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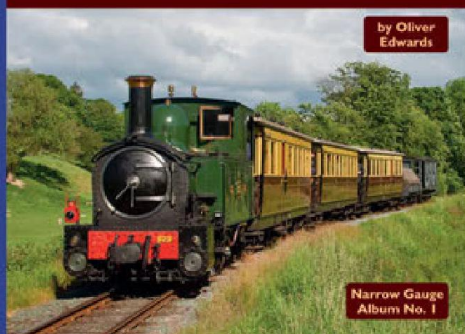
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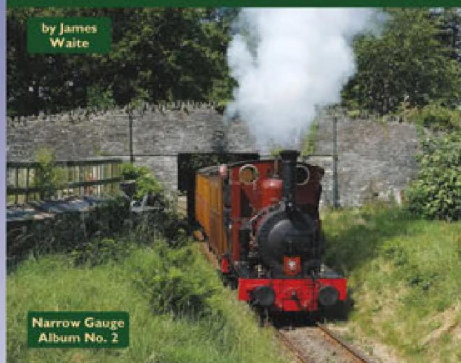
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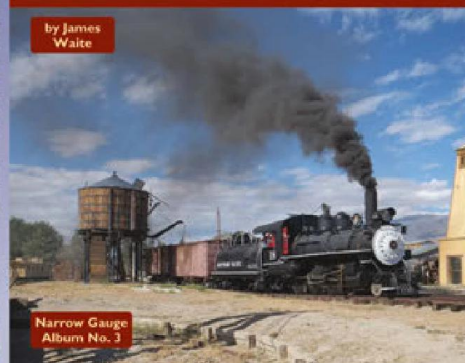
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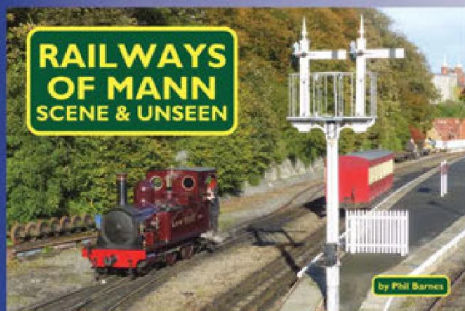
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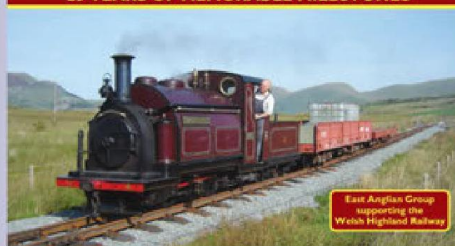
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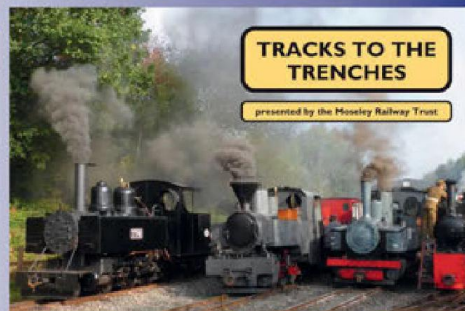
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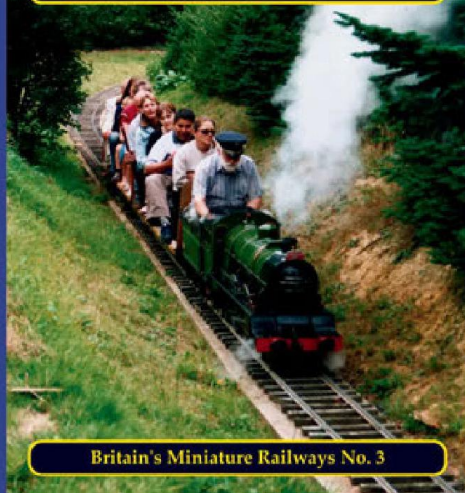
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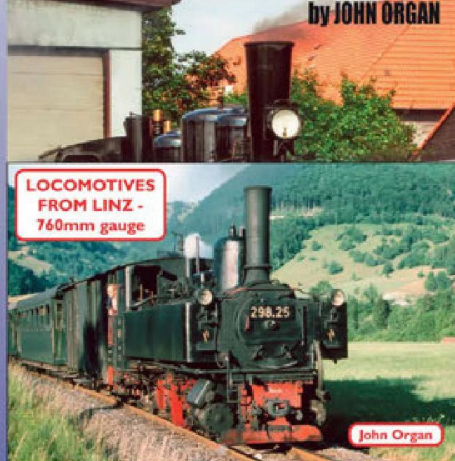
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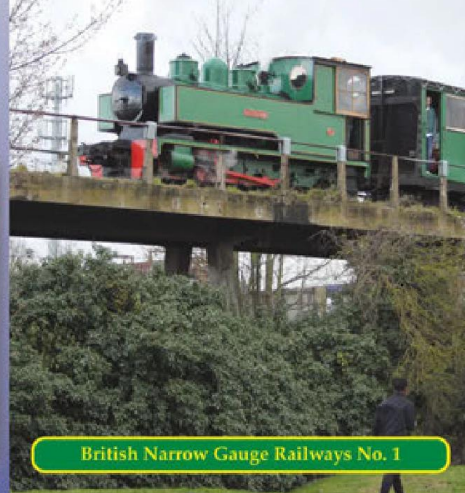
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Cover: The Romney's Hythe & Dymchurch Railway was among a slew of 15-inch gauge lines leading 'reopening weekend' on 4th-5th July. Davey-Paxman 4-6-2 'Northern Chief', with suitable headboard, was pictured on the single-line section of track operated between New Romney and Dungeness.
Photo Steve Town

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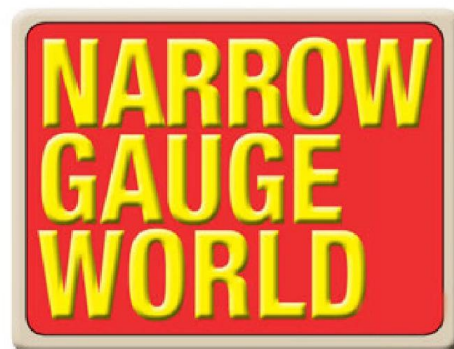
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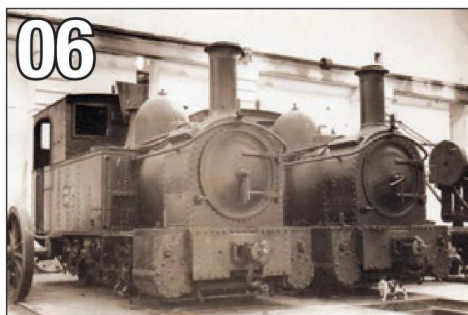
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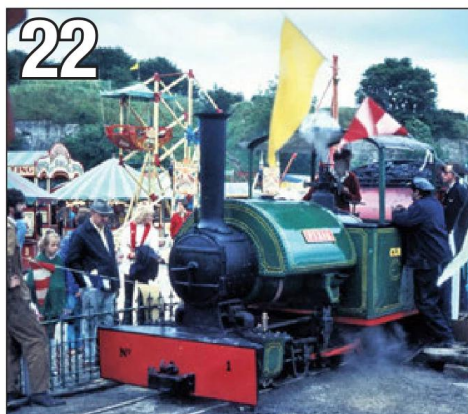


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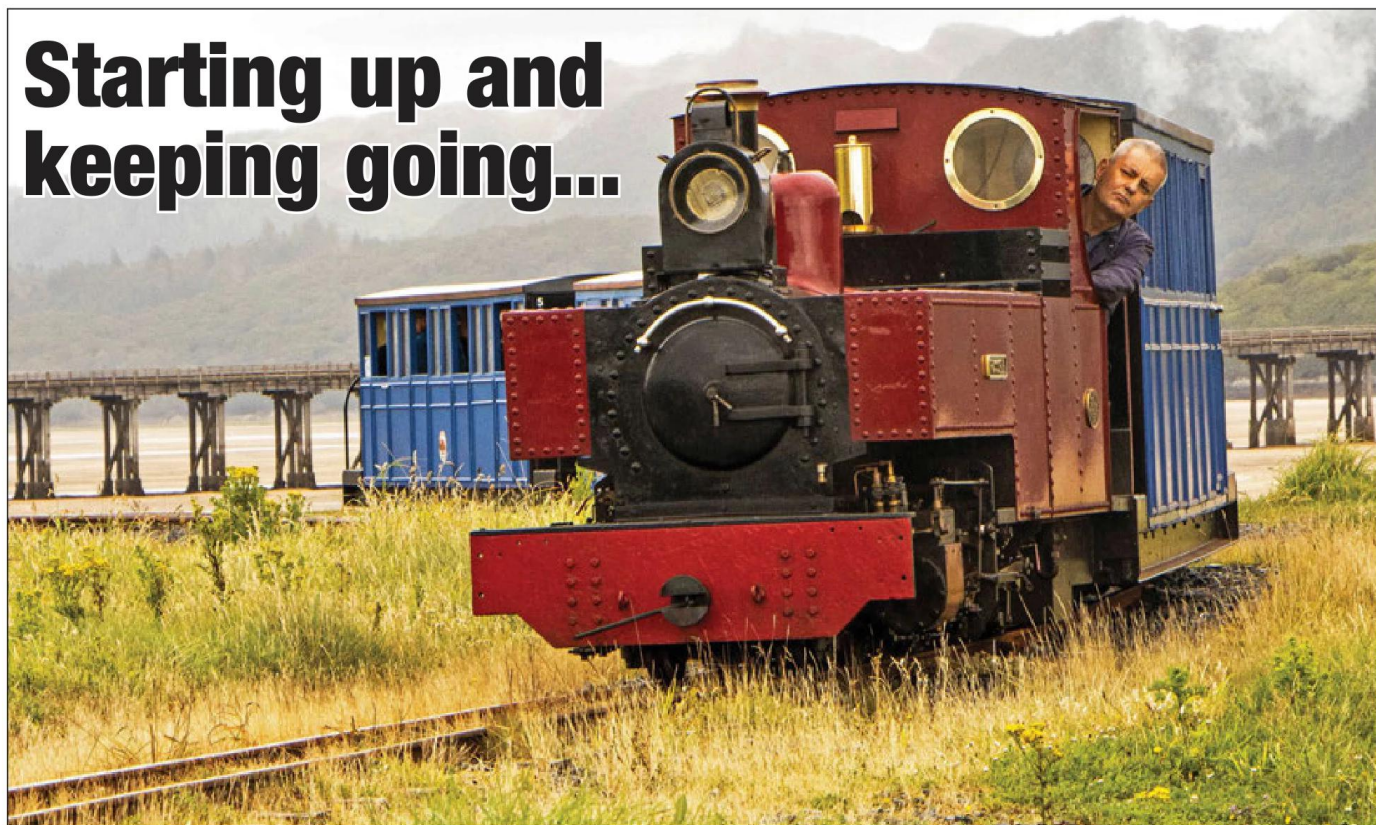
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Starting up and keeping going...



"It was a windswept and drizzly Fairbourne but I was so glad to be there..."

Main photo: The first train of the Fairbourne Railway's post Covid operating schedule departs from Penrhyn Point on the return to Fairbourne on 14th July – despite less than summery weather there was a goodly number of passengers delighted to see the railway back running. Photo: Andrew Charman

Welcome to **NGW** 150, and firstly this month I must thank a good proportion of readers and correspondents who have been in touch to offer congratulations to us on reaching what they consider to be a milestone issue.

I must admit, however, that I don't feel quite so celebratory, particularly in an environment which has given us all great challenges and which we are definitely not out of the other side yet, despite many pictures in this issue of lines reopening and for the first time in 2020, reason to publish a diary page.

In any case, to me it seems only yesterday that we were publishing our 100th issue, and yes we did celebrate that one! In fact it was the January-February 2015 edition, just over five years ago, and at the end of our first year of producing nine editions of **NGW** annually instead of the previous six.

I do regularly get asked when we are going to "fill in the gaps" of our winter half of the year, when **NGW** remains bi-monthly. Editorially there is plenty of evidence for more frequent publication in that period – while many lines don't run in the winter the news certainly doesn't stop, and our network of correspondents continue to surprise and delight me with the new, fascinating and thought-provoking feature material that they come up with – a highly popular element of **NGW** with our readers.

More frequent publication has to stack up economically of course and it won't surprise you to learn that the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic have made increasing our winter frequency a slightly more distant prospect. We have suffered, as has the whole of the publishing industry – in fact most of industry.

As a freelance editor I must offer a word of thanks to Warners Group, our publisher, which has taken a very positive attitude throughout the pandemic based on ensuring what are very niche titles such as **NGW** continue to appear, while also expending every effort to make it as easy as possible for you the reader to obtain the magazine.

I have been shocked to see some major titles from other publishers in other markets, with much larger readerships than we enjoy, closed down permanently by Covid-19 – in some cases magazines I have been reading since my teenage years...

Of course the other great thanks has to go to you our readers – there would be no magazine without you. Hopefully we are looking forward to a brighter future with more readers, more advertisers again and who knows, more editions?

Rail revelations

A particular pleasure in this issue is that great rarity in publishing, a proper exclusive. Mind you it's one at least 60 years old!

As a Welshpool & Llanfair footplateman I was somewhat

gobsmacked when I first learnt that our two original locomotives could have been sold to Bowaters paper mill in Kent – I had never heard tell of any such scheme before and on asking around those who have been involved with the railway a lot longer than me, it was clear they had no knowledge of such a plan either. As our story starting over the page describes, if the plan had gone ahead it could have had tumultuous effects, not least on the W&LLR's preservation.

This revelation shows that the narrow gauge world keeps coming up with surprises, and it's our job to keep bringing such news to you – even from many decades ago...

Get out and ride

Finally, as the welcome return of our diary on page 49 reveals, there will be a whole host of lines available to ride in August. Now we of course appreciate that the pandemic is not over yet and everyone's first priority should be to stay as safe as possible.

However we are also sure that after more than three months stuck at home many of you will be champing at the bit to get out and enjoy the narrow gauge – I took the picture above at a windswept, drizzly Fairbourne on 14th July, but I was so glad to be there...

If you can, get back to the railways – they both want and need to see you...

Andrew Charman

Were Welshpool's Beyer locos almost sent to Sittingbourne?

Newly-found blueprint reveals scheme to buy 'The Earl' and 'The Countess' for Kent paper mill.

A newly-discovered document dating back more than 60 years has revealed how two of the most recognisable narrow gauge locomotives on the UK preservation scene could have had a very different fate.

The blueprint was prepared by the chief engineer of the 2ft 6in gauge Bowater-

Lloyd paper mill system in Kent, part of which survived to be preserved as the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway. The document reveals that the company was considering buying Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway Beyer Peacock 0-6-0Ts 'The Earl' and 'The Countess'.

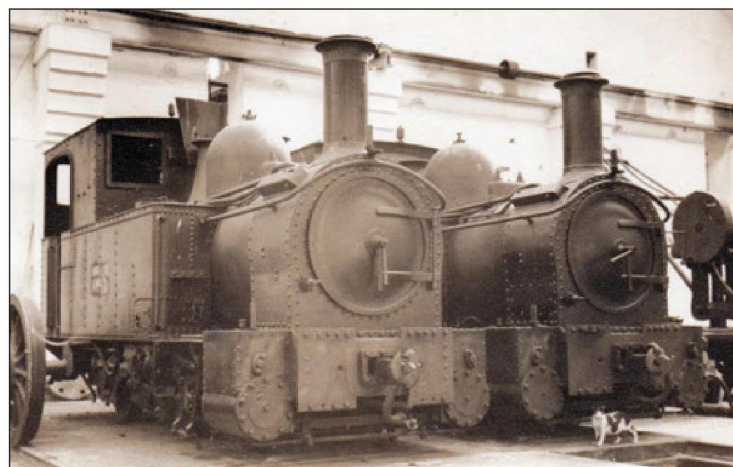
Had the sale of the two 1902-built locos gone ahead, it could have had major repercussions for preservation history in both mid Wales and Kent.

Lockdown discovery

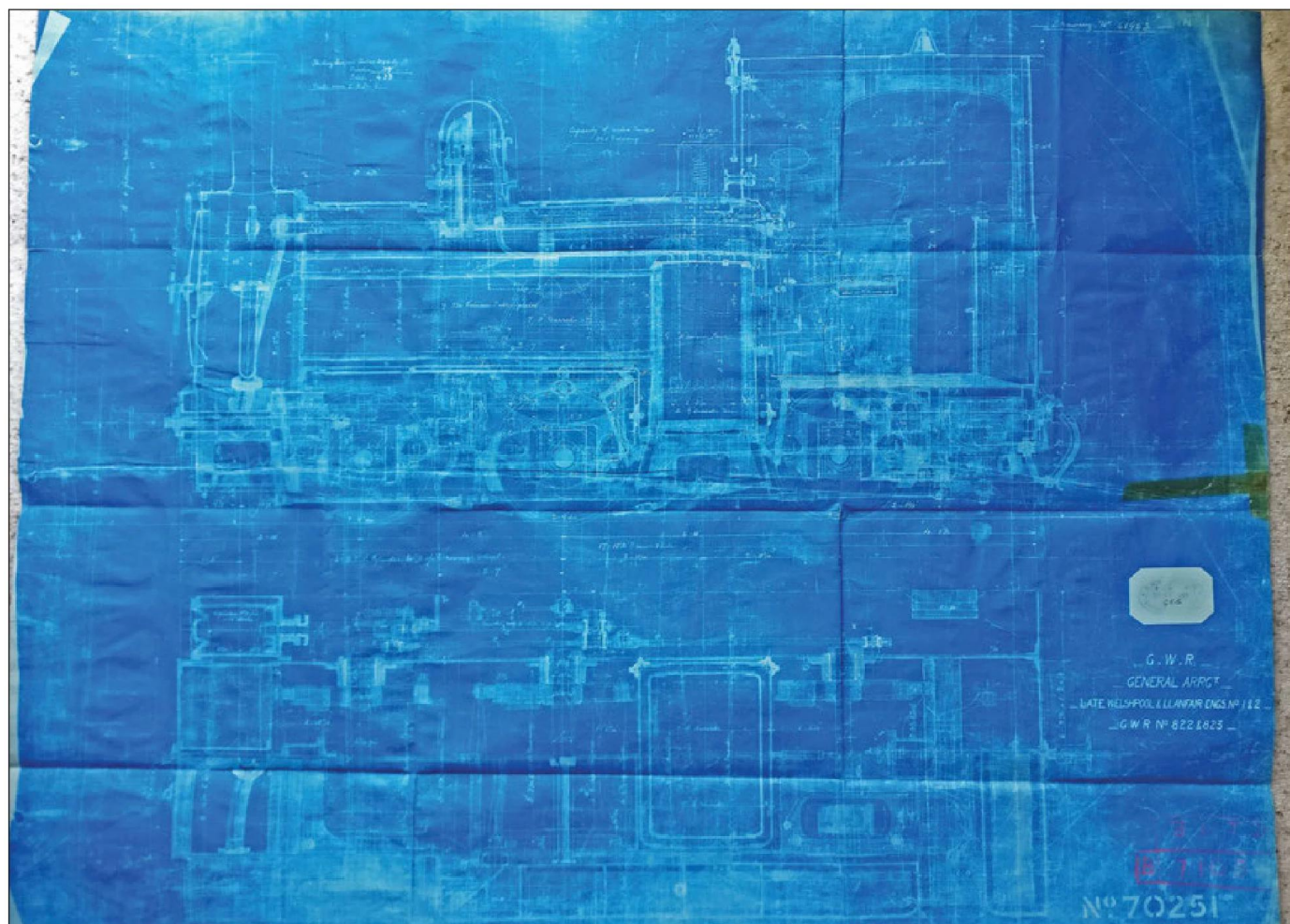
Kent-based narrow gauge enthusiast Tim Gregson, a driver on the Bala Lake Railway, found the blueprint during a lockdown clear-out of his loft. "It was given to me years ago by my step-father, Ron Heathcote, who worked his whole life for Bowaters, designing paper-making machines," Tim told *NGW*.

"The chief engineer had pulled the drawing and given it to my step-dad, knowing of his steam interests. He also told him that at one time Bowaters was very serious about buying the two locomotives."

Discovery of the blueprint (below) raises many questions. While it carries a GWR date of 1945 (right), the word 'Late' has clearly been added later, while the Bowaters number marked on the front (below right) is repeated on an official label affixed to the rear (bottom right).



Left: The W&LLR's two Beyer Peacock locos in store at Oswestry works in August 1959. Now new evidence suggests they might never have gone here but headed instead for Kent... Photo: Mike Wilkinson/W&LLR archives



The drawing carries a GWR date of 1945, at which time the Great Western Railway was operating the W&LLR. A Bowaters number has been marked on it, this number repeated on an official label affixed to the rear and carrying the words 'Bowater-Lloyd's Chief Engineer's Office, Northfleet, Kent.'

Bowaters moved its engineering office to Northfleet during the Second World War, and clearly the drawing was prepared after the move, using the GWR original. The word 'Late' has clearly been added to the description 'Welshpool & Llanfair Engs No 1 & 2' on the original GWR drawing.

For whatever reason Bowaters did not proceed with the purchase. Following the W&LLR's eventual closure in 1956, the two locos were stored in the former Cambrian Railways works in Oswestry. From here they were purchased by the fledgling scheme to preserve the railway, The Earl returning to Welshpool in July 1961 and The Countess following in October 1962.

NGW editor Andrew Charman, a member of the W&LLR footplate department who has fired both engines on many occasions, said that the discovery of the blueprint is remarkable and throws up a host of questions and alternative scenarios that could have had a major effect on both

Right: 'Monarch' at work on the Bowaters system. If the sale of the W&LLR locos had gone through, might this loco have not been built? Photo: Michael Messenger

Below: 'The Earl' and 'The Countess' have been the core motive power of the W&LLR throughout its history, pre- and post preservation. Photo: Megan Charman



the Welshpool and Sittingbourne lines.

"Determining the date that the drawing was prepared by Bowaters would have a great bearing on how everything played out," Andrew said. "While the original is dated 1945 Bowaters could have prepared theirs any time between then and 1961 when the locos were secured by the W&LLR preservation company.

"The first proposal to close the W&LLR was made in 1947 and the GWR might have sought buyers for the two locos then. They were both overhauled in late 1947 and early 1948 – to enable the line to keep running, or to encourage potential buyers?"

Used or new?

Bowaters bought its first secondhand narrow gauge loco in 1950, Manning Wardle 0-6-2T 'Chevallier'. Remarkably this loco is currently stored at the W&LLR, though expected to soon leave the line. Then in 1953 the mill invested in Bagnall articulated Kitson-Meyer engine 'Monarch'. Built new for Bowaters this was the last steam narrow gauge loco constructed for industrial service in the UK.

After a short period of service in Kent Monarch was sold into preservation in 1966 – going to the W&LLR, where it remains on static display today.

The two 2ft 6in gauge operations have forged further connections over the years – the W&LLR's first preservation passenger

stock was obtained from the Lodge Hill & Upnor Railway in Kent in 1961, and when the four vehicles became surplus to requirements in 1978 they were sold to the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway. In recent years the relationship between the two lines has grown with S&KLR Bagnall 0-6-2T 'Superb' (2624/1940) running at the W&LLR Gala in 2017 and 2018.

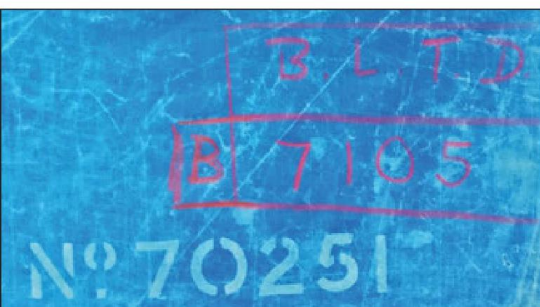
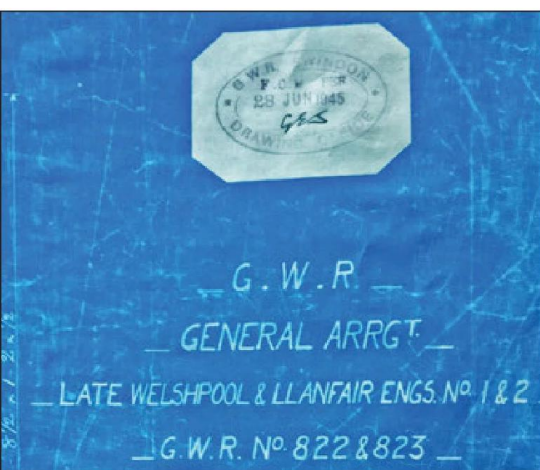
"If the drawing dates from before 1953, and the sale of the locos had gone ahead, might Monarch have never been built?" Andrew speculated.

He added that some W&LLR members who were at Llanfair in the earliest days of the line's preservation have claimed that Bowaters was offered the locos either before or on the Welsh line's closure in 1956, but turned them down due to their long fixed wheelbases that would have prevented them working on the sharp pointwork at Sittingbourne mill. But whether this was the first Bowaters interest in the engines remains unknown.

Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway chairman Liz Fuller told us that the mill trackwork was only ever traversed by the system's Kerr Stuart 0-4-2STs, the longer wheelbases of the Bagnall 0-6-2Ts preventing them working on this section. "Monarch never went in the mill either," Liz added.

Andrew believes that even if the drawing

Continued on page 8





Pony steams straight back to work on FR

Four weeks after steaming for the first time in more than 80 years, Ffestiniog Railway 'large England' 0-4-0ST 'Welsh Pony' was set to join the line's operating roster as it reopened following the Covid-19 pandemic.

The initial steaming of the 1867-built loco had been intended to be a highlight of a 'Fairlie Eventful' Gala in June but the event fell victim to coronavirus restrictions, so the steaming on 27th June was live-streamed on the FR's social media feeds.

Successful test runs followed, and with the FR's initial operating programme to Tan y Bwlch from 20th July using the line's smaller locomotives, a decision was taken to make Welsh Pony available.

"We need three locomotives a day and in practice this means we need a fourth in case of any problems/maintenance needs," FR general manager Paul Lewin explained in a message to members.

"We are not looking to use the double

Fairlies for now, referring to keep them for times when we need to haul larger trains again, when they are at their most efficient.

"In short this means Welsh Pony can play an important role in helping us to earn income from fares, which in turn will help the railway find a way through the crisis."

Paul added that he hoped members would understand why the loco was being used in traffic ahead of its official launch. It will for the present run simply as No.5, a naming ceremony and special train planned for part of a future vintage weekend.

Combining its England 0-4-0STs and former Penrhyn locos with heritage compartment carriages and running only to Tan y Bwlch, the FR's initial post Covid services will effectively recreate the line as it was in the 1960s.

Photo: On the roster – 'Welsh Pony' is available for service just weeks after returning to steam. Photo: Chris Parry/FF&WHR



■ The Bure Valley Railway made an earlier than planned return to services on 11th July, one day after the 30th anniversary of the 15-inch gauge Norfolk line's opening. Covid-19 restrictions had forced the cancellation of a planned 'Step Back in Time' Gala event, which would have featured locos from the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway that initially provided BVR services in 1990. But to mark the occasion two test trains were run over the line on 10th July, both double-headed by BVR no 6 'Blickling Hall' and no 8 'John of Gaunt' – the first time the two locomotives have double-headed a train together.

Photo: Gerry Balding/BVR

Did Beyers almost go to Kent?

Continued from page 7

does date from around 1956, the locos going to Kent could have had a tumultuous effect on the preservation of the W&LLR.

"In the early days funds were extremely tight and raising money to buy locos from outside would have added to the difficulties, particularly as it has been proven over the years just how hard it is to obtain motive power able to cope with the W&LLR's challenging route.

"Also, how much would Bowaters have wanted to sell one or both locos back to Wales – even if they had been willing to part with them?"

Such a scenario could have been pivotal when the collapse of the Banwy river bridge in December 1964 almost ended the W&LLR revival, only a year after the line partly reopened.

"Following the collapse an emergency meeting was called for W&LLR members and one of the options on the table was to end the railway revival and preserve the locos as static exhibits. As we all know the decision was made to carry on but might it have been different if at the time members were desperately trying to raise money to buy the locos back from Bowaters?"

■ Can any *NGW* readers provide extra information, perhaps a likely date of the drawing? If so please contact us through the editorial address on page 3.

Earl overhaul fund passes first hurdle

The Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway's 'Keep The Earl on Track' appeal, launched to help fund the partially complete 10-year overhaul of the line's Beyer Peacock 0-6-0T at the Vale of Rheidol Railway, has already raised more than half of its £95,000 target.

As reported in *NGW* last month, the loco was sent to the VoR in June 2019 and the W&LLR planned to pay for the work from existing resources, until the loss of income caused by the Covid-19 pandemic left the line expecting much greater demands on funds over the coming winter.

The appeal passed £30,000 within days of its launch, enabling the W&LLR to ask the VoR to complete the rolling chassis of The Earl as soon as its workshop reopens.

Hopes are high that the entire £95,000 will be raised, enabling completion of the loco and its return to Llanfair before the boiler ticket of sister loco 'The Countess' expires in February 2021.

Laxey boiler escapes lockdown

The Great Laxey Mines Railway on the Isle of Man not only restarted services on 5th July but reclaimed the boiler for its locomotive 'Ant'. Retubed and with a new chimney, the boiler had been stuck for several weeks on the UK mainland due to the Covid-19 lockdown.

15-inch lines lead the reopenings



The UK's 15-inch gauge lines headed a narrow gauge revival over the weekend of 4th-5th July, the **Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch, Heatherslaw, Evesham Vale, Cleethorpes Coast** and **Perrygrove** lines all reopening after the Covid-19 lockdown.

The 10¼-inch gauge **Wells & Walsingham Railway** also reopened on 4th July, as the smaller carriages of the narrower gauge lines allowed easier segregation of compartments for social distancing.

All of the lines had worked hard to put in measures to protect visitors and staff, including the social distancing measures, extra cleaning and in many cases taking pre-booked tickets only, both to control visitor numbers and to provide traceability in the event of a Covid-19 incident.

The RH&DR initially ran trains only on the single-line section between New Romney and Dungeness, though services to Hythe were set to commence in late July.

Manx battle

As predicted in last month's *NGW* the **Groulle Glen Railway** ran its first 2020 services on 5th July, but was beaten to the title of first Isle of Man line reopened by the **Great Laxey Mines Railway**, the quarter-mile long 19-inch gauge line resuming services a day earlier on the 4th.

The 15-inch gauge **Kirklees Light Railway** opened on 11th July, as did the **Bure Valley Railway**. Having prepared for a 1st August opening, detailed in *NGW* 149, the Norfolk 15-inch gauge line was able to bring forward its plans in time to celebrate its 30th birthday (see separate story).

First Welsh line to resume services was the **Bala Lake Railway**, running trains from 9th July. "We wanted to have a 'soft' opening ahead of the summer holidays," said BLR general manager David Jones.

"We are in such uncharted territory it is important not only to exercise safe practice but also to ensure everyone feels confident with the new safety measures. And this is a good time to test out new procedures."

David added that the line was very grateful to the Welsh government and the Heritage Lottery Fund for "life-saving" support provided during the crisis. The BLR was among several heritage lines aided by the National Lottery, receiving £40,000.

The **Snowdon Mountain Railway** reopened on 10th July, but running only to Clogwyn, the decision taken to keep the Summit station and cafeteria closed for the whole of 2020.

Efforts of lines hoping to reopen in the UK's narrow gauge hub, Wales, have been complicated by a more cautious approach to easing lockdown restrictions taken by the Welsh government, a five-mile maximum travel distance rule only being relaxed from 6th July.

The **Fairbourne Railway** reopened on 14th July, the **Ffestiniog Railway** was set to begin running trains again on 20th July, and the **Talylyn Railway** intended to follow suit on 1st August.

Both lines are using heritage rolling stock with individual compartments, each having its own doors and making it easier to keep visiting parties socially distanced.

The FR's sister **Welsh Highland Railway**, which does not run stock with separate compartments, will

remain closed for the present and the FR is only running between Porthmadog and Tan y Bwlch, allowing more frequent trains and a greater number of visitors.

The third of what many regard as the 'premier lines', the **Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway**, was also expected to reopen in August, though as *NGW* went to press dates were yet to be confirmed. Among other UK lines the **Lynton & Barnstaple Railway** planned a reopening on 18th July.

■ Operating dates for UK lines confirmed to *NGW* before we went to press on 18th July are listed on our first diary page of 2020 on page 49. For the very latest news on the railway revivals, refer regularly to the *NGW* Facebook page.

Top: The Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway resumed services on 4th July, running on its single-track section south of New Romney, where Davey Paxman 4-6-2 'Northern Chief' was pictured on its way back from Dungeness.
Photo: Steve Town

Centre right: All smiles on the Great Laxey Mines Railway, first Manx line to run again on 4th July.
Photo: David Lloyd-Jones

Right: On the Bala Lake Railway driver Ben Nelson and fireman Peter Newhouse crewed quarry Hunslet 'George B', as the first post Covid-19 train prepared to leave Llanuwchllyn on 9th July.
Photo: BLR





Moseley recovers locos from last UK peat line

The Moseley Railway Trust has recovered all of the remaining locomotives, wagons and track from the last peat works railway in the UK on Lindow Moss, near Wilmslow in Cheshire.

Lindow Moss made national headlines in 1984 when the well-preserved remains of an Iron Age male were discovered – ‘Lindow Man’ is now an exhibit at the British Museum.

A 2ft gauge line ran from the peat fields to the works, where the peat was tipped from wooden wagons, processed, and then taken from the site to be used for such processes as mushroom cultivation. Similar railways once existed on many sites but increasing environmental concerns have resulted in peat extraction ceasing.

Members of the MRT reached an agreement with site owners, Croghan Peat, and over 24th-25th June recovered three locomotives, four wagons and a quantity of track and removed them to the Trust's base at Apedale in Staffordshire. The recovery operation was further complicated by a

need to comply with Covid-19 guidance.

Two of the locomotives, built by Lister and Alan Keef are complete, and were both returned to operation within a few hours of their arrival at Apedale. However the other loco, another Lister, is missing many of its major components.

The MRT's Apedale site is set to reopen on 1st August, running on every Saturday during the month, plus Sunday 9th, Bank Holiday Sunday 30th and Bank Holiday Monday 31st. Steam will be scheduled on 8th-9th and the Bank Holiday weekend, but trains will have significantly reduced capacity due to Covid-19 restrictions.

The MRT intends to run its two Autumn enthusiast events, the Farewell to the Joffre weekend on 12th-13th September and the Diesel Gala on 3rd-4th October. Plans for these are under development – we expect to have more news in our next issue.

The three Lindow locos after their recovery to Apedale (above) and the Lister at work in on the moss in 1987 (below). Photos: MRT



Lines write off 2020 season

While the narrow gauge is steadily coming back to life some UK lines have confirmed that they will not be running at all in 2020.

Chief among them is the **Vale of Rheidol Railway** – as predicted in last month's issue by VoR CEO Rob Gambrill, the line has officially confirmed it won't open this season, stating that the difficult decision was made to protect its visitors, staff and those that live locally to the line.

The **Golden Valley Railway** will also stay closed for the rest of this year – the 2ft gauge line is based at the standard gauge Midland Railway Centre in Butterley and the centre has decided not to open in 2020.

Others confirming that they will not open in 2020 include **Hollycombe Steam Museum** in Hampshire and the **Fintown Railway** in Ireland.

Closure scare for park line

Fears grew that the Wicksteed Park Railway would become the first UK narrow gauge line beaten by the Covid-19 pandemic, when its owning company went into administration on 15th June.

In a letter to staff Wicksteed Park Ltd, which runs the amusement park in Kettering in which the 1¼-mile long 2ft gauge line runs, said that its leisure park and events business had been critically impacted by the Covid-19 outbreak.

However the park remained open without its attractions operating, and a new company was formed which hopes to reopen the park fully in 2021.

The park has received £247,000 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) while fundraising amongst the public has added a further £140,000.

Opened in 1931, the railway was the last attraction added by Charles Wicksteed, who founded the park in 1921. Operated by steam-outline i/c locos, the line has seen visiting steam on several occasions.

Vandals target SKLR yet again

Vandals have again attacked the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway's Sittingbourne viaduct station during lockdown.

A wooden safety fence between path and track was broken down and set on fire, while the platform shelter was attacked with an attempt to remove its roof.

Repeated vandalism at Sittingbourne has forced the line to lock all fittings in a container at the end of each running day.



Trust launches £85K shed appeal

The Moseley Railway Trust has launched a public appeal to help raise funds for an £85,000 new stock shed in which to house its growing narrow gauge collection.

The Trust built a stock shed as soon as it relocated to the Apedale site, completing it in 2008. But since then the space available has been outgrown by new stock arriving on the site and the restoration of several items. These include a collection of World War One wagons, many of which are wooden-bodied.

The new, second shed will measure around

30ft by 85ft and contain four tracks catering for 2ft, 2ft 6in and 3ft gauge vehicles. The MRT has gained full planning permission for the development and is close to placing a contract with a preferred supplier for the work.

As well as the £85,000 cost of the building, there will be further costs including the groundworks and trackwork to reach the shed. Donations to the project can be made through the Trust's website at www.avlr.org.uk

Above: Artist's impression of the new shed.

Weather delays Corris embankment building

Wet weather has delayed construction of the new embankment needed by the Corris Railway to extend its current three-quarter mile running line southwards.

A long spell of dry weather in May and early June had enabled completion of a wall of stone-filled gabion baskets on the extension route. These will form part of an embankment that when completed will be 170 metres long and up to six metres high in places, made up of stone, slate, earth and geotextile material.

Construction of the steep-sided embankment must be undertaken by professional contractors with heavy plant and machinery, and will use an estimated 12,000-15,000 tonnes of material the railway has obtained from Dolgellau.

However Corris personnel fear that delays in construction could result in the line losing the material, which will be frustrating as if work resumes this phase of the job can be done in around one working week.

Funding remains crucial to the project – even with all the earthworks in place ballast,

sleepers and track fixings will have to be purchased. A complete 10-metre length of the new track has been costed at £795, totalling £13,500 for this stage of the project. The line has a supply of rail in secure storage.

Donations for the Southern Extension can be made via the Corris Railway website at www.corris.co.uk – the site and the line's Facebook page is being updated with information and pictures as progress is made.



■ Progress on building of the Corris Railway's Falcon 0-4-2ST no 10 has taken a significant step forward with construction of the stainless steel smokebox at Barnshaws Plate and Section Rollers in Bilston, and the smokebox door by Purdie Dished Ends of Bradford. Completion of the smokebox is essential – the loco's boiler is shortly to be moved from the Corris line's Maespoeth Works to the Ross-on-Wye base of Alan Keef Ltd, where no 10's bottom end has been erected. It will not be possible to mount the boiler in the frames without the smokebox. *Photo: CR*

BRIEF LINES

Fox steams at Kirklees

Reopening of railway workshops without the distraction of running trains has had some advantages – on the Kirklees Light Railway the long-term overhaul of 2-6-2 'Fox', built in 1987 by KLR founder Brian Taylor, has made rapid progress, the 15-inch gauge loco steaming for the first time in five years on 29th June.

Battery loco at Halesworth

The Halesworth to Southwold Narrow Gauge Railway Society has acquired a 3ft gauge battery-electric loco to further its aims of reopening the former Southwold Railway west from Halesworth. The former quarry loco, which was previously in private ownership in Buckinghamshire, was delivered to the group's workshop on 20th June with the aim of it eventually becoming an emissions-free works engine as track is laid.

Ashover delays operation

Plans by the Ashover Light Railway Society to begin running passenger services on its site at the Rowsley station site of the standard-gauge Peak Rail line have been delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic, one issue being the unsuitability of battery-electric loco 'Spondon' for social distancing. The group now expects to commence services on its newly laid track in 2021.

Lincs Coast stays closed

Just after our story on page 10 went to press the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway announced it would not be operating in the 2020 season. The line had planned a number of events during the year to celebrate its 60th anniversary; "We hope we can have much happier news in 2021," a LCLR statement said.

Polar Bear off to farm

The Groudle Glen Railway's battery-electric loco 'Polar Bear' was shipped off the Isle of Man to Old Hall Farm at Bouth in South Cumbria on 19th July for what is described by the line as "a much-needed rebuild and refurbishment." The work has been made possible by support from Manx charity the Elizabeth Clucas Trust and the Scheinberg family.

UK narrow gauge news to tell?
Send details to NGW at
andrew.charman@warnersgroup.co.uk



■ A major step on the road to normality – the guard jumps aboard as the first train of the Groudle Glen Railway's 2020 season leaves Lhen Coan station on 5th July. The 2ft gauge line on the Isle of Man was one of the first narrow gauge railways in the British Isles to resume operations following the Covid-19 pandemic. *Photo: David Lloyd-Jones*

Third time lucky for Bratton Fleming purchase effort?

As *NGW* closed for press there were increasing signs that a bid to secure the former Bratton Fleming station for the future revival of the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway would be successful, at the third time of asking.

We reported in *NGW* 148 and 149 how the former station, closed with the rest of the railway in 1935 and since converted to a private house, had been put on the market in March, the owners seeking offers in the region of £325,000.

The L&B's supporting Exmoor Associates organisation, which has been for some years been acquiring trackbed as it came onto the market in readiness for future restoration, mobilised an effort to prepare a bid for the station, only to be told it had been privately sold.

However within weeks the station was back on the market, prompting an urgent fund-raising campaign under the title of the Friends of Bratton Fleming station.

Efforts appeared to be in vain as the station was put under offer again, only for

the sale to fall through a second time.

On 16th July the Friends revealed on social media that the agreed price for the station and grounds had been reached, subject to one large promised donation arriving in the group's account.

Further fundraising continued to cover extra costs, including the required installation of a septic tank – as it will almost certainly be some years before restoration of the line reaches Bratton Fleming, which is more than seven miles from the current L&B headquarters at Woody Bay, the station is likely to be used as a holiday let helping to raise funds for the revival.

A Justgiving page set up by the Friends to raise £25,000 for the purchase reached its target over the weekend of 19th July.

As *NGW* went to press there were also suggestions that the owners of L&B trackbed immediately to the south of Bratton Fleming, which includes some of the station platform, might be willing to sell it.

Manx rail bridges replaced for new heritage footpath

Bridges demolished after the closure of the Isle of Man Railway's Douglas to Ramsey line are being replaced under plans to create a heritage footpath.

The three bridges, at Glen Wyllin, Glen Mooar and over the Peel to St John's road near Ballaleece, were removed in around 1975 following closure of the line in 1968.

Now under a £1.3m scheme to create a route for walkers and cyclists, the bridges are being put back.

The whole route will also be resurfaced using recycled quarry material and stone to create a path 2.5 to 3.5 metres in width.

However the Manx Department of Infrastructure insisted that the route would not be tarmaced.

The new plan follows the success of a trail previously created on the railway's former route to Peel.

Statfold Barn gets back to action

The Statfold Barn Railway has made an earlier than expected return to activity following the easing of lockdown restrictions in England.

Having stated last month that it was planning activities for 2021 (*NGW* 149), the Staffordshire museum trust organised a pair of photo charters in very short order (see *Gallery* pages in this issue).

A 'Cars in Strawberry Park' event was set for 26th July, while also scheduled to go ahead are the Enthusiasts' Days planned for 8th-9th August.

This event will be for visitors aged 10 and over only and all tickets must be pre-booked from the Trust's website at statfoldbarnrailway.co.uk. Numbers are always limited at such events but they will be further restricted by the need to make Covid-19 considerations.

Those who do attend will be able to take their first view of Statfold's new restoration workshop, which was completed just before the planned March enthusiasts' day which had to be cancelled due to Covid-19.



■ An impressive picture from North Bay Railway Engineering Services on 9th July, with some four newly-built boilers lined up in the workshops ready for ultimately successful boiler tests. The large one to the rear is destined for the project to build a modern recreation of the Ffestiniog Railway's lost England 0-4-0 'Mountaineer' while the others are for a 6-inch Burrell road loco and two miniature locos for a private client.

The Darlington workshop continues to be busy, the wheels for the 18-inch gauge recreation of the Crewe Works 0-4-0 'Nipper' completed recently and lining of the Llanberis Lake Railway's 'Thomas Bach' underway. We'll have more on Nipper and NBRE's own 15-inch gauge loco project next month. *Photo: NBRE*

Tourist train in collision with truck



Determined efforts by the Taiwan Sugar Corporation (TSC) had its tourist service at Xihu sugar mill back in operation 24 hours after a train was hit by a truck at a level crossing.

The train was carrying 270 passengers when the collision happened at 1:30pm on 25th June (reports **James Chuang**).

According to reports, the train was travelling at around 10 kilometers per hour at the time. The train driver had sounded the horn for a full 12 seconds as it approached the crossing, but the driver of the truck did not heed the horn, nor the flashing lights at the level crossing.

The collision derailed the locomotive and the first two carriages, causing the loco to plunge off a bridge into a drainage ditch.

Fortunately, the passengers and driver of the train were not injured. The truck driver reported feeling dizzy and was taken to hospital for examination but had no obvious trauma.

The sugar mill had expected repairs to take at least two days, but the track was fixed the following morning, and availability of a spare loco allowed the 50-minute train tour to resume at 1pm.

Just a day later, a tourist train derailed just outside the yard of Xinying sugar mill, 84km south of Xihu. Initial investigation found the rail point was at fault and tourist

TAIWAN

services were suspended for three days.

Opened in 1921, Xihu once produced the largest volume of sugar in Taiwan but refining ended in 2002 and the mill was transformed into a tourist destination.

At one time the mill operated eight rail routes, a section of dual gauge – 2ft 6in (762mm) and 3ft 6in (1067mm) allowing through runs of freight trains directly to the Taiwan Railway Administration's western trunk line.

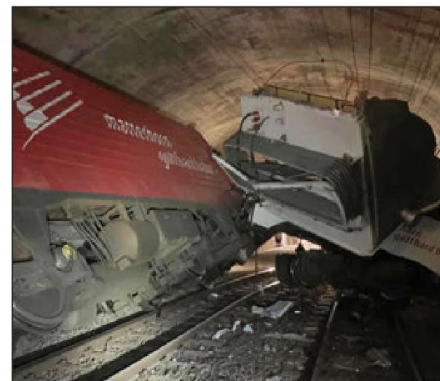
The mill used a fleet of Belgium AFB(Anglo Franco Belge) 0-6-0Ts of which 1948-built no 346 is preserved and at times works tourist trains.

From 1967 the mill was dieselised, acquiring a large number of Japanese Hitachi locomotives. Until 1982 a passenger service was also operated by a Hitachi diesel railcar which has also been preserved (the railcar and steam loco no 346 were both pictured in **NGW137**).

Today's tourist train route operates over 3.5km from the sugar mill to canola flowers farm and a local country market.

Xinying sugar mill's tourist service started in 2003, and at 5.6km is currently the longest tourist train operated by TSC.

Photo: The Xihu tourist train after the collision on 25th June. The road truck can be seen in the ditch alongside the locomotive. *Photo courtesy Maggie Huang and Huiping Weng*



■ A collision between two trains in a tunnel on the Matterhorn Gotthard Bahn in SWITZERLAND on 3rd July left 11 people with injuries.

The accident occurred at around 10:10am in the Stephan-Holzer-Tunnel near Oberwald station on the metre-gauge system. A car-shuttle freight service, carrying around 15 cars, collided with a regional passenger train with around 30 people aboard that was travelling in the opposite direction.

Local reports stated that seven people sustained minor injuries, three of them hospitalized locally and one, an employee of the rail service, flown to hospital by helicopter.

The line between Realp and Ulrichen, which is part of a scenic Alpine route that connects the ski resort of Zermatt with central and eastern Switzerland, was closed following the collision with trains replaced by buses. An investigation into the incident is understood to be underway. *Photo: Valais Cantonal Police*



■ A collision on a crossing in Prater Park, Vienna in AUSTRIA on the evening of 26th June tipped over a diesel locomotive of the 15-inch gauge Liliputbahn. The train was not carrying passengers at the time of the incident, which occurred in heavy rain, and no injuries were reported. The locomotive Lok D4, built in 1967 by Tobisch KG, Vienna and extensively rebuilt in 2009, was able to return to the line's workshops under its own power.

■ A collision between a train and car on the Lößnitzgrundbahn between Radebeul and Radeburg near Dresden in GERMANY on 6th July resulted in the Mercedes car being pushed for 10 metres down the track of the 750mm gauge line.

Three local fire departments were alerted to the incident, which happened just after 1pm, but fortunately the two occupants of the car received only minor injuries and did not require hospital treatment, while travellers on the train were not injured. However the locomotive, VIK Class 0-10-OT 99 713, suffered significant damage while the car was written off.

Photos: Radebeul fire service





More lines open up across the globe

Narrow gauge heritage railways throughout Europe and across the world are continuing to resume services following the Covid-19 pandemic, though the picture remains mixed.

The Musée des Transports de Pithiviers in **FRANCE** ran its first train on 21st June and unveiled a calendar of Sunday running right through to the end of the year, together with Saturdays in July and August and Wednesdays in August.

The museum advised, however, that steam haulage on its line would only begin in the second half of August following the end of the harvest season.

The Museum of French Steam Tramways and Secondary Railways (MTVS) also reopened for business at its Crèvecœur base on 21st June, limiting passenger numbers to 150 per day and seeing 147 turn up on the first day.

Several lines in **ROMANIA** have restarted services, seeing an immediate encouraging response from visitors.

Across the globe lines closed by Covid-19 are also coming back to life. The Cripple Creek & Victor Railroad

in Colorado, **USA** reopened on 21st June, the Bundaberg sugar cane railway in **AUSTRALIA** recommenced services on 28th June, and in early July steam passenger services resumed on the recently built 2ft 6in gauge line at St Nicholas Abbey rum distillery in **BARBADOS**.

The Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad has reopened its depot and museum at Durango and was planning round trips from Rookwood Depot to Cascade Canyon from 16th August – full trips to Silverton are currently not possible due to track damage (see separate story).

Volunteer working sessions have also resumed, with Covid-19 precautions in place, on the East Broad Top Railroad in Pennsylvania as the line aims next year to run its first trains since 2012. A first planned non-train event in June did have to be cancelled, however.

However as *NGW* went to press the Puffing Billy Railway in Australia remained firmly shut by the pandemic, as did the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, **INDIA** currently a global hot spot for increasing coronavirus infections.



Top: The first day of running at the MTVS in France resulted in almost all its available tickets being sold.

Left: With working parties back in action the MTVS was preparing to resume the extension of its running line at the end of July. Photo: Oliver Janneau/MTVS

Sibiu celebrates grant success

The Association of Friends of the Sibiu Agnita Railway have been given a major boost to their efforts to revive the 760mm gauge line in **ROMANIA**, securing a grant of 118,000 Euros.

The funding will enable the group to purchase a diesel locomotive and restore two passenger carriages for use.

The Friends are planning a gala event for both the first two weekends in September, with a visiting steam loco already booked.

We hope to have more detailed news on progress in Romania in next month's issue of *NGW*.

Forest trains back in action after landslip

The Taipingshan National Forest Recreation Area tourist train in **TAIWAN** was set to resume full services from 10th July following the repair of damage caused by a landslide (*reports James Chuang*).

Known as the 'bouncing train' due to its ride quality, the 762mm line has operated since 1991 over a 3km length of former forestry routes. Opened in 1924, the system formerly comprised two lines of 36.4km in the mountain ranges of the Taipingshan forest, and 23km operated as Luodong Forest Railway over the plain from the foot of the mountain to the nearest city of Luodong where timber was transferred to Taiwan Railway Administration freight trains.

The two systems were linked by cable ropeways, eight in total ranging from 460 metres to 1.1km in length. The system closed in 1982 after serious typhoon damage but a small section was reopened for tourists in 1991.

Durango fails in bid to overturn court order

The Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad in Colorado, **USA**, has failed in a bid to overturn a 'cease & desist' order made by the US Forest Service, stopping the line making emergency repairs to a bridge damaged by river debris during a recent washout.

The Forest Service, which is currently suing the D&SNGR blaming it for a devastating forest fire in 2018, had earlier stopped the Railroad cutting down trees near its tracks.

Repairs to the Elf Creek bridge are considered essential to allowing train services to Silverton to resume.

Road collapse adds to Darjeeling issues

Heavy monsoon rains caused part of the Hill Cart Road near Pagla Jhora, **INDIA** to collapse on 29th June, forcing closure of the adjacent Darjeeling Himalayan Railway.

All DHR passenger services had been suspended on 22nd March as part of India's national lockdown against the Covid-19 pandemic, but the line's UK support group the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway Society (DHRS) told *NGW* that by mid-May a third of DHR staff were back on duty doing essential maintenance work, and locomotives and rolling stock were being repaired/overhauled at Tindharia works.

The DHRS, which has provided urgently needed funds for local Covid-19 relief efforts, understands that road repairs should be completed within a few months. However with the impact of the pandemic still increasing in the region, and with Darjeeling closed to tourists, there is no indication yet as to when DHR services will resume.

Damage to the road following the monsoon was extensive – the DHR line can just be seen top right.

Photo courtesy DHRS



Repairs 'will take some time' after flood destroys bridge

The Kumagawa Railway is expected to be closed for some time after flooding on 4th July washed away one of the 3ft 6in gauge line's bridges.

Torrential rain that deluged Kumamoto Prefecture left more than 70 people dead while more than 2,000 were forced to live in temporary shelters.

Measuring 322 metres long, the No. 4 Kumagawa bridge, located between the railway's Kawamura and Higo Nishinomura stations, was destroyed by flooding that followed the rains. TV pictures showed an entire girder span of the bridge lying on its side in the river.

The bridge, built in 1937, was considered a Japanese cultural property (similar to listing in the UK).

According to local reports the line's

JAPAN

multiple-unit rolling stock, stabled at Hitoyoshi Onsen terminus, was also inundated by flood water.

Services have been suspended on the 25km long line, which runs between Hitoyoshi Onsen and Yunomae and is jointly owned by local governments and the private sector.



■ A former War Department Hunslet 4-6-0T is ready to go on display in Osório, **BRAZIL** following restoration. The 60cm gauge WDLR 2340, Hunslet 1312 built in 1918, was exported to the south American nation following the end of the First World War and eventually saw service on the Palmares to Osório line.

The loco spent a number of years on display in a safari park before the decision was made to restore it, and it has been returned to the livery it carried on the Osório line.

The loco will be moved to a final display position in the city's railway station once Covid-19 restrictions are lifted, Brazil still badly affected by the pandemic.



BRIEF LINES

Alishan runs eclipse trains

The Alishan Forest Railway operated 10 return steam train trips between Chiayi and Beimen over the weekend of 21st-22nd June to cater for tourists wanting to view a full solar eclipse, the country named as the best place in **TAIWAN** to see the solar event. The 1914-built Shay no 25 operated top-and-tail services with Nippon diesel loco DL48 built in 2007.

Mining loco goes on show

Wanamie Mine Railroad loco no 9 'Lokie' has gone on show in Pennsylvania in the **USA** after being rescued for preservation. The 3ft gauge 0-4-0T was built in 1915 by the Vulcan Iron Works and worked in several of the state's collieries. The loco is currently displayed in the Miners' Memorial Park in Ashley, and there are long-term hopes of returning it to working order.

Sandstone gets boiler back

Efforts by the Sandstone Steam Museum in **SOUTH AFRICA** to restore NGG16 Garratt no 155 have been boosted by the return of the loco's rebuilt boiler. The work was carried out by Wonder Steam in Pretoria with an official permit, railway maintenance departments being declared as essential services during the Covid-19 lockdown. Return of the boiler will allow Sandstone's restoration team to continue the rebuild of the loco. Dating from 1968 the boiler was built at Hunslet in the UK.



Photos recall early days on Cleethorpes miniature line

Co-operation between Lincolnshire lines reveals more previously unseen images.

In *NGW*149 we reported how the 15-inch gauge Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway had discovered photos of its predecessor, the original Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway, during a lockdown clear-out of cupboards, and donated them to the modern day LCLR which now operates at the Skegness Water Park.

At the time the question was asked by the finders: "Are there any unseen old photos of our railway?" referring to the Cleethorpes Miniature Railway, which was run by the erstwhile Cleethorpes Borough Council in the 1950s and '60s.

Opened originally in 1948, the line ran for a distance of 300 yards near the sea front. After just a year it was relocated and extended as a double track, between 1949 and 1971 running southwards for 760 yards from Cleethorpes Town to Thrunsko, close to Discovery Halt on the current line.

The line was extended at both ends in 1972 and regauged to 14¼ inches, and was further regauged to its current 15 inches in 1991.

Early discoveries

The appeal for photos has proven highly successful – a number of images have turned up topped by some of the earliest known photographs of the Cleethorpes miniature line contributed by LCLR volunteer Peter Balderston. Some of these were taken in the line's very first years, 1948-49 by Peter's father, C S Balderston of Grimsby – on the same roll of film as his honeymoon photos!

Cleethorpes Borough Council took the line over in the winter of 1958/59 and between 1974-1976 Peter was a driver on the railway during his summer vacations from university, by which time it was running on the unique 14¼ inches.

Other photos have come from renowned Lincolnshire railway photographer David Enefer, also a volunteer at the LCLR and who for many years drove on the Cleethorpes line. The pictures show Mr Enefer's

Upper left: Early days on the Cleethorpes Miniature Railway with steam in the 1940s. Photo: C S Balderston

Centre left: Sepia postcard from 1952 showing the railway running past the boating lake footbridge. Photo: Chris Bates collection

Below: David Enefer, who took this picture, managed to get wife June, baby Frances and 'Rio Grande' style loco in his 1981 view.





Above: Twin track on the Cleethorpes Miniature Railway in the late 1940s.
Photo: C S Balderston



Above right: Peter Balderston was a student summer driver on the miniature line in 1974-76, when he photographed one of the 'Rio Grande' locos at work.

Centre right: The rarely photographed (and rarely seen) replica of the 'Flying Scotsman' at work on the miniature line.
Photo: P Balderston



Below right: The miniature version of the Flying Scotsman approaching the original Thrunscoe terminus; the track to the right led to storage sheds for the carriages and locos. *Photo: P Balderston*

wife June and baby daughter Frances in 1981, beside one of the 'Rio Grande' outline locos used on the miniature railway in the mid-1970s.

LCLR volunteer Chris Bates turned up an old sepia postcard dating from 1950 which shows the miniature railway. He had acquired it when writing the book *Railways of North Lincolnshire* with fellow enthusiast Martin Bairstow.

LCLR spokesman John Chappell said that the line was delighted to help its friends and neighbours in the north of the county to showcase their early days. "It's a sign of the friendship between Lincolnshire's unique heritage railways," he added.

CCLR director Peter Bryant was equally delighted: "Photos of the old Cleethorpes Miniature Railway are surprisingly hard to come by, so we're very pleased that our friends at the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway have been able to find these and share them with us," he said.

Peter added; "Our railway has evolved considerably throughout its 70 year history and it is fascinating to see changes in these photos." **NGW**



Chasing the Flying Snails

In the first of a three-part article, *Andrew Waldron and Ted McAvoy* reflect on sad tidings from Ireland and a lifetime devoted to exploring the vast 3ft gauge network now in terminal decline.

The end is looming in the Irish Republic for the largest industrial railway system in Western Europe, with more than 700 miles of track. In what is widely seen as a politically motivated decision, Bord na Mona announced in June that all peat extraction was ceasing with immediate effect.

The entire rail system is likely to close during 2021 when existing stocks are cleared. Its demise will bring the downfall of the 'Flying Snails' – a nickname long applied to

the locomotives hauling peat to the power stations.

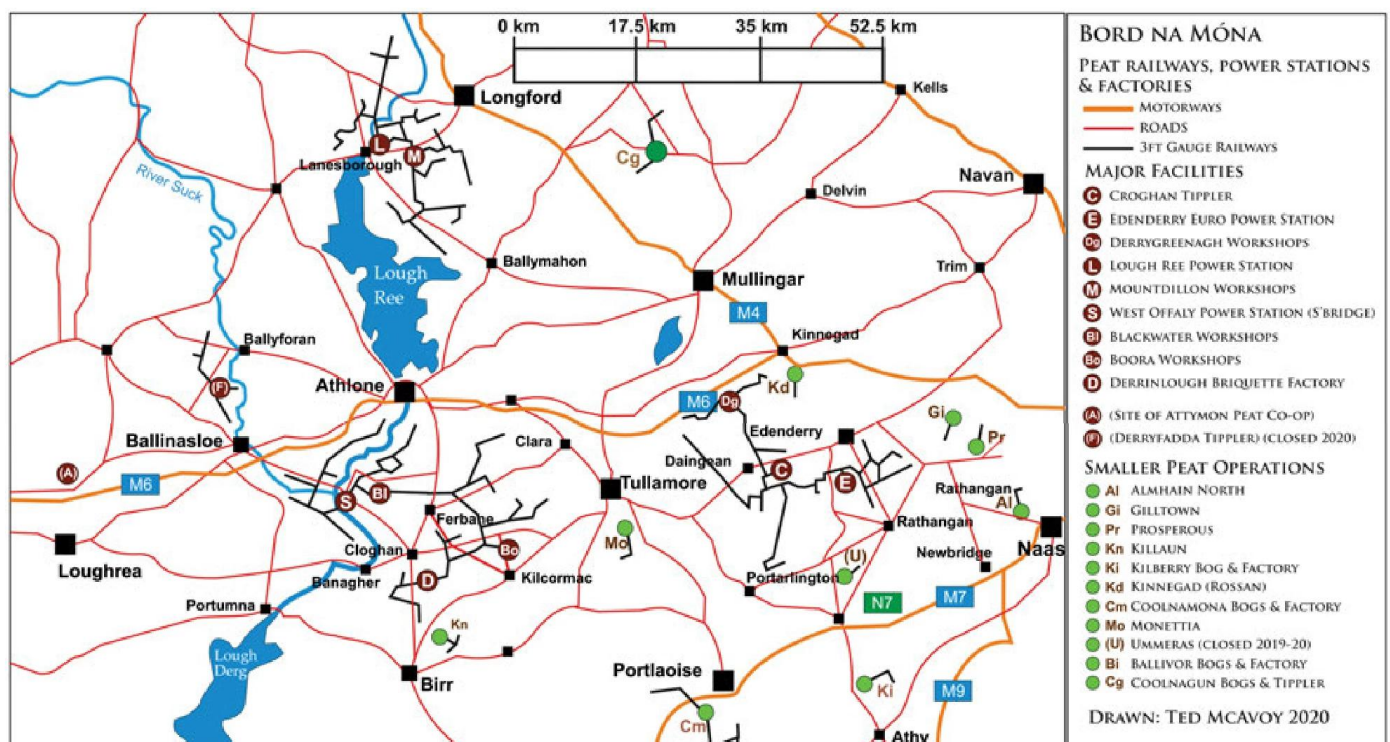
Long-distance peat haulage by rail has fascinated us over a great many years but is now clearly drawing to an end. The power stations on the Blackwater system at West Offaly ('S' on the map below) and Lough Ree ('L' on the map) are to close by the end of 2020.

The 'snail way' is a term often used to describe Bord na Mona railways. A typical long-haul run will on average take between two to four

Below: Map specially drawn for this feature showing the main Bord na Mona systems and the power stations they supply – Mountdillon (Lough Ree – L), Blackwater and Boora (West Offaly – S) and Derrygreenagh (Edenderry – E).

hours from the loading point to its destination, far slower than the main-line railway, but having said that, trains only travel at a maximum 15 to 18 mph. One has a far better chance to see the same train at a number of different locations. This is vital as the bogs are worked on a rotational basis.

Chasing BnM long-haul trains has been quite a task at times. True enough the locomotives only travel at a low average speed, but even keeping up with a pair of moving rakes can be



challenging – and that is putting it mildly! First, one must do the homework and know which route the trains in question are going to take. A good knowledge of vantage points and the local roads, most of them minor, is essential. Level crossings on BnM play an important role in being able to find a train after it has loaded on some remote bog.

Chasing trains on the bogs is, however, a fantastic and very cheap way of having a holiday in rural Ireland. Very little money will be spent – sorry, could be spent. Take plenty of liquids and food, for there are no shops and dehydration can be quite severe out on the bogs. A sat-nav is a good idea, but really going in advance, knowing the area and using the OSI Discovery Maps is far more fun. Boots and hi-vis vests are essential these days. Do not put yourself or the BnM people in any kind of risk and please do not stand at the immediate trackside to photograph the trains.

A question often raised by would-be visitors is how do you know where the trains are going. The BnM railwaymen are the best to ask. They truly love rail enthusiasts and if you ask, then you will be informed. What you want to know is how long will it take a train to reach a certain point and how long before it will return to the power station.

Plan your route in advance so that you get to the first vantage point before the trains do. Level crossings provide a good example. The trains must stop, the leading loco driver opening the gates or barriers and pulling his train through. His mate on the second rake will follow him, but he must stop, having cleared the crossing, to run back and open the gates to road users.

By then the first loaded rake will have stolen a march on him and so he plays the game of 'catch me if you can'. Once both rakes have cleared the crossing it is back in the car and boot to the floor to get ahead of the first loco to the next vantage point, which might be another crossing or an overbridge.

Some of the roads on the bogs leave a lot to be desired. Some are very narrow, others could be classed as tarmac goat tracks, and driving at speed has to be calculated or you could end up in the ditch. But the roads are generally quiet – it is an area where houses are few and far between and where the pace of life is somewhat slower.

The Bloomhill circuit

A typical chase was had in 2018, where over a dinner with plenty of the 'black stuff' at Lukers Bar in



Left: A loaded rake approaches West Offaly, headed by LM 435, one of 50 locos rebuilt in 2017-19. All are set to be exported to China. *Photo: Paul Carpenter, October 2018*

Above: Irish weather can be challenging – on the Derrygreenagh system LM 238 traverses Clonad level crossing bound for the Croghan tippler. An hour later hurricane Ophelia locked down the entire country with winds in excess of 140mph. *October 2017.*

Above right: Clonad crossing gates are opened by Ted McAvoy – an opportunity for a good 'crack' with BnM men on the train. *Photo: Susan McAvoy, April 2015*

Right: There can be many surprises on the BnM. What looks like a load of giant carpets is degradable track underlay used on virgin bogs where the ground is soft. LM 400 is at the Derelahan triangle on the Blackwater system. *Photo: Paul Carpenter, October 2017*



Shannonbridge, tactics for a look at the Blackwater operations were discussed by the group of four. On the final day of yet another adventure the decision was taken to go and see two medium-haul rakes make the run over and around the highly scenic Bloomhill circuit. The Bloom Hill, from which the route takes its name, is a large area of upland, 823 feet at the highest point, where one can see

the whole of the bogs far below with the BnM rail line snaking its way round the hills.

When we set out a thunderstorm had broken and things looked bleak. The roads were washed out in the torrential downpour that just seemed to go on and on. Ted, our scout, went ahead to find where the rakes were loading and he phoned us to let us know. Just as we arrived, one could »





hear engines being cranked up and we knew the 'Off' was not far away. Then, as if by magic, the rain stopped, the sun came out and the two rakes backed onto the main line as a rainbow formed behind them. Once we had waved them on their way it was a mad dash to make the first level crossing. We knew we had a good chance of getting there before the trains arrived and we easily beat them by about 15 minutes. As an added bonus the little Gleismac loco, LM 364, used as an occasional rail taxi was sat in the siding opposite the Bloomhill tea station with a pair of the old ballast wagons.

A quick inspection then followed before we took up our positions for a level crossing run-past. Sure enough, no sooner had I got my pipe out than lights appeared on the horizon. A check of the road traffic and we flung the gates open, the drivers roaring through with each one grinning like a

pair of Cheshire cats for they knew we would close the gates once they had cleared the catch points.

Then it was back to the cars and zooming off like startled rabbits down a burrow to make the next crossing. Again we got there in plenty of time and the little siding by the crossing held a solitary Thompson-built ballast bogie, which was photographed as an aside.

In the distance we could see the two trains threading their way round the outskirts of the bog. The gates were thrown open and there were yet more big smiles from the train crews. Once they had gone it really was at breakneck speed that we made the last vantage point. As we approached a bridge the first rake was only about 200 yards distant. We fell out of the cars and only just made it to the bridge to see the two rakes almost on top of each other go roaring through.

Looking down into the cutting,

Above: Traditional image of the peat bogs with Hunslet 4wDH LM 383 at Esker, near Edenderry, on a roving track repair train. The scarcely credible track on the right looks in desperate need of attention. Photo: Andrew Waldron, April 2019

Below: Double take as 4wDH LM 390, built by BnM in 1994, is about to pass under the N62 road to reach the famous Corbane sand bunker. It is bound for Lemanaghan. April 2014

one could imagine a scene from the old Irish 3ft gauge. A faint siding almost overgrown greatly added to the atmosphere. As they sped through we waved our final farewell, then in the gathering dusk and with more rain threatening we headed to our cottage for a well-earned brew and cakes to reflect on another most enjoyable outing chasing the Flying Snails.

Long runs

Chasing trains on the long haul from Lemanaghan Bogs to West Offaly power station offers some fantastic vantage points. In addition to the level crossings and one or two overbridges, the line runs right under the Corbane sand bunker. This is where trains can stop to top up their sand, necessary on really long runs such as this one.

If a loco runs out of sand, disaster is spelt in capital letters for the train just cannot move without the vital ingredient. The driver would probably find himself on the carpet in front of the manager with some serious explaining to do.

Unfortunately, long runs of peat via Corbane are becoming just a memory, for no more peat from Lemanaghan is to be taken to the power station. Instead the vast reserves on the Lemanaghan Bogs are to go to the Derrinlough briquette factory via a different railway route. Some trains may still pass under the sand bunker as to its west is Ballyaghurt Bog, which will also be retained to supply the briquette factory.

One of my favourite long runs is the line from Derryhinch Bog on the Derrygreenagh system to the EPL Power Station near Edenderry ('E' on the map), 23 miles one way and undoubtedly the longest haulage run on BnM. The first four miles from the bog are through completely uninhabited country and the first vantage point is at Derrygreenagh Workshops (map = 'Dg'), near Rochfortbridge, where the line must pass under a main road with an excellent view in each direction.

The line then heads south past Ballybeg Bog tea station, where a fuel train can sometimes be found. The bog is accessible by means of a rough track with deep pools of water on either side. Soon afterwards, a branch line to Esker Bog diverges and the lifting bridge over the Grand Canal is reached. The bridge is something very special to watch as the train pulls up on a ruling grade of 1 in 56. The driver waits for the second rake to catch up and then operates the controls to lower the bridge for trains to pass.

There are opening barriers and



catch points at each end so that, if a train fails to stop for whatever reason, it will be derailed rather than finishing up in the canal. The bridge has a time interval on it, so that both trains can pass over before it automatically opens again and the barriers return to danger.

The first time I (Andrew) went, I made an error of judgement. I parked the car by the bridge and waited for a fuel train that came along. I was so busy snapping photos that I failed to see what the driver did when he climbed down from his cab. The bridge then came down, so I ran across to get a shot from the other side. Both barriers opened and he drove across.

I watched him disappear into the distance and as I looked round and to my disbelief the bridge had opened. I was on one side and the car was on the other with the engine still running! I had no way of getting back to chase him a bit further. The luck was with me, however, for a runner on the towpath shouted to me, "The key to the bridge is in a red box near the barrier."

It took some frantic finding but I opened it, worked out where the key went, followed the instructions and bingo, the bridge came down. I was so relieved. I jumped in the car and tore off to catch up with the train, only to find a tractor with a trailer had come out of a field and got in front of me on the tiny and narrow



Above: The attractive Rathdrum viaduct over the Grand Canal on the Derrygreenagh system. A loaded rake is on its way to the Croghan tippler in August 2016.

Below: Long-haul train from Derryhinch to Croghan tip head crosses the Grand Canal lifting bridge. Should it be raised there are catch points to prevent a train ending up in the brink! September 2015.

Photos in this feature by Ted McAvoy unless stated

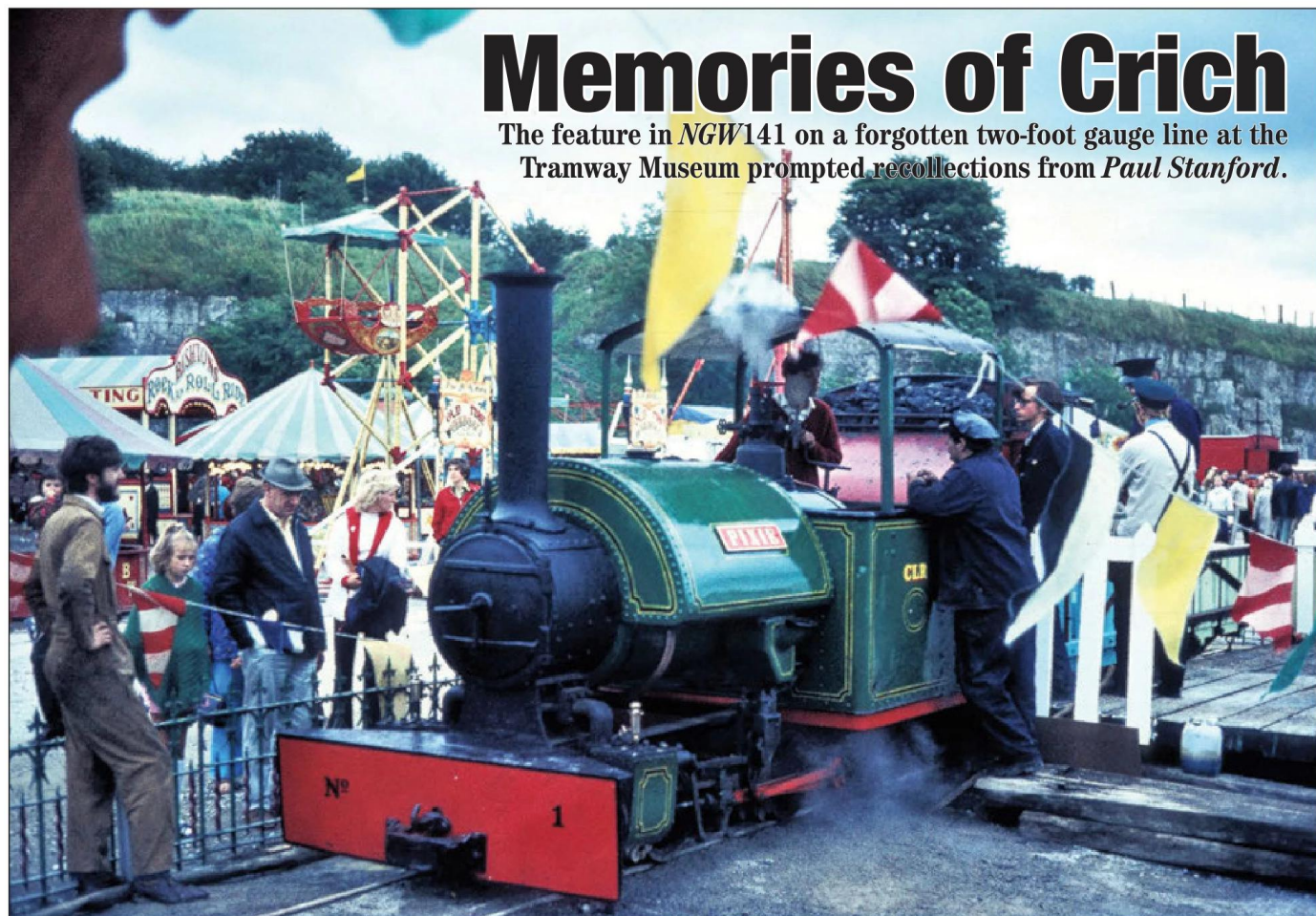
dirt track. The tractor just plodded along and at one point I thought Miss Daisy was driving it, but eventually he must have seen me and pulled over. I was away but I never did see that fuel train again. **NGW**

■ The second part of this feature will cover challenges posed by lines ranging from north of Lough Ree to south of Athlone.



Memories of Crich

The feature in *NGW141* on a forgotten two-foot gauge line at the Tramway Museum prompted recollections from *Paul Stanford*.



I would visit the Crich Transport Extravaganza every August with my father from 1970 onwards up to 1985 and would be hugely disappointed if the narrow gauge line wasn't operating, as was the case some years, and I would mither him as to why it wasn't running.

I travelled the railway in both locations with the Bagnall 'Pixie' and also on the horse tram that operated the line at its fullest extent. It was a long-wheelbase Hudson chassis vehicle with tip-over tramcar seats. Another year saw the two maroon knife-board carriages (built on

Hudson chassis) operated with a Ruston loco loaned by Yorkshire Water. The latter I recollect was charmingly crewed by one of the Crich tramcar clippies – Margaret Hyde, daughter of W.G.S. Hyde who supplied some of the photos in the earlier *NGW* article.

The highlight of my personal involvement was in 1981 when I spent my first summer holiday working at Crich Tramway Museum as a 14-year old schoolboy. This was in the two weeks leading up to and including the August Bank Holiday. My father was chief architect in this happening – one of his friends was the late Ray Coxon who built the super O-gauge Birmingham tramway running the length of the West Bromwich single-deck 1929 bus that he took to Crich every year. A group of lads whose fathers were well known to Ray would undertake work at the museum and operate the tramway in the bus for the benefit of visitors. Ray, a retired school teacher from Handsworth, and my father John were linked by a common love of Britain's biggest narrow gauge (3ft 6in) tram system in Birmingham.

So in summer 1981 my friends and I found ourselves at Crich. A chap called John Murphy, who was a young adult Tramway Museum Society member, organised my

Above: Visits to the 2ft gauge line at Crich museum were eagerly anticipated by the author from 1970 onwards. At times in 1971 the volunteer train crew appeared comfortably to outnumber the passengers.

Left: The Bagnall 'Pixie' poses at the sleeper platform beneath a trellis arch in 1971.

Both photos: Winstan Bond © National Tramway Museum. The help of Donald Brooks with the photos for this feature is gratefully acknowledged.



teenage friends and I to go and cut back the undergrowth on the narrow gauge line. We also did some serious weeding ready for its use over the Bank Holiday weekend.

Over the following days a fork-lift truck was used to bring the Hudson chassis horse tramcar up to the narrow gauge line from its covered store by the tramway museum entrance. We played on the vehicle on a few summer evenings by scooting it along the line we had cleared with one of us on the handbrake to control it. This was good stuff for teenage lads with a healthy rail interest and we stayed safe – despite the fact that at the town end of the line there was no buffer stop and the land fell away into trees and bushes!

Then on the Friday before the 1981 Bank Holiday weekend the narrow gauge loco arrived on a low-slung green-painted two-axle road trailer. It was none other than Kerr Stuart Wren 0-4-0ST no 4256 'Peter Pan', painted at that time in a mustard-brown colour scheme with green and red lining that was unusual but very attractive. I'd seen it pictured in narrow gauge magazines before this date. My father sought out *Narrow Gauge Times* for me and it appeared in one issue – driven by the crew I'd go on to meet.

I was forward enough to get chatting to who I now know to be Graham Morris and a chap assisting him called Gary who was quite a character – with me offering to clean and coal the engine. I'd previously done some similar unpaid work on miniature railways the year before and learnt to drive my friend's loco. Graham and Gary both agreed to my offer of help and the next morning that's what I did.

Three busy days

One thing led to another and as I helped raise steam on the Saturday of the August Bank Holiday weekend I was offered the chance to fire the engine. So I rapidly forgot about taking my shift driving the model tramway. And that's how I spent the next three days, with either Gary or Graham driving and my two pals and I taking stints at firing.

One of the three of us cycled round to take turns in acting as guard on the Hudson tramcar coupled to the loco. We were issued with a megaphone by the museum to warn people to stay clear of the open level crossing which dissected the running line. The crossing would get busy with pedestrians as the transport extravaganza flea market was either side of the line by the little marine plywood platform.



Above: Before 'Peter Pan' ran at Crich in August 1981, it was taken to various events by Graham Morris and Gary Stevens. Gary is driving at a July 1978 steam rally at Frocester, near Gloucester.

Below: Peter Pan in its distinctive mustard brown livery is coaled at Frocester.

Both photos: Colin Arnot

My pals and I were between 14 and 16 years of age. No thought of risk assessments or rules exams occurred but we all kept safe as did the travelling public with a healthy dose of common sense. The tramcar was hand-braked only, with Peter Pan doing a push-pull run, as the track layout was so rudimentary. That said, the three busy days safely passed with no mishaps.

There was no running water by the line, so two water barrels were provided and topped up from a road bowser which also supplied the many steam road engines dotted around the site. We used domestic buckets to replenish Peter Pan's water tank from

the barrels. Similarly, a coal stock was left in a pile by the level crossing and I would use the same bucket to coal the engine.

It was a joy to fire the loco – usually happening when it was resting between trips. Graham taught me how to use the injectors and he gently corrected me when I allowed a hole in the fire to occur causing the diminutive engine to reverberate.

Both my friends were given the chance to drive Peter Pan under supervision. I was happy firing – plus on 'my' side of the loco was the handbrake. Gary or Graham would trust me to do the braking and stop in the right place. And so for the »





Left: There was a casual but safe atmosphere when Peter Pan came to the 1981 Crich Transport Extravaganza. Note especially the two water barrels on hand.

three days we were busy carrying passengers. I think the horse tram seated eight people and it was pretty much non-stop trundling up and down the line attached to 4256.

The jubilee track held up well. The only point, to a short siding, was bereft of a lever and had blades I wedged with a piece of wood. I recollect Peter Pan would quite clonk through the points in the facing

direction. We used the siding once at the end of each day to hand-shunt the horse tramcar out the way when manoeuvring Peter Pan to have the fire dropped.

In one direction there was quite a steep gradient climbing from the primary level crossing, although with one carriage the Kerr Stuart did not have to work too hard. On one occasion Gary instructed me to wind

on the handbrake to make the engine work hard, with him chuckling as my face lit up. The exhaust sharpened up as I gently turned the handbrake to apply the brakes and he opened up the regulator.

Looking back

I worked at Crich for the next four years in the summer up to and including August 1985 when I entered full-time railway employment. The line wasn't used again in that time and I'm not sure whether it was used thereafter.

When I went back with my family in December 2007 I snuck off for 20 minutes and found the line mostly still intact. I allowed myself a wry smile as I walked the track of what was a very casual but safe operation of a narrow gauge steam railway more than 25 years earlier.

I'd never imagined in 1981 that 30 years later I would have my own collection of 2ft gauge railway equipment. Thank you Gary and Graham if you are reading this account – you carry much responsibility for getting me into narrow gauge railways. It is a responsibility which sits with all of us to enthuse young people. **NGW**

Below: In 1975 two knife-board carriages built on Hudson chassis were operated with a Ruston diesel loaned by Yorkshire Water.

Both photos: W G S Hyde



Awakening from their slumbers...

As lockdown restrictions ease and the railways come back to life, *NGW*'s photographers can get back out with their cameras – and these pages can return to showcasing images from most recent times...

Right: The first train on the 12.25-inch gauge Fairbourne Railway since lockdown slows for the level crossing, before curving to run alongside the beach on 14th July. In charge on a dull and drizzly day was 2-6-2T 'Russell', built in 1979 by Milner Engineering in the form of a Leek & Manifold Railway 2-6-4T and converted to its current look in 1985.

Below: With remaining restrictions meaning that the cafeteria facilities at Penrhyn Point remained closed, refilling the bunker of Russell was a lonely job on 14th July.

Both photos: Andrew Charman

Following pages: Statfold Barn wasted no time in organising a suitably socially-distanced Photo Charter once the Staffordshire venue was able to on 13th July and *Martyn Tattam* pictured Bagnall 2-4-0T 'Isibutu' with suitably period road transport...





NARROW GAUGE WORLD





Above: *Kenny Felstead* was another willing visitor to the Statfold Barn charter on 13th July and came up with this atmospheric shot featuring 'Isibutu' and the Mack truck.

Below: As featured on our cover the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway made an impressive return to action from 4th July, with multiple trains working the single-track New Romney to Dungeness section. The drivers of Davey Paxman 4-6-2 Pacific 'Northern Chief' and 4-8-2 Mountain class 'Hercules' are seen swapping staffs at Romney Sands.

Photo: Steve Town





Above: Quiet but welcome scene on the Isle of Man as the Groudle Glen Railway ran its first 2020 trains on 5th July, Bagnall 2-4-0T 'Sea Lion' seen here resting at its namesake station, Sea Lion Rocks.

Photo: David Lloyd-Jones

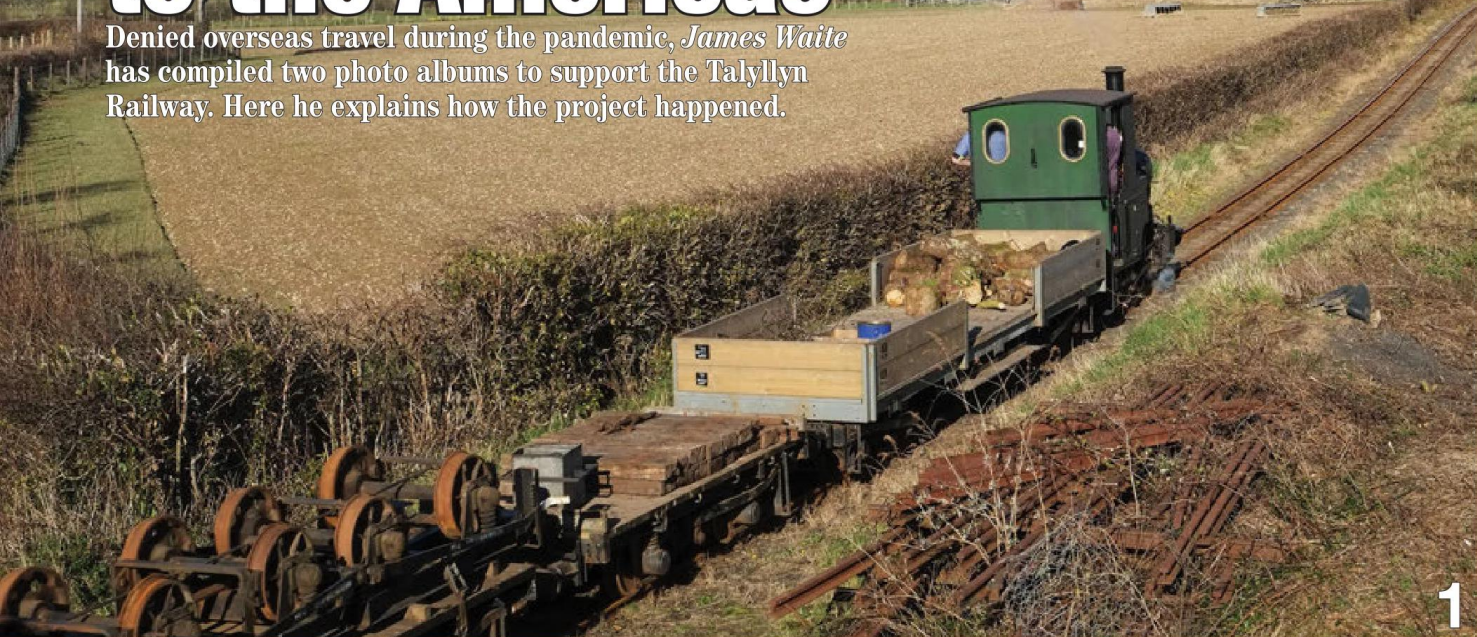
Below: The weather did its best not to play ball but grey skies failed to dampen the historic significance of this picture on 17th July, as newly restored England 0-4-0ST 'Welsh Pony' worked a pre-reopening test train on the Ffestiniog Railway. The loco was hauling passenger carriages over Penrhyn crossing for the first time in more than 80 years...

Photo: Chris Parry/FF&WHR



From the Talyllyn to the Americas

Denied overseas travel during the pandemic, *James Waite* has compiled two photo albums to support the Talyllyn Railway. Here he explains how the project happened.



I think it was during the third week of the Covid-19 lockdown in the UK and, like many enthusiasts, I had been reading the increasingly despondent accounts of how the prolonged period of closure would harm the finances of our heritage railways. Other than making modest contributions to their appeals there wasn't any obvious way to help.

Then an email arrived from Iain McCall, who runs the Mainline & Maritime publishing house. He had taken matters into his own hands and was launching a series of affordable photo albums, the proceeds of which would go to help support them. Was I interested in producing a book to fundraise for a railway of my choice?

This brilliant idea appealed in every way. There was just one little proviso, that the photos and their captions had to be submitted within just eight days! This was a first for me but I was more than happy to rise to the challenge. The choice of railway was a no-brainer – the Talyllyn, and the beautiful and welcoming district through which it runs, had long been family favourites and we have spent our holidays there for many years, so I had no shortage of photos on which to draw.

It seemed sensible to lay out the photos to present a virtual version of the beautiful journey from Tywyn up to Nant Gwernol since the real thing is temporarily unavailable. I received

All photos in this feature by James Waite – each photo numbered, for captions see text

a great deal of help from many people at the railway and, thanks largely to their input, I was able to despatch the finished product on the eighth day.

By then Iain had suggested a second book, again to help the Talyllyn's 'Virtual Visit' appeal, but this time on an overseas subject – narrow gauge steam in the Americas with an emphasis on the US. This was a fairly blatant attempt to raise funds for the line from US railfans as well as Talyllyn supporters in the UK with an interest in overseas railways.

There wasn't quite the same urgency to complete the job. This was just as well, as the research involved in writing the captions took some six weeks altogether! Some 80



of the photos come from the US, from Alaska in the north to Colorado and New Mexico in the south. The other 40 are from seven countries in Central and South America. Producing the two books has been great fun and I hope that reading them will be fun as well!

The Talyllyn

The view up into the Fathew valley and the mountains beyond must be one of the finest on the Talyllyn but it's a difficult one to photograph. With a down train the loco's cab is often unduly prominent, but the loco of an up train is all too easily hidden by its carriages. **Photo 1**, taken from Ty Mawr bridge on 10th March 2014, comes from one of the photo charters which David Williams arranges annually. With only low wagons in the foreground, there's plenty of 0-4-0T no 6 'Douglas' to see. The loco had been temporarily repainted in the livery in which it was supplied when new in 1918 to what became RAF Manston in Kent.

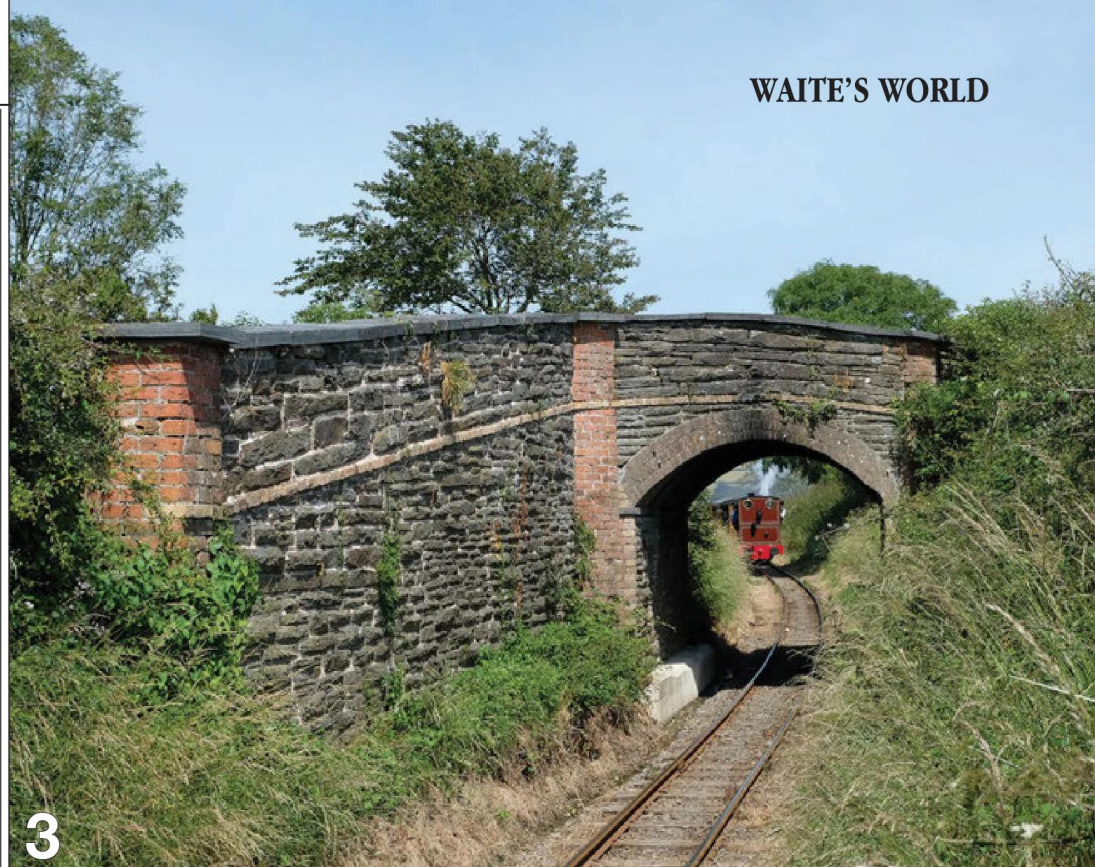
The Talyllyn prides itself on its friendly staff and volunteers, and in **Photo 2** there are cheery waves all round as no 1 'Talyllyn' passes Hendy bridge on 6th July 2017. They weren't for me but for my 10-month old granddaughter!

Hendy bridge is an unusual structure. It carries a public bridleway over the railway at an oblique angle which then turns sharply to run beside the line, requiring the retaining wall to the left on **Photo 3**. It can only be photographed adequately from the adjoining field which forms a part of Hendy farm. Happily this wasn't a problem as we were staying there and Anne Lloyd-Jones, our landlady, offers her guests the freedom to roam throughout her land. 'Dolgoch' approaches with a down train on 4th July 2019.

Maine Two-Footers

In the UK we rightly regard the Talyllyn as the world's first preserved railway, but it's worth remembering that in the US the private preservation and operation of locos and rolling stock, though not the rescue of complete railways, began several years earlier. The Sandy River & Rangeley Lakes Railroad, in Maine, closed in 1935 and its loss acted as a wake-up call to many US enthusiasts, especially after the many fine steam locos still on the line were scrapped with almost indecent haste. The closure of the Lynton & Barnstaple in the same year perhaps had a similar effect in the UK.

After the Second World War nearly all that remained of the stock



"It seemed sensible to present a virtual version of the beautiful journey from Tywyn up to Nant Gwernol since the real thing is temporarily unavailable.."

from Maine's Two-footers was bought by Ellis D Atwood from southern Massachusetts, where he operated the largest privately-run cranberry plantation anywhere in the world. In the autumn of 1946 construction of the Edaville Railroad began. It would provide essential transport for the cranberries and the people who harvested them, as well as being a live museum of the Maine lines.

By the following summer the line was largely complete with more than six miles of route, and was up and running as the first enthusiast-run railway anywhere in the world. Very sadly Mr Atwood was killed by a boiler explosion at his cranberry processing plant in 1950.

The Edaville RR continued to flourish, but in later years a decline set in and it closed in 1992. Four

locos which had come from Maine returned to the state. The line was revived in 1999, but by then its only narrow gauge steam locos were two statically preserved 0-4-0STs built by Porter for the Raritan Copper Works at Perth Amboy in New Jersey.

No 11 (Porter 6976/1925) was rebuilt at the comprehensive shops of Boothbay Railway Village in Maine as a 2ft gauge 0-4-0 tender loco between 2012 and 2014. In **Photo 4** this engine takes a train away from Thorndike station at Boothbay on 4th September 2014 while running in before its return to Edaville. This is hardly a historically accurate loco but I thought it made a pretty picture, and should be included out of respect for the vital contribution which Edaville made towards the preservation of the Maine Two- »





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footers and the heritage railway movement more generally.

The 0-4-4 Forney tank no 9 (Portland 624/1891) is the only surviving locomotive from the old

Wiscasset, Waterville and Farmington Railway. It was built for the Sandy River RR in western Maine, and went on to serve the Sandy River & Rangeley Lakes and, from 1924, the



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Kennebec Central and is also the only surviving loco from both of them. It arrived at the WW&F early in 1933, only a few months before its closure, and was bought for private preservation a few years later.

Enter Harry Percival who had lived beside the old trackbed for many years and was determined to resuscitate a part of the line. In 1985 he bought much of its route and the title to the original operating company, and built his home at the old Sheepscot station. In 1989 the WW&F museum society was born. Now enthusiasts have rebuilt about three miles of the railway and more is set to follow, while no 9 has returned. In **Photo 5** the loco shunts at Sheepscot station on 14th January 2017. Also present is Monson RR 0-4-4T no 3 (Vulcan Iron Works 2093/1912), visiting from its home at the Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad Museum in Portland.

The Rio Grande

The history of the Denver & Rio Grande Western, and its two long preserved sections, is too well known to need repetition here. Its first 2-8-2s were the 15 K-27s which were built by Baldwin in 1903. Only two have survived and perhaps the better known of them is no 463 which runs on the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad. **Photo 6** shows the other, no 464 (Baldwin 21796/1903) which lives on the Huckleberry RR in Michigan, far away from Rio Grande territory. This loco was probably the last to remain in service when retired as the Durango shunter in 1962, though it may just have been outlived by one of two which were sold to the Nacionales de México in 1941 and were converted to standard gauge eight years later. Here the Baldwin crosses a creek east of Genesee Village, near Flint, on 15th January 2019.

The Rio Grande's last narrow gauge section ran between Alamosa and Durango, from where branches extended to Silverton and Farmington. After the remainder of the railway closed in 1968 the Rio Grande continued to run tourist trains over the Silverton branch until sold in 1981 to Charles Bradshaw junior, a Florida citrus fruit grower. It was worked by three K-28 2-8-2s, the other seven of the class having been requisitioned by the US army during the Second World War for service on the White Pass & Yukon line in Alaska and northern Canada and scrapped when the war ended.

Mr Bradshaw upgraded the line so that it could accommodate heavier locos, but **Photo 7** shows the railway's annual photo special on 24th September 2011 headed by

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K-28 no 478 (Alco 64989/1923), close to the River Animas near what was once Cascade siding. The carriages had temporarily been painted in the dark green used by the Rio Grande between 1917 and the early 1950s.

In Brazil

The metre-gauge EF Mogiana was promoted by coffee farmers in Brazil's São Paulo state. The railway between Campinas and Jaguariúna, 38km away, opened in 1875 and was the earliest section of its mainline. It is now a heritage railway run by ABPE, the country's main preservation society.

One of the line's locos is EF Noroeste do Brasil Pacific no 401 (Baldwin 53766/1920), painted in that railway's characteristic green livery, and in **Photo 8** it is seen leaving Anhumas station for Jaguariúna on 9th July 2013.

The first section of the NOB opened to the northwest from Bauru in 1906. It headed across Mato Grosso do Sul through the vast marshy Pantanal, one of the world's great wildlife habitats and also inhabited by diminishing numbers of pre-Columbian peoples who used to attack trains with bows and arrows during the line's early years.

In 1952 the line reached Corumbá, more than 1,000km away from Bauru, and now joins the Bolivian railways there. It became a part of RFFSA when the state railway was formed five years later.

The leading wooden carriage in the picture, with its high domed roof

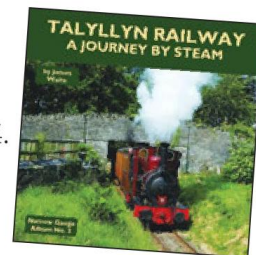
"Harry Percival had lived beside the old trackbed for many years and was determined to resuscitate a part of the line..."

and arched windows, is one of a series built for the line in the late 1940s and early 1950s in readiness for the opening to Corumbá. Passenger services ended in 1995, shortly before RFFSA was broken up and privatised – a sad end to what must have been a magnificent train ride.

One result was that many of these distinctive carriages became available for preservation, and they now grace several of Brazil's heritage railways. Three other NOB locos are preserved at Bauru's railway museum, including 2-6-0 no 278 which is usually in working order. **NGW**

■ *Talylllyn Railway: A Journey by*

Steam is available from Mainline & Maritime, price £18.95, and is reviewed on page 44. Further details of this title and the forthcoming book on narrow gauge steam in the Americas, which in both cases will see £5 from each copy sold donated to the Talylllyn's 'Virtual Visit' appeal, are available at www.mainlineandmaritime.co.uk. The website also includes details of several other photo albums that have been produced to assist the fundraising efforts of a number of heritage lines.



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U is for Unzmarkt

Donald Brooks profiles arguably the most famous class of Austrian narrow gauge locomotives – now also familiar on the Welshpool & Llanfair.

Carriages from Austria and Hungary and a locomotive, 'Sir Drefaldwyn', that spent almost all its working life in Austria have long given the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway something of a central European feel. This atmosphere was significantly enhanced in August 2019 by the arrival on the mid-Wales line of 0-6-2T no 2 'Zillertal' (Krauss, Linz 4506 of 1900), hired from the Zillertalbahn in Austria's Tirol until at least the end of the 2021 season (*NGW*143).

The locomotive's welcome visit to Wales provides an opportunity to look back at the history and development of 760mm gauge 0-6-2Ts in Austria, particularly the class U to which Zillertal belongs, and to recall the days when these locos could be seen in everyday service with the Österreichische Bundesbahnen (ÖBB).

The precursor of the U and the first Austrian narrow gauge locomotive with an 0-6-2T wheel arrangement was a series of three built by Krauss, Linz in 1888 for the opening of the Steyrtalbahn, not far

from Linz, a year later. In the early 1890s the same manufacturer built further 0-6-2Ts, perhaps most notably for the Salzkammergutlokalbahn, but it was in 1894 that the familiar form of the U first appeared.

The first four, Krauss works numbers 3062-5, were built for the newly-opened Murtalbahn, connecting the main line junction of Unzmarkt in Steiermark with Mauterndorf, 76km away in Land Salzburg. Unlike the original Steyrtal locos, which had a smokebox protruding well beyond the side tanks and a chimney set back from the front, the Murtal machines were much better proportioned, with full-length tanks like a Vale of Rheidol 2-6-2T and a conventionally-positioned chimney.

The designation U is simply the first letter of the Murtalbahn's Unzmarkt terminus, but the type proved so successful that many more were built, both for the state railways, known as kkStB until the First World War, and also for provincial and private operators such as the Zillertalbahn, which acquired two in

1900. Most examples were produced by Krauss, Linz but other manufacturers were also involved.

The last of the basic U design was built at Linz in 1922 and was delivered, appropriately enough, to the Steiermärkische Landesbahnen (StmLB), which by then was the operator of the Murtalbahn where the design had originated. The final loco was numbered U.44.

By this time there had been further developments in the design. The Uv type, a compound version of the U, was introduced in 1902 with two locomotives built for Niederösterreichische Landesbahnen (NÖLB), followed by one for the Zillertalbahn, where it became the system's third 0-6-2T, no 3 'Tirol' (Krauss, Linz 4790 of 1902).

In 1905 an innovative variant of the design was ordered by the NÖLB for extension of the Mariazellerbahn to Laubenbachmühle, becoming the first superheated locomotive anywhere in Austria-Hungary. It was numbered Uh.1 but became Bh.1 when further superheated examples of Class U appeared much later. The

Above: Where it all began. StmLB 0-6-2T U.11 (Krauss, Linz 3065 of 1894), the last of four original U class locos built for the Murtalbahn, works a Tamsweg – Murau special on its home line near Ramingstein on 19th July 2000. Photo: Roland Beier

This page: No 3 'Tirol' leaves Schlitters on the Zillertalbahn with the 15.30 from Jenbach to Mayrhofen. In 2020 and 2021 it will be possible to see a similar train on the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway, although hopefully with less snow.



'B' class designation came from Bregenz, from where the loco had been transferred.

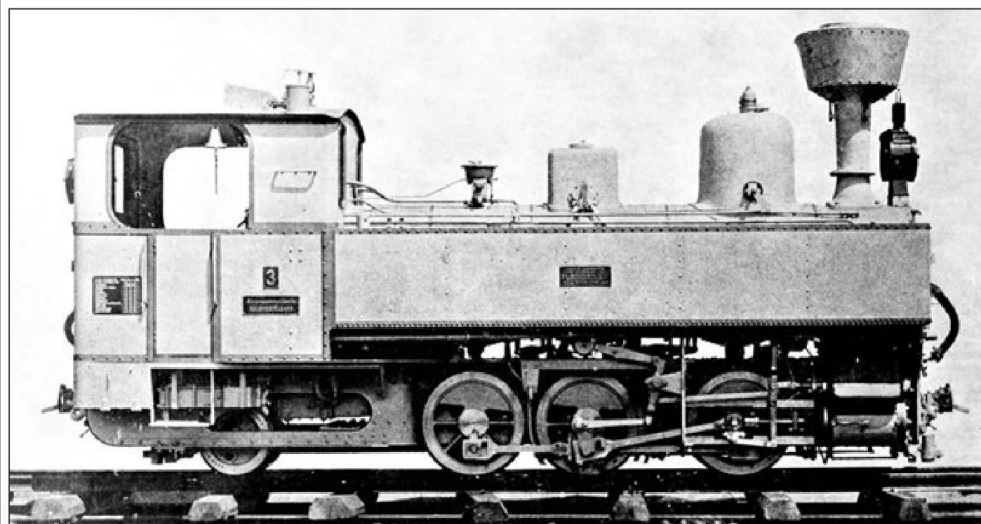
The U type was widely dispersed across the Austrian half of the Dual Monarchy, from the Split – Sinj railway down in Dalmatia to the Osobloha line in Moravia. Following the end of the First World War much of the territory of Austria-Hungary was ceded to successor sovereign states along with the locomotives that operated there. A new series of superheated U, constructed between 1928 and 1931 as the definitive Uh, was built partly to replace engines that had been lost.

Long-lasting locos

The appearance of the new Uh differed from Bh.1 and its non-superheated predecessors, with shorter side tanks and a more modern and purposeful look. The U, along with its derivatives, enjoyed an exceptionally long and successful career, with further changes to the locos and their appearance over the years. Large spark-arresting chimneys were perhaps the most noticeable of these, while U.38 of the StmLB was fitted with a Giesl ejector which did little to improve the loco's looks. The StmLB also rebuilt three of its locos with superheating.

The U type numbering system originally consisted of the class designation followed by a running number. There were some earlier renumberings, but the first completely new scheme was put in place after the 1938 Anschluss, when the state railway engines received a DRB number in the 99 78XX series. Final renumbering took place in 1953, when ÖBB gave them the class number 298.

The original Steyrtalbahn pre-U 0-6-2T design, finally totalling six machines, received the 298.1 designation while the Uv became the 298.2. The Uh was deemed sufficiently different to become class 498 while Bh.1, the 1905



Above: Works photo of Floridsdorf 1355 of 1900, seen here as no 3 of the Waldviertelbahn. Although all three of its branches survive with a heritage service, this loco was lost to Italy after the First World War.

Right: The headquarters of the Murtalbahn have always been at Murau, roughly halfway along the route. In this 1908 view an unidentified U waits to leave with a short mixed towards Unzmarkt.

Both photos: Keith Chester collection

superheated prototype, became the sole member of class 398.

It is worth adding that the U has also become globally familiar in the shape of LGB's celebrated model in G scale (1:22.5 on 45mm gauge track). Available over the years in

several variants it is a stalwart of many a garden railway.

On the Zillertalbahn

The U class could be seen in service on many of the 760mm gauge lines around Austria as well as further »





afield, but for British enthusiasts the type was particularly associated with two lines, the Zillertalbahn (ZB) and the Steyrtalbahn.

The ZB, running for 32km from the mainline junction of Jenbach into the heart of the Alps at Mayrhofen,

needs little introduction. The valley it serves has long been popular with both summer and winter visitors, while the railway itself first came to the wider attention of British enthusiasts as early as 1959 with the publication of *Narrow Gauge*



Above: No doubt which line this photo was taken on. Unique superheated Bh.1 (Krauss, Linz 5330/1905) approaches Murau with a special through the short tunnel to the west of the station. Photo: Keith Chester

Left: Charm of the Austrian narrow gauge. 298.52 (Krauss, Linz 3710/1898) and 298.56 (Floridsdorf 1354 of 1900) wait outside the Steyrtalbahn's soot-blackened shed at Garsten.

Below: Loco 298.56 glints in the morning sun at Garsten.



Railways of Europe by Peter Allen and Pat Whitehouse. The book's photographs show the 0-6-2Ts, then without their spark-arresting chimneys, working long passenger trains. Even in the mid-1950s a diesel railcar helped out and over the years diesel locomotives and railcars gradually took over regular services. Steam never completely went away, though, and there is still one return special from Jenbach to Mayrhofen most days in the summer season.

Both of the ZB's early U class locos survive along with the later Uv, though no 1 'Raimund' is a static exhibit in a Jenbach museum. The other two continue to work on the line, except when no 2 is fighting the gradients at Welshpool, and are assisted by Uh.5 'Gerlos', built for the ZB by Krauss, Linz (1521 of 1930) This was the last locomotive to be constructed at Linz before the factory's closure. A further Krauss, Linz product, 83 class 0-8-2 6035 of 1909, originally built for Bosnia, is on hand to help out should today's very long tourist trains be too heavy for a U.

Although the ZB runs through some very spectacular Alpine scenery, from an enthusiast's point of view it is not the most interesting of routes. The Ziller Valley is wide, flat and busy – a key aim behind the four-car hydrogen-powered multiple units currently on order for the ZB from Stadler is to increase rail's market share – and there are no significant gradients. Allen and Whitehouse described the ZB as 'an interesting and charming little railway' and, while the former epithet remains indubitably true, perhaps modernisation has slightly diluted the line's charm.

The Steyrtalbahn

Undeniably charming until the day it closed was the Steyrtalbahn, which retains something of its atmosphere in preservation today. When the line opened on 20th August 1889, it ran just over 19km from Garsten, on the St Valentin – Klein Reifling main line, to Grünburg.

Garsten is a couple of kilometres south of the historic town of Steyr at the confluence of the Enns and Steyr rivers. The narrow gauge line joins and follows the Steyr valley after climbing round a sweeping horseshoe curve to reach its own station of Steyr Lokalbahn on the opposite side of town from the main line stop.

The railway was extended in two stages, finally reaching Klaus on the Linz – Selzthal main line in October 1909, continuing to follow the river all the way. The Garsten end of the line passed through a gentle

landscape of rolling hills, the route becoming more mountainous and the valley less populous the further south it went.

Austria and in particular its state railway, ÖBB, introduced narrow gauge diesel locomotives from an early date, but showed little enthusiasm for railcars until the arrival of the 5090 class in the mid-1980s. For line work the first 2091 class diesels were built in 1936 and, despite its relatively modern appearance, the 2095 class was introduced as early as 1958. Allen and Whitehouse included a complete list of Austrian narrow gauge routes in their book, indicating whether the motive power was steam or diesel, and even in 1959 the Steyrtalbahn was the only ÖBB adhesion narrow gauge line to remain all steam.

And so it continued until the line closed completely in 1982, having been cut back from Klaus to Molln in 1968 and then to Grünburg in 1980. Steam remained in sole command, the track being too light for diesels.

The line's original 0-6-2Ts, latterly class 298.1, were regular performers into the early 1970s, with the first examples of the U type arriving during the Second World War. The ex-U 298s gradually took over passenger operations completely, leading to the happy situation of a major European state railway relying on a fleet of steam locomotives more than 80 years old to operate the seven return passenger trips into the 1980s.

Familiarity with steam

One of the memories that stays with me most from the four or five visits I made to the line is of being at Steyr Lokalbahn before dawn on a winter morning, when the second train of the day arrived from the valley. This working was double-headed from Aschach and the two 298s came to a halt in an atmospheric swirl of steam, caught by the station lights. A surprisingly large number of passengers alighted and made their way off to work or school, paying as little attention to the train that had brought them to town as a Merseyrail commuter arriving in Liverpool. Such heavy loadings were the exception rather than the rule, though, and on many workings if the passengers did actually outnumber the crew it was often not by very many.

The Steyrtalbahn was not quite exclusively worked by 0-6-2Ts of one type or another. During the Second World War and after visitors included a 598 class 0-6-4T from the Ybbstalbahn and a German military 0-6-0 tender locomotive, later ÖBB class 798, as well as a former Uh class 498. In 1972 the parallels with



Above: 298.56 rounds the curve between Garsten yard and station with empty stock for an afternoon service to Molln. February 1975.

Below: ZB2 'Zillertal' heads for Coppice Lane crossing during its debut on the Welshpool & Llanfair at the Welsh line's Gala weekned, 31st August 2019. Photo: Andrew Charman

Uncredited photos in this feature by Donald Brooks, taken January 1979 except where stated

Welshpool became even stronger with the arrival of 0-8-0T 699.103 to work the daily freight. This was from the same batch of German military locos, built by Société Franco-Belge in 1944, as the engine that arrived in Wales in 1969 to become WLLR no 10 Sir Drefaldwyn.

In 1985, just three years after its closure by ÖBB, the 18km long section between Steyr Lokalbahn and Grünburg was reopened by Österreichische Gesellschaft für Eisenbahngeschichte (ÖGEG), the Austrian Society for Railway History, as a tourist railway. In 2020 ÖGEG was planning to operate a service, usually of three return trips, on summer Sundays and peak Saturdays, with more frequent trains on the Sundays before Christmas. Although the society owns three type U locomotives, none is currently operational and trains are likely to be hauled by the last of the original six Steyrtalbahn 0-6-2Ts no 6 'Klaus', built in 1914 and latterly ÖBB

298.106, or 1929 Uh.4, now carrying its ÖBB number 498.04.

The U/Uv type is in use, though, on other Austrian museum lines, including the Zillertalbahn, and can still be seen today working specials on the line for which it was first built – the Murtalbahn. Four of the class survive here, two of them serviceable, though as the scheduled workings operate between Murau and Tamsweg, the outer end of the route, it is not usually possible to see a U working out of Unzmarkt.

Of course once services resume following the Covid-19 pandemic it will be unnecessary to visit Austria to see a U in action. Just check whether Zillertal will be operating from Llanfair Caereinion (the online timetable at www.wllr.org.uk includes the planned motive power on operating days) and head for mid-Wales instead. **NGW**

■ The author thanks Keith Chester and Roland Beier for their generous help with information and photos.



Trompe l'Oeil...

What initially appears to be simply a highly-detailed 1/24th scale model of a US backwood line is actually the work of a very unconventional railway modeller, as *Bill Jolitz* discovers...



My first impression upon walking into Bob Roegge's Geneseo Railway: it's big and beautiful. My reaction upon hearing how he accomplished it: gobsmacked! Little is as it looks or would seem to be. How he constructed it all boggles the mind.

In Bob's words, the Geneseo is, "a fictional backwoods railway serving three small rural towns in 1927. With the advancements of the automobile and improvement of roadways, revenue has been declining.

"The equipment is aged and in poor condition – certainly, there is no consideration for any replacements. There is little money for anything beyond essential maintenance. Abandonment is a real possibility in the near future."

It is more of a tramway, featuring light industrial equipment running on 18-inch narrow gauge track. This 1/24th scale railroad is as laid back as the backwoods location would suggest. It has hand-laid track, scratch-built equipment and structures, and... scenery.

A long run

Full of character, the layout occupies three edges of a 17 x 40 foot room. That enables a 120-foot mainline of 16.5mm gauge track with a main yard and three towns, Maryville, Geneseo and Furness. Each town is separated by about 15 feet. For models it is a long way to travel.

Bob was introduced to model railways by his father long ago. A stint in the Armed Forces prevented any serious layout building but when he retired and settled, Bob's creativity was unleashed. He is in the hobby because he likes to build things that have a purpose, that he can use, that he can invite friends to operate.

Bob is a true natural artist. His imagination is extremely fertile, his intuition guides every decision. "I do not have the patience or skills to create a plan for anything," he says. "Consequently, everything is just laid out and built from my imagination. Sometimes things work out and remain, at other times the effort is scrapped.

"There was no track plan. I simply started laying out ties on the base and added rail. After trackage was down, I laid out buildings where there was room. A lot of selective compression was necessary in this large scale."

In effect, Bob is a master storyteller, as are all artists. Towns are his chapters, scenes are paragraphs and details are sentences. The Geneseo is a world of its own, completely convincing and compelling.

He is also an incredibly fast worker. Nothing takes more than a few days to complete. He built a basic freight car frame before my eyes in less than two minutes. Nothing he does is conventional.

Trackwork

All of the track on the layout is Code 83 rail hand-laid on balsa wood sleepers. Bob »



Left: The town of Geneseo looking 'south'. At front lies the locomotive servicing area. The turntable is made from a CD jewel case while the CD itself is overlaid with wood and rail. Because the entire railway is dead rail, Bob doesn't need to worry about how to power the tracks.

Above: The Decauville no 8 departs the town of Furniss – four cars is the normal length of a Geneseo Railway train. Behind is Furniss Manufacturing, maker of the newest, in 1927, modern conveniences – electric toasters and clothes irons. The structure is insulation foam board, bricks carved with a hacksaw blade.



Above: This semi-bucolic scene lies between Maryville and Geneseo. Clem pays no attention to "jest 'nother train" passing over the river.

Below: Engine servicing area in Geneseo. No 9 is a 3D printed Decauville superstructure powered by a Bachmann Percy mechanism. Behind is one of Bob's Critters, built of cereal box cardboard and balsa wood. Hidden inside is a battery and radio receiver.





Left: Carl's Auto Repair shows off Bob's work. Inner framework is Foamcore board, outside cereal box cardboard glued on with PVA adhesive. Windows are 3D printed, signs are commercially available, these sanded very thin, soaked in adhesive and pressed into place so that they look like they were painted directly on to the wall.



Building is glued to layout surface, ground cover worked on so the structure looks like it really is sitting in the ground. "I hate floating structures!" says Bob. Note clutter – Bob carefully selects suitable items, "slaps on some paint and plants 'em."

Above: Station between Geneseo and Furniss, typical of the painstaking detail. Oriental characters on standing bag show it must be rice from Japan or China. Bag of flour shows labelling typical of the late 1920s. Blackboard shows train arrivals and departures while two cartons are Bob's subtle 'revenge' toward rivet-counter types of modellers – 'R(ivet) Counter & Sons quality rivets. Sold by weight, not count'.

Below: Geneseo looking 'north.' Complex track arrangement appears deeply thought out, but isn't. Bob had no plan when he started – he laid out points and pieces of track until it looked right. Then he glued the sleepers, cut rail, made points and the crossing, glued down the rail, and result – it was that simple!



sets one rail in place with contact cement; "I do not own a track gauge or any type of jig for turnouts. I put down one rail and gauge the opposite with an HO truck."

There are turntables in every town made from CD jewel cases and a CD disc. Bob glues down some wood and rails, snaps the disc in place and it is ready.

Electrics – there are none, nary a single wire soldered to a rail. The locomotives carry their own power in batteries and receive commands via Del Tang radio control units.

Motive power

The steam locomotives, Bagnalls and Decauvilles, are 3D-printed superstructures from Shapeways to which Bob adds basic details and couplings. They are powered by 'Percy' 0-4-0 mechanisms from Bachmann's Thomas The Tank Engine range. To each he adds a battery and radio receiver for power and control.

He has a few gas-mechanical Critters. One is 3D printed while the rest are made from card and balsa, all powered by HO mechanisms with batteries and receivers.

As for the rolling stock – freight cars are made from cereal box cardboard, balsa wood and 3D printed. They run on 1/35th scale Gilpin tram trucks – On30 wheels place the car at a natural height. Where rivets are needed, Bob uses tiny drops of PVA glue.

The couplings closely parallel those on UK railways, being three-link chain. This goes over a vertical pin at the ends of each car. They are coupled and uncoupled using a shunting pole formed from an L-shaped piece of brass wire. Even for old eyes and shaky hands, it is easy to master.

Structures

All the structures on the layout are scratch built. Bob uses what he describes as cheap card stock – primarily cereal boxes. "Foam board with one side peeled off and carved to represent brick or stone... I seldom measure anything. I cut out almost all parts with scissors along lines I draw with a straight edge by eye.

"Bricks are likewise scored into foam with a straight edge by eye. I trust the viewer's eyes to be fooled by the overall scene and not look carefully at any specific thing to closely. They're detailed just enough to fool the eye."

One technique that has evolved has been the method of making windows and frames. Originally Bob used balsa wood. Then he changed to 3D-printed frames. Now he uses photographs, printed to size, cut out and pasted on.

Bob uses bits and bobs that he finds to make almost anything. For example to make the water standpipe, he employed pieces of his wife's diabetic syringe.

Scenic work

Landforms emerge from the foam insulation board Bob employs as the base. He makes good use of small hills to

partially hide trains. A couple of deeper valleys justify bridges.

Ground cover is plain old dirt – the grit that is scattered over icy places on roadways during the winter. It seems to accumulate in Bob's garage and once a year, he sweeps it up and treats it to eliminate any chemicals and small bugs that may be hiding within.

Everything else is conventional, including Woodland Scenics ground foam, unraveled twine, small paper plants, Plaster of Paris rock and artist's acrylic paint.

Clutter plays a big role – Bob is a master at junk/debris piles. Each one is very carefully crafted so they look like somebody's detritus. He takes his time to perfect each one.

Operation consists of trains running out-and-back, from an active fiddle yard to one of three towns. "Car movements are dictated by car cards which have destinations listed. A paperclip on the card edge marks the current destination. When picked up the paperclip is moved to the next destination on the card.

"The car is returned to the yard and the yard operator blocks the car in the next train to that destination's town. It is a Simple system with perpetual yet random movements and requires no staging or other preparation."

Bob describes it as a leisurely operation. In the typical three-hour session, an operator can run three to four trains.

Further progress

I visited the layout a year ago and much has changed since. Bob says he is fast and here is the proof. He broke through a wall to add a 13 x 17ft room extension. He tore out the previous owner's storage shelves, erected walls and a backdrop; installed a drop ceiling and lighting; erected benchwork; laid land forms; laid another 60 feet of mainline; added the town of Fahr and added another yard at Hyden.

Bob started work on 1st March, 2020. His first operating session was 40 days later. That's fast... During all this, he taught himself how to paint backdrops, so many scenes have an entirely different 'feel.'

Bob's closing thoughts; "Do what you want – do not feel constrained by the 'norms' of the hobby. Model railroading can be done very inexpensively and in any amount of space. The amount of operation and fun is not limited by space or scale – I model in 1/24th scale in less space than many HO-scale modelers." **NGW**

More Information

If you are a member of the online Narrow Gauge Railway Modelling society you can read the full story of Bob's efforts, especially the additions, at:

<https://ngm-online.com/index.php?forums/topic/25574-geneseo-railway/>

A large set of photos is on Flickr here: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/187093122@N07/49884026451/in/photostream/>

Top right: Sitting on the Maryville turntable, no 6 is a Bagnall Sipat-class steamer. The 3D-printed superstructure came without details and a powered chassis – Bob added fine detailing. As with other steam locos power is by a Bachmann Percy mechanism from the Thomas The Tank Engine series.



Centre right: Little no 4 is a 3-ton gas-mechanical Bagnall, again with a 3D-printed superstructure and powered by an HO-scale diesel switcher. It sits in the rather primitive Maryville shed.



Below: 'The Yard' just outside Maryville – simply four tracks that empty on to a turntable. Inbound trains pull into an empty track, uncouple, turn around and escape on another empty track. The driver will sort his cars by destination on other available tracks, and then his run is over.

All photos by Bill Jolitz



Further adventures in minimum scale

Ken Jones continues to be frustrated in his efforts in micro narrow gauge modelling on 6.5mm gauge track.

Back in *NGW* 139 in June 2019 I described my layout 'Yn y Coed twinned with Unter den Baumen' in Nn3 scale, 2mm to the foot on 6.5mm gauge track (used by a model railway scale known as Z). I've been looking for some passenger stock which hopefully will run on the layout, and I have found some 3D-printed ones designed by Kevin Knight in Australia and printed by Shapeways in Holland.

Kevin has also designed a 3D-printed 0-6-0 saddle tank body and I've bought one of these as well. You can find these models on the Shapeways website (www.shapeways.com/marketplace?type=product&q=n6.5) – view the items by Dark Side Railway Models.

The locomotive is designed to fit a Marklin 0-6-0 chassis or 2-6-2 chassis with the front pony truck removed.

The carriage bodies, meanwhile, are designed to fit onto the chassis used for Microtrains boxcars. The 3D-printed carriages can be bought separately or as a train which consists of two thirds and one brake-first. You can see the train running on Kevin's layout at www.youtube.com/watch?v=yXaATQrE2TM

As the picture shows Kevin has painted his set in LNER livery. He also has a 3D model of a tram locomotive available, similar to the Glyn Valley Tramway one offered by Peco, and is developing other ideas such as a four-wheeled carriage designed to go on a Japanese Z-gauge four-wheel boxcar chassis.

I already have a Kestrel kit running on a Microtrains chassis, but as the gradients on my layout have contributed to previous problems it remains to be seen whether I will get such a train to run. I've brought the layout out of hibernation and it is due to be at Zedex 2020 in Oxford in October, should that show go ahead.

Right: Nn3 scale 3D printed narrow gauge locomotive and carriages produced by Kevin Knight under the Dark Side Railway Models banner.

Below left: The basic 3D printed kit of the loco.

Bottom left: Loco body mounted on its chassis – Kevin has designed it to fit a Minitrix 0-6-0 chassis.

Below: 3D printed rake of carriage bodies as supplied.

All photos by Ken Jones

It would be nice to have a Nn3 passenger train running on the layout for part of the day.

Under trial

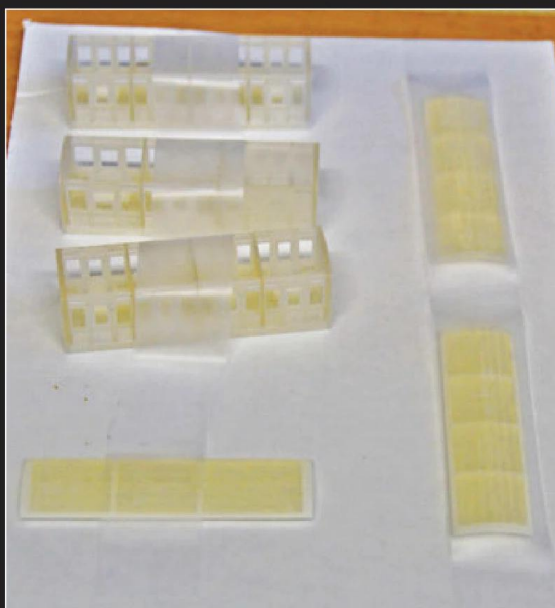
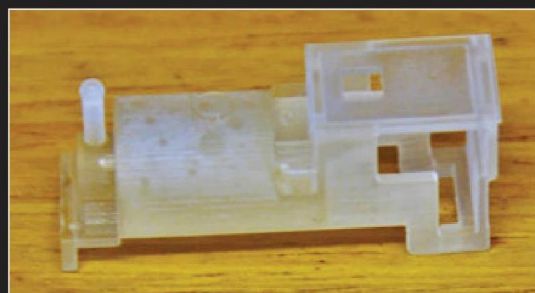
My first problem proved to be that the saddle tank did not fit neatly on the 0-6-0 chassis I had obtained for the job – making it fit would mean removing the buffers and there would be no point in doing that if it will not pull the train.

For my trial I used two spare Microtrains box cars, to represent the carriages. In the first trial the locomotive ran around the track on its own with no problem, but I was not expecting any as even my Peco whitmetal locomotives do that. The running also gave the loco a chance to warm up.

However trials with Microtrains bogie

wagons failed just like they had with my locomotive combining a Kestrel body on a weighted Graham Jones chassis. The rolling stock is too light and the bogies bounce off the track. Adding weights to counteract this tendency means that they cannot get up the incline. Trials were carried out with various wagons and double heading but the conclusion reached was that my layout isn't suited to Microtrains rolling stock.

However, the locomotive did pull two Marklin wagons around the layout and that might provide the solution – can I get a 3D Nn3 carriage to fit a Marklin chassis? While I try and find out, I'm meanwhile going to paint the Dark Side locomotive and remove the buffers from the chassis. **NGW**



"Trials were carried out with various wagons and double heading but the conclusion reached was that my layout isn't suited to Microtrains rolling stock..."

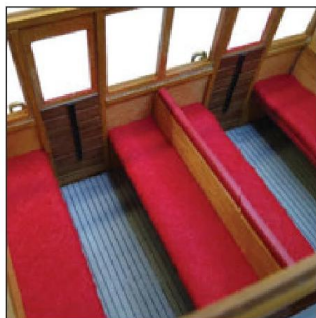


■ The new model selection is all large-scale this month and modellers of the Talyllyn Railway in 16mm scale certainly have things good at present. As well as the recent live-steam locos from Accucraft and a host of new rolling stock from I P Engineering, Coach and Wagon Works is releasing these ready-to-run models of the TR's original carriages nos 1, 2 and 3.

The vehicles include lining, details and handles and removable roofs to access the fully fitted interiors. They are distinctive from one another, the shorter length of no 3 accurately reproduced. Unlike the full-size ones, however, they have door handles on both sides!

Each carriage costs £225 with their wheels adjustable between 32mm and 45mm gauge.

Web: www.coachandwagon.works



■ Elsewhere Bole Laser Craft is adding to the Talyllyn options with this two-bar slate wagon. Made in ply with a styrene sheet floor, engraved with details, the model comes as a kit in 32mm gauge only, at £35.



■ Meanwhile those who model in the larger 7/8ths scale featured in *NGW* 148 may well be attracted to this ammunition van from the Woolwich Arsenal Railways, which were of course of 18-inch gauge and so perfectly suit 32mm gauge track in this scale. Laser-cut ply parts and 3D-printed details are in the kit which costs £65.



Web: www.bolelasercraft.com

■ It's another good month for garden scale rolling stock! From the Lineside Hut comes this modern Penrhyn Quarry tipping wagon – larger than the original tippers used in the slate galleries, these were also known as 'Devil' wagons. The 16mm scale model is supplied as a kit of laser-cut ply parts with Binnie wheels in either 32mm or 45mm gauge. The wagon can be built with its tipper working, and the tipper can be hooked into position while running for extra realism.



Web: www.thelinesidehut.co.uk

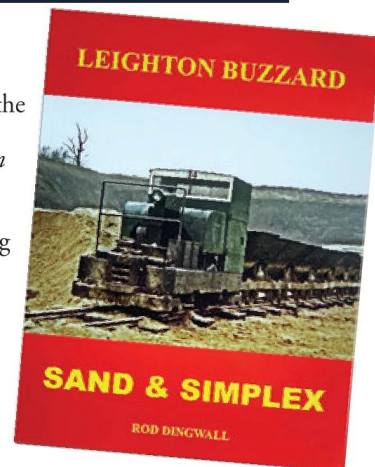
Sand & Simplex – Rod Dingwall

■ Rod Dingwall's personal history of the Leighton Buzzard Railway, which has already produced the two volumes *Iron Horse Railroad* and *Turbulent Times* reviewed in *NGW* 130 and 148, now offers this larger format album focusing on the line's days serving the extensive sand industrial operations of the area.

There are some 450 images in total in the book's 332 pages, selected from the extensive collection built up by Rod over the years. They progress up the line from Leighton Buzzard and include some old postcard views of the town, but mainly of the industrial operations and their locomotives – fans of Motor Rail's Simplexes will love this album...

Most pictures are in black and white but there are some very well-reproduced colour shots too, and while this is mainly a photographic album it does include some fascinating recollections from those employed in the sand industry.

For students of industrial narrow gauge the album is a must. Publication has been brought forward to help the railway navigate the Covid-19 challenges, but only 180 copies have been printed so if you want one you had better get in quick... *AC*



Published by Rod Dingwall, order by post for £30, cheque payable to Leighton Buzzard Narrow Gauge Railway and sent to Page's Park Station, Billington Road, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire LU7 4TN



The Lynton & Barnstaple Railway

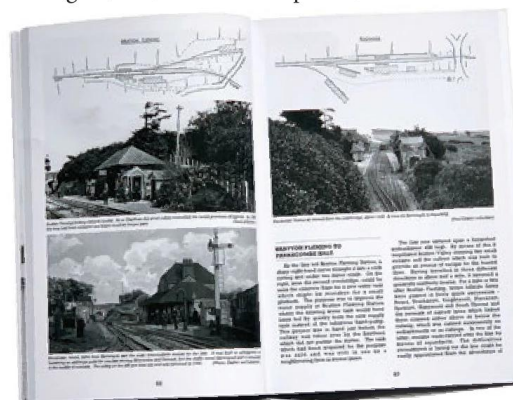
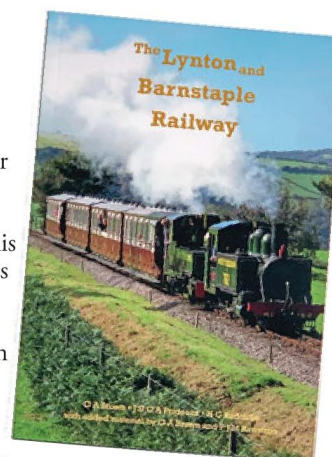
G A Brown, J D C A Prideaux, H G Radcliffe

■ This title, and its authors, will be familiar to many *NGW* readers, being the seminal history of the famed Devon line, first published in 1964 by David & Charles. This sixth edition bringing the story up to date is in the hands of the revived line's Surrey Support Group, with contributions from Group member Phil Rawstrom and Gordon Brown, the last of the original authors who sadly passed away in March while the book was in preparation.

Your editor believes that the L&B deserves the kind of large hardback history produced for other in some cases lesser lines, but this softback crams a lot into its 178 pages. Much of the original remains, including station plans, building elevations and rolling stock drawings, though admittedly to quite a small scale, while new material includes a detailed description of the line's revival, up to the arrival of the latest restored carriage in mid 2019.

At the price, the book is a bargain, and L&B fans in particular should snap it up. *AC*

ISBN 978-9552181-4-9
Published by Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Surrey Support Group
Available from the railway shop at Woody Bay station or online at:
www.lynton-rail.co.uk/shop/browse
Price £12.95 plus post



Talyllyn Railway – A Journey by Steam

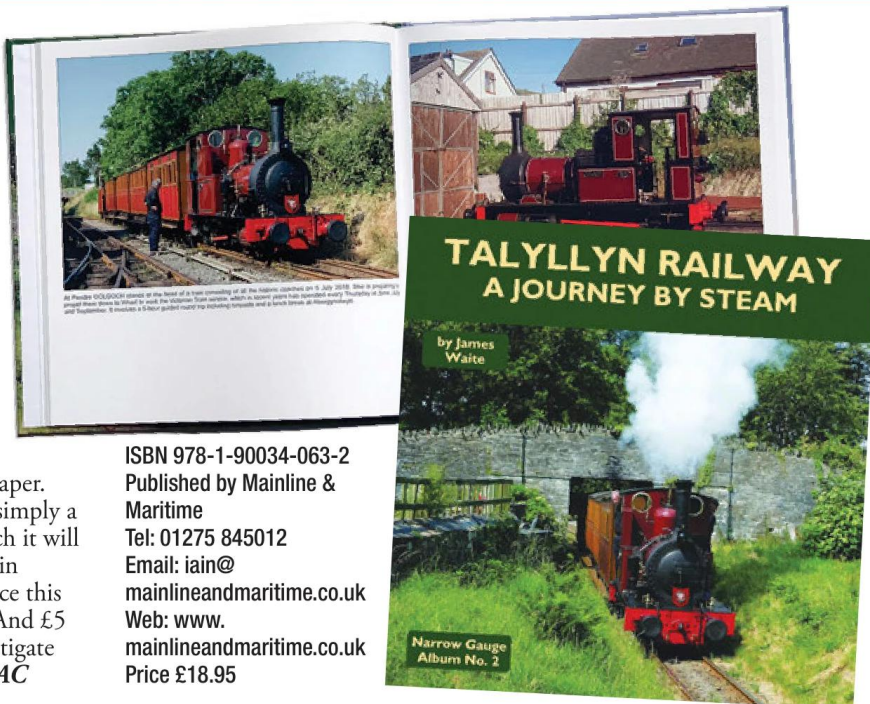
James Waite

■ Last month we reviewed the first of the photo albums published in very short order by Mainline & Maritime to help raise funds for various railways affected by the coronavirus pandemic, and the latest trio features on this page.

Regular *NGW* contributor James Waite has already described in this issue the thought process that went into his album on the Talyllyn Railway – the premise is simple, a journey along the line from Tywyn Wharf to Nant Gwernol, featuring pictures taken over the last 15 years or so.

The pictures in this hardback album are to the quality we are used to from James, and they are well produced, virtually all occupying full pages on high-standard glossy paper.

There's no great in-depth revelations to this album, it's simply a celebration of the line's appeal in sumptuous colour. As such it will be greatly enjoyed by Talyllyn fans, particularly those who in normal years would have already visited the line at least once this season but who instead have been forced to stay at home. And £5 from each sale is donated to the railway's fundraising to mitigate the effects of lost revenue due to the Covid-19 pandemic. *AC*



ISBN 978-1-90034-063-2
Published by Mainline & Maritime
Tel: 01275 845012
Email: ian@mainlineandmaritime.co.uk
Web: www.mainlineandmaritime.co.uk
Price £18.95

Tracks to the Trenches

Moseley Railway Trust

■ This inexpensive softback landscape A5 album from Mainline & Maritime focuses on three of the most memorable Galas of recent times, staged by the Moseley Railway Trust at its Apedale site in Staffordshire in 2014, 2016 and 2018 under the umbrella title of 'Tracks to the Trenches'. The First World War theme was certainly highlighted at these events, not just in the rail stock of resident and visiting steam and i/c locos, running on the Apedale mainline and the 'field railway' reminiscent of a front-line system, but also the costumed re-enactors, soldiers' encampments, a recreated trench, tanks...

The album does a very good job of providing an appropriate pictorial souvenir of these events, and while all the pictures, again reproduced to high quality, are of rail-related aspects, they are pictured very much in the well-created period environment.

There is a lot to enjoy in this album, and again each sale will generate £2 for the Moseley Railway Trust's ever-developing activities at Apedale. *AC*



ISBN 978-1-90034-069-4
Published by Mainline & Maritime, contact details as above
Price £10.95

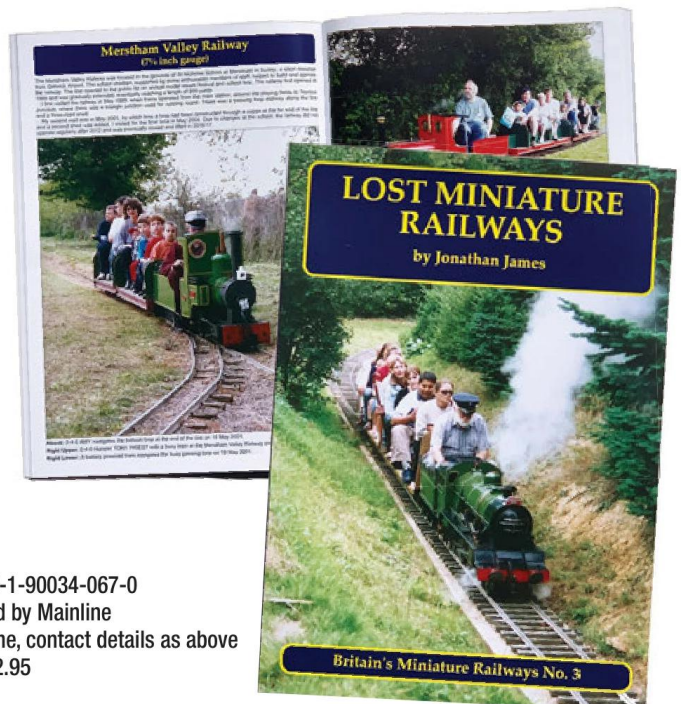
Lost Miniature Railways

Jonathan James

■ In many respects this album falls 'below the bottom end' of *NGW*'s remit, or at least dips into our modelling section, featuring small-scale lines some worked by standard-gauge scale locomotives. But it is also in some respects the most interesting of this selection, as it features lines that performed an appreciated role in their time but which have passed into history.

Compiled by Jonathan James, another photographer whose work regularly appears in *NGW*'s pages, the A4 format softback is notable for the variety of lines, some 37 in all, that are included in its 60-plus pages. Some will without doubt spark memories for readers – your editor, for example, found it poignant viewing three large shots of the 7¼-inch gauge Merstham Valley Railway, which ran round a school in Surrey only seven or miles away from where he was brought up, and which was a required element to enjoy during the annual Garden Railway Show held at the school. Sadly the show ended a few years ago and the railway, shorn of its annual starring role, was lifted as recently as 2016-17.

If you like miniature railways you will enjoy this and again you will be helping a line. In this case that great survivor, the 12¼-inch gauge Fairbourne Railway, will receive £4 from each copy sold.



ISBN 978-1-90034-067-0
Published by Mainline & Maritime, contact details as above
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Not what it tried to be...

With reference to the article by Martyn G Davies on page 48 of *NGW* 149 regarding the loco plinthed by the roadside near Kalavryta in Greece. After looking at the photo in close detail I was suspicious of the authenticity of this exhibit. For instance the wheels look more like items obtained from the local motor vehicle scrap yard!

I discussed the matter with James Waite, who saw it during a visit to the area in 2018. Having made enquiries he was informed that it was a two-thirds scale 'replica' built up from assorted items by the owner of the land where it is located. It was very loosely based on one of the original Diakofto-Kalavryta locos - loosely being a very apt description! The origin of the 'Système ABT' plate remains a mystery.

All the original six rack and adhesion locos from the line are still extant. Cail no.1 is based at Kalavryta in working order, Cail no.3 is displayed on a plinth alongside the station at Diakofto. Cail nos 2 and 5 plus Krupp no.11 are stored in a secure compound a short distance from the station while Cail no.4 is on show in the Athens Railway Museum.

So unfortunately on this occasion Martyn didn't discover a historic survivor from the railway.

John Organ

Andrew C replies: Yes on first viewing the provenance of the loco's 'wheels' looked rather familiar but we knew our readers would supply more useful information! Thanks to John and others who wrote in.

Mallet return – again

I was very interested to read James Waite's article in *NGW* 149 about the return to steam of metre gauge Portuguese Mallet no E214. This was not however the first time that E214 has been restored to steam since it was withdrawn by



Portuguese Railways back in the early 1970s.

The loco was first restored in the early 2000s and worked a number of charter trains for the Portuguese Traction Group. The photo I've enclosed (*see above - Ed*) shows the engine with a PTG special at Povoacao station, on the 'Congo' line between Regua and Villa Real, on a very wet 22nd October 2002.

These engines were the staple motive power on this line for almost 50 years. In May 1998 a friend and I found nine derelict Mallets, but not E214, still stored at Regua almost 30 years later. Several of these have since been preserved but sadly the 'Congo' line, which once extended to Chaves, closed altogether in 2009.

James' article also mentioned the strict security around the loco yard in 2019. In 1998 my friend and I wandered at will around the locos at Regua, but as it was lunchtime perhaps any security guards were having their siesta!

When we tried to do the same at

Above: Portuguese Mallet in action on a PTG special in 2002 – see the letter from Phil Horton.

Below left: The 'wheels' on this Greek mystery engine clearly have a road, rather than rail provenance... See John Organ's letter on this page.

Below: Clear social distancing visible on the open carriage of the Fairbourne Railway's first post lockdown train on 14th July, see the letter from R Snowdon.

the Contumil depot at Porto, where broad gauge CP 4-6-0 no 248 is plinthed, we were soon apprehended by security guards who duly escorted us to the nearby station and then waited until we got on the next train back to Porto.

Phil Horton

Hampshire tramway info?

During a walk today from Bucklers hard to Beaulieu in Hampshire, we stumbled upon the old estate brickworks, which is now a fine private house complete with the old chimney.

The information panel nearby shows a tramway from the clay pit to the west down to the works (which closed in 1935) but we found no trace of it at all. Has anyone heard of it or got any information on it?

Patrick Ridley-Martin

Andrew C replies: Anyone with information please send into the editorial address in the usual way – details on page 3.



Minimum gauge taking lead

In recent days we have at last enjoyed the spectacle of the UK's narrow gauge coming back to life, and I have been struck by how the return to normality has been led to a great extent by our narrower lines, 15-inch gauge and under.

Now obviously I realise that on these smaller lines it has been just a little easier to incorporate some of the various restrictions that have been necessary to allow the trains to run again.

On a 15-inch gauge line, for example, a carriage compartment will usually only accommodate three or four people so it is somewhat of a simpler task to restrict each one to an individual group, such as a family, and to take every second compartment out of use. Cutting train capacity by only half rather than two thirds as some of the larger lines have suggested is I imagine less draconian and more likely to ensure that each individual train is worth operating in terms of revenue.

Despite this, I believe the operators of our narrower gauge railways are worthy of praise for all the efforts they have made to get back to running – your detailed analysis last month of the measures the Bure Valley had to undertake before being able to reopen shows just how hard the staff of these lines have had to work in recent weeks.

I know there are narrow gauge enthusiasts that look down on those lines of 15-inch gauge and under, dismissing them as miniature playthings. I don't subscribe to that view, and I think right now they are particularly worthy of praise.

R Snowdon

Andrew C replies: You won't find any downwards looking here Mr Snowdon! In the **NGW** editorial office we believe the minimum gauge lines are as worthy of coverage in our pages as any other line whose rails are less than four feet eight and a half inches apart.

And yes we fully agree with you – the whole of the narrow gauge movement has certainly stepped up to the plate in their efforts to return to normality, and the smaller-gauge lines have been right there alongside their more prominent sisters.

Do you have a narrow gauge point to make, a question to ask or something interesting from railway history to tell us about? Send your letter to andrew.charman@warnersgroup.co.uk or to the editorial office at 12 Maes Gwyn, Llanfair Caereinion, Powys SY21 0BD

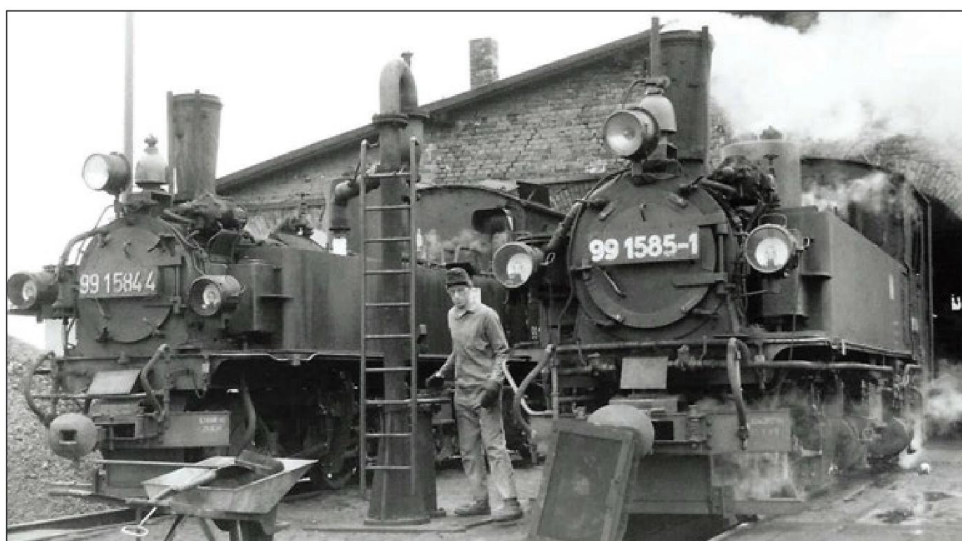
From a Different age...



■ The Covid-19 lockdown has been immensely challenging for many but there have been some small positives too, not least many narrow gauge enthusiasts suddenly having some time on their hands to delve into their picture archives and bring period material back into the light of day.

These three pictures were sent in by *Mick Bass*, who tells us they were taken in East Germany in 1990, "so post wall coming down and pre first election." Mick adds that the Meyer above is at Gorlitz workshop post rebuild on the test track, still with all the calculations chalked on its side. The other two shots come from the Oschatz Muglen system, with its double-headed rollwagon trains.

Fascinating pics – and if you have rediscovered something equally interesting in recent weeks, why not send in a copy to us for fellow readers to enjoy?



That was the year that...

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

From 40 years ago

Work starts on FR's Peckett

The Festiniog Railway (*sic*) has recently moved the long-neglected Peckett (2050/44) into the Boston Lodge erecting shop for work to start on restoring the locomotive to working order. At present plans are to carry out the least amount of work required to steam the locomotive so that an assessment of its service capabilities and requirements can be made. Restoration to full service standards will depend on the results of the service trials. (NGN, July 1980)

This plan did not last long – it was soon concluded the former Harrogate Gasworks 0-6-0ST was unsuitable for the FR and work never reached a point where it could be steamed. In 1987 it was sold to the Bredgar & Wormhill Railway in Kent, where restoration was completed, and it was then acquired by Graham Lee of Statfold Barn. 'Harrogate' is now a regular performer both at Statfold open days and visiting other lines, including, in 2012, the Ffestiniog...



Photo: Andrew Charman

Reseau Guerledan Stock offered for sale

An outstanding selection of miniature railway steam locomotives and equipment has recently been advertised by Milner Engineering, of Higher Kinnerton, Chester.

Acting on behalf of clients the company are offering the entire locomotive roster, rolling stock and ancillary equipment of the erstwhile Reseau Guerledan. This package consists of 12¼-inch gauge steam locomotives as follows;

Replica Darjeeling-Himalayan 0-4-0ST (Milner)
Replica Lynton & Barnstaple 2-6-2T (Curwen)
Replica Leek & Manifold LR 2-6-4T (Milner)
Replica Welsh Highland LR 0-6-4T (Curwen)
Replica D&RGW Galloping Goose PRC (Curwen)
30 coach-built carriages, 6 kilometres of new track and turnouts, freight rolling stock and much sundry equipment.

(A separate story in the news pages of NGN added...) The company is also offering for sale the following locos;
Fairbourne Railway 4-6-2 'Ernest W Twining', 15-inch gauge, ex Dudley Zoo MR

4-6-2 + 2-6-4 Garratt locomotive, based on EAR 59 class, 7¼-inch gauge, built 1979 and never steam since completion.

The company stress the point that all these locomotives are offered on behalf of clients and request enquiries from parties seriously interested in what is after all one of the biggest miniature railway steam offerings for some years. (NGN, July 1980)

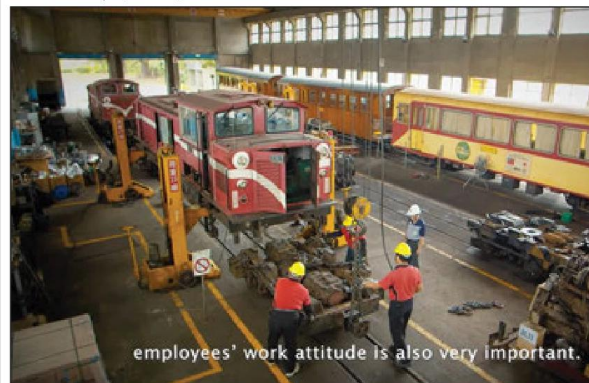
A notice that few at the time could predict would spell the end for the 15-inch gauge era of the Fairbourne Railway. The 'client' was John Ellerton, who had tried to set up a railway on a metre-gauge trackbed in France. It opened in the face of local opposition in 1978 and closed in the following year. Mr Ellerton did not sell off his stock – he kept it in storage and after buying the Fairbourne Railway in 1984, he converted it into the 12¼-inch gauge form that it runs today.

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



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. If you've seen a clip that our readers would enjoy, why not send in the link?



employees' work attitude is also very important.

<https://youtu.be/vWvpOjx0Q>

An excellent 20-minute promotional film from the Alishan Forest Railway in Taiwan, in Mandarin but with English subtitles, shows many behind-the-scenes views of the railway, focusing on the staff that run it – there is much more here than a typical promo video.



www.youtube.com/watch?v=XUwX84eY2Kc&feature=youtu.be

This 50-minute video could well leave you jealous! It's a private and very extensive 12-inch gauge line in Australia, which doesn't open to the public. With something like this to play on lockdown might not have been such a drag...

Miniature Railways

- **Audley End Railway** (10.25in): Essex 01799 541354, www.audley-end-railway.co.uk Daily services
- **Beer Heights Light Railway** (7.25in): Devon 01297 21542, www.pecorama.co.uk Closed throughout 2020.
- **Lappa Valley Railway** (15, 10.25, 7.25in): Cornwall 01872 510317, www.lappavalley.co.uk Daily from 10am.
- **Littlehampton Miniature Railway** (12.25in): Sussex www.littlehamptonminiaturerailway.com Closed until further notice
- **Moors Valley Railway** (7.25in): Hants 01425 471415, www.moorsvalleyrailway.co.uk Daily services
- **North Bay Railway, Scarborough** (20in): Yorks 01723 368791, www.nbr.org.uk Open daily from 10.30am
- **Rhyl Miniature Railway** (15in): Clwyd 01352 759109, www.rhylminiaturerailway.co.uk Open 'most days', see website

Tramways

- **Douglas Horse Tramway**: Isle of Man, 01624 662525, www.rail.im/ No reopening date currently announced.
- **Great Orme Tramway**: Conwy 01492 577877, www.greatormetramway.co.uk No reopening date announced.
- **Manx Electric Railway**: Isle of Man 01624 662525, www.rail.im Open Saturday to Tuesday plus Friday 28th August.
- **Seaton Tramway**: Devon 01297 20375, www.tram.co.uk Daily services, every 20 minutes from 10am.
- **Snaefell Mountain Railway**: Isle of Man 01624 662525, www.rail.im No reopening date currently announced.

Railways open up, but check carefully for travel details

We are delighted to print a diary page in this issue for the first time in 2020 as lines begin to reopen in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Listed below are organisations that by the time we went to press on 17th July had confirmed plans to open in August. **Please note** – a line not being on the list below does not necessarily mean it will not be open, but that plans were not announced by our deadline. Check the website and social media feeds of lines concerned for latest updates – we will also publish all the latest information we receive on *NGW*'s social media feeds, see page 3 for details.

It is essential that anyone planning to visit a railway checks on the line's website before travelling for latest news. Timetables may change at short notice, many are operating via pre-booked tickets only to control numbers and provide Covid-19 traceability, while there will also be other restrictions in place – some lines for example are not operating over their full length.

Subject to ensuring you stay safe, please visit the railways if you can – they very much need your custom...



David Nelson-Brown and his family team at the 15-inch gauge Perrygrove Railway in the Forest of Dean are delighted to be running trains again after more than three months of lockdown, now they need plenty of people to visit them.

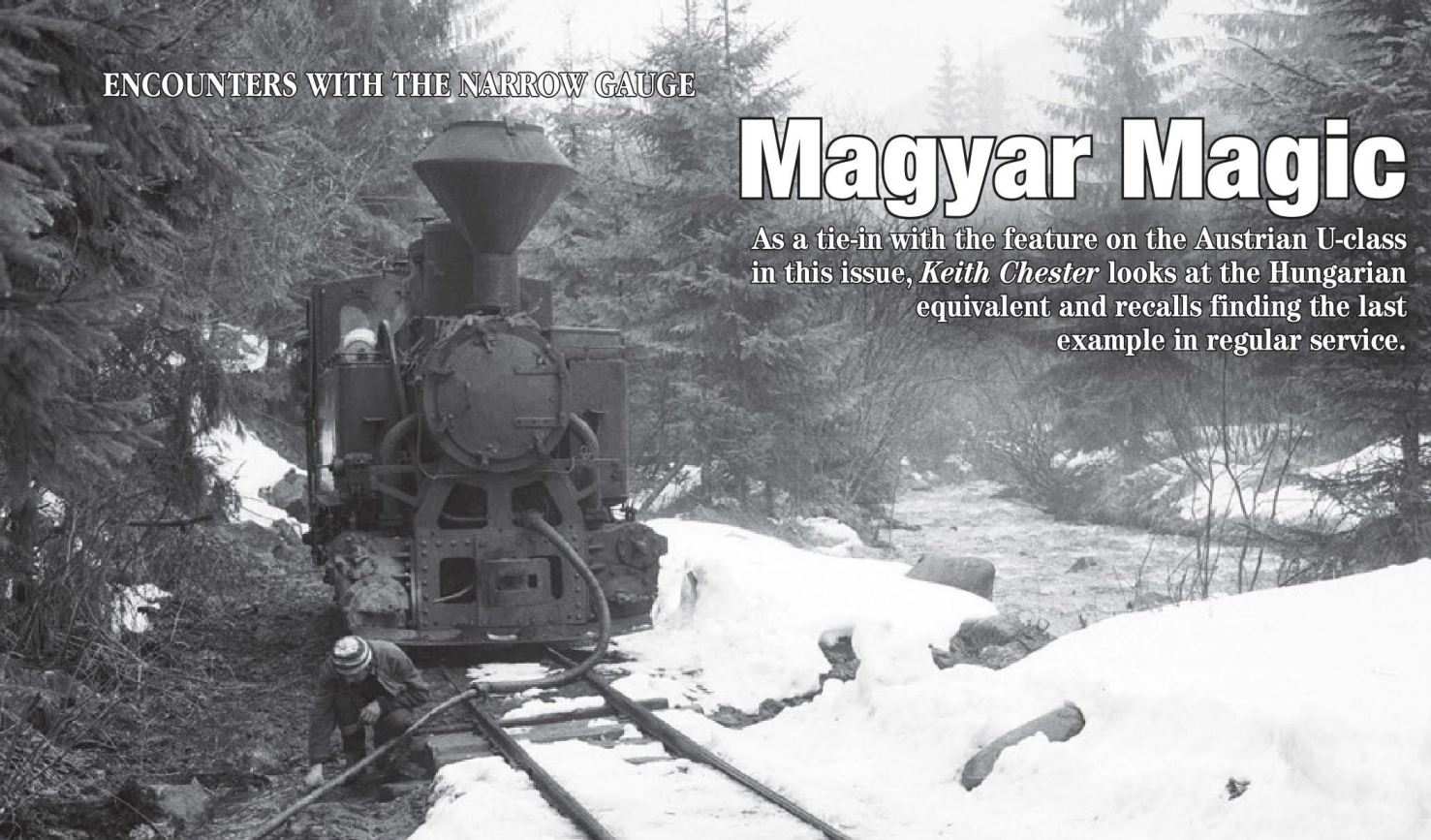
Photo: Perrygrove Railway

What's On

	Sat 1st	Sun 2nd	Mon 3rd	Tue 4th	Wed 5th	Thu 6th	Fri 7th	Sat 8th	Sun 9th	Mon 10th	Tue 11th	Wed 12th	Thu 13th	Fri 14th	Sat 15th	Sun 16th	Mon 17th	Tue 18th	Wed 19th	Thu 20th	Fri 21st	Sat 22nd	Sun 23rd	Mon 24th	Tue 25th	Wed 26th	Thu 27th	Fri 28th	Sat 29th	Sun 30th	Mon 31st
Amberley Museum: 01798 831370 www.amberleymuseum.co.uk																															
Amerton Railway: 01785 850965 www.amertonrailway.co.uk																															
Apedale Valley Rly: 0845 094 1953 www.avlr.org.uk																															
Bala Lake Railway: 01678 540666 www.bala-lake-railway.co.uk																															
Bressingham: 01379 686900 www.bressingham.co.uk																															
Bure Valley Railway: 01263 733858 www.bvrw.co.uk																															
Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway 01472 604657 www.cclr.co.uk																															
Evesham Vale Light Rly: 01386 422282 www.evlr.co.uk																															
Exbury Gardens Railway: 023 80891203 www.exbury.co.uk																															
Fairbourne Railway: 01341 250362 www.fairbournerrailway.com																															
Ffestiniog Railway: 01766 516000 www.festrail.co.uk																															
Groule Glen Railway: 01624 670453 www.ggr.org.uk																															
Hayling Seaside Rly: 07775 696912 www.haylingrailway.com																															
Heatherslaw Light Rly: 01890 820317 www.heatherslawlightrailway.co.uk																															
Isle of Man Steam Rly: 01624 663366 www.gov.im/publictransport																															
Kirklees Light Rly: 01484 865727 www.kirkleeslightrailway.co.uk																															
Leek & Rudyard Railway: 01538 306704 www.lrsr.org																															
Llanberis Lake Rly: 01286 870549 www.lake-railway.co.uk																															
Lynton & Barnstaple Railway: 01598 763487 www.lynton-rail.co.uk																															
Perrygrove Railway: 01594 834991 www.perrygrove.co.uk																															
Ravenglass & Eskdale Rly: 01229 717171 www.ravenglass-railway.co.uk																															
Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Rly 01797 362353, www.rhdr.org.uk																															
Ruislip Lido Railway: 01895 622595 www.ruislipidorailway.org																															
Sittingbourne & Kemsley Railway: 01795 424899, www.sklr.net																															
Snowdon Mountain Rly: 0870 450 0033 www.snowdonrailway.co.uk																															
Talylyn Railway: 01654 710472 www.talylyn.co.uk																															
Threlkeld Msm: 01768 779747, www. threlkeldquarryandminingmuseum.co.uk																															
Wells Walsingham Rly: 01328 711630 www.wwlr.co.uk																															
Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway 01938 810441, www.wlfr.co.uk																															
West Lancashire Light Railway 01772 815881, www.westlancs.org																															
KEY Trains (steam or diesel), Special events, No trains	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Magyar Magic

As a tie-in with the feature on the Austrian U-class in this issue, *Keith Chester* looks at the Hungarian equivalent and recalls finding the last example in regular service.



The political compromise reached between Austria and Hungary in 1867 established the two countries as independent units with a few common institutions. Railways in the two halves of the Habsburg Monarchy operated entirely separate of each other and two highly distinctive, distinguished schools of locomotive design developed.

The 760mm gauge railways of Bosnia-Herzegovina, first opened in 1879, demonstrated the viability of this gauge as an economical alternative to 1435mm (standard gauge). First in Hungary, and then in Austria, narrow gauge railways began to proliferate. However, one of the common institutions of 1867 was the Ministry of War and this insisted that the so-called Bosnian gauge should be the standard format throughout the Dual Monarchy to allow the easy transfer of locomotives and rolling stock in the event of war.

It took the Hungarians a bit longer than the Austrians to hit upon a standard 760mm gauge design but, after some false starts with 0-6-2T and 0-8-0T variants, this emerged in 1905. That year the Budapest

locomotive works supplied three of its type 70 0-8-0Ts to the Gurghiu forestry railway in Transylvania; two went to the MÁV state railways in 1906, where they were designated class 490 in 1911. With the extra coupled axle they were more powerful engines than the Austrian U-class 0-6-2Ts but achieved flexibility by using Klien-Lindner axles. In service the type 70s proved very successful and 41 had been delivered by 1914.

The foresight of the Austro-Hungarian military was demonstrated during the Great War. Many U and 490-class locomotives were requisitioned and dispatched to various fronts, and seven additional 0-8-0Ts were ordered for military use in 1916. The breakup of the Monarchy in 1918 saw the type 70 scattered throughout Central Europe, with survivors in Hungary, Yugoslavia, Romania, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Italy.

Fascist Hungary regained many territories in Transylvania in 1940. To meet the renewed demand for narrow

Above: CFF no 764-348 (MÁVAG 5859/1950) was found on a cold and damp 7th April 1993 taking water from a stream on the Lapusna forestry railway. Photo: Keith Chester

Below left: The first type 70 (Bp 1810/1905) was supplied to the Görgényivölgyi Erdei Vasút forestry system.

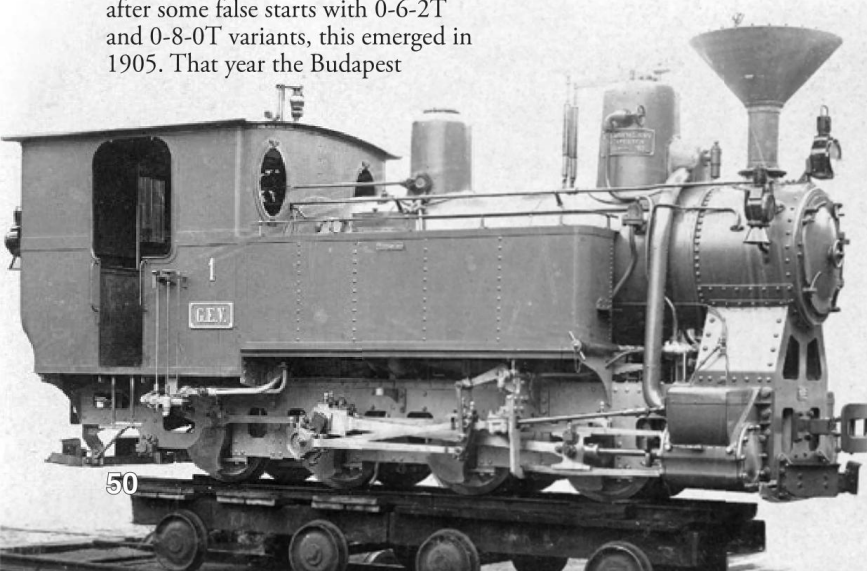
Below: MÁV no. 490,013 (Bp 2853/1912) was sent to the Balkans in the Great War and remained in Yugoslavia after 1918, being renumbered JDŽ 81-003 in 1933. Both photos: Keith Chester collection

gauge locos an enlarged version of the type 70 was introduced in 1942. Some 90 were built up to 1950, initially for the MÁV and industrial systems, then after 1945 as reparations to Yugoslavia and the USSR, and commercially to Romania.

Forest survivors

Nearly all of these modernised 0-8-0Ts had disappeared by the mid-1980s apart from a few from the 1950 batch working on forestry railways in Romania. The last in regular service seems to have been CFF no 764-348 at Lapușna, which by a delicious twist of fate was a branch of the old Görgényivölgyi Erdei Vasút, the forestry railway to which the first type 70 had been delivered in 1905.

Public access to this area was for long only with a special permit as it was near one of Nicolae Ceaușescu's hunting lodges. When we went in April 1993, more than three years after the dictator's fall, the guard post was still manned but we were simply waved through. We were happy to find our prey in steam. **NGW**





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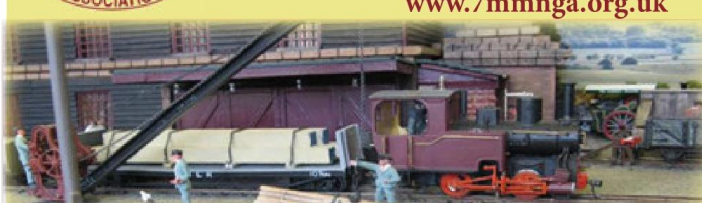
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