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NARROW GAUGE WORLD

ISSUE 157
JUNE 2021



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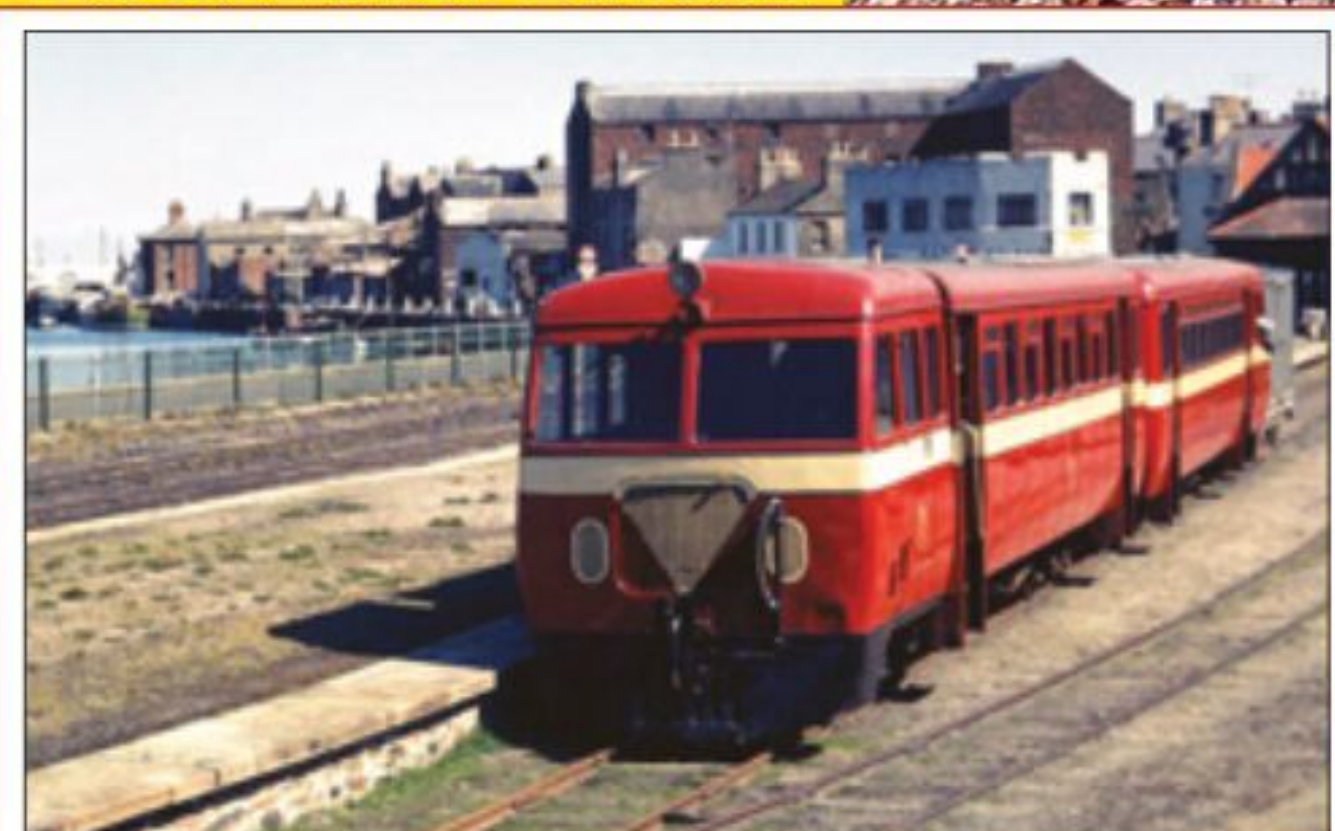
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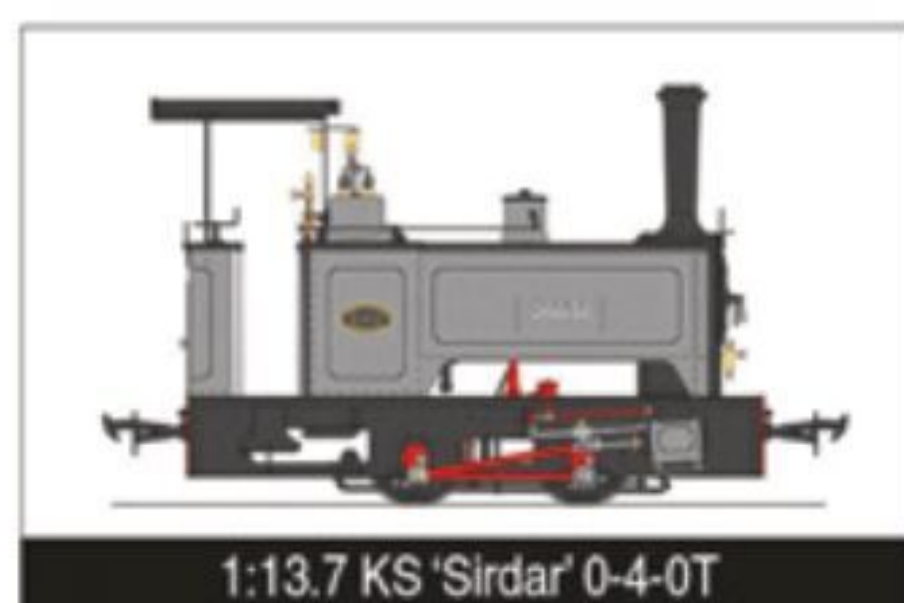
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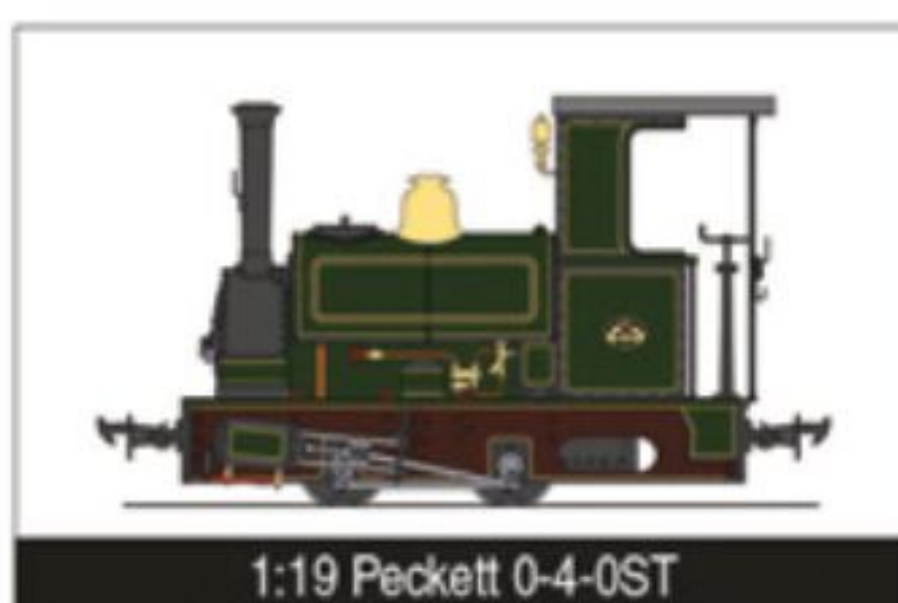
As soon as we had a chance to run *Dolgoch* last year we realised that the design brief for this small locomotive had produced an almost perfect balance of performance and duration and, having instinctively avoided some of the smaller designs, the possibilities for new engines were now numerous. With Talylllyn No.1 designed and signed off we immediately re-drew our 7/8ths" Quarry Hunslet as a 16mm model, a design whose characteristics are much the same as the TR models and should prove to be a real crowd-pleaser.



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1:13.7 KS 'Wren' 0-4-0ST



1:19 Quarry Hunslet 0-4-0ST



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TEL: 01981 241380

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PUBLISHER
Steve Cole
stevec@warnersgroup.co.uk

EDITOR
Andrew Charman
12 Maes Gwyn, Llanfair Caereinion, Powys,
SY21 0BD. Tel: 01938 810592
Email: andrew.charman@warnersgroup.co.uk

FEATURES EDITOR
David Joy
Email: dawjoy1@gmail.com

DESIGN & PRODUCTION
Andrew Charman

GROUP ADVERTISING MANAGER
Bev Machin
Tel: 01778 392055
Email: bev@warnersgroup.co.uk

SALES EXECUTIVE
Hollie Deboo
Tel: 01778 395078
Email: hollie.deboo@warnersgroup.co.uk

AD PRODUCTION
Allison Mould
Tel: 01778 395002
Email: allison.mould@warnersgroup.co.uk

SUBSCRIPTIONS

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Cover: Best news of 2021 so far is that many lines are operating again and so excellent photos of the narrow gauge in action are again coming into the *NGW* offices! Typical is this delightful image from the Kirklees Light Railway, the recently overhauled 1987-built 2-6-2T 'Fox', heading for Clayton West on the 15-inch gauge line on 17th April.

Photo Mark Allatt

NARROW GAUGE WORLD is published nine times per year.

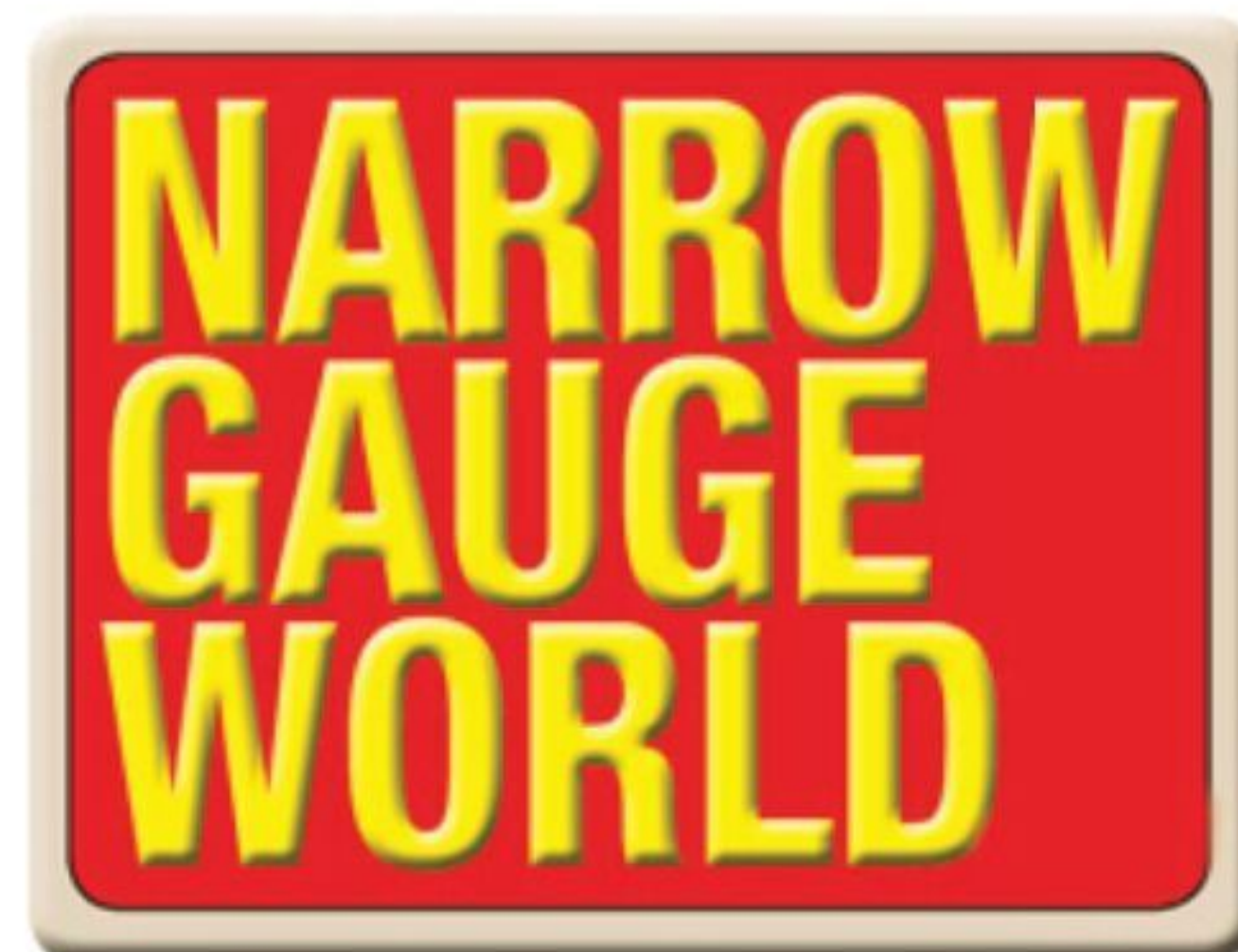
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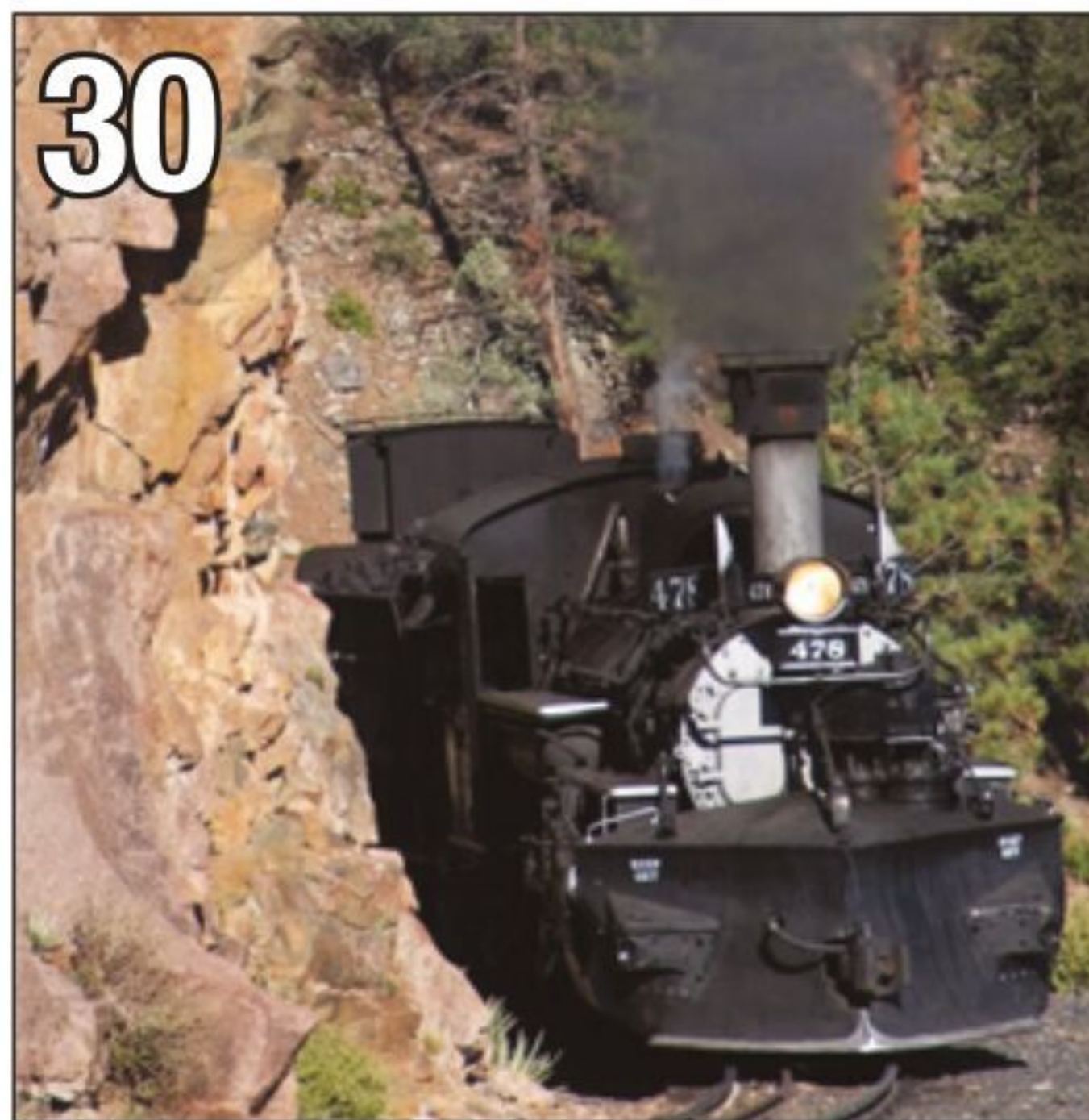
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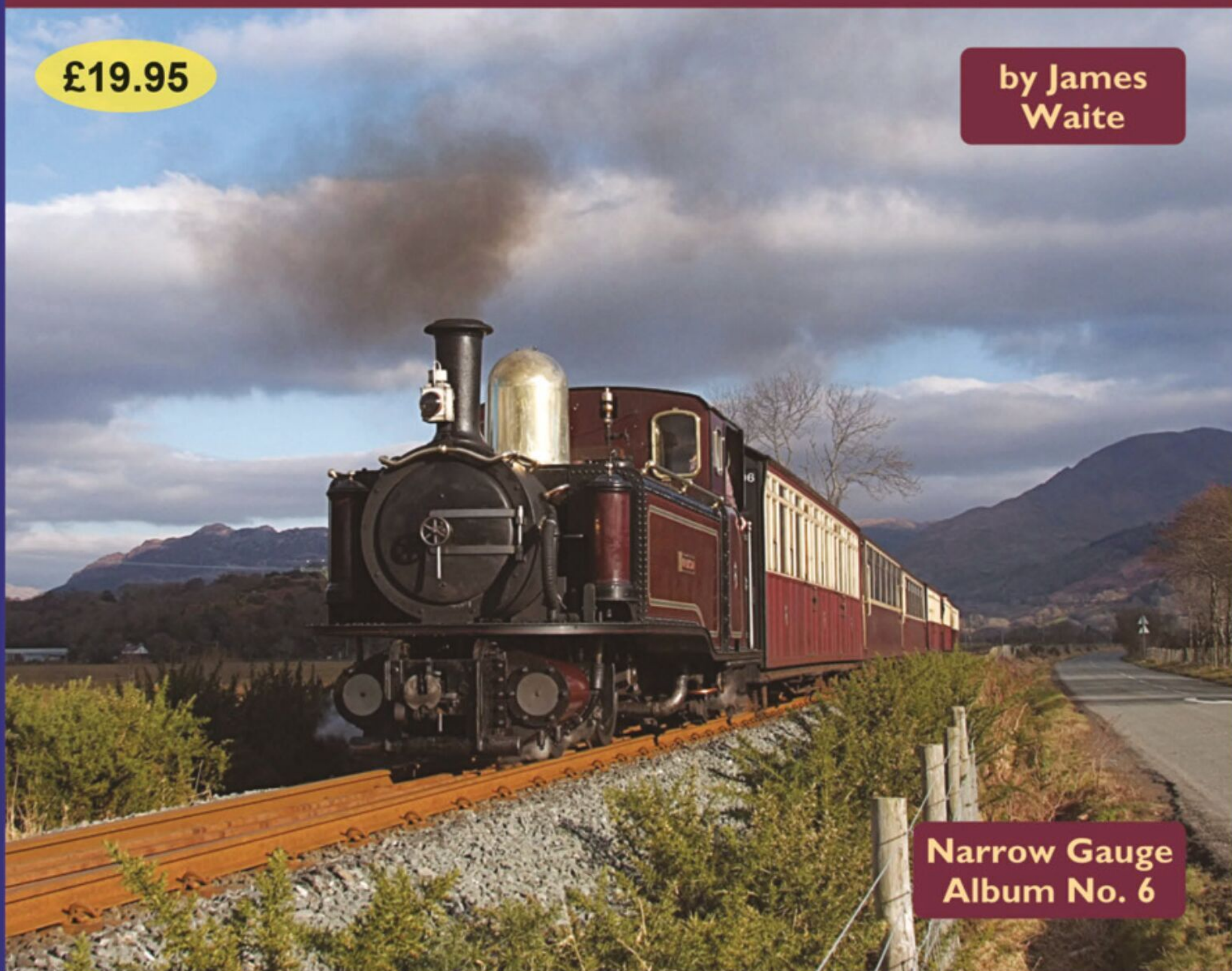
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The delights of train travel...



“Running freight trains on the 760mm gauge line will take 20,000 truck journeys off the roads each year...”

Photo: How we've missed riding the narrow gauge! Tim Gregson wasted no time, heading for the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway's first running day of 2021 on 2nd May.

Welcome to *NGW* 157 and it is very much a welcome feeling as this has been a 'normal' issue to put together. Many railways reopened at the start of May, or even before, and by the time I started planning what to fill this issue's news pages with various *NGW* correspondents were back to their usual task, trying to bust my email inbox with photos from lines in action.

And riding trains! How many of us have so missed travelling on the lines? Okay not everywhere is open yet, though just a handful of lines are still to restart running.

The return of pictures has been one of the happiest parts of editing this edition. Readers will know I am a big fan of good photos – I started my career as a press snapper after all. We have some highly skilled photographers contributing to *NGW*, readers who must have been very frustrated as their equipment gathered dust over the last year. I do like to make full use of quality pictures so scheduling in a properly-sized *News Gallery* was particularly pleasurable – I've missed it!

I've also been given a real indication of something I already knew – just how vibrant the narrow gauge scene is, despite the challenges it has faced in recent times. When putting together last month's issue, the changeover point between our winter bi-monthly and summer monthly publication, I struggled to

fit in all the news stories I had in the file – real quart-in-pint-pot stuff.

With just a month, in other words half the time, between that issue and this, I didn't expect to have the same problem – but I did! So much news is about it's really a challenge (but a hugely enjoyable one) to adequately cover it all, and I know there is more to come.

There has been evidence in recent times of some media giving less prominence to subject matter running on rails less than 4ft 8½-inches wide, all of which shows that a specialist publication focusing firmly on matters narrow gauge, and only narrow gauge, has never been more relevant. So if you know of a narrow gauge fan who is not seeing *NGW*, please point them in our direction. The more our readership goes up, the more narrow gauge we can bring you each month...

Global variety

It's not in the least surprising that the majority of the content in our magazine is slanted towards heritage subjects – as I've already mentioned the UK heritage narrow gauge scene is large, highly varied and vibrant. And of course across the globe heritage narrow gauge railways form a vital part of the movement and we cover them extensively too.

It's easy to forget, however, that many modern lines across the globe are narrow gauge, and they are also producing news stories that are bang

up to date but no less interesting.

Two recent announcements, both covered on our *World News* pages, proved this fact, though your editor freely admits that when he heard about the new vehicles being built for the Nambour Heritage Tramway in Australia he checked that we really are in May, and not very early in April... Take a look on page 15 – yes, it looks like something out of the *Mad Max* movies, but it is an environmentally-friendly solution to the revived tramway's stock needs.

The other story is equally environmentally friendly. It's great to hear that eight years after being considered too expensive an option for shifting timber, the Zillertalbahn is back in the logging-train business. Central to the decision of timber specialist Binderholz to start running very frequent freight trains on the 760mm gauge line again is that the move will take 20,000 truck journeys off the roads each year.

This is all excellent stuff – we of course enjoy our heritage narrow gauge railways, and they provide an important boost through tourism to the gross domestic product of the countries they operate in. But the narrow gauge doing a job of work, like it did a hundred years ago, and being relevant is a very good thing.

Enjoy your *NGW* and hopefully we'll see you back here with even more narrow gauge action in our pages next month...

Andrew Charman



Reopened railways enjoy big demand

As this issue of *NGW* closed for press the UK narrow gauge was well on the road back to normal operation, with many lines running trains and several more set to reopen imminently.

Lines that restarted services in the past month have seen an enthusiastic response from visitors keen to get out after many months confined to their homes, with several trains selling out.

First of the Welsh lines to reopen on 27th April were the Ffestiniog Railway, which brought forward its originally planned start date of 1st May, and the Fairbourne Railway.

Murray Dodds, general manager of the 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch gauge coast line, told *NGW* that initial passenger numbers were encouraging despite less than perfect weather.

"We are happy with visitor numbers in the first couple of weeks – it is particularly nice to be able to accept passengers once again arriving on the ferries from Barmouth, which Covid restrictions meant we weren't able to do last year," Murray said.

The Bala Lake, Tallylyn and Welshpool & Llanfair lines all restarted services on 1st May. Initial services on the Welshpool & Llanfair were hauled by the line's former Taiwan Sugar Corporation Diema diesel, after the only available steam loco, ZB2 'Zillertal' on hire from the Zillertalbahn in Austria, developed boiler issues.

Two weeks before the planned resumption of services some of the loco's boiler tubes were found to be leaking. After consulting Zillertal's owners a full retube was carried out. This was completed before 1st May but further issues in the smokebox delayed a return to service until 11th May.

The W&LLR fleet is set to be boosted in mid June by the return of Beyer Peacock 0-6-0T 'The Earl', after the loco's major overhaul at the Vale of Rheidol Railway was badly delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Welshpool line reported a encouraging response to its new first-class travel option using the former Sierra Leone Railway bogie carriage.

"After a hiatus of more than six months,

the whole team were delighted to be able to welcome passengers back to our line on 1st May," said the W&LLR's new general manager James Brett.

"Uptake on both our weekend and midweek services has been positive, with certain trains including our first class full-line excursion and evening fish-and-chip specials selling out online well in advance, demonstrating the pent-up demand for visitors to get out and enjoy themselves after a hard winter," he added.

"Whilst operating in a Covid-secure manner remains a challenge, we look forward to increasing our services over the coming months," James said.

The Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways began its season with a series of named trains, on the FR between Porthmadog and Tan-y-Blwch and extended to the Ddualt spiral on 1st May, and between Porthmadog and Beddgelert on the WHR. These have seen a strong response, several WHR trains in particular sold out.

English lines reopening at the start of May included the Old Kiln Light Railway in Surrey and the Bure Valley Railway.

Erin Towey, general manager of the



Above left: Underway – the first passenger train of 2021 leaves Fairbourne on 27th April, headed by Lynton & Barnstaple 2-6-2T 'Yeo', built by David Curwen in 1978. *Photo: Andrew Charman*

Above: Opening the 2021 season on the Old Kiln Light Railway on 1st May was 0-4-0T 'Emmet', built by Jim Haylock in 2005 on the chassis of a Orenstein & Koppel i/c loco. *Photo: Willy Field*

Left: A late failure of ZB2 loco 'Zillertal' saw the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway's first 2021 trains hauled by Diema diesel No.175, built in 1979. The flag in the foreground was the result of a photo request from the loco's former owners, the Taiwan Sugar Corporation.

Photo: Andrew Charman



15-inch gauge Kirklees Light Railway which began running on 12th April, described results as "so far, so good."

Erin told *NGW*; "Our Young Engineers days (especially for toddlers) on Mondays and Fridays have been sold out since re-opening and weekend standard running has seen up to a 50 per cent increase on passenger numbers compared to pre-Covid standard days, and all this despite running at half capacity."

"The Turntable, our new ice cream parlour at Shelley Station, has seen catering business boom and it seems like steam and an ice cream is what people want as they come out of lockdown," Erin added.

As this issue went to press more lines were planning to restart operations, including some that had not run at all for more than a year.

The Vale of Rheidol Railway started taking online bookings early in May ahead of a planned 29th May reopening date, while in Cornwall the Launceston Steam Railway was intending to run its first trains on 21st June.



Among other lines the Brecon Mountain Railway has indicated on its website that it hopes to open at the end of June.

Some railways are still to announce reopening dates. The Great Whipsnade Railway has begun recommissioning ahead of reopening but manager Kevin Edwins could not give *NGW* a reopening date as work to the line's station platform needs to be completed. Kevin suspected trains might not run for the public until July.

The plans of several lines have been disrupted by a need to complete winter maintenance projects delayed by lockdowns. This has been particularly true of smaller lines who could not call on a large pool of volunteers.

Above left: Kerr Stuart 0-4-2ST 'Leader' was in charge of the first 2021 season trains to run on the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway on 2nd May.

Photo: Tim Gregson

Above: First 2021 train on the Great Whipsnade Railway was the annual weedkilling operation on 12th May. This was hauled by 1951-built Fowler diesel 'Hector'. Photo: Kevin Edwins, GWR

No Snowdon steam in 2021

There will be no steam services on the Snowdon Mountain Railway during the 2021 season.

Ahead of its reopening the 4.7-mile long 800mm (2ft 7½-inch) gauge line announced that it had taken "the extremely difficult decision to withdraw our Heritage Steam Service for the 2021 season," in order to dedicate all available timetable capacity to the main diesel service.

The line was due to reopen on 22nd May, with plans to run daily, subject to weather, until October.

However trains will only be operating as far as Clogwyn, the final station before the summit, the Hafod Eryri summit visitor centre remaining closed this year due to the difficulties of social distancing within it. With no facilities at Clogwyn only return trips will be available with travellers returning on the same train.

WHHR readies for year of projects

The Welsh Highland Heritage Railway was making final preparations for a planned reopening on Saturday 29th May as *NGW* went to press.

Initial trains on the Porthmadog, north Wales-based 2ft gauge line were set to be diesel hauled, and as in 2020 combine a train journey with a visit to the Gelert's Farm sheds and museum. Steam haulage is expected to resume in July.

WHHR spokesman Michael Chapman told *NGW* that 2021 should see the culmination of two major new projects on the line.

The full overhaul of Baldwin 10-12-D 4-6-0 WD 794 at the Vale of Rheidol Railway in Aberystwyth will resume once the VoR has completed work on the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway's Beyer Peacock 0-6-0T 'The Earl'. The Baldwin is planned to assume the guise of

classmate 590, which worked on the WHR and was scrapped in 1941. Donations to the project continue to be welcomed.

The year will also see the introduction into traffic of a replica Pickering brake carriage, generously paid for by a sponsor and constructed at the Ffestiniog Railway's Boston Lodge works. The WHHR will then be able to operate both Welsh Highland and North Wales Narrow Gauge

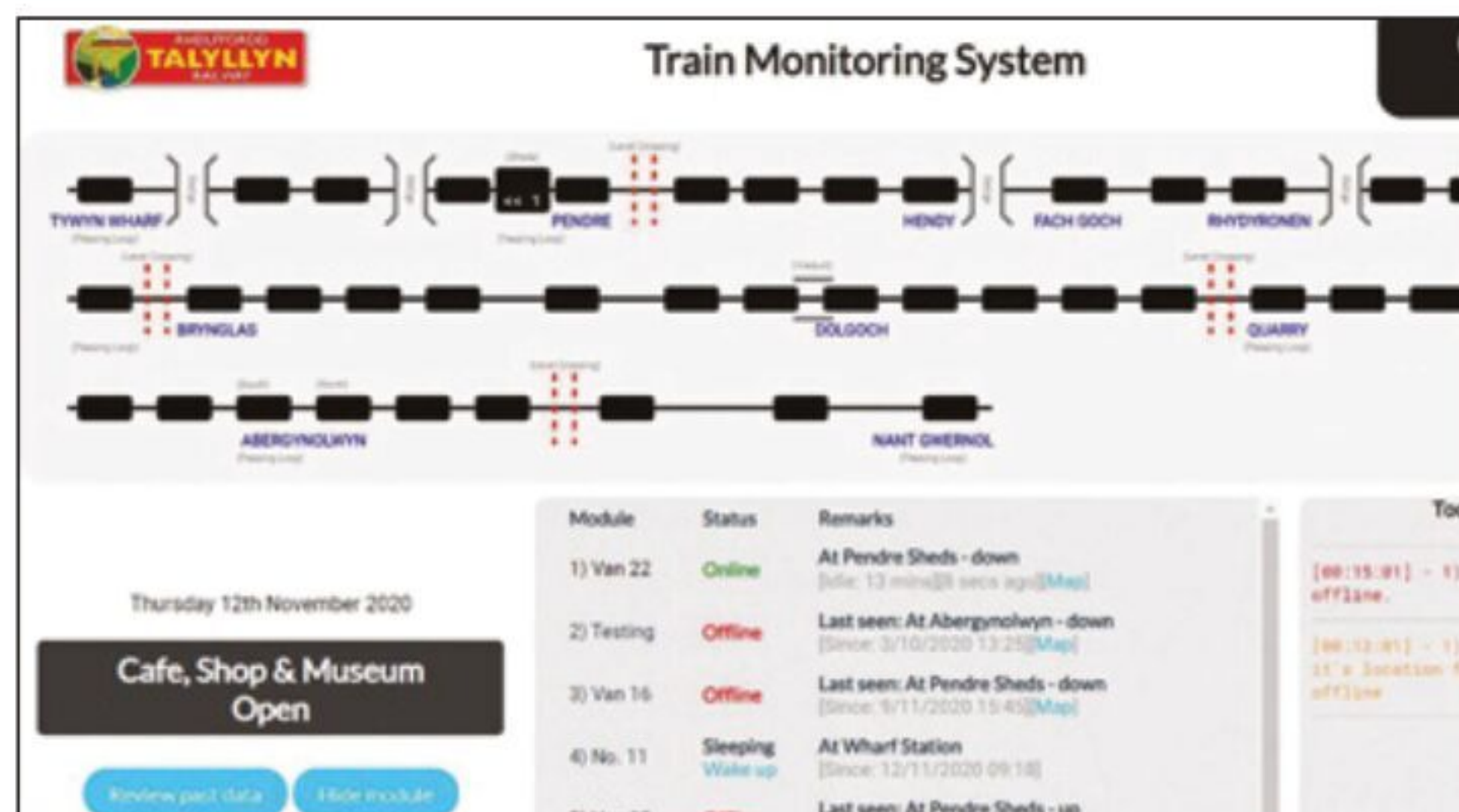
Hunslet Barclay diesel 'Emma' (LD9346/1994) is likely to be among the initial motive power when the WHHR reopens.

Photo: WHHR

Railways (NWNHR) heritage trains.

Latest details of WHHR train services will be on the line's Facebook page at <https://facebook.com/WHHRly/> and website www.whr.co.uk





NG triumphs at Heritage 'Oscars'

The UK narrow gauge movement enjoyed one of its strongest years in the 2021 Heritage Railway Association (HRA) Awards, with shortlisted entries stretching right across the market and narrow gauge organisations taking six of the 10 awards.

This year due to the Covid pandemic the usual awards gathering was unable to take place. Winners were announced in an online presentation hosted by Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway general manager Paul Lewin on 28th April.

Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway trustee Oliver Edwards was presented with the Lord Faulkner award as the HRA's Young Volunteer of the Year.

Olly, 21, joined the W&LLR in 2019 and his achievements since include leading a major piece of market research, helping to raise more than £140,000 as part of the line's 2020 Covid appeal and increasing the W&LLR's social media presence by more than 25 per cent.

He also found time to write a book about the line to raise further funds, and was elected to the W&LLR board of trustees where he now takes the volunteer role of Marketing & Product Manager.

"I'm blown away to have won the award," Olly said. "Thank you so much to my brilliant colleagues for everything they have done to support me in the two years I've been at the W&L."

The Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway won the Coiley Locomotive Engineering Award for the restoration of

Large England loco 'Welsh Pony', while the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway was shortlisted for its 25-year-long 'Skeggy Simplex' restoration of a 1947-built Motor Rail loco. The LCLR project was also shortlisted in the Diesel Locomotion Award, the third consecutive year the 2ft gauge line had been an HRA finalist.

The Internal Communications Award went to the Talylllyn Railway for its 'Control Centre', a public online subscription service set up during the Covid pandemic to give 'armchair' supporters more access to the mid-Wales line.

Talylllyn Railway Preservation Society chairman Jonathan Mann was delighted with the accolade as the railway begins celebrating its 70th year of preservation. "This award shows that we are still innovating and embracing new technology to add to the Talylllyn experience," he said.

The Welshpool & Llanfair was shortlisted in the same category for *The Earl*, a digital newsletter for volunteers created in 2014 and edited ever since by *NGW* editor Andrew Charman.

24-hour triumph

The award for Most Innovative Fundraising Idea went to the Seaton Tramway for its 'Tramathon Live 2020' a 24-hour online event during the pandemic. The 2ft 9in gauge line was also shortlisted for the most outstanding visitor attraction award.

The HRA Award for small groups was won by the Downs Light Railway Trust, the

historic 9½-inch gauge line in Malvern run almost entirely by school pupils.

At the other end of the scale, the award for Large Groups was taken by the Lynton & Lynmouth Cliff Railway, the 3ft 9in gauge funicular praised for the replacement of its top winding wheel.

Other shortlisted entries included in the External Communications category the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway's media and communications department and the Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway Preservation Society's 60-year celebration book *It's Still a Lot of Fun!*

The Talylllyn's Virtual Visit Appeal was shortlisted for most innovative fundraising idea, while in the outstanding visitor attraction category the Lynton & Lynmouth Cliff Railway, Seaton Tramway and Statfold Narrow Gauge Museum Trust lost out to the standard gauge Dartmouth Steam Railway & Riverboat Company.

The event also included various rail media accolades, with the *Heritage Railway* magazine Interpretation Award going to the Narrow Gauge Railway Museum at Tywyn Wharf on the Talylllyn Railway.

The awards presentation can be viewed online at <https://youtu.be/AkwvuCI6wnI>

Top left: Welshpool & Llanfair Trustee Oliver Edwards was named HRA Young Volunteer of the Year. Photo: W&LLR

Top: The Talylllyn Railway 'Control Centre' took the internal communications award. Image: TR



■ Southend Pier Railway diesel unit 'Sir William Heygate' was pictured by Jonathan James at the Pier Head on 22nd April as it and its sister unit 'Sir John Betjeman' began their final season before intended replacement by two new trains later this year.

The two were built for the 1.25-mile long 3ft gauge line by Severn Lamb in 1986, which is also constructing their replacements.

The new units will carry a green and cream livery that was applied to the 1949-built trains that were retired in 1978. Built by AC Cars of Thames Ditton, two of the vehicles are preserved in the currently closed Southend Pier Museum while the former maintenance vehicle is at the Mangapps Farm Railway Museum in Essex.



Leighton Buzzard diverts to run under new link road

The Leighton Buzzard Railway is to undergo its most major route change since the 2ft gauge Bedfordshire line was preserved in the late 1960s.

The line will be diverted over a length of several hundred yards where it runs alongside Vandyke Road en route to Stonehenge Works, to allow the building of a link road to a housing estate.

The line will drop down to pass under the new road before returning to its traditional route, until recently one of the last sections of the LBR bordered by open fields on one side.

Construction of the deviation is being financed by developer Arnold White Group and designed to cause minimal impact to LBR operations. The 45-metre long underpass is being built off-site in 46 pre-cast concrete sections, while rail engineers Alan Keef Ltd have been contracted to build the rail line.

Construction will continue through the summer with the new track planned to be connected into the LBR in November, once the line's operating season, due to start on 22nd May, is over.

Leighton Buzzard Railway General Manager Joe Horsley said that all parties involved had worked together to ensure the survival of the town's major tourist attraction. "This is an elegant and practical solution to a potentially awkward crossing of road and rail," he added.

Kate Groves of Arnold White Group said that it was clear an innovative solution was needed to deliver the link road while also keeping the Leighton Buzzard Railway running. "We are delighted to help to secure the future of Leighton Buzzard Railway and ensure that this significant local tourist attraction can be enjoyed for many years to come," she added.

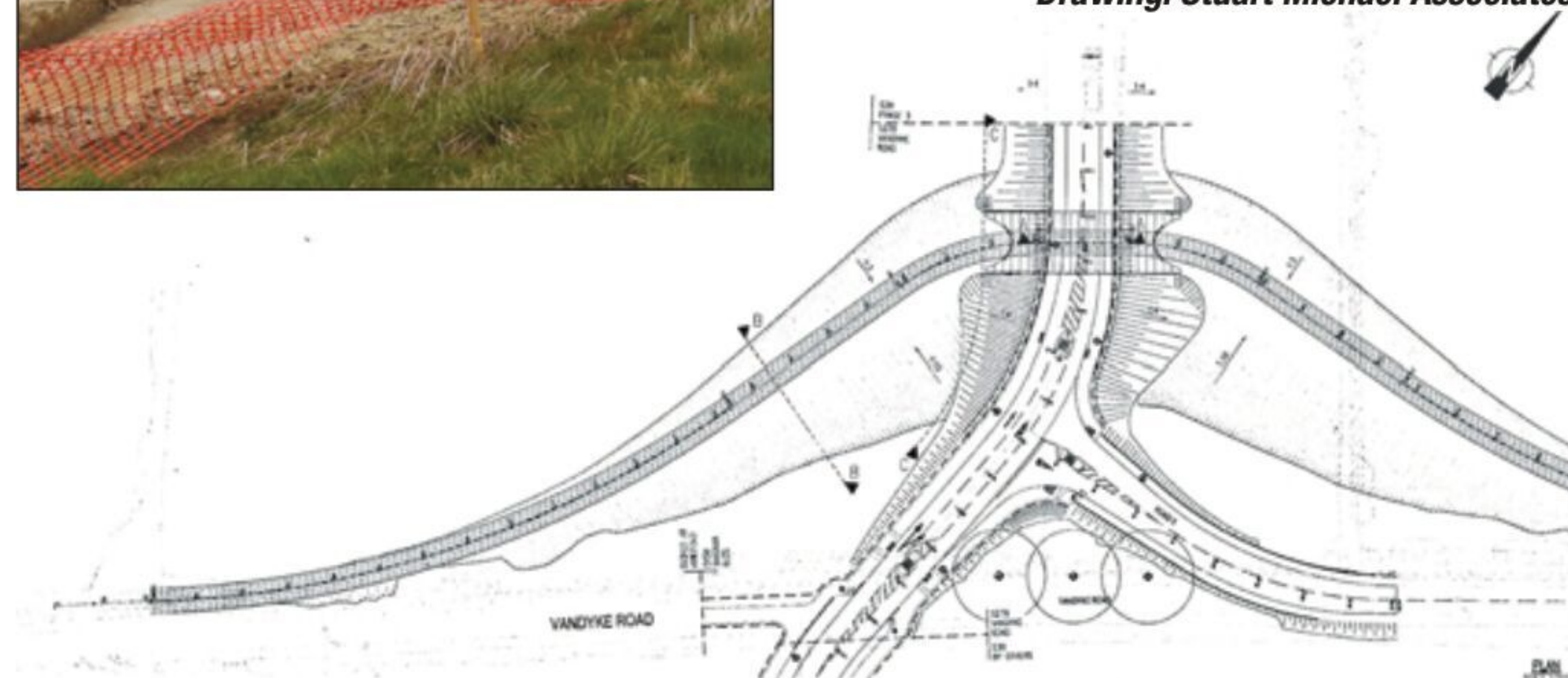
■ The new structure will be the only bridge on the LBR but not the first – formerly a footbridge was built to link RAF Stanbridge, on one side of the line, with the married quarters estate on the other side.

When the LBR preservationists obtained steam locomotives the trackbed under the bridge had to be lowered so they could pass under it. The bridge survived until the 1980s when it was demolished to allow the passage of larger locos.

Top: In this drone shot the LBR runs across the centre of the picture, with the course of the new line very evident. *Photo: Joe Tovey/LBR*

Left: The bridge will cross the line at the centre of this picture – the trackbed is at the base of what is a deep cutting. *Photo: Geoff Gauntlett*

Below: This engineering drawing plan shows how significant is the diversion of the railway line. *Drawing: Stuart Michael Associates*



BRIEF LINES



Kiln plans Pamela return

The restoration of quarry Hunslet 'Pamela' (920/1906) at the Old Kiln Light Railway has progressed in recent months. Chassis work has been underway in the workshop and fundraising for a new boiler is planned to ramp up shortly. The former Penrhyn Quarry loco, unique in having been fitted with the boiler and cab from a Hudswell Clarke loco during an overhaul at the quarry, has been at the Surrey line since 1984 but never run on it.

Photo: Willy Field

Corris trains to go further

Corris Railway services resuming on 30th-31st May will not include the usual guided tour of Maespoeth sheds, due to Covid restrictions. But trains will run on to the current running line limit on the southern extension. Tickets must be pre-booked through the line's new online system at www.corris.co.uk/tickets. This was developed in-house by the line's webmaster Alf Oxford and his son Mike.

New bridge on IOMSR

The Isle of Man Steam Railway has gained a new bridge, that will carry a bypass over the line as part of a housing development under construction at Ballasalla. In early May good progress was being made on building the bridge between Ballawoods and Ballahick.

More locos at Apedale

Joining the i/c fleet of the Moseley Railway Trust at Apedale in recent weeks have been a battery-electric Logan loco formerly displayed outside at the Llechwedd slate quarry in Blaenau Ffestiniog, Wales and Ruston & Hornsby works no 243392, which worked originally on the Bord na Mona peat system in Ireland and more recently was displayed in a park in Lancashire, painted to represent Thomas the Tank Engine.



Bala set to steam at planned Town station

Steam will run at the Bala Lake Railway's planned new terminus in the centre of the north Wales town on 12th-13th June, when the line stages a 'Bala ReRailed' event to highlight its extension plans.

In early May temporary 2ft and 7¼-inch gauge track was laid and ballasted at the Bala Town station site which the BLR owns. The 2ft track has been loaned by the Ffestiniog Railway and during the event quarry Hunslet 'Winifred' will run on it, giving rides in the line's Penrhyn Quarry workmen's carriage.

Two steam locos should be providing rides on the miniature line while Bala Lake Railway Trust chairman Julian Birley will conduct a series of guided walks along the extension route.

The BLR's extension plans have attracted much support, particularly from the local community. An urgent appeal earlier this year to raise £50,000, as part of £276,000 of trackbed work on flood prevention measures being conducted by Natural Resources Wales, brought in more than £71,000 (*NGW*156).

Meanwhile the railway has overhauled its rake of former Dinorwic quarry slate wagons, as it continues to enhance its heritage connections to the slate industry.

Axle box overhauls were conducted by

BLR Society vice-chairman Tim Williams and the line's wagon expert Francis Stapleton. This involved turning over seven wagons, removing the axle boxes and where necessary packing or sleeving them to improve the fit and then re-fitting the axle boxes, packed with grease.

After the public train service had finished on 9th May the wagons were taken for a test run to the line's halfway point at Llangower, hauled by Hunslet 0-4-0ST 'Maid Marian'.

Above: Tracklaying at Bala Town ahead of the 'Bala ReRailed' event later this month.

Below: Overhauls of the rake of Dinorwic Quarry slate wagons was followed by a test run (bottom) with 'Maid Marian'.

Photos: Julian Birley & Tim Williams/BLR



Tallyllyn marks its 70th year

Just as *NGW* went to press on 13th May the Tallyllyn Railway was marking exactly 70 years since the line opened as the world's first preserved railway.

On 13th May 1951 the Tallyllyn Railway Preservation Society operated the very first preservation train, hauled by original TR locomotive, Fletcher Jennings 0-4-0WT 'Dolgoch' and only as far as the intermediate station of Rhydyronen due to the condition of the track beyond.

The commemoration Founders' Day Special replicated this journey, with Dolgoch joined by Kerr Stuart 0-4-2ST 'Edward Thomas'.

Acquired from the former Corris Railway, the 1921-built locomotive proved crucial to the new regime's survival in the first two seasons, its introduction relieving the basically worn-out Dolgoch – though the 1866-built loco effectively ran the first season alone.

Those travelling on the Founders' Day Special included some of the volunteers who had played a role in the pioneering season. At Rhydyronen everyone gathered for a short speech by TR company chairman David Ventry, recalling the achievements of the line in preservation.

We expect to bring you more on this event, including photos in next month's edition of *NGW*.

Corris 'third of four' carriage to enter service

A newly completed carriage is scheduled to enter service when the Corris Railway reopens on 30th-31st May.

The latest easing of Covid 19 restrictions allowed Corris Railway Society volunteers to complete the braking system for new-build carriage 23.

No 23 is the third of four new vehicles that are being constructed for the mid-Wales 2ft 3in gauge line and recreates the appearance of the Victorian/Edwardian era vehicles that once carried passengers on the line – the only surviving operational original now runs on the Tallyllyn Railway.

Design changes to meet 21st century safety requirements include a steel body frame instead of wood. The vehicle has an arched roof like sister vehicle 21 – no 22 has a clerestory roof.

Internally passengers sit on longitudinal seats in two compartments per carriage with each compartment seating up to eight adult passengers.

Construction of no 24 is advancing in Maespoeth Junction shed. The vehicle will also have a clerestory roof and incorporate a first class observation car portion.

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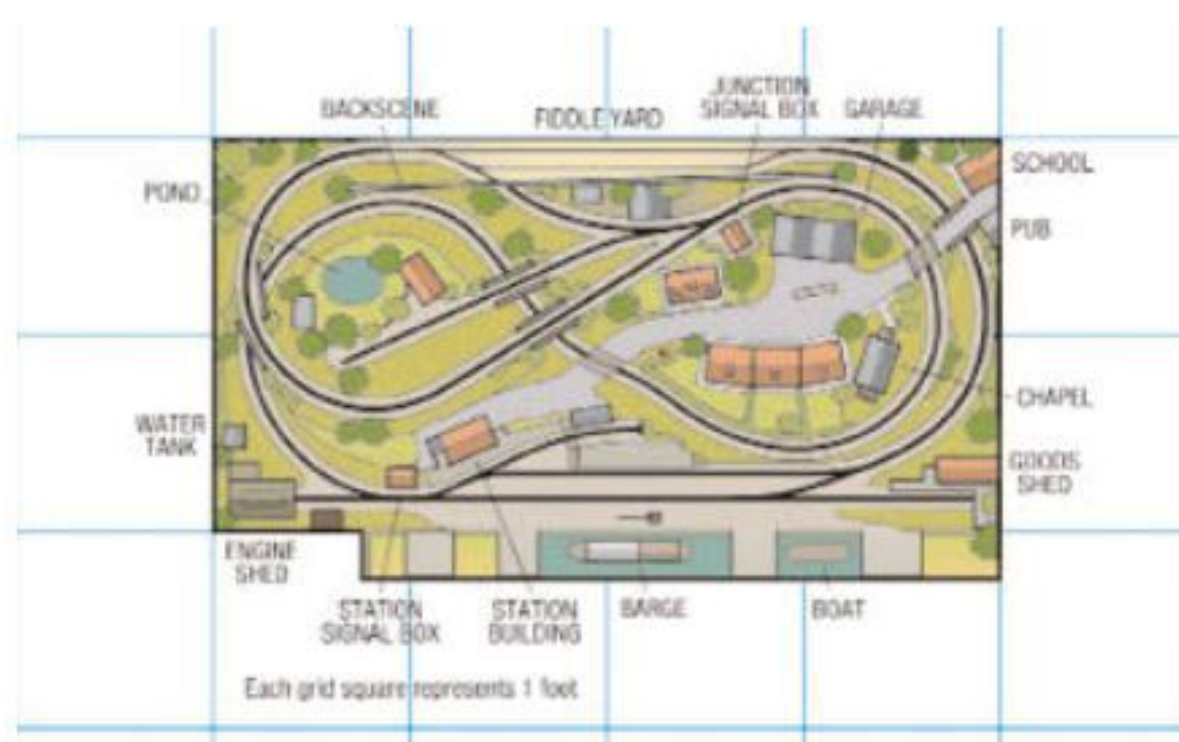
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Details of cab extension for Tynedale's Barber revealed

The South Tynedale Railway Preservation Society has published a Conservation Management Plan detailing the Cumbrian 2ft gauge line's controversial plans to raise the cab height of Thomas Green & Sons 0-6-2ST 'Barber'.

As reported in *NGW* 155, news of the line's intentions towards the unique loco, which was built for the Harrogate Gasworks Railway in 1908 with a very low cab to negotiate a tunnel just nine feet high and eight feet wide, broke earlier this year and caused a social media furore.

Many argued that the historic and unique nature of the loco – the only Thomas Green product operating in the UK – should not be sacrificed for operational efficiency.

The line is seeking to raise the height of both the cab and chimney of Barber by 350mm, to provide more space in the cab and prevent excessive chimney debris falling on the carriages.

Six options are listed, from doing nothing to plinthing the loco out of service or "selling, trading-in or swapping Barber with another suitable narrow gauge loco."

Option 4 is preferred – this involves writing of the conservation plan and then inserting 6mm thick mild steel plates into the centre of the cab sides, front and rear, butted into the existing plates and riveted through existing holes to raise the roof.

STR trustees believe the modifications will give Barber the look of a typical Thomas Green loco. They will achieve the operational requirements and maintain the historic nature of the loco by being reversible should the need arise in future.

The conservation management plan received a highly mixed reaction from enthusiasts but according to the line a consultation amongst STRPS members resulted in 44 responses, with 39 backing the plans, 12 against and two abstaining.

"Members who are active volunteers and either drive, fire or maintain Barber tend to favour raising the cab height – those that disagree with our proposals tend not to be actively involved with the loco," chairman David Granath stated.

Members of the preservation society are working to enable the STR to reopen following the collapse into administration last year of the line's completely separate operating company. No reopening date has been officially announced but the website is quoting a hoped-for opening in July.

The Barber Conservation Management Plan can be viewed in full at www.south-tyndale-railway.org.uk/barber-conservation-management-plan/

Above: 'Barber' in action at the South Tynedale Railway in August 2015 – the compact nature of the cab is obvious. Photo: Michael Chapman



■ Moving closer to completion, the Southwold Railway Trust's new-build Sharp Stewart 2-4-0T 'Blyth' received the first of its side tanks at North Bay Railway Engineering in Darlington on 11th May.

Photo: NBRE

C&L Irish steam first for 2021

The Cavan and Leitrim Railway hosted what was possibly the first 2021 steam operation in Ireland on 17th March, thanks to railway manager Micheal Kennedy living on site.

Micheal resides in the original C&L station building and was able under lockdown regulations to steam Avonside 0-6-0T 'Nancy' of 1908, to check the 3ft-gauge loco after winter storage.

The steaming was also a symbolic gesture recalling closure of the C&L on 31st March 1959 and the arrival of Nancy from restoration on 29th March 2019.

The preservation centre has been closed since the end of 2019 but raised €10,000 last year to ensure survival through the Covid pandemic. Micheal has called for further support in 2021. "It is not likely that we will reopen in 2021 as we want to ensure our volunteers are safe," he said.

The overhaul of the C&L's Kerr Stuart 0-4-0ST 'Dromod' at John Fowler & Co's Cumbrian workshops has revealed that the loco will require a new inner firebox. However the boiler barrel is in relatively good condition and will be retained.

Donations to the C&L can be made online at <https://cavanandleitrim.wixsite.com/home/vintage-train> or by post to Cavan and Leitrim Railway, Dromod, Clooncolry, Co. Leitrim

Below: 'Nancy' steams at the CLR's Dromod base on 17th March. Photo: Nigel Billett/CLR

Bottom: Restoration of the boiler of 'Dromod' is continuing in Cumbria. Photo: CLR



Fintown bids to reopen in 2021

The Fintown Railway in County Donegal, Ireland, hopes to reopen in 2021 if it can secure funding (*writes Hugh Dougherty*).

Comlacht Traenach na Gaeltacht Lair, operator of the line, has approached Uduras na Gaeltachta, the Irish-speaking area development body, to seek financial support for reopening.

Due to the Covid-19 epidemic the 3ft gauge line, which runs for three miles on the trackbed of the former Stranorlar-Glenties route, did not open in 2020, losing significant revenue as a result.

"We would very much like to open again for this season and are keeping the matter under close review, while we need to tap into funding and will have to attract seasonal staff back," Seamus McElwee of CTGL said.

"We also have to judge whether or not tourist traffic will return to our part of Donegal this summer before we make a final decision," he added.

Former County Donegal Railways railcar 18, on loan to the Fintown line since 2003 from the North West of Ireland Railway Society, and the former Shane's Castle Railway Simplex locomotive which runs with the railcar in push-and-pull mode, have been locked up securely at Fintown. "If and when we re-open, the train will be ready to run," said Seamus. "We've looked after the railcar and loco well during the shutdown."

Any decision to open will be announced on the railway's Facebook page.

The other County Donegal Railway heritage presence in the county, Donegal Railway Heritage Centre, reopened along with all museums in the Republic of Ireland on Monday 10th May. Refurbished over the closure period, the museum is keen to attract visitors. Full details are at www.donegalrailway.com



■ Restoration of the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway's Kerr Stuart 0-4-2ST 'Premier' (886/1905) passed a milestone on 13th May when the boiler was returned from NNR Engineering at the North Norfolk Railway and reunited with the boiler. The S&KLR reopened on 2nd May and is running on Sundays throughout June. *Photo: Liz Fuller/S&KLR*



Statfold reveals its 2021 calendar

The Statfold Barn Railway has announced its events for both enthusiast and family audiences in 2021.

Following an initial 'Statfold Goes Wild' family animal event on 29th-31st May, the Staffordshire steam centre will stage a vehicle day 'Cars in Strawberry Park' on 6th June, before the first enthusiast weekend, the 'Trangkil 50' Gala on 12th-13th June.

Celebrating the half century since Hunslet 0-4-2ST 'Trangkil No.4' became the last industrial steam locomotive built in the UK, the Gala will feature visiting locomotives including England 0-4-0ST 'Prince' from the Ffestiniog Railway and former Dinrowic quarry Hunslet 0-4-0ST 'Jonathan' (678/1898), which normally resides at the private Lytham Motive Power Museum in Lancashire.

Enthusiasts are also likely to enjoy the return of the Giant Miniatures Weekend on 26th-27th June, which features model traction engines and others alongside the railway and tram line.

This will be followed by a delayed celebration of 150 years of the Quarry Hunslet on 10th-11th July, detailed plans for which are yet to be unveiled. Further enthusiast events include a Road, Rail & Ale Festival on 11th-12th September.

Pre-booking of tickets is strongly advised and mandatory for some of the Statfold events – details are at www.statfold.com

Above: Yet another quarry Hunslet at Statfold – 'Jonathan', normally resident at the private Lytham Motive Power Museum, will feature at the Trangkil 50 Gala in June. Photo: Joey Evans

Trains run on East Suffolk extension

The East Suffolk Light Railway opened the first stage of its extension on 18th April (*writes Jonathan James*).

The 2ft gauge line is located in the grounds of the East Anglia Transport Museum at Carlton Colville near Lowestoft and has operated on a 300-yard long line between Chapel Road and Woodside stations since 1973, using former industrial i/c locomotives.

The longer line has been made possible by the purchase of additional land by the museum a few years ago, and the first stage

of the extension doubles the length of the ESLR's running line.

A new station is under construction but was not completed in time for the opening. Trains were operated by no 6 'Thorpness', a Simplex 4wDM (22209/1934).

The museum also has a standard gauge tramway, trolleybus system and a collection of road vehicles including buses, coaches and traction engines. The next phase of the expansion will be an extension to the tramway, which crosses the narrow gauge railway shortly after Woodside station.



Simplex 4wDM 'Thorpness' makes a stop at the incomplete new station on the first day running on the extension of the East Suffolk Light Railway on 18th April. *Photo: Jonathan James*



Left: Baldwin 778, the restoration of which Alan Moore played a crucial role in, was the focus of a tribute at his funeral.

Above: Alan Moore in 2016 at the opening of the new LBR station at Page's Park, another project he donated to. Photos: Cliff Thomas

Leighton Buzzard and preservation pay tribute to Alan

A special train on the Leighton Buzzard Railway on 11th May paid tribute to Alan Moore CBE, one of preservation's great behind-the-scenes stalwarts, as his funeral took place in the town.

Alan, who died on 22nd April aged 84, was a past president of the LBR and the Greensand Railway Museum Trust, which returned Baldwin 4-6-0T No. 778 to steam on the Bedfordshire line. He was a major donor to the restoration as well as to the line's Page's Park station building project and its extension up Munday's Hill.

However these were just a small part of Alan's preservation philanthropy – having enjoyed a highly successful career in finance rising to become deputy chairman of Lloyds Bank, he made donations across the

heritage railway movement. Examples ranged from being the first donor to the campaign to purchase A4 Pacific 'Flying Scotsman' for the nation, to £50,000 for the boiler of a working replica of Stephenson's 'Rocket', to £60,000 for the boiler of the Great Western Railway's 'City of Truro'.

Alan is thought to have contributed at least half a million pounds for work on National Railway museum locomotives, and these were just a part of his preservation activities. While his donation to the Baldwin restoration was thought to be his first narrow gauge involvement, he went on to support many other projects.

Covid restrictions restricted the number of mourners at the funeral, so the LBR

arranged its own tribute. Headed by Baldwin 778 with a wreath on its smokebox, the train stopped at a roadside location in Meadway.

The funeral cortege then paused beside the loco and as LBR members stood socially distanced along the length of the train, the wreath was transferred from the locomotive to the hearse. A long whistle was sounded by No. 778 as the cortege continued to the funeral.

LBR members in attendance included the current and past three chairmen of the line, its two vice-presidents and the chairman and three other trustees of Greensand Railway Museum Trust.

■ **NGW** thanks Cliff Thomas for his assistance with this tribute.

Horse trams return to their builder

Two redundant cars from the Douglas Horse Tramway on the Isle of Man have arrived at Wirral Transport Museum & Heritage Tramway in Birkenhead.

The two, no 11 built in 1886 and no 47 dating from 1911, were both withdrawn in 1978 and then placed on loan to the Isle of Man Railway & Tramway Preservation Society, which displayed them in a museum located in The Manx Electric Railway's Ramsey car shed.



The museum closed in 1991 and after many years in a number of locations, the two cars ended up being stored outside at the Jurby Transport Museum in the north of the island, from where the Wirral museum has now acquired them.

Both vehicles were built in Birkenhead by G F Milnes, and on arrival on the mainland no 11 was posed for pictures outside the surviving buildings of G F Milnes and its predecessor the Starbuck Car & Wagon Co.

Restoration will be a long process and will not start for some time – car 11 has now joined its sister in a shipping container, where both cars will spend considerable time drying out thoroughly before work can start.

The museum was delighted with its acquisitions, a spokesman describing the two vehicles as "an important part of Birkenhead's historic tram building."

Left: Douglas Horse Tram no 17 on arrival at the museum. Restoration will clearly be a major task...

Photo: Rob Jones/WTM&HT

Ratty plans delayed 60th birthday Gala

The Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway is set to celebrate the 60th anniversary of its preservation in 1960, with a Gala that was originally scheduled to take place last year.

The event, planned for the weekend of 10th-11th July, will feature eight locos in steam. These will be headed by the line's main fleet, including newly overhauled 2-8-2 'River Mite' featured in **NGW** 156.

There will also be additional trains hauled by smaller locomotives including the Ravenglass Railway Museum's Heywood 0-4-0T 'Katie'.

Other attractions include guided tours around the recently refurbished Pullman camping coaches at Ravenglass, and in the museum a working model railway.

The www.ravenglass-railway.co.uk website will provide more information and we will publish further details leading up to the event.

There is so much news to fit into this issue of **NGW** that the narrower gauges have been transferred to their own page – you'll find it on page 29

Solar power for heritage tram revival



The remarkable image above is of a new solar-powered tram that is to be built to operate on a former sugar-cane line.

Revealed just as we closed for press on 13th May, the vehicle will run on the Nambour Heritage Tramway in the Queensland coastal town, just north of Brisbane. Images of the car formed part of the official opening of the tramway's new terminus building.

The project, which has been underway for eight years, revives a section of the former Moreton Central Sugar Mill Cane Tramway, which was laid to the 'Australian-2ft' gauge of 610mm.

Built in 1897 the tramway operated until late 2003. Unusually the final section to the mill ran down the centre of Nambour's streets, and the revived tramway will use these tracks which were heritage-listed in 2005.

A depot for the system was completed in

AUSTRALIA

June 2020 and revitalisation of the track, together with signalling, is close to being finished.

Designed by Russell Watson, the new tram car is a battery-electric vehicle, which will be charged at night using a solar power setup.

Unveiling the images of the new vehicle, Nambour Tramway Company chairman Greg Rogerson said that the project was "hell-bent" on giving Nambour a point of difference.

"(It will be) something to stand Nambour out from all other towns, to give it a chance to prosper and its residents to feel justifiably proud," Greg added.

Australian House of Representatives member Ted O'Brien added that the scheme was simply be a transport operation. "This is a piece of street theatre, showcasing the best of Nambour's past and its future," he said.

It is hoped that the new tram will be running on the system by the end of 2021.

Flyer runs for first time in eight years

The Kingston Flyer celebrated a milestone on 27th April when the **NEW ZEALAND** 3ft 6in gauge train carried its first passengers in eight years.

A Flyer run from Kingston to Fairlight was part of the inaugural Great Southern Train Tour, organised by Pounamu Tourism Group.

The train was headed by 1927-built New Zealand A^B class 4-6-2 no 795 and 188 passengers carried on the 22-mile round trip.

The Flyer service, which can trace its history back to the 1870s, had operated as a summer heritage train from 1971-1979 and then from 1982 until closed by debts in 2009.

The train was revived in 2011, when the late David Bryce invested \$1.3million restoring the Flyer's rolling stock, which includes 795 and its 1925-built sister 778. But after two summer seasons the service was again mothballed.

The Flyer's future was only placed on a firmer footing after a group of Auckland-based investors bought the train and associated land and buildings in 2017.

Steam returns to the Zig Zag

Steam traction has operated at the Zig-Zag Railway in New South Wales, **AUSTRALIA**, for the first time since 2011.

The 3ft 6in gauge line was closed by Australian authorities at the end of 2011, unhappy at the line's safety certification, and then devastated by a wild fire in 2013.

Rebuilding has been underway ever since, a major setback being further damage caused by a second fire in 2019.

However on 8th May QR AC16 class 2-8-2 no 218A was steamed for load trials following a newly completed major overhaul.

The line, which got its name from the reverses on its route to gain height, is hoping to restart passenger services before the end of 2021.

Readers can send in news stories and photos from overseas lines for inclusion on these pages – the editorial office contact details are at the top of this page and on page 3.

Harz replaces railcars with locos

The Harzer Schmalspurbahnen in eastern **GERMANY** has rostered diesel locomotive-hauled trains on its routes between Wernigerode and Schierke, replacing the railcars that have been employed since the route reopened in the wake of Covid-19.

A release from the metre-gauge system stated that the locomotive-hauled trains would operate between 13th and 24th May, Ascension day to Pentecost, due to the higher than expected passenger numbers expected to use the line during this period.

The Harz is rostering its class 199.8 diesel locos on the trains, which consist of two return trips each day on the 20-mile route.

The class 199.8s were built as standard-gauge locos in the early 1970s and acquired and regauged by the

Harz in the 1980s. They are nicknamed 'Harzkamels' because of their size – they tower over other Harz stock.

Below: The height of the former standard-gauge 'Harzkamels' is clear in this shot of a recent working on the line. Photo: Dirk Bahnsen/HSB





Logging trains back on Ziller to cut road traffic

The Zillertalbahn has returned to operating commercial logging trains, for the first time in eight years.

Timber specialist the Binderholz company is using the 760mm gauge line to transport cut trees from Jenbach to its factory in Fügen for processing.

Timber trains were operated on the Zillertalbahn for Binderholz until 2013, when they were stopped on the grounds of cost. But now the new project has been initiated with the aim of removing 20,000 truck journeys per year from local roads.

Trials have been underway since the start of 2021 and the new trains went into full operation at the end of April.

A new loading terminal for the logs has been built at Jenbach, while Styria-based wagon specialist Innofreight has built new superstructures to be fitted to the railway's flat wagons.

AUSTRIA

The new service was officially launched in Fügen on 21st April with Deputy State Governors Josef Geisler and transport officer Ingrid Felipe in attendance with representatives of the Zillertalbahn, Binderholz and Austrian national railway operator ÖBB.

Technical director of the Zillertaler Verkehrsbetriebe (ZVB), Helmut Schreiner, described the programme as a "win-win situation for all the participants," adding that the Innofreight-developed system had delivered three train sets, each comprising 10 wagons.

Ingrid Felipe said that it was important to develop services to cover the 'last mile' in rail freight transport, "thus shifting many truck journeys from road to rail."

Photo: Wood trains are a part of Zillertalbahn operations again.

Photo: Innofreight



■ Set to join the locomotive fleet of the Museum of French Steam Tramways and Secondary Railways (MTVS) in Crévecoeur, FRANCE is this GM4/4 loco tractor, which has been donated to the museum by the Dampfbahn Furka-Bergstrecke (DFB) in Switzerland. MTVS spokesman Olivier Janneau told *NGW* that final plans are almost complete for transport of the loco, which is operational and comes with a spare engine. The move is costing the museum just under 15,000 Euros, including 2,000 Swiss Francs (around £1600) of customs charges!

Jokioinen wins €40K for track and loco repairs

The museum agency in FINLAND has awarded a grant of 40,000 Euros to the Museum Railway Association, that runs the Jokioinen Museum Railway.

Three quarters of the funding will be used on repairs to the museum's 750mm gauge running line of 8.5 miles in length, and two new staff have been taken on to carry out this work.

The other €10,000 euros will pay for the renewal by external contractors of the water tanks of JMR locomotive no 5 'Sohvi', which is currently under restoration.

As part of the work on the 2-8-2, built in 1918 for the 45km-long Hyvinkää-Karkkila Railway and resident at the Jokioinen since 1971, it is being returned to its original heritage specification.



■ Logging trains on the Alishan Forest Railroad in TAIWAN, which we reported on in *NGW156*, have continued to be highly successful. The 28-ton Shay locomotive no 31 was again rostered on 31st March for the final working, then running on to Zhaoping Station, where it was posed with Shay no 24 which is displayed at the station. The event attracted great interest from rail enthusiasts in the Far-East nation.

An Alishan spokesman told *NGW* that the Shay had proven so effective on the trains that for the first time in many years it had been permitted to run without assistance from a diesel at the rear of the train.

In further good news for the Alishan, a documentary film made of the line has won three international film awards. *The Heart of Alishan Forest Railway* took the Gold award (short movies) in the third World London Film Festival, Gold for video in the sixth Muse Creative Awards, and the Gold Remi (documentary) in the 54th WorldFest-Houston. **Photo: Ku-Ting-Wei/AFR**

Sibiu starts Sunday tourist trains

Local county council president Daniela Cimpean marked another milestone in the revival of the Sibiu to Agnita Railway in **ROMANIA** on 17th April, by driving the first train since 2001 over a newly refurbished level crossing at Cornatel station on the 760mm gauge line.

The occasion was marked with a small ceremony (*writes Alasdair Stewart of UK based support group SAR UK*) before the volunteers of the 'Friends of the Mocănița' operated a public train to Hosman.

Since the end of services by state operator CFR the road surface at the crossing had been built up over the rails. This restricted rail operation at the station to one of the two loops and prevented rail vehicles passing towards the next village along the line at Cașolț.

The obstacle was too much for the line's

volunteers to overcome alone, but working with the county highways department during recent road resurfacing work, the way is now clear to access the next few kilometres of track.

Despite ongoing difficulties associated with the global pandemic, volunteers are operating regular trains on Sundays between Hosman and Cornatel stations, using a hired-in diesel loco and carriages.

The first locomotive in the Friends ownership is undergoing rebuilding and is set to enter service later in the year.

Weekday trains have been run recently for local junior school and youth organisations. These trips include stops en-route for passengers to look at evidence of abundant wildlife in the Hârtibaciu valley.

The volunteer group has recently taken delivery of several hundred used sleepers

from Austria and are busy replacing life-expired examples from beneath the worst joints on the running line. Working parties are held most weekends and during the week as availability of volunteers permits.

Main photo: Regular tourist trains are now operating on the Sibiu line with hired-in stock.

Below: A pleasing side of the revival is the many of young people involved, here replacing life-expired sleepers. Photos: Friends of SAR



President's visit raises hopes of museum expansion

The **SIERRA LEONE** National Railway Museum started the week celebrating the 60th anniversary of the West African nation's independence in style, with a long-awaited visit from the country's President.

Brigadier (ret'd) Dr Julius Maada Bio was accompanied by several other Government officials during his visit on 22nd April, during which he was given a guided tour of the museum.

National and international TV coverage of the event gained the museum much useful publicity, while the event was also live-streamed enabling global supporters of the museum, including its highly active UK support group, to take part. "The publicity value of the event will be enormous," a spokesman for the Friends said.

Local residents, who had packed streets to catch a glimpse of the President without knowing what was behind the museum walls, took the opportunity after the visit to take a look at the exhibits for themselves.

During the visit museum coordinator, Abubakarr Nylander-Kargbo made an impassioned speech in which he appealed for a recently cleared scrapyard next to the

museum to be donated to it, so that the UK Friends could progress their concept of a railway heritage park with a miniature line.

Mr Nylander-Kargbo told the President (translated into English) "The English people who support us are proposing to build a railway with a train that goes right round, which will be a big boost for tourism as people will come to see it.

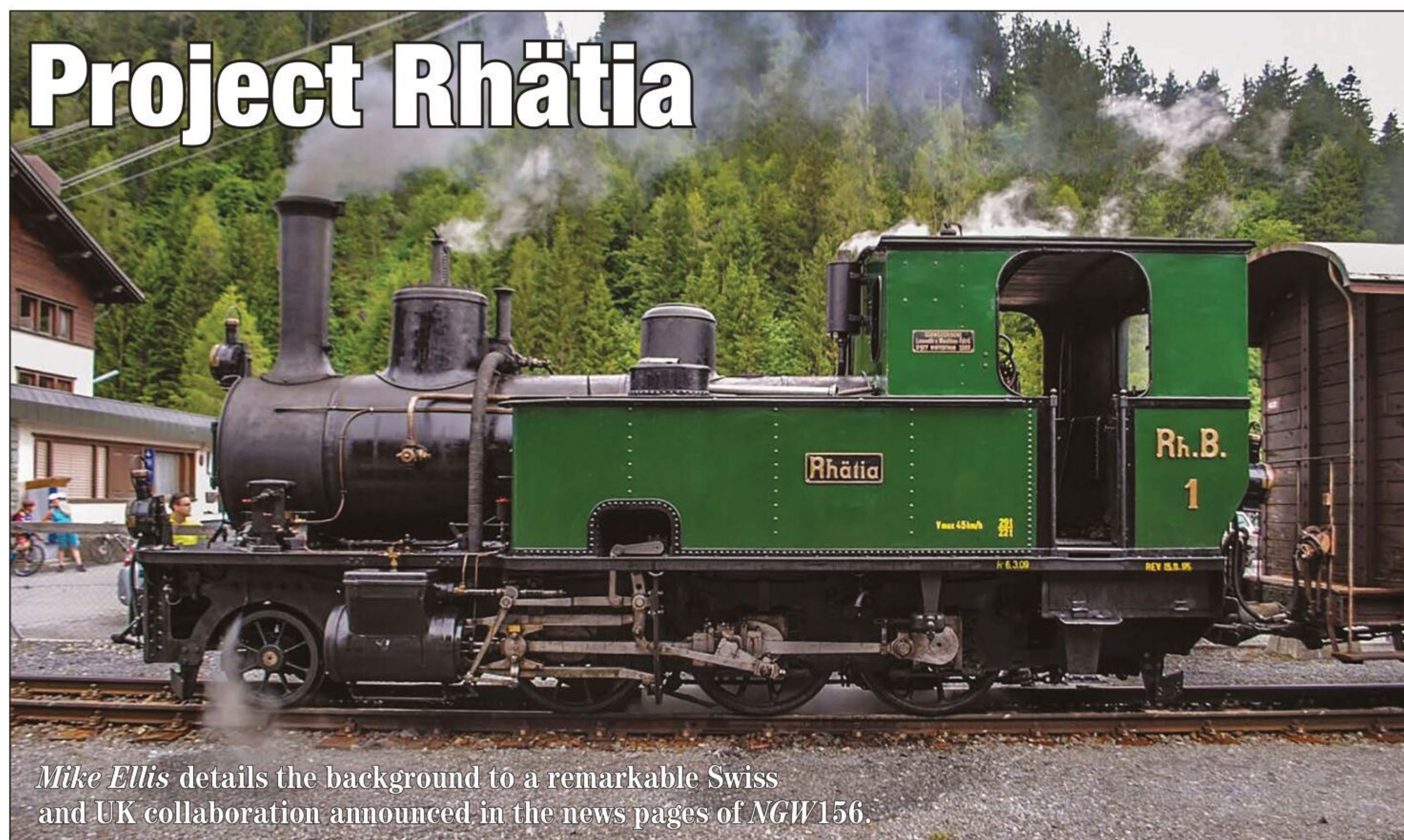
"They wanted me to talk to you about it

in the hope that you will transfer the land to us, so that we can build the railway."

The museum staff were said to be elated after the visit, with high hopes that much good will come from it in terms of public support and political will.

President Julius Maada Bio chats with museum staff during his highly-successful visit. Photo: FSLRM





Mike Ellis details the background to a remarkable Swiss and UK collaboration announced in the news pages of NGW156.

Locomotive no 1 of the Rätische Bahn (RhB) dates from 1889; 'Rhätia' – or 'Rhätia' in more modern German – is classified as G 3/4 (2-6-0 in UK terms). A fine example of the craftsmanship of the Swiss Locomotive and Machine Works (SLM), it is still very much in its original form and condition.

No 1 is factually and emotionally bound to the origins of the RhB. It hauled the inaugural train of the metre gauge Landquart - Davos Railway (LD), as it was then known, through the Prattigau up to Klosters in 1889.

Rhätia has had an eventful life and is today effectively the centrepiece of the RhB historic collection, which in

its own right is quite a remarkable ensemble of rolling stock of significance to those interested in alpine railway history.

At the time of writing Rhätia has been out of service since 2014. There are a considerable number of known issues with the locomotive, but rectification had been put off in order to obtain a year or two more of service without costly overhaul. Being mothballed on track 17 in the RhB roundhouse in Landquart is not a problem – the storage conditions are ideal for conservation, and weather and consequent deterioration are not an issue. The roundhouse is the active base for the RhB loco fleet and is excellently maintained.

Above: 'Rhätia' seen during one of the loco's final duties at the 125 years of RhB celebrations held in 2014.

Below: Rhätia in Klosters at the head of the first public train from Landquart up to Davos in 1889. Behind is sister loco no 3 'Davos'.

Photos courtesy of Project Rhätia Group unless credited

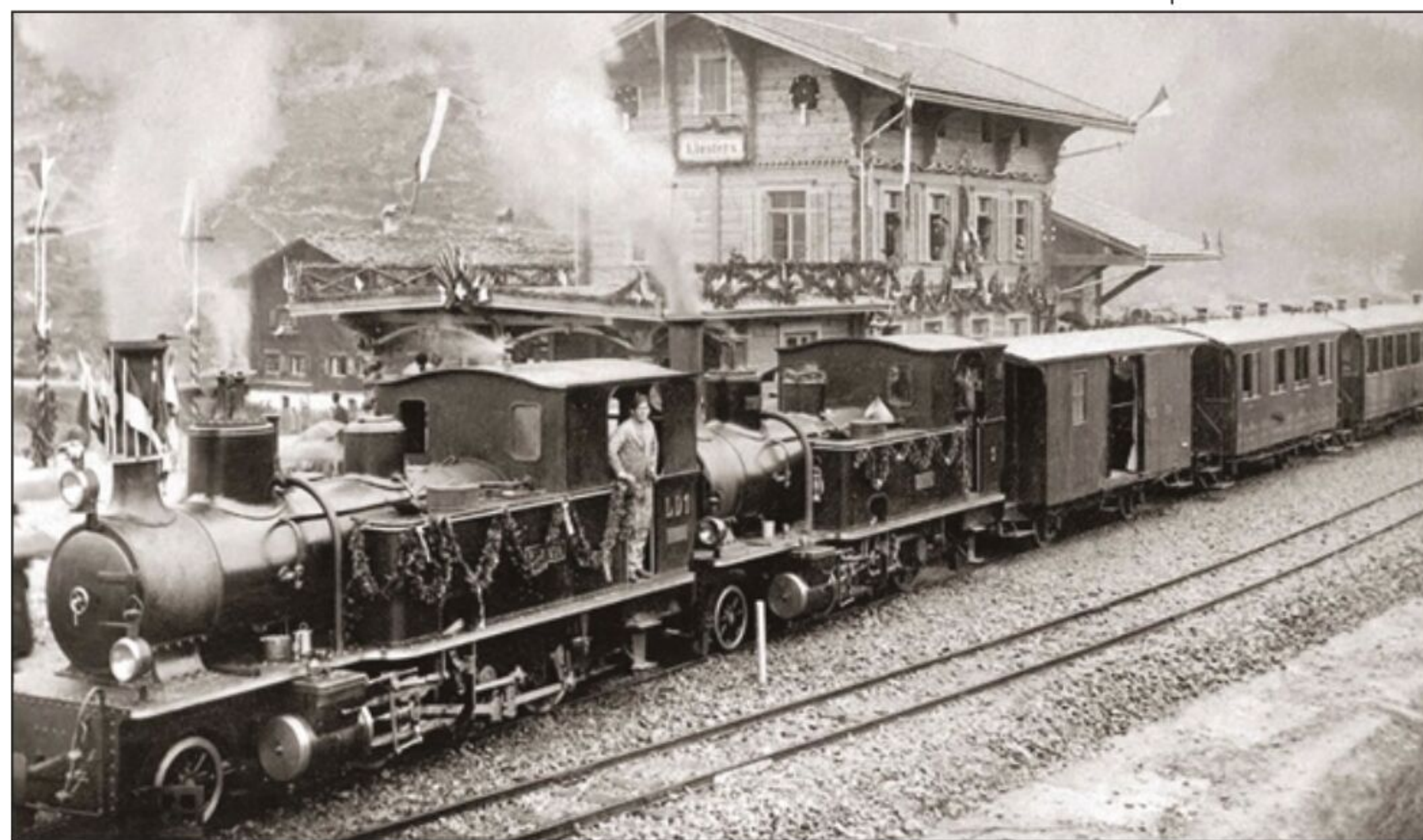
Project Rhätia – the group

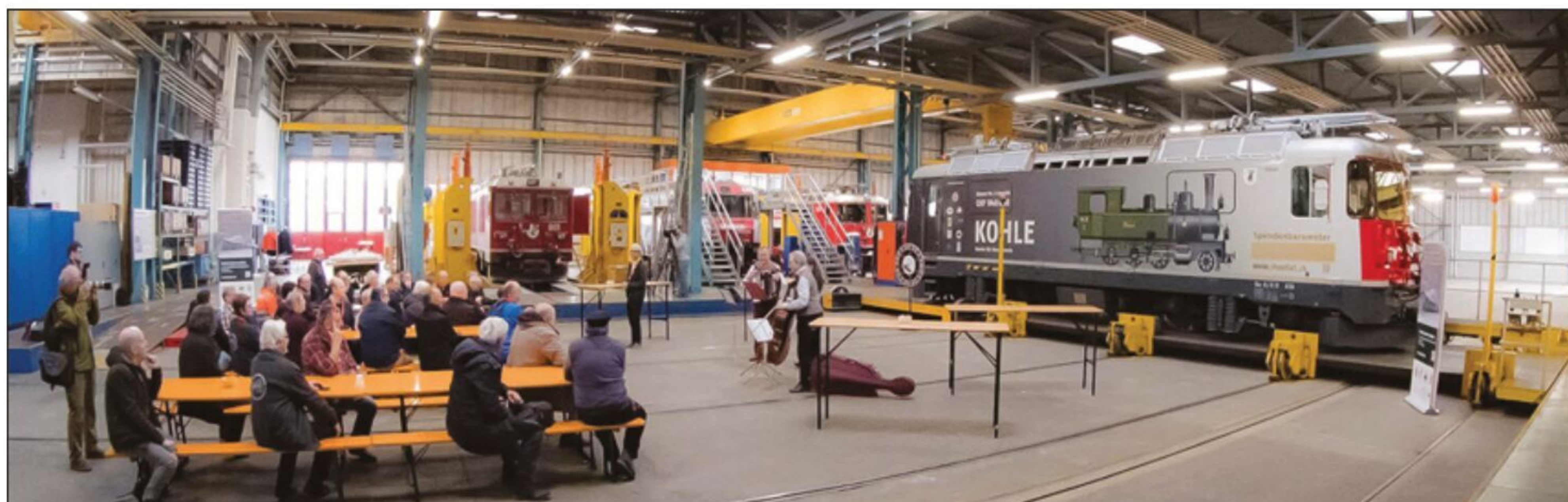
As the name suggests, this group is the coordinating committee for the loco's restoration, an amalgamation of members from the 'steamfriends' of the RhB, Club 1889 and other RhB historic organisations. Project Rhätia focuses purely on this locomotive.

Club 1889 has around 700 members and is heavily involved in the preservation and restoration of noteworthy RhB rolling stock under the custody of RhB Historic, which has about 1400 members. To date, Club 1889 has restored to service more than 16 vehicles in the Historic collection. With eyes set on Rhätia the dream of having an entire train dating from 1889 is starting to become a realistic proposition. The possibility of a complete period train operating on the network of its home railway makes this project just that little bit more enticing.

In 2018, Project Rhätia Group's founding members, Armin Brüngger, Fredy Pfister and Christian Meyer, produced a well thought-out restoration concept based on initial technical findings on the state of the loco. But as with all such restoration projects the prime mover, following enthusiasm, is funding. Thanks to the organised efforts of the group, the financial aspect of this project is today secure.

In addition to private individuals giving smaller sums of money, there are major sponsors such as the Canton of Graubünden (the home county), the communities of





Prattigau/Davos and others involved. One interesting sponsor of note is the German model railway company Lehmann Grossbahn (LGB), which has produced a model of the electric RhB 'Kohle' loco with fundraising graphics applied. Each sale donates 50 Swiss Francs (about £40) to the project. LGB is understood to be planning an additional production run to meet the demand generated.

Operational years

The Landquart - Davos Railway placed an order with the SLM in 1888 for five saturated steam tank locos of the G 3/4 arrangement. These were the first locos for the LD and were allotted numbers 1 to 5 with the names 'Rhætia', 'Prättigau', 'Davos', 'Flüela' and 'Engadin'. The names indicated the direction in which the network of the LD would expand under the leadership of its Dutch founder Willem Jan Holsboer. Rhætia was commissioned on 8th July 1889.

The axles and wheelsets of the five locos were exchanged in 1893 – the reason remains unknown. No 1 received a new inner firebox in 1894, probably due to design modifications to improve performance. Initially numbers 1 to 3 were equipped with large snowploughs during the winter periods. And, due to pressure from the inhabitants of Davos, the LD equipped all locomotives with ash collectors in 1899.

Around 1895/1896, Rhætia was 'un-named' by the newly formed RhB and consequently had its nameplates removed. They still exist and will be used to cast replicas for the loco's restoration to original form.

With the subsequent delivery of more powerful Mallet locomotives, the smaller G 3/4 class was relegated from 1910 onwards to electrification work trains or lighter service duties. Following delivery of G 4/5 (2-8-0) tender locos, the G 3/4 series was placed in the reserve pool. Once network electrification was completed and modern, stronger and less

Above: For several years loco 616 'Kohle' has acted as a roving ambassador for its 'little sister', attracting much attention and comment. The loco is seen here prior to unveiling of sponsorship.

Right: The 'Kohle' LGB model outside the RhB Roundhouse in Landquart during a marketing photo session.

Below: The Kohle loco in operation – note funding scale on side, each coal briquette represents 50,000 Swiss Francs, with CHF940,000 raised. Photo taken by Georg Trüb with RhB permission – site not accessible by public



expensive electric loco usage became the norm, no 1 was finally retired and placed out of service in 1928.

Retirement years

Thankfully a decision to scrap no 1 was never taken. We may safely assume that this was due to the emotional and historical aspect of its origins. Once out of traffic the locomotive was placed unprotected outside the works in Landquart.

In 1942 the Verein Verkehrshaus der Schweiz (Swiss Transport Museum) was founded and in 1947

the RhB placed no 1 on loan to this organisation. However, the museum did not open until 1959, once it had finally secured a location near Lucerne in central Switzerland.

As events unfolded, no 1 was not allocated for inclusion in the transport museum's collection and was transferred three times to different storage locations. These included the Zürich tram depot at Wiedikon, Vallorbe loco depot and then the depot at Chexbres-Villages.

Finally in 1970, the Blonay-Chamby Museum Railway (BC) took »





over guardianship and even went so far as to refurbish the locomotive for operations starting in 1972. The BC invested considerable time and effort and installed a Friedmann-lubrication pump and turbo generator for electrical lighting.

From 1980 until 1988, no 1 was active on BC summer service duties. During this period the loco was also occasionally to be found on the Montreux-Oberland-Bahn and Chemin de fer Fribourgeois Gruyère-Fribourg-Morat metals.

When the 100th anniversary of the RhB occurred in 1989 the management wanted to organise something special. It was therefore decided not to extend the loan agreement with BC and instead to repatriate no 1 back to Landquart.

Negotiations were not exactly easy, as having brought the loco back to life the BC was now losing its

invested time, money and effort. The RhB promised to return no 1 following the centenary celebrations or to reimburse the BC for its costs. The right of first refusal was also pledged should the loco be put up for sale. Following the festivities the RhB Board of Directors made the decision to retain no 1 and reimburse the BC with 90,000 Swiss Francs (about £72,000). The date of transfer was 26th January 1990.

Between 1989 and 2014, Rhätia (as the loco was now named) was used to pull occasional historic excursions. These included a photo trip over the Bernina Pass on 26th August 1995 and a visit back to the BC line for its 40th anniversary. In 1997 Rhätia was on duty for the 150 years of Swiss Railways celebrations and headed various special trains on the Bellinzona - Mesocco Railway.

The last active service for Rhätia

was in 2014 during the 125 years of RhB celebrations. At this point it was clear that boiler and frame-related issues were serious enough to bring further operations to a halt.

An idea emerges

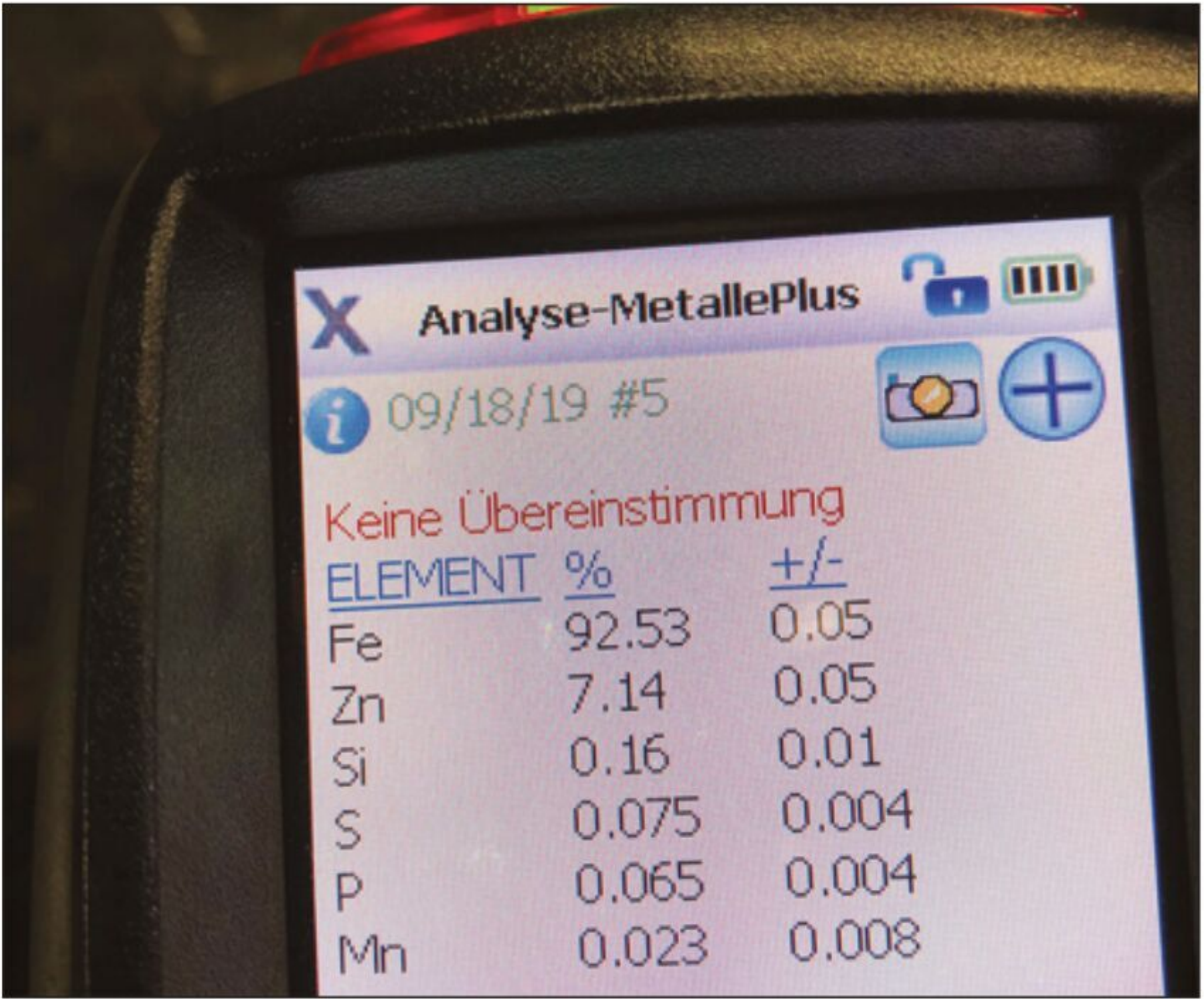
When Rhätia was taken out of service the list of items to be repaired or re-fitted was extensive, as might be expected in a loco of such age and originality. The ‘steamfriends’ of the RhB now started fund-raising with the sponsorship of individual tubes and stays. This generated sufficient funds to commence exploratory work and gain an idea of what would be involved to restore Rhätia.

The initial survey clearly showed that the scope of necessary works lay outside the capability of the RhB. In 2015 the dome cover together with the safety valves and the boiler tubes were removed which enabled internal physical access to assess the condition of the boiler.

In 2016 Daniel Schlosser, the technical operations manager at the Brien Rothorn Bahn (BRB), was asked to assist in an appraisal of the loco. The BRB had recent experience of a boiler overhaul in the UK and therefore included its sales manager, Mike Ellis, author of this feature and owner of Swiss Railway Services (SRTS). Mike had the experience of managing successful repairs undertaken to BRB no 7 at the L&NWR works in Crewe, England.

The information provided by the BRB team supported the idea that a restoration was realistic and, most important, that expertise could be found to undertake this work even if it was only available outside Switzerland. Once funding was underway the boiler was lifted out of the frames and all fittings and

“The UK leads the world in steam locomotive preservation and the skills required – there are around 650 steam locos in service in the UK and new ones being built on a regular basis...”



Technical specification G3/4 no 1 ‘Rhätia’	
Built	1889, SLM, Winterthur, Switzerland
Works Number	577
Classification	1 C (2-6-0) n2t ‘Mogul’
Boiler	Saturated steam, coal-fired 12 bar. Copper firebox
Cylinders	Two with outside admission slide valves
Power	250 PS
Gauge	1000mm
Length over buffers	7945mm
Driving axle spacing	1250mm
Driving axle diameter	1050mm
Weight dry/empty	23.5 tonne (metric)
Water tank capacity	2.6 m³
Braking	Vacuum
Bunker capacity	0.9 tonne (metric)
Service weight	30.2 tonne (metric)
Maximum speed	45 km/h

cladding removed. A clean boiler was now available for detailed inspection.

On 2nd May 2019, SRS was officially engaged to support the project. It was in a position to supply the best technical experience, specialised translation skills, quality control and project management to ensure the project's success. On 18th September 2019, the SRS boiler specialist Steven Latham flew over from the UK – commissioned to inspect the boiler and provide a detailed report he enabled an informed decision to be made regarding the key question: Was it possible to rescue the remains as a realistic working unit, true to original design, or was a new boiler going to be required?

The two-day inspection involved precise thickness measurements of all boiler sections, as well as spectrum analysis to ascertain the composition of the metalwork. Elements inside the boiler were also evaluated with regard to re-use or replacement.

The SRS report confirmed that the boiler, although in poor condition, was still very much a viable option for repair. The use of traditional repair methods (riveting, as just one example) was in hindsight an advantage; the analysis of metal composition had shown that the original boiler had used the crucible method of batch production. As was usual with such processes in the late 1800s, this introduced many impurities into the various mixes. These make welding solutions impossible to implement. To quote Steven at the time: "Think of it as like trying to weld puff-pastry!"

SRS duly presented its report together with a repair plan and budgetary costing to Alex Graf the RhB project manager. This in turn enabled funding and overall planning to gather pace and take form.

Parallel to the boiler overhaul, mechanical repairs will be carried out on the rest of the locomotive, by the RhB workshops. These will include a complete strip-down and assessment of components, new tyres and repainting in the original black as opposed to the black and green of today. The plan is completion and commissioning in 2024.

Why a UK supplier?

Whereas the 'mechanical' overhaul is relatively straightforward in content, the boiler work is not. Following the demise of the SLM in the 1990s no company exists in Switzerland today that is capable of undertaking copper firebox work.

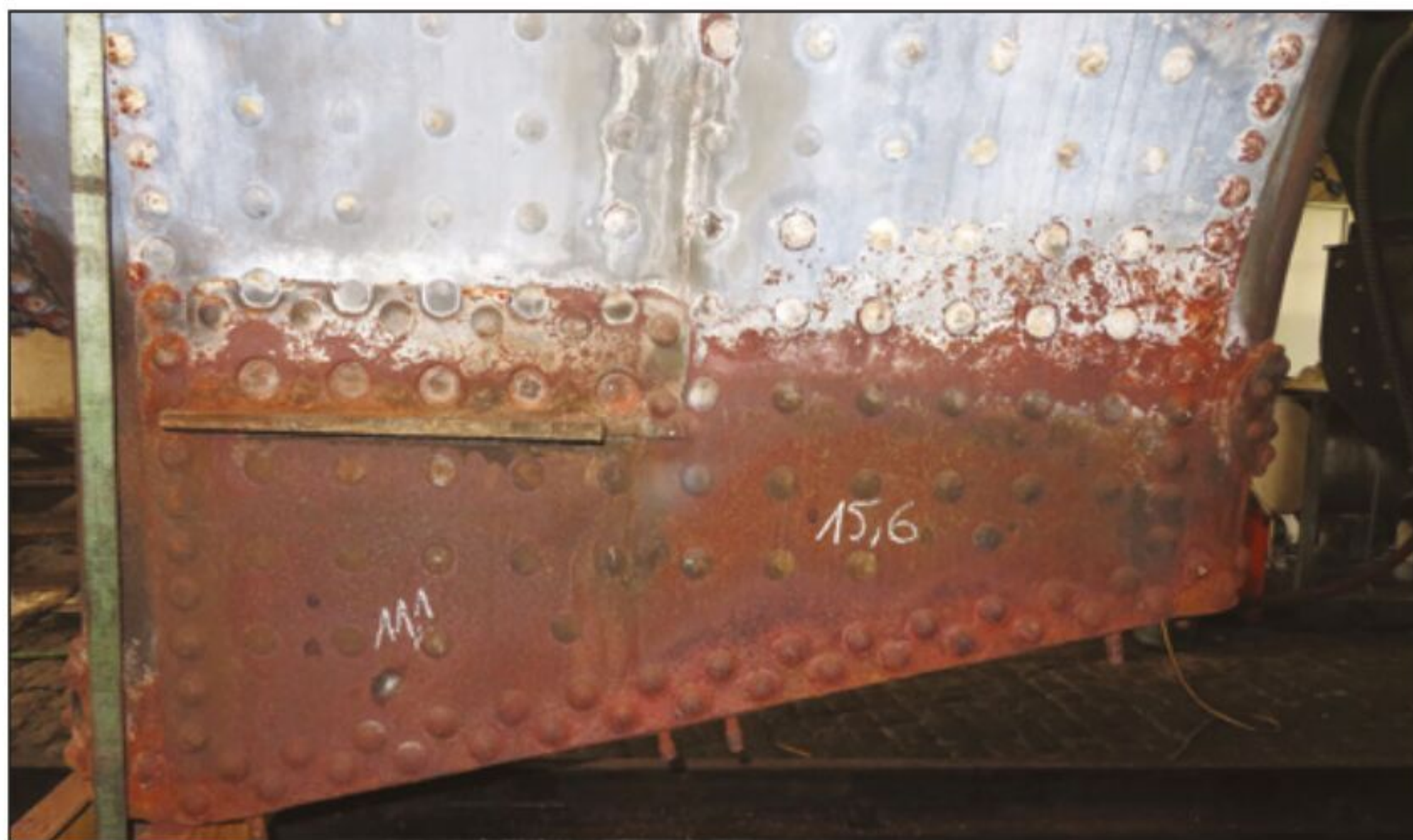
An additional complication when considering this project is the insistence from major sponsors that

Left: Steven Latham of Swiss Railway Services examines Rhätia's 130-year old boiler in 2019 after the firm was contracted to provide a feasibility report and overhaul plan. Photo: SRS

Below left: One of the spectrum analysis results: what was thought to be wrought iron is actually only 92.5 per cent iron, Zinc and silicon also in the mix! Photo: SRS/RhB

Above right: Always an area full of surprises, the foundation ring and surrounding walls are getting thin. Photo: SRS

Below: Something different for UK engineering – the design of stirrup stays is not BR standard. The near wall top is the firebox tubeplate, taken from inside the boiler. Photo: SRS



repairs are completed in faith with the original plans and methods, with attention to details that will not even be visible to public observation. This dictates, for example, riveted construction of a new inner firebox and not a welded assembly. Skills to fabricate such items are very rare in continental Europe these days and most suppliers are wary of the associated certifications necessary to return a boiler to service.

In comparison to mainland Europe the situation in the UK is somewhat different. The UK (in my opinion) leads the world in steam locomotive preservation and the associated skills required. There are today around 650 steam locos in service in the UK and new ones are being built on a regular basis. This means a skills pool exists to offer solutions for projects such as Rhätia.

The trick is to match supplier with customer and build a secure and mutual understanding to support the contractual paperwork – a 'trust is a must' aspect to the project.

The boiler overhaul is a significant work package within the Rhätia Project and is well into a six-figure budget. Under Swiss law this means an open tender had to be

communicated via SIMAP (Système d'information pour les marchés public), the official online portal for European public procurement. Any company may submit an offer under the SIMAP process and the final selection criteria are strictly followed.

To publicise the work and attract UK interest this process was unusually undertaken in both German and English languages. SRS was asked to translate the tendering package into English and also generate interest with selected companies within the UK. At the end of the tendering period a final decision was taken, and the winning company informed.

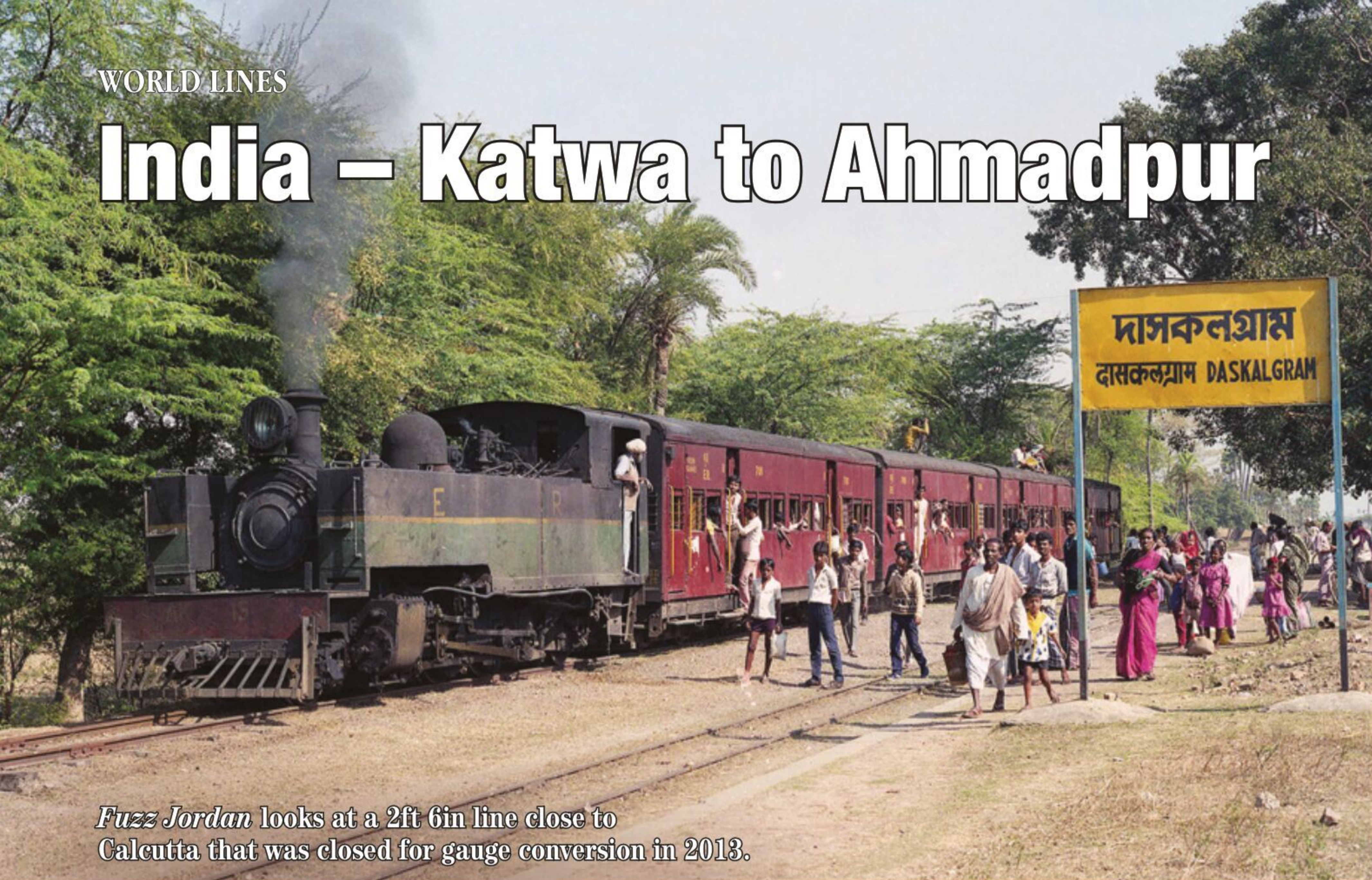
At the time of writing the contract had not been signed off due to Covid-19 travel restrictions preventing the RhB team making a site visit. Details of the engaged UK company were due to be revealed shortly. **NGW**

■ This first instalment will be followed by others as the Rhätia Project evolves both in the RhB works in Landquart and the UK.

The RhB will also feature in a forthcoming issue of **NGW**, covering the 2021 centenary of its famous articulated electric 'Crocodiles'.



India – Katwa to Ahmadpur



Fuzz Jordan looks at a 2ft 6in line close to Calcutta that was closed for gauge conversion in 2013.

Some 95km north-west of Calcutta (now Kolkata) lay the surprisingly busy lines from Burdwan to Katwa and from Katwa to Ahmadpur, both of 2ft 6in gauge.

The two lines were built by the private company McLeod & Company, and the Ahmadpur line opened on 29th September 1917, two years after the Burdwan line. They avoided the initial nationalisation of Indian Railways and stayed in McLeod's ownership until finally absorbed into India's Eastern Railway in 1966.

The line from Katwa to Ahmadpur, 52 kilometres long with seven intermediate stations, crosses some of West Bengal's most fertile land – flat and with a good water supply – so perhaps it is no surprise that there are plenty of rice paddies along the route.

Being relatively close to Calcutta, the lines were busy and supported six trains a day in each direction. Even in 2011 there were still two daily trains each way and as such, the line was still a candidate for gauge conversion. The narrow gauge closed in 2013, re-opened as electrified broad-gauge on 24th May 1918 and now runs with suburban EMUs.

The main depot (covering both

Above: Delta class AK15 pauses at Daksalgram on a westbound train, 7th February 1991.

Below: Headed by AK15, this train was certainly well loaded.

Facing page top: It was an amazingly friendly line, with cab-rides offered in both steam and diesel eras.

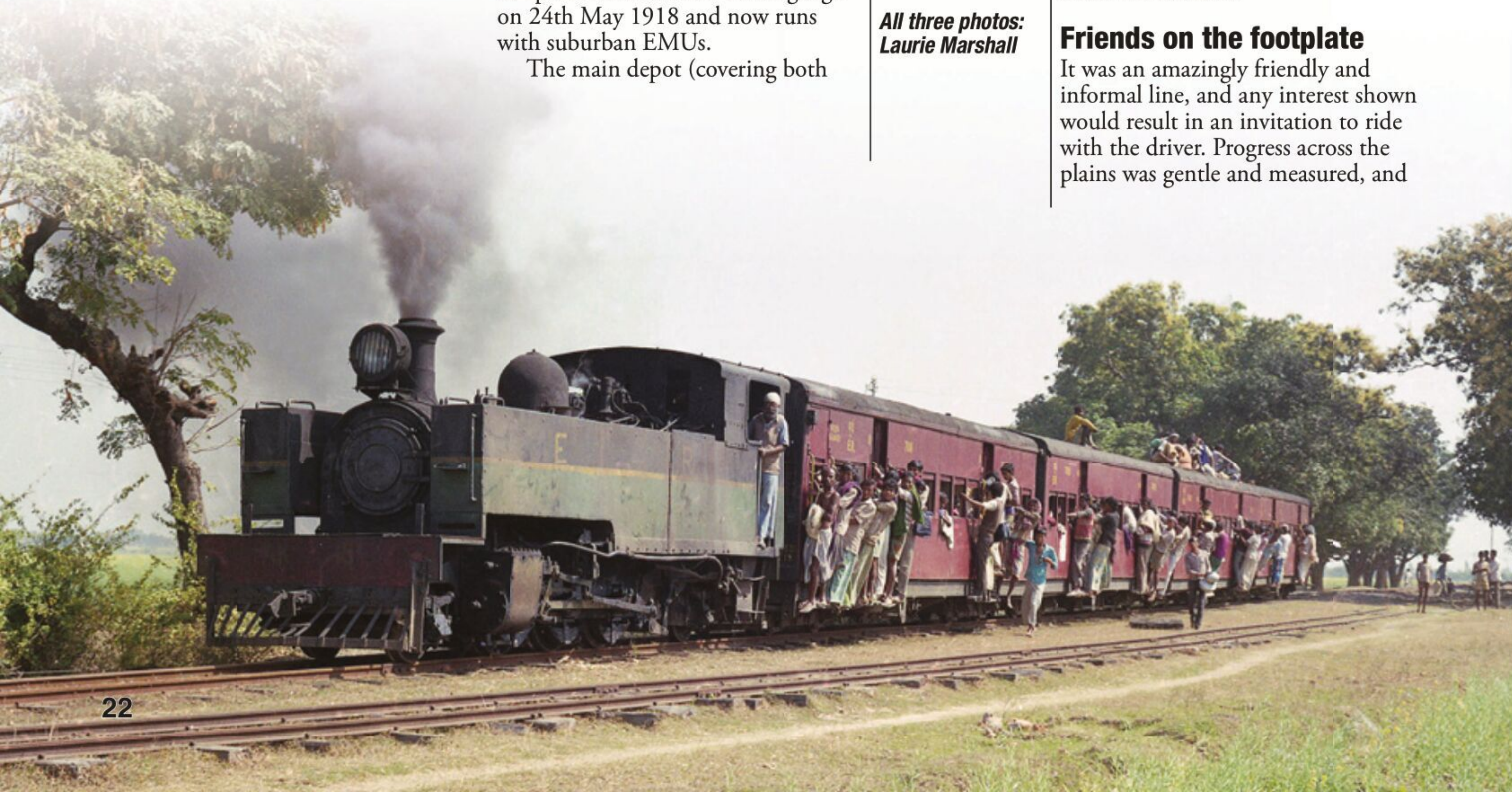
All three photos: Laurie Marshall

the Ahmadpur and Burdwan lines) is at Katwa where all the rolling stock including motive power is maintained. The line leaves Katwa parallel to the broad gauge heading north to Azimganj, but after about eight kilometres the two diverge and the Ahmedpur line heads to the west.

In many ways the rest of the journey is unremarkable: the railway sets about its regular business crossing the fertile land and stopping at small villages. The only civil engineering structures of note are the frequent bridges crossing over the rivers and other watercourses.

Friends on the footplate

It was an amazingly friendly and informal line, and any interest shown would result in an invitation to ride with the driver. Progress across the plains was gentle and measured, and





with time to stop and chat at each of the small stations along the way.

Both the Ahmadpur and Burdwan lines had the same motive power, although in steam days individual locomotives were allocated to one line or the other, shown by their number being preceded by 'AK' or 'BK'. Aside from three secondhand steamers and two 0-6-0T Sentinels, all services were operated by 'B' class Bagnalls or 'Delta' class locomotives.

There were seven B-class 0-6-4Ts built between 1914 and 1916, with two more following in 1924 and 1927. The 2-6-2T Delta class was so named as the locos formed part of an order to UK builder Bagnall for the

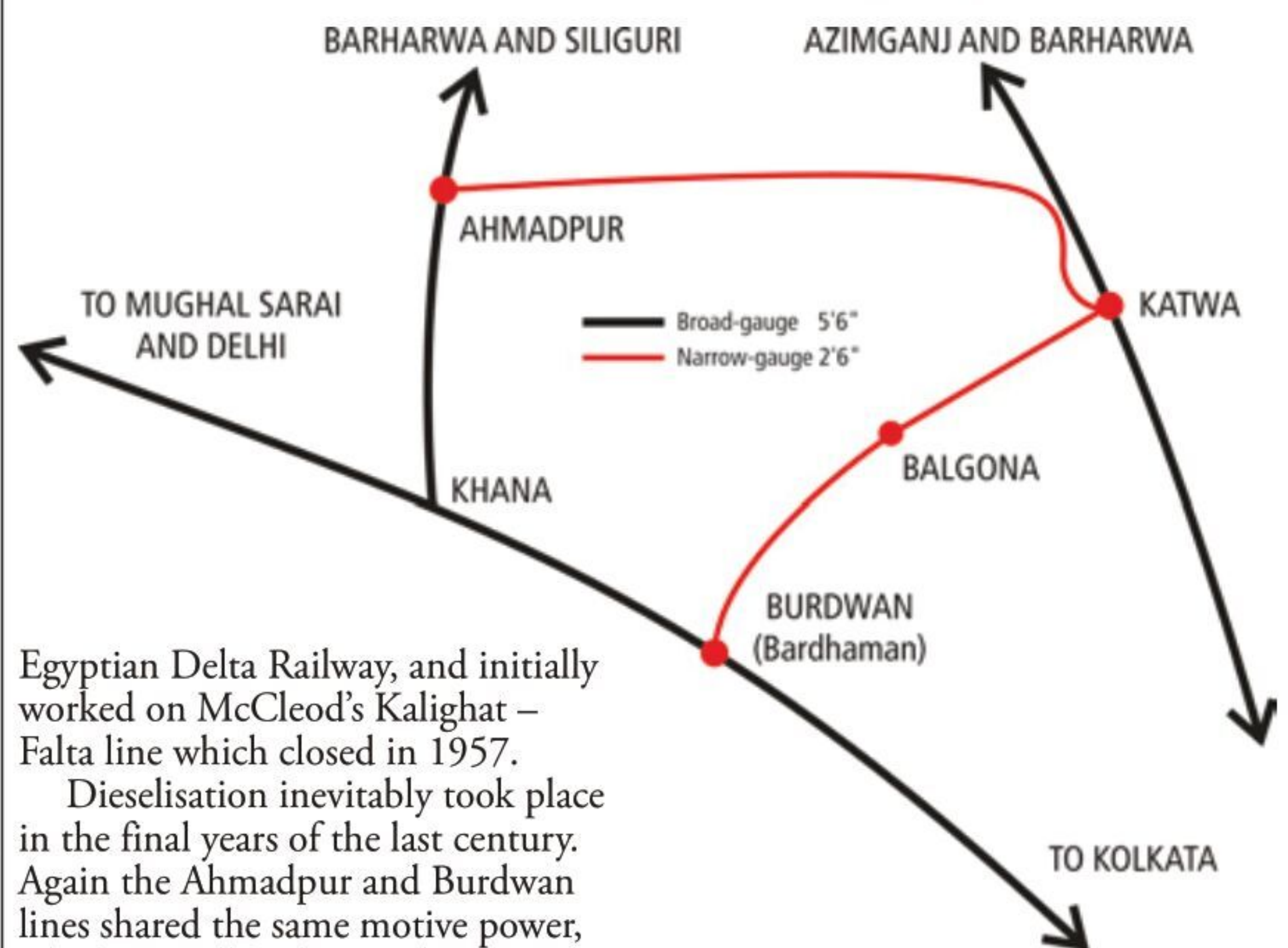
Top right: The western terminus, Ahmadpur, lies alongside the broad gauge line north to Malda, busy with traffic for Assam and north-east India.

Below: ZDM5 525 waits at Katwa with a lunchtime departure for Ahmadpur. Photos: Fuzz Jordan

Above right: Map of the system by David Charlesworth



KATWA TO BURWAN AND AHMADPUR 1917 - 2013



Egyptian Delta Railway, and initially worked on McCleod's Kalighat – Falta line which closed in 1957.

Dieselisation inevitably took place in the final years of the last century. Again the Ahmadpur and Burdwan lines shared the same motive power, which we will look at in the next article covering the Burdwan to Katwa line. **NGW**



Back in the old routine...

The UK's narrow gauge has come back to life in the last few weeks, and grateful photographers have relished the chance to take their cameras out of storage and get back to the linesides...





Left: Prolific *NGW* visual contributor *Joey Evans* has been out and about in recent weeks, including to a venue that doesn't feature too often in our pages, the Great Bush Railway at Hadlow Down in Sussex. On 24th April Joey pictured Orenstein & Koppel 0-6-0WT 'Sao Domingos' (11784/1928) passing a Morris Minor car in pristine condition.

Below left: One of the first locations to stage a post-Covid special event was Beamish Museum, celebrating the 150th anniversary of its standard gauge former Betchworth Quarries 'Coffee Pot' loco on 1st May. Busy in the appropriate surroundings of the museum's narrow gauge line was former Penrhyn Quarry Andrew Barclay 0-4-0WT 'Glyder' (1994/1931). This loco started its working life much closer to Beamish, working on construction of the Burnhope reservoir in County Durham and named 'Grey'.

Top: Also pictured during the Beamish Coffee-Pot weekend, Stephen Lewin 0-4-0 replica 'Samson', built by the museum in 2016, was working alongside Beamish's 1877-built standard-gauge Lewin 0-4-0, no 18.

Both photos: Matt Ditch

Right: Back running on 2nd May was the Bredgar & Wormhill Light Railway, staging its first open day since the Covid pandemic began. Decauville 0-4-2ST 'Victory' (246/1897) enjoyed a spirited run through the bluebells carpeting the Kent line. *Photo: James Kindred*

Overleaf: The Groudle Glen Railway was the first of the Isle of Man railways to reopen following the Covid pandemic and *David Lloyd-Jones* pictured Bagnall 0-4-0ST 'Otter', built by North Bay Railway Engineering in 2018, on 2nd May's trains – a colourful scene.



NARROW GAUGE WORLD







Above left: Davey-Paxman 2-8-2 'River Esk' (21104/1923) was rostered on Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway services on 1st May during the Cumbrian 15-inch gauge line's first week of 2021 operation. Driver Ryan Lamb is here keeping a look-out for the points as his train approaches Irton Road.

Photo: Matthew Pye



Left: And finally, summer's coming! As a Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway trustee our editor was obliged to be in a day of meetings at the line on 15th May – he decided to get a cuppa from the line's mobile catering unit just as the heavens very much opened! Pictured in the deluge is Zillertalbahn ZB2 0-6-2T 'Zillertal', built in 1900 and which is currently on hire to the mid-Wales line.

Photo: Andrew Charman

Campaign fights threat to Wells harbour line

News that the 10¼-inch gauge Wells Harbour Railway could close within weeks have sparked a campaign to keep the line running.

The owners of the 1200-yard long line in the Norfolk town of Wells-next-the-Sea have been told by their landlords, Holkham Estates, that the lease on the line's site will not be renewed at the end of its term.

Gary and Alison Brecknell, who have run the line for 21 years, had earlier asked for a new 10-year-lease, as they wished to retire in the next year or two and needed the lease in order to make the line a viable purchase for a new operator.

In a statement the Brecknells said that Holkham had told them the lease was not going to be renewed and subsequently added that the landlords had no intention of buying the railway from the couple.

"With huge regret and very much sadness on our part the railway will need to be removed from Holkham land before the end of the lease," the Brecknells stated. "At



no time has Holkham had any discussions with us about moving where or when the railway runs.

"We hope to run the railway for the remainder of this year but the trains will now need to be sold to salvage what's left of our business, so consequently because this is such a specialised market as soon as buyers become available the railway will cease to exist."

Holkham Estates told the *Eastern Daily Press* that the area's needs were evolving; "The Holkham team hopes to be able to find better solutions for getting people to and from the beach – ones that offer an easier and safer experience. The current railway was designed to help holidaymakers

at Pinewoods get into town and back to the site in the evening," it added.

A petition started by Nottingham resident Ashley Illingworth, who has enjoyed many rides on the line on holidays to Norfolk, had gathered more than 48,000 signatures as *NGW* closed for press. The petition is at <http://chnng.it/zkXFQn6tsK>

The Wells Harbour Railway was established in 1976 by Roy Francis, better known for the similarly-gauged Wells & Walsingham Light Railway which runs south for four miles from the town.

Above: Pictured here in 2008 by *Jonathan James*, the Wells Harbour Railway has been a part of the Norfolk coastal town for 45 years.

Ruislip to stage year-late Gala

The Ruislip Lido Railway is set to stage its 75th anniversary Gala Weekend on 26th-27th June, a year after it was originally meant to happen.

The first trains ran on the 12-inch gauge Greater London line shortly after the end of the Second World War in 1945 and the Ruislip Lido Railway Society, that has been responsible for the line for the past 42 years, planned a suitable celebration, only for the Covid pandemic to scupper plans.

Now the delayed event has been rescheduled, with most of the attractions planned for the original.

Between 11am and 5pm on both days the railway's workshop will be open to visitors. Everyone will be required to wear a face covering inside the building unless Government restrictions have changed, and visitors will be able to see overhaul progress on ELSR steam locomotive 'Mad Bess' – built in 1986 and based on the Ffestiniog Railway 2-4-0 'Blanche'.

Track maintenance vehicles will be on display, an intensive passenger service will be operated using four locos, and the line's shop and tearoom will be open.

More details can be found on the RLSR website, www.ruislipidorailway.org



■ Fairbourne Railway 6-inch scale Darjeeling 0-4-0 'Sherpa' successfully passed its steam test following a 10-year overhaul on 10th May. The railway's recently recruited engineer Harry Billmore, seen here on the footplate, was hoping to have the 12.25-inch gauge loco, built in 1978 by Milner Engineering, back in service for the line's Gala over the Spring bank holiday weekend.

Photo: Murray Dodds/FR



■ The Rhyl Miniature Railway's Barnes Atlantic 4-4-2 'Joan' (101/1920) was rostered on services for the first time in four years on 8th May, after undergoing a major boiler overhaul. The 15-inch gauge line is running on weekends throughout June. *Photo: Justin Bell/RMR*

The Durango & Silverton

In the second of a three-part feature on Colorado, *James Waite* recalls a photo trip made ten years ago when the mountain weather was at its finest.

The Rio Grande company never extended beyond Silverton. However three short railroads, each independently operated, were built northwards from the town through the principal valleys to serve some of the outlying mines.

These involved fearsome gradients and the oldest of them, the Silverton Railroad, invested in a Shay loco which came brand new from its

builders. This engine lasted there for less than one year, and the line closed in 1922 after the mines along the route were abandoned.

The Silverton, Gladstone & Northerly Railroad closed for practical purposes at about the same time although it remained formally in existence until the late 1930s, for accountancy reasons associated with the third of the lines, the Silverton Northern Railroad.

This was the most successful of the three since the mines which it served remained active the longest. It closed suddenly when its remaining three locos were requisitioned by the US military in August 1942 for service on the White Pass line in Alaska in connection with the war

This page: The star of the photos in this feature, Durango & Silverton K-28 2-8-2 no 478 (Alco 64989/1923), is shown here running light engine, entering Horseshoe Curve on its way back to Durango.

Photos by James Waite, September 2011.

effort there. The last of these was scrapped at Skagway in 1952.

Rather longer-lived was the Rio Grande Southern which connected Durango by an indirect route with Ridgway, on one of the Rio Grande's branches much further north, by what must have been a stupendously scenic route. Construction began from both ends in 1890 and the line opened throughout in 1892, one of its first locos being the Shay bought secondhand from the Silverton RR.

This railway led a precarious existence, passing into receivership only one year later and remaining insolvent for the rest of its life. In later years it relied to a large extent on its US Mail contract to keep going. This ended in 1950 and the line closed the following year.

The line was the home of the fabled Galloping Geese, homespun and somewhat improbable-looking railcars built from 1931, which operated all its passenger services after 1933. Five have been preserved.

The Silverton Northern, incidentally, had its own mini-goose which is now preserved in the town. I'd hoped to get to visit it but was thwarted by what turned out to be inaccurate ticketing for my train ride from Durango.

A mixed train continued to run on the Durango-Silverton line all year round throughout the 1950s to serve the dwindling mining traffic, worked for many years by one of the few remaining K-27 locos. Its passenger loadings increased dramatically as tourism got off the ground. In 1961 freight traffic ended and the service then became a





seasonal passenger-only operation.

The company made a half-hearted attempt to cash in on this unexpected surge in business. A glass-roofed vista car, the 'Silver Vista', arrived and the carriages were painted in the bright yellow it had begun to use for its mainline diesels. The colour hardly suited what had by then become historic vehicles but, rather like the UK's first preserved lines, perhaps the operators thought that the public would want a break from the tired state into which the line had got during the years when it was being run down.

After the last K-27 was withdrawn from service in the early 1950s the trains were worked by the K-28 2-8-2s. Ten of these fast and sure-footed machines were built for the Rio Grande between 1923 and 1925. They earned the nickname 'Sports Models' and until the Second World War some were generally in charge of the principal passenger trains.

Sadly seven were also requisitioned in 1942 to work in Alaska and never returned. The army wanted all ten,

Above All four of the D&S's Baldwin K-36 2-8-2s at Durango engine shed during an evening photo shoot. No 482 (58560/1925) moves towards the turntable. On the far left no 486 (58564/1925) is under repair, as is no 480 (58558/1925) on the right. No 481 (58559/1925) stands to the right of no 486.

Below: No 478 rests on the Durango turntable.

but fortunately the Rio Grande managed to hold onto the remaining three. Pseudo diamond-shaped chimneys and equally pseudo oil lamps appeared on the locos and these continued to disfigure them for the remainder of the time the company owned the railway.

The Rio Grande was really only interested in its mainline freight business and, despite the obvious success it was having with the Silverton tourist traffic, it sought permission to abandon the line. Fortunately this was refused.

New owners

Eventually the railway and its locos and rolling stock were sold as a going concern in 1981 to Charles Bradshaw Junior, a Florida citrus fruit grower – who soon earned the gratitude of many US enthusiasts by removing the fake chimneys and oil lamps!

The line was rebranded as the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, the lettering for which soon appeared on the tender sides in place of the old Rio Grande flying

herald to the regret of many lovers of the old railway.

More pertinently Mr Bradshaw upgraded the line in order to accommodate the K-36 2-8-2s which today work most trains. They were needed in order to expand the services, something Mr Bradshaw deemed essential, and so the upgrading became central to his plans. Previously the K-28s had been the only locos allowed to work through to Silverton since the demise of the K-27s or 'Mudhens'.

The current owners, Allen Harper, a Florida real estate developer, and his wife Carol, took over in 1998.

They've worked hard on improving the line's infrastructure which is probably now in better physical shape than it has ever been.

The Harpers have also taken active steps to conserve the line's rich heritage – the stations at Durango and Silverton in particular have been beautifully restored. So too has the iconic Needleton water tank midway along the line even though it's no longer used, water now being taken »





from a modern tank nearby. They've also built a replica of the 'Silver Vista' car. The original was destroyed by fire back in the 1950s.

There is a really well-run museum in part of the roundhouse at Durango, the star exhibits when I was there being Rio Grande Southern 2-8-0 no 42 and K-28 no 476, along with many small exhibits.

No 42 owes its survival to Bob Richardson, a dedicated enthusiast who moved to Colorado back in the 1950s and bought the loco to prevent it being scrapped, even though he could not afford to keep it himself. It changed hands more than once before finding a good home at Durango.

It's fair to say that during the Bradshaw era the line acquired a reputation for hostility towards enthusiasts with places such as the loco shed being definitely off-limits. The Harpers now operate shop and yard tours and so the shed can be visited once more, albeit only at times

when the working locos are away up the line.

There's also a Fall Spectacular weekend with all-day photo specials and a night shoot at the shed which provides one of the few opportunities to see it with its residents in steam. The visit which Pete Lerro and David Williams are planning for autumn 2021 should include a similar night shed shoot.

I spent a couple of days at the line during the 2011 Fall event when several of the carriages had been repainted in the old Pullman green which they used to carry before the yellow colour appeared. The Harpers now paint their premium-class carriages in the Tuscan red which the Rio Grande used until the advent of the green in 1917 and two of these were also included in the photo train.

The train was hauled by K-28 no 478, carrying its old Rio Grande lettering for the occasion, the idea being to recreate the appearance of a

train from the early 1920s when both the red and green colours were in use. It looked absolutely magnificent, and it was a real joy to see it running through the spectacularly beautiful Colorado countryside.

Recently the K-28s and the K-36s have been joined by no 493, one of ten K-37 2-8-2s rebuilt between 1928 and 1930 from standard-gauge 2-8-0s dating from 1902. Along with the K-36s they handled most services after the 1940s. No 493 has been converted to oil-firing, mainly as a result of a devastating wildfire in 2018 which was blamed on cinders from a steam loco.

Four oil-fired locos similar to the K-28s were built for the Oahu Railway in Hawaii in 1925 and 1926. The D&S has obtained drawings for the oil-burning equipment and plans to convert at least one of its K-28s, and it is also buying diesels.

Recalling the Rio Grande

Around Durango reminders of the old Rio Grande company are everywhere, from shopping malls to parks to bars. It's more than 25 years now since the company disappeared as a result of railroad mergers but there are many people who remember it with great affection.

A good stop in the city is the Durango Brewing Co on the corner of Main Avenue and 30th Street. It's a couple of miles north of the centre but close to many of the affordable hotels. The bar is full of Rio Grande memorabilia – the whole of one of the inside walls consists of the side of one of its box cars which still carries original paint. The beer's good too...

Just around the corner the level crossing at 32nd Street is an excellent photo spot for the outgoing morning trains though these run a little too early for a bar visit! Just one block away from Durango station is the Strater Hotel, a magnificent historic property nearly as old as the railway. It has preserved many old features, even down to the iron bedsteads which perhaps don't wholly measure

Scenes from the 2011 Fall event when James followed the journey of Baldwin 478...

Above: Standing at Needleton water tank, no longer in working order, heading for Durangoy.

Below: Running through Memorial Park, approaching 32nd Street level crossing on the outskirts of Durango before piloting a K-36 on a train to Silverton.





up to modern expectations of comfort but definitely make for a stay with a difference!

The line's first 11 miles, as far as Hermosa, are relatively straight and flat as the railway runs along the broad valley of the Rio de las Animas Perdidas (River of Lost Souls), nowadays often known more simply as the Animas River. Hermosa is the line's civil engineering base, and fans of the East Broad Top in Pennsylvania will recognise the hoppers that live here!

Just beyond the station the route begins to climb in earnest, the next six miles to Rockwood being at 1 in 40, as the surrounding scenery becomes increasingly splendid. Note, however, that there is no road access

Above: No 478 blowing down as it runs beside the Animas River on route to Silverton.

Below: Hauling a rake of premium class red-painted carriages on the route alongside the Animas River.

between Rockwood and Silverton.

Horseshoe Curve is an easy walk from Rockwood station. It must be one of the most spectacular and photogenic spots on any US railway, with the line curving around a sheer rock face and the river tumbling through rapids hundreds of feet below. A friend and I spent an afternoon here awaiting a late-running southbound train. We had a bald eagle for company, circling high above, for part of the time as well as a wealth of smaller wildlife to watch.

The next two miles as far as Canyon Cascade are known as the High Line, still with the river far below. Eventually the railway rejoins the river bank, and follows it through wild and spectacular scenery the rest

of the way to Silverton, 45 miles from Durango.

For enthusiastic walkers there is sheet 140 of National Geographic's one-inch map series, which is usually kept in stock by the ever helpful Map Shop at Upton-on-Severn (www.themapshop.co.uk). It shows how to reach some of the many good photo spots further up the Animas gorge, though it is important not to venture on private land away from the public tracks. Otherwise they are only accessible on one of the line's occasional photo specials. **NGW**

■ The final instalment of this series will look at some of the locos and stock now preserved away from the old Rio Grande lines.



Isle of Man – May 1963

Michael Farr has vivid memories from almost 60 years ago, when he crammed a great deal into his Manx week.



I flew into Ronaldsway from Heathrow towards the end of May 1963, found the bus connection to Douglas (sadly in rain) and, remembering to wave to the fairies while crossing Fairy Bridge, walked to my digs in Windsor Terrace, high above the Villa Marina. I enjoyed Mrs Mawson's hospitality and slept fitfully thanks to the blare of the foghorn throughout the night.

The next morning, after a hearty island breakfast, I walked down the

steep hill to the promenade through the mist and murk that the island's god Manannan had cast over the town. I followed the tracks of the horse trams to the pier head and onto the docks where a bright red railway lorry was being loaded with packages that had arrived on the overnight ferry.

The huge booking hall at Douglas station was abandoned, with all ticket windows closed and so I went onto the platform. A grey four-wheeled

van was parked against the stops in the outer Peel-line platform into which the packages from the ferry were stacked after being meticulously checked in and out – what a time-consuming practice.

I'd chosen the last-but-one week of the winter timetable, partly to sample the system serving its community rather than the summer visitors and also to ensure I'd ride on the ex-Country Donegal railcars, as I'd missed out on seeing them in their

Above: The ex-County Donegal railcars, no 19 leading, emerge from the shed in Douglas ready for the morning trip to Peel. They will couple up to the parcels van waiting for them in the platform.

Below left: St John's. Railcar no 20 tows no 19 out of gear and a van for parcels and luggage on the solitary daily journey from Douglas to Peel.

Facing page, above: High tide at Peel with the castle in the background. The railcars have arrived from Douglas and shunted the incoming van into a siding. They then picked up the previous day's van to return it to Douglas.





native Ireland. Suddenly, with a roar and huge cloud of exhaust they came off shed, the two cars 19 and 20 being coupled back-to-back. The driver, Arthur Buttell who with his family was to become a very good friend, lubricated the very visible rods.

I retired back to the booking hall and knocked gingerly on the appropriate window. My request for one of the 12s 6d (*about 60p in today's money but with inflation now equivalent to around £13 – Ed*) Holiday Runabout Tickets advertised on the walls was greeted with some surprise. "With only one train each way on the two lines you'll have difficulty in getting your money's worth," I was told – but I persevered and had my full value by Tuesday!

Railcar to Peel – and back

In preparation for departure Arthur walked along the track, sprinkling sand on the rails made greasy by the island mist. We then set out on time, driver, guard and myself as the only passenger. We passed Quarter Bridge and Braddan where you alighted for the open-air church services on summer Sunday mornings. We accelerated through Union Mills, of particular interest as I had already made a model of the wooden building there based on a photo in Ian MacNab's book *A History and Description of the Isle of Man Railway*, and on to Crosby, where the member of staff collected a couple of parcels.

We were greeted at St John's by legendary stationmaster George

Below: Railcar no 19 tows no 20 and a parcels van into St John's on the return journey from Peel to Douglas.

Photos by Michael Farr, all taken May 1963 except where stated

Crellin, scurrying around to operate first the signal box, meet the train and then open the crossing gates. I came to know him well when he was in charge of selling off surplus Manx Northern Railway tickets. After a brief pause we headed towards Peel, gradually pulling away from the northern line to Ramsey.

The run-round neck was too short to accommodate the two railcars and so Arthur backed the two cars and van out of the platform. He ran

forward into the goods shed road, where the van we had brought was uncoupled for later unloading, and he attached to the one the staff had already filled with outgoing parcels. He then returned to the platform where a small group of passengers had gathered, their return tickets allowing them to come back to Peel by bus from Douglas.

The driver had difficulty with slipping on the steep gradient up to St John's, cured by stopping and »





"The driver had difficulty with slipping on the steep gradient up to St John's, cured by stopping and dislodging the sand with the help of a clout with a large spanner..."

dislodging the sand with the help of a clout with a large spanner. The remainder of the journey was accomplished without problems and as we pulled into Douglas at 11.45, the beautiful Manx 'kitten' no 11 'Maitland', coupled to two carriages, waited in the south line platform to take the 12.30 departure to Port Erin.

Steam to Port Erin

We had an on-time departure and with such a light load no 11 gave a sprightly performance up Nunnery Bank. We passed the very impressive

Port Soderick station (another of my later models) and on through Ballasalla to Castletown, where another red railway lorry was waiting to deliver the packages on board to their final destination – with yet more handling.

It was on through Colby to Port St Mary and Port Erin where our steed was watered and lubricated before attaching to the front of the train with the carriages surprisingly well filled. At Castletown we were even joined by a commuter, an elderly teacher at the school there who took

the train home every day.

Arriving at Douglas at 14.25, the mist had cleared and I had plenty of time to walk along the prom to Derby Castle, before boarding a Manx Electric Railway tram to Ramsey. I also worked out that with high tea at the Mawsons taken at 18.00 hours (sitting with them in their kitchen as I was the only guest), there was time for a further tram trip afterwards. However, there was not time to travel all the way to Ramsey and back, so I assumed I'd have to change at Laxey, but the conductor

Above left: Isle of Man Railway no 11 'Maitland' shunting at Douglas, July 1964. It is about to pick up one of the carriages comprising a pair of former four-wheeler bodies mounted on a bogie underframe.

Below left: Maitland waits at Castletown on a running-in turn following winter overhaul, June 1965. At the end of the winter timetable, all journeys were normally scheduled for operation by the railcars, with the parcels van coupled between them to save running round at termini.

Facing page, top right: Manx Electric Railway tram no 22 with trailer arrives at Derby Castle from Ramsey.

Right: Douglas horse tram heading for Derby Castle terminus.



explained that wherever the two last cars of the day passed they exchanged crews so both could return to their home depots – and I joined them. Then it was back to Windsor Terrace for the night, after climbing up the steep hill.

Next day I set out for the IMR station again for another lonely trip to Peel, in slightly better weather. Riding in the former Irish railcars made me determined to visit Belfast Transport Museum to see the other surviving County Donegal railcars. So, after my sandwich lunch provided by Mrs M, I found a travel agent who, for £2.2s each way, booked me on the next morning's early flight to Belfast. I also had time on the Tuesday to ride on the horse trams and an afternoon MER trip to Laxey.

Railcars in Belfast

I had to be up early on Wednesday to catch the plane, in much improved weather, from Ronaldsway to Nutts Corner on the outskirts of Belfast – an airport with very basic facilities. The airport bus took me into the city and I had time to ride out to Lisburn on one of CIE's AEC diesel trains, the development of GWR's Flying Bananas and forerunners of all British Railways DMUs. After that I caught a bus to the Belfast Transport Museum, being given a personal tour by the curator as I was the only visitor.

I marvelled at the exhibits and was delighted to be able to see the beautifully restored County Donegal vehicles. I also realised how large 3ft narrow gauge could be compared with, for instance, the stock I was used to on the Talylyn.

I could now see two forerunners of the railcars on the IMR, the pioneer no 1 and also no 10. However, due to the number of exhibits, the museum was quite cramped with little room between each vehicle. I could photograph only the front end of no 10 but no 1 and the Donegal's 'home-made' diesel locomotive 'Phoenix' were fine. I also took the dimensions from this, no 11, which set me up for making a model mounted on a Triang TT-gauge railcar motor bogie.

Returning to Nutts Corner, I flew back to Ronaldsway and, despite the delayed arrival into Douglas, Mrs M had kindly organised a late high tea for me.

Two more days

Next morning, Thursday, the weather improved even more, dawning bright and sunny. Following my usual pattern and taking the morning train to Peel, I was able to get some excellent photos at St John's and at the terminus, the high tide enhancing



"The guard was not so happy and admonished me for hailing the train – 'We aren't supposed to pick up there,' he said..."

the pictures there. On return to Douglas I paid a visit to the Manx Museum to look at their archives of island transport.

On Friday I decided to take an early bus to Union Mills and scaled the wall by the padlocked gate. Measuring the building, I was delighted to discover that the dimensions I had calculated from MacNab's book illustration were almost correct, except that there was also a small extension, presumably a toilet, added at the back out of sight.

Suddenly there was a singing along the rails and the railcars roared into the station. Arthur Buttell recognised me and kindly made an emergency stop. However, the guard was not so happy and admonished me for hailing the train. "We aren't supposed to pick up there," he said.

On leaving Douglas station I picked up a new duplicated leaflet – sod's law had dictated that they were doubling the service the following week when I could have had even better value from my runabout ticket.

In the afternoon I had my last steam trip of 1963, to Port Erin and back, and in the evening a ride on the Manx Electric, returning to Douglas in a thunderstorm, with the lightning most spectacular over the sea.

I returned via Birmingham, leaving Ronaldsway at 15.00 hours and reached my home station in Bristol less than four hours later – quite a record. I was under the spell of the island and vowed to return the following year, when I chose the early summer timetable to give me a greater choice of trains. But that is another story from a different age. **NGW**





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Vivarais in my sitting room

Simon Cannon is a huge fan of the metre-gauge Vivarais line in France so did not miss the chance to create a model diorama at home to remind him of the line...

My main railway passion is the French metre gauge, and especially the Vivarais line – in normal times we make sure we visit the ‘Train de Archeche’ every year for a summer holiday, along with the Velay Express.

Of course in the past year we haven’t been able to go, and I’ve been grateful for having recreated the Vivarais in my sitting room, in O-16.5, 7mm to the foot, scale.

The diorama is housed on a shelf above my TV. It is at eye level and as the pictures on this page show, if you stand by it you can feel like you are actually there.

Most of the buildings are taken from along the Vivarais line. The engine shed is based on the one at St Agrève, the station on Le Chambon and the water tower on Tence. The background also includes buildings from Tence and Lamastre.

Behind the station are two buildings based on ones in Plymouth, a postal sorting office and the Reel cinema. These were left over from my scrapped OO-scale layout but they work okay in providing background perspective.

The fleet

The diorama gives me somewhere to display the fleet of Vivarais motive power I have built. I model in O-16.5 which with a 16.5mm track gauge (scaling out to just under 2ft 6in) is not an accurate representation of metre gauge, but it is close and works well because I can reuse OO-scale chassis.

The Vivarais loading gauge is similar to that of standard gauge, so in model form there is plenty of room inside locomotives >>

“The diorama is housed on a shelf above my TV. It is at eye level and if you stand by it you can feel like you are actually there...”

Simon’s Vivarais diorama packs a great deal into a small space (above) and is neatly contained on a shelf at eye-level viewing above the TV (right). Photos: Simon Cannon





to house motors. For example, the BB400 bo-bo diesel on the Vivarais is a metre-gauge version of a standard gauge loco.

The table at right shows my current loco fleet, listed from left to right in the picture above.

I am very happy that my scratch building has worked well, it hasn't cost a lot as some chassis I already had left over from my old OO layout.

The Billard A150D2 was the most difficult to build, as it is articulated, also the cab fronts curve both from bottom to top and left and right to middle.

Some of my modelling is not exactly accurate, for example the real BB400 has outside-frame bogies. To replicate this I have enhanced the bogies built from J50 locos to look like outside frames.

Currently I am working on a model of the Pinguely 0-6-0T bi-cabine. The

full-size example is currently being restored by volunteers at Boucieu Le Roi. This loco has a cab at both ends because it worked on a tramway line into the busy city of Lyon. **NGW**

■ Next month in his second Vivarais-themed piece Simon will describe the challenge of modelling a steam locomotive that now has no boiler and no number. Confused yet?

Actual loco/railcar	Built	Location	Status	Model chassis
Billard A150D2 222	1939	Velay Express	Fully restored, not currently running	Lima Deltic motor bogie with centre wheels removed
Billard A150D 211	1938	Vivarais	Operational	Lima Deltic, as above
De Dion Bouton ND 207	1935	Vivarais	Unrestored	Hornby 0-4-0 with single axle (as bogie at front and single fixed driven axle at back)
CFD BB400 403	1962	Vivarais	Operational	2 Lima J50s with centre wheels removed, one J50 for each bogie
CFD Locotracteur Y	1948	Vivarais	Operational	Lima 08 (as has outside frames) and cheap to buy
CFD Locotracteur 62	1948	Velay Express	Fully restored, not currently running	Lima 08



■ Modellers all enjoy some visual inspiration and the editor certainly found some in this superb slate quarry diorama in 7mm scale – at least he thinks it is! The two old slides came to the surface during a long-overdue sorting of the Ed's photo archive, a job that still has a very long way to go and has only been made possible by all that stay-at-home time we've had in lockdowns. Problem is, the archive goes back some 40 years or more and for a while was very badly recorded – Andrew thinks he took this at an Expo NG show, and for *NGW's* sister magazine *British Railway Modelling*, long before he had any connection with the company. He just doesn't know when, or who the builder of the model was! Can any reader assist? The only clue is that the show was between 1988 and 1995, this conclusion drawn from Andrew's home address on the slide mounts!





Exbury Gardens to host new garden railway show

After well over a year without any shows to go to news of a brand-new one is particularly welcome – Exbury Gardens in Hampshire will join the events calendar on 22nd August with its first Steam Model Railway Festival.

The New Forest location is renowned for its wide-ranging gardens stretching over more than 200 acres, and particularly amongst *NGW* readers for its 12¼-inch gauge railway. Running to around 1.5 miles in length, this is very busy and much more interesting to the enthusiast than might first appear, as we found out when we featured the line in *NGW*131.

Organised by well-known large scale model railway and book seller John Sutton, the Festival is set to include layouts in the 'garden scales' of 16mm and G Scale, as well as model traction engines and several trade stands. *NGW* editor Andrew Charman intends to be there too, he never

missing a chance to go to Exbury as the picture above shows!

The show runs from 10am to 4.30pm and admission is £3 adults with accompanied children free. Note that this does not include the other attractions at Exbury which are charged extra.

The event will follow any Covid restrictions that may be in place at the time, though as these words are written there are strong signs that we hopefully may be back to some form of normality be then!

Exbury is open, with the railway running, every day. The gardens are quite something making the Steam Model Railway Festival a real event you can take the whole family to! More details of the Gardens are at www.exbury.co.uk

Above: No-one needs to tell *NGW* editor Andrew Charman of the attractions at Exbury Gardens... Photo: Rosemary Charman

Midlands Model show back in October

We are delighted to report that the Midlands Model Engineering Exhibition will return this October, after the 2020 event fell victim to restrictions caused by the Covid pandemic.

The show, sponsored by *NGW*'s sister magazine *Engineering in Miniature* and now in its 44th year, is regarded as one of the largest model engineering events in the UK. Notably for *NGW* readers, the event always includes a strong narrow-gauge element amongst the many hundreds of models on display.

This year's event is set to be held between Thursday 14th and Sunday 17th October at its usual venue, Warwickshire Exhibition Centre near Leamington Spa. This of course assumes no setback in the current easing of Covid restrictions.

Organiser Meridienne Exhibitions promises all of the traditional favourite aspects of the show, including more than

50 specialist model engineering suppliers, alongside a host of club stands and entrants in 16 competition and a further 16 display modelling classes.

More details of what's on offer will be released closer to the event and the October edition of *Engineering in Miniature* will include a four-page pull-out guide to the show. More details at www.midlandsmodelengineering.co.uk



MODEL LINES

7mm show gets October date

■ One of the major shows missed by modellers over the past year has been the 7mm Association's annual gathering in Burton-upon-Trent, traditionally combined with the organisation's Annual General Meeting.

For a second successive year the AGM has been scheduled as an online event in June, but this does not mean we have to wait until next year for a show, as reacting to the general relaxing in Covid restrictions underway, the 7mm Association has rescheduled the exhibition for Saturday 16th October.

The event will be held in its usual venue of the Burton-upon-Trent Town Hall, and while many details are still to be decided initial plans suggest there will be at least 15 layouts on show. On previous evidence while these will be of widely varying styles, they will also all be of high quality. Four are set to make their first public appearance at the show.

Eight trade stands have already confirmed their attendance, and these will no doubt be joined by others.

More details will be found on the show page on the Association's website – <https://7mmnga.org.uk/AGM.php>

16mm show goes ahead

■ Another much-delayed event set to happen this month is the National Garden Railway Show, organised by the Association of 16mm Scale Narrow Gauge Modellers at the Peterborough Arena, and set for 26th June.

The organisers have planned this show to take account of Covid restrictions, and have split it into morning and afternoon sessions. All tickets must be pre-booked and visitors can choose either to go in the morning or afternoon, but not to both.

However, with the improving situation as *NGW* goes to press, we are hearing that should all restrictions in England be lifted on 13th June as the Government planned, then the show restrictions may well be lifted too.

The show is widely regarded as the premier large-scale modelling event, and is set to include several layouts many of which will be operating live steam, okus a vast number of traders selling all one needs to build a garden railway.

One definite highlight is likely to be the Landmarks Display, featuring significant models from the history of the 16mm hobby.

There will also be the usual Grand Draw held at the event with a host of very attractive prizes on offer including live-steam locomotives.

More details of the show, and ticket-booking facilities, can be found on www.nationalgardenrailwayshow.org.uk



■ Bachmann UK unveiled its Summer 2021 new releases on 5th May and while there was nothing to add to the plentiful previous announcements in the British-outline 009 narrow gauge range, the newcomers did include a pair of potentially highly useful models of steel-bodied bogie carriages.

The two ready-to-run vehicles are apparently generic but follow an Austrian/Eastern European style – the green one reminded our editor of the former Hungarian State Railways acquired by the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway, before they had end balconies added. They would certainly look good on a wide range of layouts. RRP will be £44.95 each though of course shop prices could be cheaper.

Meanwhile there is much Bachmann-related for UK 009 fans to look forwards to. Latest on the various items coming is that the Quarry Hunslet 0-4-OSTs have reached engineering sample stage and tooling is being made for the Ashover Railway bogie carriage. Some way off still are the Baguley-Drewry diesel and RNAD wagons, which have only reached the stage of plans being created in the drawing office.

Building up a very large slate...

We carry lots of new releases in the large modelling scales of 16mm, G and 7/8ths in these pages but it is very rarely we have something that dwarfs even these scales! But this new slate wagon kit certainly does that, built to 7¼-inch gauge – yes the same as the Beer Heights and Moors Valley passenger-carrying lines that appear in our diary each month...

The kit is from 17D Models and produces a typical style of slate wagon, as used in their thousands in the quarries

especially in north Wales – many have survived into preservation and this particular wagon takes a Ffestiniog example as its inspiration.

You get everything you need in the bolt-together kit – laser-cut steel framework, machined axleboxes and CNC machined axles and wheels, the latter including the correct signature curly spokes.

We are told by the makers that the wagon is very straightforward to assemble, but full illustrated instructions are available.

When you've built it you will certainly have an impressive model, measuring 752mm long, 352mm wide, a body height of 243mm and height above rail head of 360mm. It costs £499 and even if you don't have a 7¼-inch line to run on it would make a great garden talking-point, as a very bespoke flower pot perhaps?

Produced by 17D Miniature Railway Specialists
Tel: 01629 825070, 07780 956423
Web: www.17d-ltd.co.uk



16mm without the expense

As is typical there are a whole host of new products being released in the ever vibrant scale of 16mm to the foot, including this rather neat little closed van from PS Models.

It's described on the maker's website as a 'Corris Carriage', of which "little is known about". Now admittedly it looks nothing like any Corris carriage this reviewer has ever seen recorded, though it does have overtones of the compact Corris brake van that ended up on the Talylllyn Railway.

No matter, it's a pleasing and attractive little wooden kit, which you can build to 32mm or 45mm gauge.

The kit also comes with one major further advantage. It's supplied with wheels and axleboxes, in fact the only things it doesn't include are glue, paint and a hacksaw to cut the axles to length, and you get all that for a mere £16.50 – who said 16mm scale was expensive?

Produced by P.S. Models
Email: sharples66@talktalk.net
Web: www.philsharples.com



Swiss stalwart from LGB

The latest G-scale locomotive from LGB is of a very long-lasting class on the metre-gauge Swiss railways, the GE4/4 bo-bo electric locos, the first of which was delivered to the Rhaetian Railway (RhB) in 1947.

These were the first modern RhB electric locomotives with bogies and single-axle drive and the first GE4/4s – there have been second and third classes since (a loco of class GE4/4^{II} appears on page 19 of this issue).

The initial four were delivered in 1947 and were followed by six more in 1953. While superseded by the later classes they continued to serve the RhB on lesser traffic, aided by major updates in the 1980s that among other things removed the central end doors. At least two are still working on the line today with three more in preservation.

Measuring 54cm over the buffers LGB's model is of RhB no 605, in pre-rebuild format and correct green livery for Era IV between 1970 and 1990. The model is driven on all axles by a pair of Bühler motors and fitted with an mfx/DCC decoder providing light and sound functions. The pantographs are also electrically operated by servos. Cost is around £800.

Produced by LGB, model no LGB 22040

Web: www.lgb.com



■ 16mm scale exponents modelling the Ffestiniog or Talyllyn lines are very well served by the trade these days – latest releases include this FR 'Bowsider' Carriage no 19 from Resurgam Rolling Stock.

This plywood kit is based on vehicles designed by modeller Will Curry for his own layout and incorporates the hidden slot-and-tab construction developed by Resurgam. It includes the distinctive tumblehome on the sides, while details such as the balcony rails are 3D printed, including interior panels.

Protopical bogies, steel wheel sets and bronze bearings are supplied and made up the kit is an impressive 555mm long. Cost is £125 plus post and the makers also intend to release kits for carriages 17, 18 and 20 in due course.

Produced by Resurgam Rolling Stock

e-mail: davidwilliams42@btinternet.com

Web: <http://resurgamrollingstock.co.uk>



And now the Talyllyn – Coach & Wagon Works has added to its range of TR rolling stock, original carriages 4 and 5 and early preservation example no 8 joining the already available line-up of nos 1 to 3.

These are supplied complete as ready-to-run models and as can be seen are fine creations boasting full interior detail – the brake van pictured here has sliding doors and a removable ladder while all bar carriage 8 have lighting too. They are supplied with metal wheels on aluminium axles in 32mm or 45mm gauge.

Cost of each is £225 including postage.



Produced by Coach & Wagon Works

Tel: 07538 127785

Web: www.coachandwagonworks.co.uk

And finally...



■ That essential final detail in the quest for 16mm scale realism... Wood Valley Works has produced the evocative 'Last Vehicle' sign as used on Ffestiniog Railway slate trains, and basically designed to enable signalmen to establish that the train hadn't parted and left half its wagons behind... The wooden sign includes white writing on a red background and costs a mere £2 plus post. More details can be found at www.woodvalleyworks.co.uk

■ Wondering where the usual new book reviews are? Quite simply, we did not receive any books for review this month! We expect to be back to our usual reviews in NGW158, and meanwhile if you have something you wish to appear in this section, contact details are at the top of the page...

When it goes wrong

The Editor's comment in *NGW* 156 regarding the failures of some lines rang very true. Running a heritage railway is no longer a hobby for enthusiastic amateurs; it needs professional managers with a wide range of specialist qualifications.

The comment also brought to mind the sight of derelict locomotives (and other rolling stock) dumped for years at the end of sidings on some heritage lines. Some haven't been touched since they were rescued from scrapyards. Many are often left by enthusiasts who had the money to buy a 'wreck' but nowhere to put it, and then didn't have the funds or expertise to restore them or keep paying storage charges. This applies as much to 'enthusiastic amateurs' as to very wealthy 'captains of industry' (witness the chequered preservation history of 'Flying Scotsman').

The same theme runs through other articles and letters in *NGW* 156. The item on the Howdenclough Light Railway quoted model steam loco builder Jack Buckler who opined that "anybody buying a loco should ensure they had secure shed accommodation in place, before acquiring the loco!"

He didn't agree with buying an engine merely to save it from the scrap yard. But I can understand why people do that, having shed a few tears watching film of the wholesale 'slaughter' of British steam locos in the 1960s, and whilst watching a couple of ex-Soviet L class 2-10-0s (huge magnificent beasts!) being scrapped in Gulbene, Latvia in 2008.

The Lynton & Barnstaple has been a major interest since my teens (nearly 60 years ago) so I've seen many instances of locos being loaned to the railway and then disposed of when the L&BR management decided they were no longer of use to the railway. The problems Colin Pealling had which resulted in him losing his collection receive an oblique mention on page 37. *NGW* 154 recently reported on privately owned L&BR loco 'Isaac' moving temporarily to Statfold Barn

Above right: Sights such as this, at Amberley museum in July 1984, were highly reminiscent of the derelict stock 'dumped for preservation' mentioned in Tony Olsson's letter. But remarkably much has been restored and scenes such as this are much rarer on today's narrow gauge.

Below: A prime example of an apparent basket case being proved capable of restoration. Davenport 0-4-0 1586 of 1917 was a mess when imported by Statfold Barn in 2013, with a tree growing up through the chassis and smothering the motion. Two years later it was hauling trains at the Staffordshire steam centre.

All photos: Andrew Charman



after eight years service whilst the owner finds a buyer.

NGW 155 reported on the scrapping (because the owner couldn't afford the storage fees) of a Polish diesel locomotive formerly used on the Great Whipsnade Railway. The secretive Collection X and The Phyllis Rampton Trust received mention in most railway magazines in September 2019.

It's a strange thing, this hobby of ours! How often do we look at pictures of a pile of rusty wreckage which someone has bought with the idea of restoring it and think "they must be mad!" But sometimes 'miracles' do happen, and years down the line, a resplendent loco is revealed to the world. But I still feel we should be more professional in the way we do railway preservation.

My other passion apart from the L&BR is the ASG Siaurukas 750mm gauge railway which runs between Panevėžys and Rubikiai in Lithuania, a 68km journey. I first encountered the railway in 2003 shortly after it had been reopened following a deputation of members of the New Europe Railway Heritage Trust (NERHT) and a few Lithuanian enthusiasts, meeting the Lithuanian Seimas (Government) which then adopted the railway as a National Monument.

In 2003 it looked like a scrap yard, but over the years it has been transformed into a colourful railway. Unlike British heritage railways,

Siaurukas is a division of LTG the national railway operator, so has had a less parlous existence than our railways, and has attracted substantial EU funding which in 2014 saw a major restoration of the infrastructure including a new station and rolling stock storage and display facilities at Panevėžys. Sadly, however, the 'professional railway men' in Lithuania are unwilling to accept guidance from 'amateurs' involved with British heritage railways on how to run a heritage rather than a main-line railway. **Tony Olsson**

Andrew C replies: In such a wide-ranging vocation as railway preservation, even narrow-gauge railway preservation involving so many people from polarisingly different walks of life, there are bound to be a number of what seemed like good ideas at the time never coming to fruition.

However Tony is right, as I stated in my editorial, that today's narrow gauge has to have a more professional outlook than was perhaps the case in the pioneering years. While in those times a yard of derelict locos saved from the scrap man but not touched would have fascinated the enthusiast, today such sights would impress few visitors to our railways, which is why they have mainly disappeared.

Tickets – what's the issue?

As a retired printer and print production manager with





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experience in most aspects of the profession – jobbing, city and magazine printing, letterpress, litho and web-offset, I'm puzzled by the repeated claims that heritage railways have difficulty obtaining 'blanks' for Edmondson card tickets.

To me it's just thick card on which is printed information about the railway, then cut to size on a guillotine and overprinted on an Edmondson ticket printer.

Is this a case of railway operators thinking the tickets are some manifestations of the printer's 'black art', or is there something I've missed? Are there no printers other than the one in the Netherlands who can produce the blanks? What is stopping heritage railways from printing their own tickets?

If as a 15-year old in 1960 I was able to set up a print shop (letterpress, silk screen, spirit and stencil duplicators) in my secondary school, why, with all the facilities available today for desk-top publishing production, is there a problem? Do let me know, I'd like to help!

Tony Olsson (again!)

Andrew C replies: If anyone out there knows an answer to Tony's question, feel free to get in touch!

NG at Slaggyford

I noted your comments about the Slaggyford Light Railway in *NGW156 (That was the Year)*.

I went to that place twice; if memory serves, it was a caravan park (Google tells me that it still is). In 1986, all the equipment was very securely sheeted, and there was little to see. I thought it was still owned by Mr Horseman at the time, but if he was selling-up in 1981 (as the piece in *NGW156* suggests), perhaps not.

However, at the former BR branch station, there was a standard gauge saddle tank parked up. I think this was a remnant of an earlier attempt to re-open the Alston branch using standard gauge. The station building was in a remarkable state of preservation, and I vividly recall a paper timetable poster from the year when the branch closed (1976) in the waiting room.

Fast forward ten years, and in 1986 I went again with the late John Lucas (he is seen holding the sheet up off Baguley 3236 for a photo). By that time, Mr Cant owned the site; there was the Baguley and a couple of Hunslet diesels. I believe that all the equipment, except the Baguley loco, ended up at the Tanfield Railway. Sadly, I am aware that Mr Cant died fairly recently.

Simon Lomax

Andrew C replies: Thanks to Simon

"Is this a case of railway operators thinking the tickets are some manifestation of the printer's 'black art'?"



Right: Simon Lomax sent in these photos of the private Slaggyford Light Railway, which ran around a Cumbrian caravan park long before the South Tynedale Railway reached the same village.



Below: Baguley 3236, built in 1947 for the Butlin's holiday camp at Sheerness, Kent before it went to Slaggyford, is today on display outside a slate mine in Cumbria, this picture taken by Andrew Charman in 2019.

and also to Cliff Thomas, who wrote to mention that we published his picture of the Baguley in its present location, on display at Honister Slate Mine in Cumbria, in *NGW106*,

September 2015. Indeed the editor saw it recently, during a break in Cumbria following his 30th wedding anniversary celebration in 2019! He always manages to find trains...



From the cupboard...

We have featured a fair number of period postcards in recent editions of *NG Extra*, strangely rather many of them featuring the 20-inch gauge North Bay Railway at Scarborough. Now we have more!

The recent takeover of the line by the owners of the Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway has prompted the discovery of two postcards from the Yorkshire seaside line's earliest days, as well as a booklet commemorating the line's Golden Jubilee published 40 years ago.

The two postcards, showing pre-war holiday crowds enjoying a ride on the miniature line, were unearthed by former Narrow Gauge Railway Society secretary Mike Swift, also a founder shareholder in the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway.

Mike had been prompted by the new Cleethorpes Coast owners John Kerr and Peter Bryant, to look out photographs of the early days of the LCLR after their 'lock-down tidy-up' of their railway's cupboards and drawers uncovered previously unpublished photos of the earliest days of the line (*NGW*149).

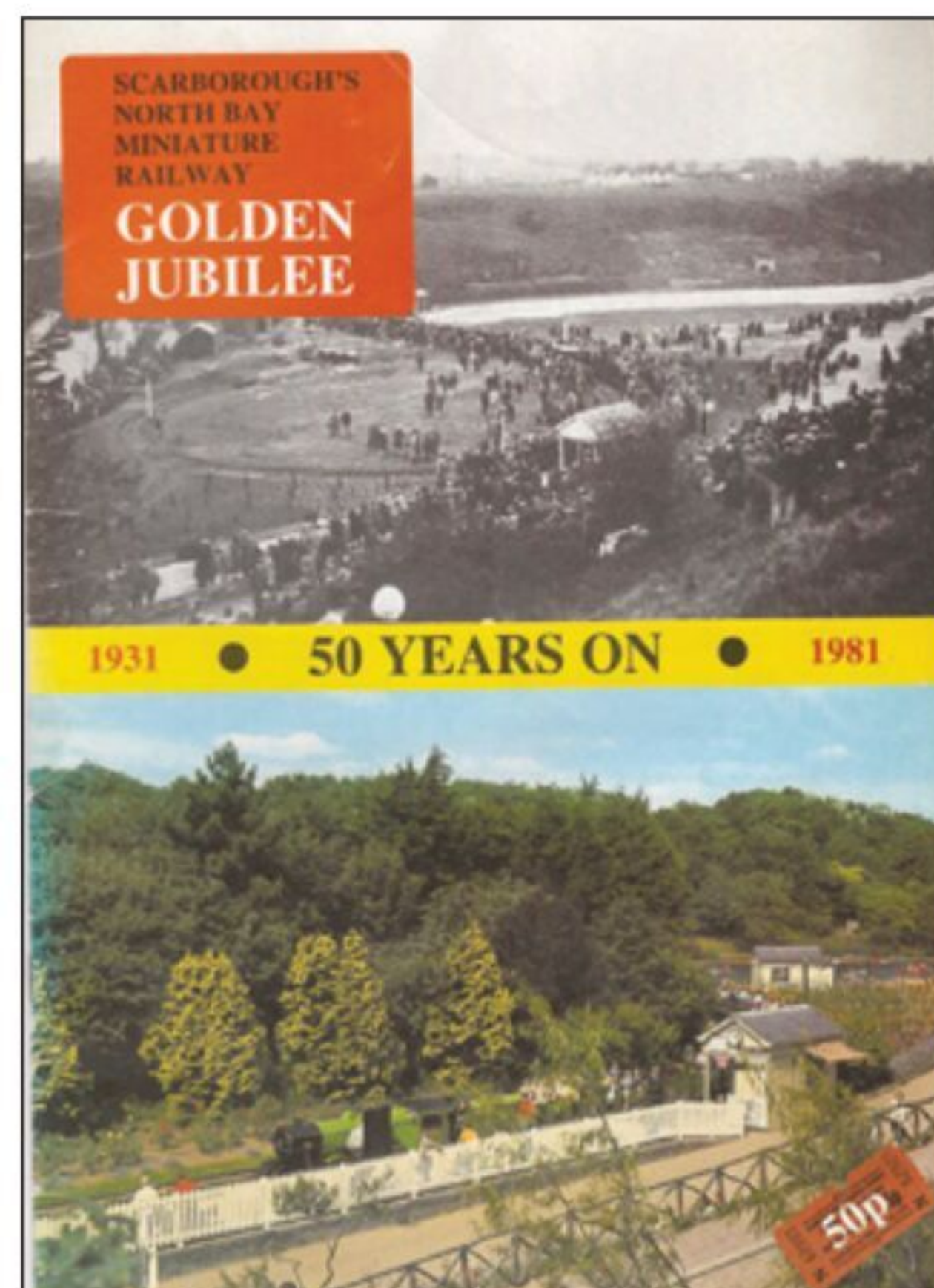
Prompted by John and Peter's take-over of the North Bay Railway, Mike Swift found the two postcards in his own collection, along with the booklet published in 1981 by Scarborough Borough Council, the then owners of the line commemorating the Golden Jubilee. These have all been sent to John and Peter.

Find those pictures...

Meanwhile LCLR volunteer Chris Bates is appealing to readers to seek out the many more previously unseen photos that may exist from the early days of the Scarborough, Cleethorpes and Lincs Coast railways – particularly old family holiday photos tucked away in long-forgotten albums.

Chris would like copies of such pics for the railways' archives, by email to chrisbates31@btinternet.com or posted via Skegness Water Leisure Park, Walls Lane, Ingoldmells, Skegness, PE25 1JH.

We'd like to extend that invitation – we always want to see period shots of the narrow gauge, UK and global, so if you have some long-forgotten pics in your attic,



cupboard or such like, while not let them see the light of day and send them in for fellow enthusiasts to enjoy?

Photo above copyright Scarborough Borough Council, below Collection of Mike Swift



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. Seen a clip that our readers would enjoy? Send in the link!



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t6-tXtVb9M8>

Thanks to *NGW* reader Gareth Houghton for this link, one of a series of films dubbed *Lawrie Goes Loco*. Readers will particularly enjoy this film, as it focuses on a Lister Railtruck dubbed by Lawrie "a shed of a locomotive". He describes in detail then drives it around the Moseley Railway Trust's Apedale site – an enjoyable 36 minutes!

Unexpected Narrow Gauge...



■ Well, only unexpected because our editor, in his other career as a motoring journalist, was surprised when back in 2003 he drove a new BMW into a town in Spain, to see this loco on display! According to the accompanying plaque it had been there since 1975, and was loco no 1 of the 'Sant Feliu de Guixols Train' that ran between Sant Feliu de Guixols and Girona between 1892 and 1969. The line was of 750mm gauge and we understand that the loco, Krauss-Munich 2355 of 1890, has since been moved undercover into a museum.

That was the year that...

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

From 50 years ago

Merioneth County Council

The Council as is well known are considering the establishment of passenger-carrying light railways as tourist attractions on portions of the roadbed of the former Ruabon-Morfa Mawddach line which it owns and has offered leases to suitable organisations who may care to apply.

Public meetings were held at Bala on 3/4/71 to discuss proposals to reopen sections from Bala to Llanuwchllyn and from Morfa Mawddach to a point near Dolgellau.

Only 29 persons turned up at Bala and 37 at Dolgellau and nobody was prepared to put up money for either scheme. However committees were formed in both cases to look into the matter further. A member of the Bala committee is Mr M Phillips of Glyn Ceiriog who has some 2ft gauge equipment ex Oakley slate quarry, which he has been unable to set up at Glyn Ceiriog due to planning problems. (NGN, June 1971)

A fascinating news item – what a forward-thinking council Merioneth was in those days, and what a shame the reaction was so poor! A line on what is today the Mawddach Trail would have been an enjoyable route. But remarkably just 16 months later the first section of the Bala Lake Railway opened at Llanuwchllyn – as a child your editor rode it soon after, when the Charman family had the line to itself (picture right).

What is also interesting is a mention of early preservation efforts, in vain, on the former Glyn Valley Tramway track bed at Glyn Ceiriog.



J W Greaves & Sons Ltd, Llechwedd Slate Quarries, Blaenau Ffestiniog

In common with the other two quarries at work in the Blaenau region, Llechwedd is working as hard as it can. Following the closure of the Dorothea, Dinorwic and now the Oakley quarries, orders are coming in thick and fast... Rail transport is still active, though with the new workings becoming open, mechanisation is currently being considered.

Rail traffic is confined to the roof slate mills and level ('Floor 2') and the floor tile cutting level (Floor 7). On the lower level two locos were in use, being a 4w battery electric and overhead electric 'The Coalition' (formerly Bagnall 1278/1890 0-4-0ST 'Edith'). In the explosives store at the southern end of this level, out of use, was another battery electric (4w and with a cab) and the frames and cab parts of 'Margaret' (Bagnall 1445/1895).

On the upper level a battery-electric loco screeched around with a brake shoe disconnected and rubbing, while 'The Eclipse' (formerly Bagnall 1568/1899) stood in a shed, out of use perhaps because there is no longer any overhead cable for it here.

The management at Llechwedd is most co-operative, but a little bewildered at so much interest being shown. (NGN, June 1971)

More fascinating stuff – it's easy to forget that rail operation in the Welsh slate quarries did not end with the demise of the systems at Penrhyn and Dinorwic. The comment about the Llechwedd management made your editor smile – with the benefit of hindsight, he would love as a 10-year-old in 1971 to have been taken by his father on an adventure to watch The Coalition at work!

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.



Diary & Special Events

■ We are pleased to return to our full-page Diary this month as the UK's narrow gauge railways continue to progress towards more normal services.

Listed on the following page are organisations that by the time we went to press on 14th May had confirmed plans to open in June. **Please note** – a line not being on the list does not necessarily mean it will not be open. Railway websites and social media feeds will carry the latest news.

While as these words are written the Covid pandemic appears to be receding at encouraging pace, it remains **essential** that anyone planning to visit a railway checks on the line's website and/or social media feeds for the latest information before travelling. Many lines are operating via pre-booked tickets only to control numbers and some lines are still not operating over their full length.

No responsibility can be accepted for the dates on these pages and you should check with the line concerned before travelling.

Special Events in June

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

■ **Thur-Sun in June plus 1st, 2nd, Devon Railway Cntr Open Day** Museum nr Tiverton, 2ft gauge line. <http://devonrailwaycentre.co.uk>

■ **6th June, Bredgar & Wormshill Railway open day. Services/ 1940s Day.** Kent 2ft line, unlimited rides. <http://bwlr.co.uk>

■ **12th-13th June, Bala Lake Railway Bala Re-railed.** Event at planned town station, 2ft gauge loco in steam, rides and displays

■ **12th-13th June, Statfold Barn Railway Trangkil 50 Enthusiast Day.** Many locos in steam, visiting locos. www.statfold.com

■ **26th-27th June, Bressingham Traction Engine Gathering.** Workshops open, behind-the-scenes access, intensive service

■ **26th-27th June, Ruislip Lido Railway 40th Anniversary Gala.** Road locos running alongside railways

■ **26th-27th June, Statfold Barn Railway Giant Miniatures Wknd.** Road models alongside resident railway. www.statfold.com

■ **27th June, Leighton Buzzard Railway Vintage Vehicle Rally.** Road vehicles at railway

Tramways

■ **Douglas Horse Tramway** www.iombusandrail.im/heritage/ No reopening date announced at press time

■ **Great Orme Tramway:** Conwy 01492 577877, www.greatormetramway.co.uk No reopening date confirmed.

■ **Manx Electric Railway, Snaefell Mountain Railway:** Isle of Man, 01624 662525, www.iombusandrail.im/heritage/ Weekends plus 3rd-4th, 10th-11th

■ **Seaton Tramway:** Devon 01297 20375, www.tram.co.uk Daily services from 10am.

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 Tuesday to Saturday.

■ **Lappa Valley Railway** (15, 10.25, 7.25in): Cornwall 01872 510317, www.lappavalley.co.uk Daily from 10am.

■ **Littlehampton Miniature Railway** (12.25in): Sussex www.littlehamptonminiaturerailway.com Weekends

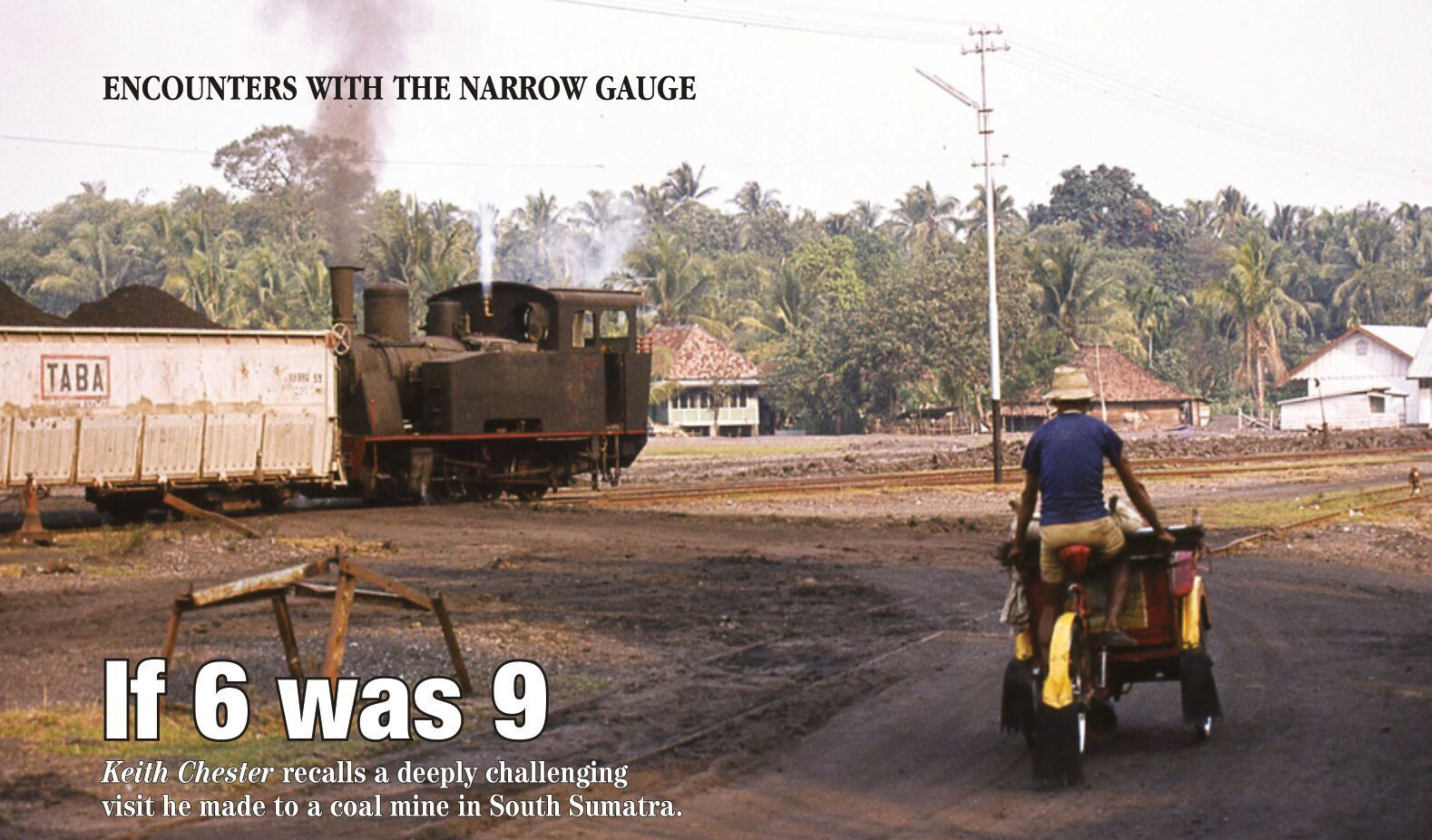
■ **Moors Valley Railway** (7.25in): Hants 01425 471415, www.moorsvalleyrailway.co.uk Daily services from 10.45am

■ **North Bay Railway, Scarborough** (20in): Yorks 01723 368791, www.nbr.org.uk, Open daily from 10.40am

■ **Rhyl Miniature Railway** (15in): Clwyd 01352 759109, www.rhylminiaturerailway.co.uk Weekends plus 1st-4th

■ **South Downs Light Railway** (10.25in): Sussex 07518 753784, www.south-downs-railway.com Weekends

What's On	Tue 1st	Wed 2nd	Thu 3rd	Fri 4th	Sat 5th	Sun 6th	Mon 7th	Tue 8th	Wed 9th	Thu 10th	Fri 11th	Sat 12th	Sun 13th	Mon 14th	Tue 15th	Wed 16th	Thu 17th	Fri 18th	Sat 19th	Sun 20th	Mon 21st	Tue 22nd	Wed 23rd	Thu 24th	Fri 25th	Sat 26th	Sun 27th	Mon 28th	Tue 29th	Wed 30th
Almond Valley Rly: 01506 414957 www.almondvalley.co.uk	Awaiting relaxation of Covid restrictions – check website																													
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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																														
Brecon Mountain Rly: 01685 722988 www.bmr.wales																														
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																														
Corris Railway: 01654 761303, www.corris.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	Porthmadog - Ddualt return (Tan-y-Bwlch to 6th) only																													
Golden Valley Light Railway: 01773 747674 www.gvrl.org.uk/																														
Great Whipsnade Rly: 0844 225 1826 www.zsl.org/zsl-whipsnade-zoo																														
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Hampton Kempton Rly: 07583 560167 www.hamptonkemptonrailway.org.uk																														
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Old Kiln Light Rly: 01252 795571 www.oldkilnlightrailway.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.ruisliplidorailway.org																														
Sittingbourne & Kemsley Railway: 01795 424899, www.sklr.net																														
Snowdon Mountain Rly: 0870 450 0033 www.snowdonrailway.co.uk	Diesel service to Clogwyn only – see website																													
South Tynedale Rly: 01434 381696 www.south-tynedale-railway.org.uk																														
Steeple Grange Lt Rly: 01629 55123 www.steeplegrange.co.uk																														
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Wells Walsingham Rly: 01328 711630 www.wwlr.co.uk																														
Welsh Highland Railway 01766 516000, www.festrail.co.uk	Porthmadog - Beddgelert or Caernarfon - Beddgelert return on certain days – see website																													
Welsh Highland Heritage Railway 01766 513402, www.whr.co.uk	Likely to be open but dates to be confirmed – check website																													
Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway 01938 810441, www.wllr.org.uk																														
West Lancashire Light Railway 01772 815881, www.westlancs.org	Possibly reopening but dates not confirmed – see website																													
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



If 6 was 9

Keith Chester recalls a deeply challenging visit he made to a coal mine in South Sumatra.

When I first went to live in Malaysia in early 1982, I used to go to the harbour at Malacca to watch the sail ships bringing timber and other cargoes from Sumatra. Visiting the island on such a vessel seemed a hugely romantic notion, although my new work colleagues quickly dissuaded me with lurid tales of likely robbery or worse on board.

So when I did go, in October that year, it was conventionally by train and ferry from Java (a journey not without its drama for a fellow passenger was robbed before my eyes). My destination was the isolated 1067mm gauge South Sumatra system, which still ran steam-hauled coal trains from the large mine at Tanjung Enim to the riverport of Kertapati.

The line to the coal mine branched off at Prabumulih, where a D50 class 2-8-0 was shunting. It was not until 7pm, an hour after sundown, when a D52 class 2-8-2 stopped at the station with a train of hoppers. Accommodation was not easy to find in Prabumulih and I ended up in one of the worst places I

ever stayed in Southeast Asia: the bathroom walls were black with cockroaches and the straw bed infested with bugs.

Bleary eyed I got to the station just as dawn was breaking and shortly afterwards another D52 rolled in with a train of empties, took water and promptly set off again for the mine. After more photos of the D50 shunting, I took a shared taxi over the pot-holed road to Tanjung Enim.

Lots of activity

In 1982 this was by Indonesian standards a busy location with a small shed to service the main-line locos and an even smaller one for the mine's fleet of Du Croo & Brauns 0-6-0Ts.

The internal system was 600mm gauge, which had once employed 0-4-0Ts and 0-6-0Ts (Uwe Bergmann estimates up to nine locos of various origins). Steam had largely been replaced following electrification and the acquisition of four-wheel overhead electric locos from AEG in

Above: The almost inevitable bejak and no 7 (D&B 398/1952) shunting in Tanjung Enim yard. One of six 0-6-0Ts here, no 7 was the last steam loco built by the Dutch firm.

Below left: Loaded tubs heading from the mine pass no 8 (AEG 7217/1953) hauling empties towards it.

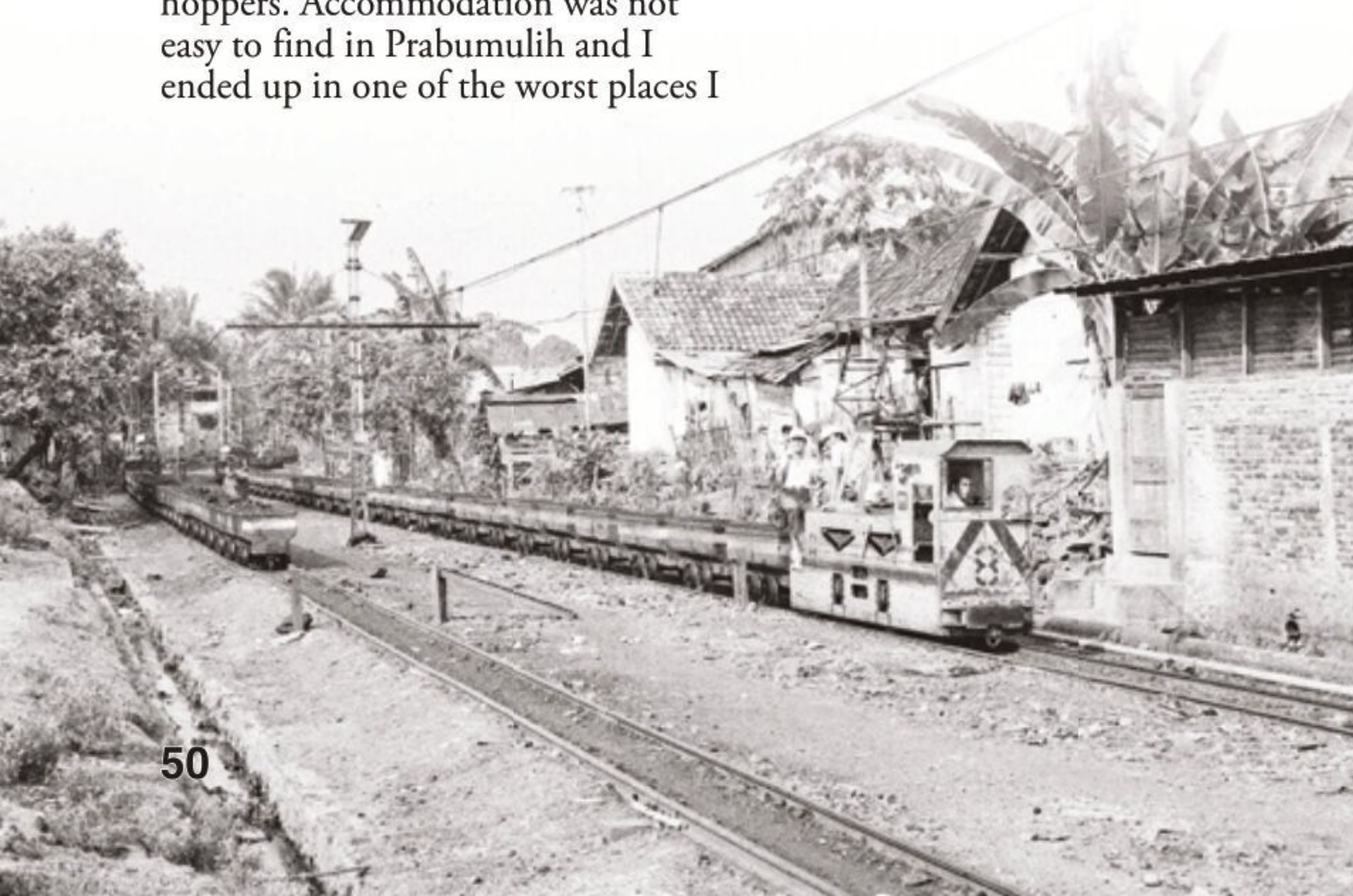
Below: Just after dawn no D52010 (Krupp 3233/1951) pauses briefly at Prabumulih on its way to Tanjung Enim. Coal firing was unusual in Indonesia.

Photos by Keith Chester, October 1982.

1953. Underground, and invisible, were six 600mm compressed-air locos.

The next morning I rose at 3am and went to the station yard. I climbed aboard no D52007 waiting with its train of loaded bogie hoppers, and we set off almost immediately on what was perhaps the most memorable footplate ride I ever had. The line to Kertapati ran through jungle, eerily illuminated by a full moon, and the cab was repeatedly filled with blasts of heat and flashes of bright orange-red as coal was shovelled into the firebox. As we bowled through the remains of the night and the tropical dawn, the 30-year-old 2-8-2 had to work hard to keep its heavy train on the move.

Shunting at Kertapati were an ugly C30 class 2-6-2T and another D&B 0-6-0T bearing the number 9. Years later I learned that after overhaul its original number 6 plate had been put back upside down. It was a surreal end to a surreal footplate ride: thanks for the music Jimi. **NGW**



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