. Murphy' after Monarch had been dismantled for regauging.

They gave Monarch to the FR, which sold it back to the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway in 2002, the repurchase funded by a group of W&LLR members. **Peter Johnson**

Andrew C replies: Thanks Peter for helping us keep things accurate, though in our defence the WHR LRO date was directly reproduced from the Narrow Gauge Railway Society news at the time!



Yet more from the NG Barry...

The saga of the locos in a Spanish scrapyard goes on...

Andrew C writes: We first featured the locomotives surviving in a scrapyard in Zaragoza, Spain in NGW 146 and they have certainly garnered a lot of interest. The ever-industrious Mark Smithers has now made contact with the scrapyard owners to advise them of the significance of their engines, and has allowed us to reproduce his letter...

I thought that you might be interested in more information on the evolution and historical importance of your little 550mm gauge Couillet locomotives. I mentioned Paul Decauville's 500mm gauge demonstration railway with locomotive 'Lilliput' in Paris shortly after the Exhibition of 1878 at which he had exhibited a manual system of 400mm gauge.

The attachment (*below right - Ed*) shows an engraving of this locomotive and railway (originally published in a French journal *La Nature* in 1880). You will notice how similar Lilliput is to your locos, with its high side (pannier) tanks; outside cylinders and Walschaerts valve gear and, most importantly at this stage, mainframes placed inside the wheels. Lilliput would certainly have been a Couillet product and would presumably have carried both Couillet and Decauville works numbers.

Your three Couillet locomotives were, however, not supplied to Decauville and would only carry Couillet works numbers (note that their 550mm gauge was not a Decauville standard).

Frame changes

As I said before, the main difficulty represented by the basic design of Lilliput and your three locomotives is that putting the frames between the wheels severely restricts the space for the firebox. Couillet therefore decided to modify the basic specification by putting the frames outside the wheels, thereby allowing for a wider firebox.

The 600mm gauge 'Chuquitanta' (*top right*) was built as Couillet 810 of 1884 and supplied though Decauville as its works number 36. You will note that its styling is similar above footplate level to your locomotives, but it has mainframes outside the wheels. This locomotive was built for South America and has recently been brought to England and restored to working order.

Not wanting to waste the 1880 engraving, Decauville had it altered to show the locomotive with outside mainframes so that he could use it for

advertising purposes (via an agent) in London in 1889, the time of the second Paris Exhibition to use his railway system (*below far right*).

Eventually, Decauville decided to build his own locomotives for his portable railway system and the Couillet type represented by Chuquitanta was developed into the Decauville Type 1 0-4-0T in the late 1890s. Examples survive today in France, South Africa, Angola and New Caledonia, and the locomotive 'Edgar' to this type (*right*), was recently built in the North of England by an associate of mine.

There you have it, a little potted history of the significance of your three little Couillet locos (and a sister that I believe survives in Madrid) – historically very important if somewhat overlooked by historians up to now."

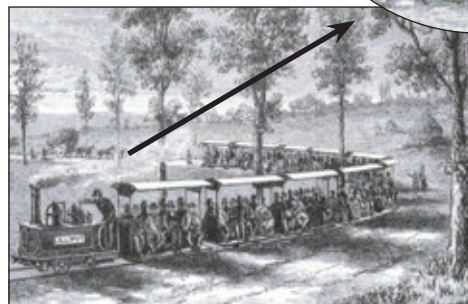
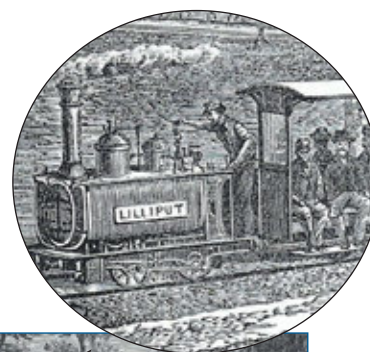
Top right: 'Chuquitanta' is an example of a Couillet supplied by Decauville.

Photo: Andrew Charman

Above right: New-build 'Edgar' is to the Decauville design.

Photo: Mark Smithers

Below and right: 19th century economies – an engraving updated to reflect loco development. Why it was felt necessary to add the gardener is lost in the mists of time...



■ Continuing the Zaragoza theme, Mark Smithers has sent in this still from around five minutes into the film *Krakatoa - East of Java* available on YouTube. "It clearly shows a Carcagente-Denia Black Hawthorn 4-4-0ST in a scene that must have been shot in Spain. – is the loco one of the Zaragoza survivors?"

Who what where...

■ So did you figure out our close-up chimney last month? It was a 12.25-inch gauge loco, the Exmoor-built 'Rosemary' being lit up at the Exbury Steam Railway in the New Forest.



For this month's offering the Editor has once again delved into his own photos, and just to make it a little more difficult, the picture of which this forms a small part is something like 35 years old... Yes, there are two locomotives featured, and if you follow the NGW Facebook feed you will already know the answer...

For those that don't follow the feed, we will reveal all next month...

YouTube Watch: online NG films

The online video site YouTube, which encourages users to upload their own clips, is a great source of narrow gauge items, especially while we are all locked down... If you've seen a clip that our readers would enjoy, why not send in the link?

<https://youtu.be/QhinKZfpXUM>



■ We don't mind readers nominating their own work and Clive Town has done just that with some up-to-date coverage, an enjoyable 20 minutes spent at the Leighton Buzzard Railway Centenary Gala last year...

Diary – still on hold...

As last month the current coronavirus pandemic makes it totally impractical to publish our diary and events listings as when we went to press all UK lines remained closed, with still no indication as to when they would be able to reopen and all coming special events cancelled or postponed to much later in the year.

As lockdown measures in England at last begin to ease the situation could change at short notice and as last month we recommend readers consult the railways' websites for information on any services restarting. A full listing of the websites is on page 7, and many of them also contain details of the fundraising appeals many lines are running to try and stave off the financial pressures caused by the loss of revenue.

Again we also recommend our social media feeds – NGW will post any latest news regarding train services and events on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/narrowgaugeworld and Twitter feed @NarrowGaugeWrld

Coming in the NEXT ISSUE of...



- Update from the narrow gauge at Beamish
- PERNHYN & PADARN lines in 1961, their last years
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NARROW GAUGE WORLD

Issue 149 – on sale 26th June

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That was the year that...

Narrow gauge news stories from the archives and their legacy...

From 25 years ago

Lynton & Barnstaple Railway

The Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Association has purchased Woody Bay Station, near Lynton in North Devon. Standing some 980 feet above sea level, this original L&B chalet-style station stands on the western fringes of Exmoor National Park and has survived with little alteration since closure of the line in 1935.

The Association has also secured the purchase of 20 acres of adjacent land incorporating a length of the original trackbed and is negotiating further agreements with neighbouring landowners. The section of trackbed purchased, about 400 yards long, is on the Barnstaple side of Woody Bay station, and the initial plan is to rebuild the line back towards Parracombe, where the Association owns another length of trackbed on the edge of the village – this will give a round trip of two and a half miles.

There are no plans to rebuild towards Lynton, primarily because of the cost of putting in a new bridge under the A39 immediately to the east of Woody Bay. (NGN, July 1995)



Woody Bay in 1995, when first purchased for the revival scheme. From a feature in NGW130 recalling these early days.

Photo: David Hudson

From little acorns – after years of false starts and bases, the L&B had finally found the home that is the centre of the project today. And while at the time of writing the line still hasn't yet reached Parracombe, it's a much more ambitious project than it was in those early tentative days, and going back to Lynton is very much on the agenda for the revivalists...

Yafford Mill Railway, Sherwell, near Newport, Isle of Wight, 2ft 6in gauge

Following an inspection by the Railway Inspectorate, permission has been granted for passengers to be carried on the Yafford Mill Railway which is in the first phase of construction. The first passengers were carried in April and trains will run daily throughout the season.

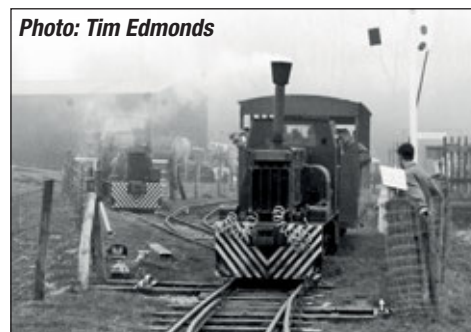
Motive power is a diesel mechanical 0-4-0 locomotive constructed by Hunslet Engineering in 1940, and which previously ran on the Hunday Museum Railway in Corbridge, Northumbria.

Currently 450 yards of the 2ft 6in gauge railway has been laid running from the station platform at the Mill end to a run-round loop at the far end. The line will run through farm paddocks which will eventually hold various animals and it is hoped the track will be extended further this year.

(NGN, July 1995)

Highlighted by Tim Edmonds on our Encounters page in NGW138, the Yafford Mill Railway quickly turned into a narrow gauge 'might-have-been'. It was extended to form an out-and-back balloon loop, but just five years after the report above the Mill would be sold and the railway closed.

Photo: Tim Edmonds



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



Times Past in Greece

Keith Chester reflects on a Peloponnese class of 2-8-0s, contrasting an elaborate works photo with seeing one during a hot and dusty journey in 1973.



Time was when a corporate image was more than a mindless slogan or a slick logo, when a railway station was more than a minimalist venue for yet another shopping experience, when railway companies and their architects vied to impress prospective passengers by announcing to the world that here was an organisation that went beyond the merely functional.

Works photographs recorded new locomotives but were also an opportunity for manufacturers to advertise their products. Most chose a plain white background but others were more imaginative. The Esslingen company in Baden-Württemberg had its latest machines photographed against the terraced vineyards of the River Neckar whilst Georg Sigl in Wiener Neustadt placed his in front of a magnificent triumphal archway, which survives to this day.

The august Borsig of Berlin was yet another manufacturer aware of the promotional effects of a good background, as witnessed by the works photograph here of superheated E class 2-8-0 no. 711 delivered to the SPAP in 1913.

The Piraeus, Athens and Peloponnese Railways, opened in 1885-91, was a metre gauge line that did exactly what it said on the tin, running from the port of Piraeus to Athens and then around the Peloponnese with a 650km-long main line, plus some branches.

Apart from three 2-8-0s built by Krauss in 1892 and three 0-4-4-0s from the same builder in 1908, the SPAP relied on a large fleet of tank locomotives for motive power until it started to acquire the E series 2-8-0s:

Above: Linke Hoffmann 2-8-0 no 7724 shortly after departure from Kalamata on 9th August, 1973. Photo: Keith Chester

Below: Elaborate background for a works photo of Borsig 2-8-0 no 711, taken in 1913.

the initial batch of five was supplied by Borsig in 1912-13, with a further five to a slightly modified design coming from Linke Hofmann in 1925 and three oil-fired ones from Henschel in 1936. After the war the SPAP obtained its final steam engines, eight 2-8-2s from VIW (1947) and ten from Breda (1952).

Veterans last longest

The 2-8-0s proved a very satisfactory design and popular with crews; indeed, when I visited the Peloponnese in August 1973, the few active steam locomotives seen were not the more modern Mikados but the older German ones. At Pyrgos, the junction for the branch to Mt. Olympia, we photographed one shuffling wagons around the station yard in the heat and glare of the early

afternoon sun; this was sport enough.

We then took the bus to Kalamata and, as poor students, spent the night in sleeping bags in a bogie van at the station. No problem: we were young and in Greece.

Kalamata was the most southerly railway station in Europe and at the time had one regular steam working, the daily mixed to Tripolis. On 9 August 1973 this was hauled by no. 7724 (LiHo 3037/1925).

After photographing its departure we took the railcar to Corinth, a slow, hot and dusty ride, during which we passed the last Henschel 2-8-0, no 7728, on the return working.

Like its steam locomotives, today the SPAP is but a memory for this once extensive metre gauge railway closed in 2011, an early victim of Greece's economic meltdown. **NGW**





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