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Cover: This would have been a typical scene at Dinas shed on the Welsh Highland Railway back in the 1930s – now it can be recreated at Gelert's Farm on the Welsh Highland Railway with the recreated Baldwin 4-6-0T '590' making its debut alongside resident Hunslet 2-6-2T 'Russell', photographed by *Joey Evans* on 27th May. The inset picture shows the eerie sight of a desert steam graveyard – in this issue *Kevin Hoggett* explores what remains of the former Hedjaz Railway in Saudi Arabia.

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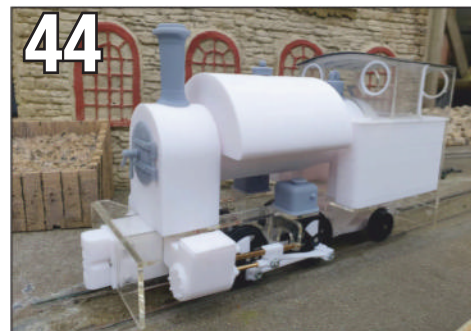
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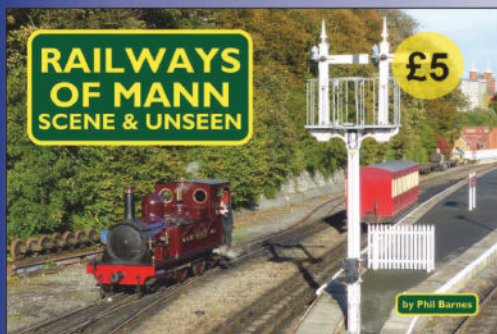
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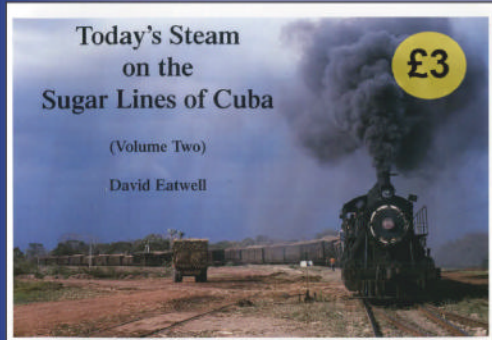


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(Volume Two)

David Eatwell

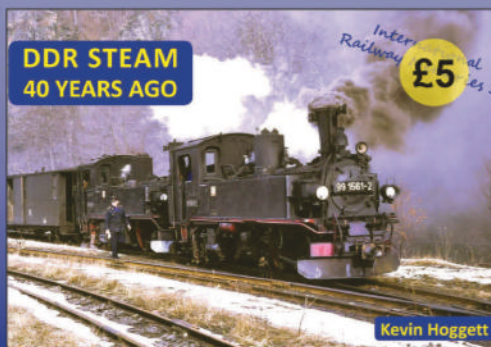
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New hardware, more interest...



Above: Centre of attention – Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway Franco-Belge 0-8-0T 'Sir Drefaldwyn' performs a run-past on 13th June for some of the donors who paid for its restoration. Such restorations are essential to keep the narrow gauge scene fresh for both enthusiasts and the casual visitor. Photo: Andrew Charman

Welcome to **NGW**176, and after two issues where this page started on a downer with frustrations facing the narrow gauge world, it's good to be in a really positive mood when composing these words this time.

Yesterday I took the briefest of breaks from sorting the news pages of this issue to pop down the road to the '60/120' Gala of 'my railway', the Welshpool & Llanfair, featuring the first public passenger trains in more than two decades headed by the line's 'heavy hauler', Franco-Belge 0-8-0T 'Sir Drefaldwyn'. Four days earlier I had travelled on the very first passenger train hauled by the loco since its oh-so delayed restoration, a private event for those who donated to the restoration (Yes, I was among those donors, mainly from the contributions given to me when travelling around the UK giving talks to railway groups about editing this magazine!).

The progress of this particular restoration has been a source of constant frustration for W&L members and not surprisingly particularly so for the line's Trustees, who include myself. The work started in 2014 and we were given the impression then that it wouldn't take long, but anyone involved in rail preservation knows that there's always more to be done on a locomotive than one thinks – in this

case it was extra boiler and frame work that caused the initial delay.

After that, and having decided on a much more extensive 'root and branch' overhaul with the intention that once finished the loco would spend virtually all of its 10-year ticket hauling trains and very little of it in the workshop, our poor engineering team couldn't seem to catch a break.

A discovery of asbestos shut them out of their workshop for several weeks while it was completely stripped and cleaned. They got going again, only for Covid to arrive and shut those doors again.

Good things come to those who are patient, however, and all the dramas seemed in the past as I watched 'Sir D' ease on to its train. And listened – the loco has a really clean, quality exhaust beat which is a tribute to the kind of engineering prowess that we are so lucky to have throughout the UK narrow gauge.

Keeping them coming

The success of such restorations as 'Sir D', and that of our cover star the Welsh Highland Baldwin, and the completion of the various new-build projects that are part of today's scene, are essential not just for operational reasons. Even long-established lines with big histories cannot afford to forget that like it or not, we are in the entertainment

industry. To an overwhelming extent our railways are not transport operations but attractions trying to ensure that tourists visit us and then, crucially, are encouraged to come back again.

For this reason we have to keep re-inventing what we offer, both in terms of the locomotives hauling our trains and the events that we run. Of course the first part costs, a lot, while if we are lucky and plan well, the second part can help pay for that first part. It's never easy and one can never take one's eye off the ball!

Hoping for good news

I'm very much hoping that next month's editorial will be highly positive too, that I'll be able to report that the late Adrian Shooter's Darjeeling 0-4-0 loco has been saved for a future remaining in the UK. As reported over the page with just days to go until the auction as these words are written, the tone is optimistic, but not certain, so fingers remain crossed.

Meanwhile I'm looking forward to being able to get out to a Gala next weekend, heading up to Porthmadog for the Welsh Highland Centenary celebrations. Of course it will all be reported in next month's issue, along with all the other latest narrow gauge happenings. Enjoy your **NGW**...

Andrew Charman



King awards MBE to TR veteran John

Just as this issue of *NGW* closed for press it was announced from Buckingham Palace that in his first Birthday Honours since ascending to the throne, King Charles III had awarded an MBE to veteran Tallyllyn Railway personality John Bate.

The award was warmly welcomed throughout the narrow gauge industry, John regarded as one of the pivotal figures in the history of the world's first preserved railway.

John joined the Tallyllyn as a volunteer in 1951, its first year of preserved operation. Then living at his parents' home in Reigate, Surrey, in 1954 he built the line's first platelayer's trolley in the garden of that home, the Austin-powered 'Toby' recently restored for the TR's heritage collection.

John was appointed honorary chief engineer to the TR in 1958 and in 1963 moved to the line to become its first paid chief engineer, a post he held until his official retirement in 1994. However he continued to volunteer at the railway on a regular basis, and today at the age of 93 still contributes his extensive knowledge and experience to the line.

During his time as chief engineer John oversaw much progress on the line, including major overhauls of all of its locomotives. Perhaps his greatest achievement is locomotive no 7, the 0-4-2T 'Tom Rolt' which he designed and built using a 3ft gauge former Irish peat locomotive as a starting point. Tom Rolt entered service in 1991 and has been a core member of the TR fleet ever since.

Commenting on the award Tallyllyn Railway Company chairman David Ventry said that John had steered the engineering decisions of the line throughout most of its preserved life and had a profound influence on its survival and success.

"His leadership influenced the whole railway heritage movement," David added. "He has been the right person at the right time, expert at value engineering and a thoroughly good engineer. In our opinion this is an award richly deserved."

Photo: Barbara Fuller/TR

Darjeeling loco's fate to be decided

By the time readers receive this issue of *NGW* the fate of Darjeeling Himalayan 0-4-0ST+T 19B will be known – the loco, the only one of the iconic line's engines to work outside India, was to be auctioned on 21st June, three days after our press date.

As reported in *NGW*, major fundraising has been underway to ensure that 19B, one of the original four B-class locos built for the DHR by Sharp-Stewart in Glasgow in 1899, does not leave the UK.

19B was rescued from the USA by major rail industry figure Adrian Shooter, who returned the loco to steam in 2003 and then operated it on his private 2ft gauge Beeches Light Railway, built around his Oxfordshire home. Following Adrian's death in December 2022, his widow is auctioning off his rail collection, including 19B and two Darjeeling-style bogie carriages built by the Ffestiniog Railway.

The impending sale saw the formation of the Darjeeling Tank Locomotive Trust to raise sufficient funds to secure the loco's future. Formed principally from 19B's support crew at the Beeches, the Trust has been backed by major figures, the DHR's

much respected UK support group the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway Society (DHRS), and the Statfold Narrow Gauge Railway Trust. Should it be secured Statfold will provide a home for 19B and undertake a soon-needed major 10-year overhaul.

Fundraising efforts have stepped up in recent weeks amid rumoured fears of an attempt being made to buy the loco by a wealthy US enthusiast. Some supporters have even made representations to the Government in the faint hope of securing an export ban on what is regarded as a major item of UK engineering heritage.

Trust chairman Jeremy Davey remains optimistic and hopeful, saying; "the team have done an amazing job, Statfold have been brilliant and the DHRS – both relationships will go from strength to strength if we're successful. The support of the enthusiasts has blown me away. What more could I ask for?"

■ *NGW*'s social media pages will carry news of the auction's outcome as soon as we get it, and of course we will carry a full report in our next issue.

Photo: Peter Jordan



The Ffestiniog Railway's 1992-built double Fairlie 'David Lloyd George' returned to service on 27th May after a record 10-year overhaul completed in just seven months. Withdrawn after the FR vintage weekend in October 2022, the work included boiler specialist Israel Newton retubing the boiler and replacing several stays and the firebox wrapper crown.

Photo: Joey Evans

Bala prepares for planning bid take two

The Bala Lake Railway has begun preparing its second attempt at securing planning permission to extend the north Wales 2ft gauge line into the centre of the town of its name.

As reported in *NGW* 175 the first application for the 1200-metre extension was rejected by the Snowdonia National Park authority, on the basis that it could not be certain that additional tourists drawn to the area by the line would not contravene Welsh Government legislation on the amount of phosphates discharging into the River Dee.

The trustees of the Bala Lake Railway Trust have now begun the process of preparing the new planning application and chairman Julian Birley said that a recent meeting with the National Park had proven encouraging with a mutually agreed plan to move forward.

£100k needed

The new application is expected to cost £100,000 – by the time the original application was completed the Trust had spent almost £250,000 over a period of 18 months. Some of this work will need to be redone and updated.

First step will be to prepare an update to the Traffic and Parking Impact Report at a cost of £5,000. The odour, noise and vibration reports are also being reviewed.

Further research and assessments and surveys will need carrying out, largely due to the environmentally sensitive area through which the railway is planned to run along the lake foreshore. The sensitive management of the River Dee's eco system will also need to be addressed.

The Trust has also received a positive response from Natural Resources Wales, particularly over plans to ensure that Welsh Water carries out additional work to sewage treatment works in Bala – this will be needed to be able to overturn the current ban on increasing the number of visitors encouraged to the town.

“With a clear way forward the BLRT is optimistic that once the issues are addressed within the new application consent will be granted,” Julian said.

“Thanks to all our generous supporters – please continue to spread the word to help us get to the £100,000 target. We are currently over £30,000 – on our way.”

Donations to the appeal for funding the new application can be made at www.balalakerailwaytrust.org/donate.html.

■ In last month's *NGW* we stated the cost of the first application was £25,000 whereas it should have been £250,000. Our apologies for the error.



Nutty stays at Welshpool

The Narrow Gauge Railway Museum has announced that ‘Nutty’, the only surviving narrow-gauge Sentinel steam locomotive, is to remain at the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway on long-term loan following its appearance at the mid-Wales line's 60/120 anniversary event on 17th-18th June.

We reported last month that the four-wheel, vertical-boilered, chain-driven loco (7701/1927) had been transferred from its previous display venue of the Leighton Buzzard Railway in Bedfordshire to the W&LLR for the anniversary event. The loco was returning to the line, having been based on the W&LLR between 1964 and 1971, the only railway it has worked on in preservation.

Nutty was one of three locos built in Shrewsbury, just 30 miles from the W&LLR, for the London Brick Company at Peterborough. Named after its driver for 30 years, ‘Nutty’ Rowell, the loco was donated to the NGRM Trust in 1964. It was regauged from 2ft 11 to 2ft 6in and loaned to the W&LLR where it mainly undertook works duties.

After leaving the W&L Nutty returned to the NGRM in Tywyn until 1991 when it was loaned to Whipsnade Zoo and dismantled for a restoration which then

stalled. The loco moved to Railworld in Peterborough in 1994, and in 1996 to a nearby engineering works where it was cosmetically restored, going on display at Leighton Buzzard from 2012.

Commenting on the move NGRMT chairman Keith Theobald said that it is good to see the unique loco going to Welshpool with which it has strong historical links. “We are very grateful to our friends at the Leighton Buzzard Railway for looking after Nutty so well for the last 11 years,” he added.

David Wood, chair of the Leighton Buzzard Railway Preservation Society, said that it had been a privilege to give Nutty a home for more than 10 years, while W&LLR general manager James Brett was delighted to have the loco at Welshpool in time for the anniversary.

“We are grateful to the Museum Trust for agreeing to the loan, and to the people at Leighton Buzzard who have worked very hard to make the physical move possible so quickly,” James added.

Motive power variety at Welshpool. The newly arrived ‘Nutty’ (left) poses alongside the on-loan Hitachi diesel DL-34 from the Alishan Forest Railway in Taiwan, and former Lodge Hill & Upnor Railway Drewry ‘Chattenden’.

Photo: Harry Billmore/W&LLR



■ Volunteers at the Old Kiln Railway in Surrey have been proceeding rapidly in recent months with building of a new bogie carriage for the 2ft gauge line. The OKLR, which runs on weekends at the Rural Life Centre near Farnham, will be featured in next month's *NGW*.

Photo: OKLR



Dolgoch returns to mark Founders Day

Talylyn Railway locomotive no 2 'Dolgoch' returned to service after an extensive 10-year overhaul just in time to take part in the mid-Wales 2ft 3in gauge line's traditional Founder's Day celebration on 14th May.

The Fletcher Jennings 0-4-0WT, built in 1866, had been withdrawn in the Autumn of 2021 for the work to take place. Delays in completion raised fears it would not be able to take part in the celebration, but a great effort by the TR engineering department meant that the locomotive, now returned to traditional TR green livery, was able to double head the 'Heart of Gold' train with locomotive no 7 'Tom Rolt'.

At Wharf station TRPS president Chris Price performed the traditional tape-cutting ceremony, before more than 50 members of the railway's 'Heart of Gold' group joined the train for the trip up the line.

At Rhydyronen TR Company chairman, David Ventry, gave the traditional speech thanking those who regularly contribute to

the railway and on arrival at Abergynolwyn the plaque marking the National Railway Heritage Hendy and Pendle Trust Volunteers Award for the reconstruction of the Ty Dwr watering point was unveiled.

After lunch the train proceeded to Ty Dwr where no 7 took water, a new trough required for no 2 not yet completed. A stop was also made at the former winding house of the Abergynolwyn village incline, where the proposed refurbishment of the winding drum was explained, along with the hopes for the long-term project.

"The 10-year overhaul was plagued by breakages and setbacks which had considerably delayed the return," TR commercial manager Lorraine Simkiss said. "However the team pulled together and it is lovely to see her back now."

Above: Was 'Dolgoch' the first of the Talylyn's original two locomotives to return to taking water at Ty Dwr? Not quite – the trough is actually refilling the tanks of no 7 'Tom Rolt', coupled behind. *Photo: Ian Drummond/TR*

Corris to recall the line's closure

The Corris Railway will operate trains on 20th August marking the 75th anniversary of the day the last train ran on the mid-Wales 2ft 3in gauge line before it was closed.

The final Corris train in 1948 attracted no local people taking one last ride – it was an almost unnoticed freight working, passenger services having ceased in 1930.

In fact the closure was not specifically planned – just months earlier the line had passed into the ownership of British Railways which became concerned at erosion by the Dyfi river at the point where the Corris crossed it on a bridge.

As erosion continued a decision was made to suspend services and the short train worked by Hughes 0-4-2ST no 3 was the last. The track was subsequently dismantled and locos no 3 and no 4 were eventually purchased by the Talylyn Railway where they operate today.

In the event the Dyfi never severed the Corris trackbed – a brand new road bridge over the river is nearing completion to replace the existing bridge that is regularly closed by flooding, and the new bridge follows the course of the old railway line.



■ Nearing completion at Bennett Boilers at the end of May was major work to the boiler of the Groule Glen Railway's home-built Bagnall 0-4-2ST 'Annie', as part of an extensive overhaul of the loco. *Photo: Richard Booth/GGR*

■ The 100th birthday celebrations of the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway's Davey-Paxman 2-8-2 'River Esk' continued over the weekend of 13th-14th May with a starring role in the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway's Spring Gala, during which Esk headed this remarkable septet of locos. *Photo: Steve Town*





■ The new bogie carriage being built for the Tallyllyn Railway by the Ffestiniog Railway's renowned carriage and wagon works at Boston Lodge is making good progress, as this picture shows. A delegation from the TR's engineering department recently visited Boston Lodge to learn the FR technique of roof covering – this uses a plastic sheet similar to those employed on curtain-sided lorries and is very effective.

In the Tallyllyn's own workshops a new open carriage, no 27, is also proceeding at a rapid rate, with the body and frame having been bolted together on 8th May and most of the remaining panels since being added.

Photos: Chris Smith/TR



■ Unusually the star locomotive at the Statfold Spectacle of Steam Gala on 10th-11th June was not one restored at the Trust. Many visitors were enthused by Fowler 0-4-2 15513, built in 1920 for the Sena sugar estates in Mozambique. Initially of 500mm gauge, it was converted to 600mm when moving to a different mill, and was among several Mozambique locos returned to the UK in 2000. Privately restored to a very high standard, the loco shared duties at the Gala with resident Statfold Fowler 'Saccharine'.

Among interesting new projects underway at Statfold is a new-build version of the 18-inch gauge Crewe works shunter 'Nipper'. The original was one of four built for the works by John Ramsbottom in 1866-67 – sister loco 'Pet' is displayed in the National Railway Museum. *Photos: Peter Johnson*



BRIEF LINES



BEM for L&B's Charles

Further to our story opposite on the award of the MBE to John Bate, we have learnt that Charles Summers, a Trustee of the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway has been awarded the British Empire Medal. Charles set up the L&B's workshop in Essex which has since produced four superb carriages for the line (above). *Photo: Andrew Charman*

London office in Wales

Progress on construction of the Vale of Rheidol Railway's new museum in the former standard-gauge depot at its Aberystwyth terminus has seen the visitor entrance to the building gain a striking new facade, in the form of the entrance arch that once graced the South Eastern Railway's headquarters in London.

Cab plans for Chinese C2

The team that has since 2007 been undertaking the long-term restoration of a Chinese C2 class 0-8-0 at the Ffestiniog Railway have begun mocking up the design for the loco's cab plates and tender. Both cab and tender will be designed to fit the FR's lower loading gauge.

Water works two ways

The Hampton & Kempton Waterworks Railway's regular Barclay 0-4-0ST 'Darent' (below) was joined by new-build Kerr Stuart Wren 0-4-0ST 'Thomas Wicksteed' from the London Museum of Water & Steam at Kew Bridge on 20th-21st May when the Kempton line celebrated its 10th anniversary of opening.

Photo: Stuart Chapman





Alford revival project makes rapid progress

Efforts to revive the Alford Valley Railway after five years of closure are making good progress, with the formation of the Alford Valley Community Railway project having been followed by six months of diligent work by local people on the 2ft gauge line located in Aberdeenshire, Scotland.

"We have a dedicated group of volunteers attending normally on a Saturday but now most days, as we have a painting project ongoing," AVCR vice-chair Karl Stevens told *NGW*.

"In November we received a Just Transition Environmental grant of £50,000 to purchase plastic sleepers and now they are on site we are planning a work programme in the Autumn, to replace the long straight alongside the road. We also have various small sections to do that will be carried out during volunteer days from various companies over the summer."

Karl added that in the station all the

significantly degraded sleepers have been replaced and new ballast has been laid. The station building is now completely refurbished and is having its kitchen and displays refitted.

The line's two main steam-outline locos, Alan Keef 0-4-0DM 'James Gordon' and Simplex 'The Bra' Lass' have both been overhauled and rolling stock restored with new roofs being fitted.

"All in all a very positive position to be in," Karl said, adding that the group are now working on a date for starting operations. "It will be soon but we are just not sure of an official opening date."

■ The group posts updates to its Facebook page – search for Alford Valley Community Railway

Left: Inside and out, much work is being carried out on the Alford Valley Railway by members of the Community project.

Photos: AVCR

Mountsorrel railway project hopes for opening in July

Set to join the ranks of operational narrow gauge railways at some point this year will be a new line at the Mountsorrel And Rothley Community Heritage Centre, served by a branch off the standard gauge Great Central Railway at Loughborough.

The 2ft gauge line has been built around the garden area of the Heritage Centre site, as an oval of around 140 metres in circumference. "Our narrow gauge system in total probably extends to some 300 metres of track length all together, but most of it is set out as an old quarry railway

would have been as the site is built in the bottom of a granite quarry," Centre spokesman Steve Cramp told *NGW*.

Plans to open the railway in May were postponed by extra work being necessary on Penrhyn Quarry-style open carriages acquired for the line. The centre is now targeting an opening sometime in July and details will be posted on its Facebook page.

Above: The first of the Centre's new 2ft gauge carriages, posed with a resident Simplex loco following arrival in April. *Photo: M&RCHC*



Evesham Gala to host Kirklees locomotive pair

The annual steam gala at the Evesham Vale Light Railway in Worcestershire on 8th-9th July will feature two visiting engines from Whistlestop Valley the Kirklees Light Railway.

The two original Kirklees locos, Hunslet-style 2-6-2T 'Fox' built in 1987 and the 1991-built Kerr Stuart-inspired 0-6-4T 'Badger' will be running alongside the 15-inch gauge line's resident locos.

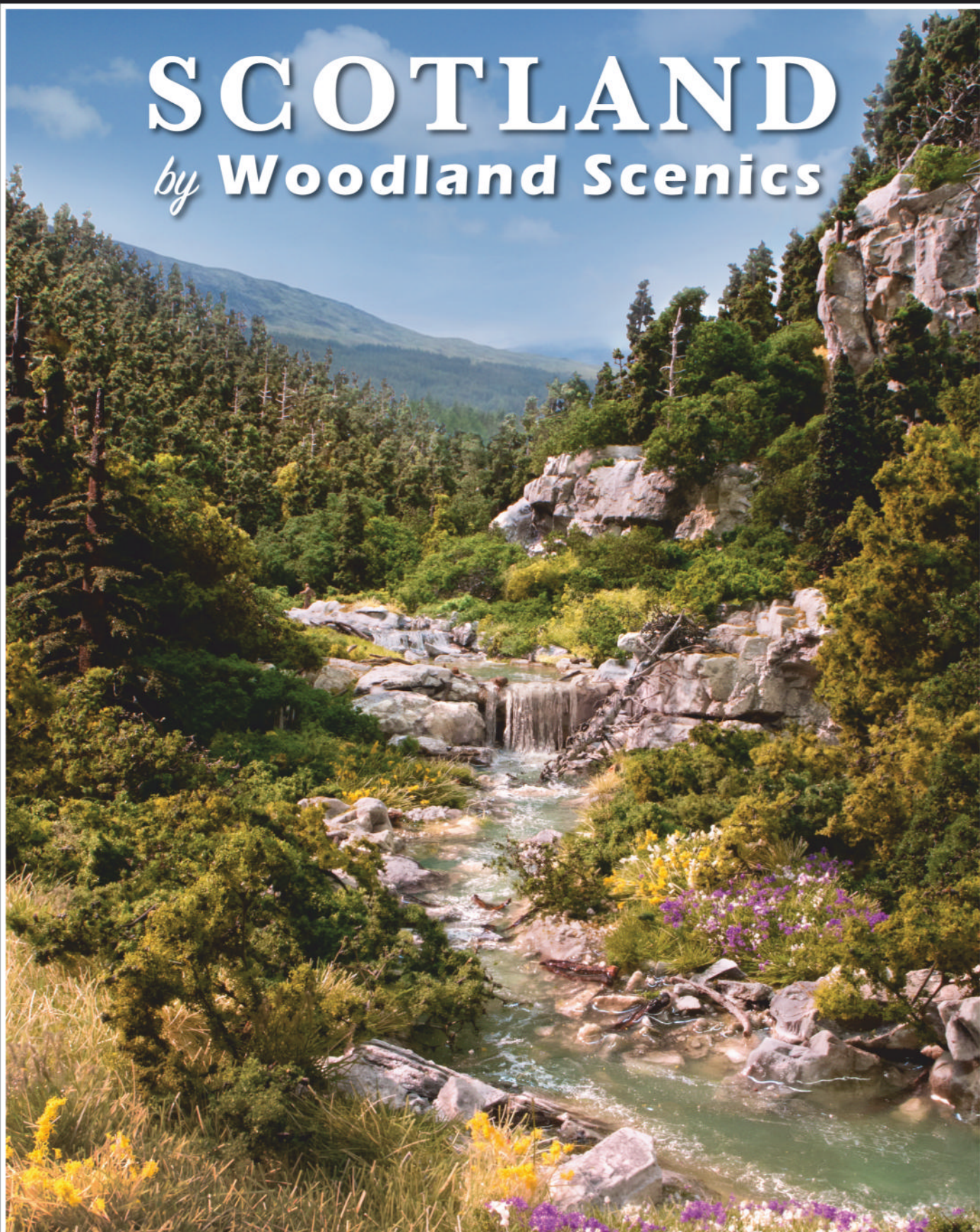
Double-heading and an intensive service are expected to be part of the activity at what is expected to be the last Gala organised by husband-and-wife EVLR owners Adrian and Sandra Corke, who are in the process of selling the line.

Below: Kirklees' 'Badger', going visiting. *Photo: Andrew Charman*



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Baldwin and Belge locos debut in style

The last few weeks have seen a pair of very significant new arrivals on two of the UK's narrow gauge railways – one a first-time restoration to adopt the identity of a lost classmate, the other a loco much liked on its line but out of service for close to quarter of a century.

On Saturday 27th May the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway held a launch event for newly restored Baldwin 10-12-D class 4-6-0T 794 – this now carries the livery and number of its sister locomotive 590, which after the First World War worked on the Welsh Highland Railway until 1942 when following the line's closure it was scrapped.

At the launch event WHHR Baldwin project managers Neil Evans and Steve Currinn thanked all the sponsors, contractors and many others who have contributed to the project.

Special thanks were reserved for the Vale of Rheidol Railway, which undertook the restoration at its workshop in Aberystwyth, and the Imperial War Museum in Duxford which originally imported 794 from its working life in India and have since gifted the loco to the line.

The 'deeds' to the locomotive were handed over to WHHR chairman Graham Farr in a ceremony outside the line's Gelert's Farm, Porthmadog works alongside resident Hunslet 2-6-2T 'Russell', the only surviving WHR locomotive.

Wrong kind of air

The two locos then operated an intensive half-hourly service with Russell hauling the full North Wales Narrow Gauge Railway/ WHR carriage rake for the first time. An issue with the Baldwin's air pump was soon sorted when at short notice the neighbouring Ffestiniog Railway loaned the WHHR four 'bug-box' carriages and bogie van no 10 in Colonel Stevens green livery. These are vacuum brake fitted, the Baldwin also carrying vacuum equipment.

"590 is a credit to everyone involved and has been immaculately turned out," WHR director Michael Chapman commented. "The locomotive crew commented that she steams freely and is a quality product."

Both the Baldwin and Russell were then set to play starring roles in the WHR Centenary celebrations being held across both the WHR and FR over the weekend of 24th-25th June. *NGW* will carry a full report on this event next month.

Meanwhile 40 miles further south the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway was making preparations for a long-awaited return to service for Franco-Belge 0-8-0T

Above: The Welsh Highland Heritage Railway's 'new' Baldwin was centre of attention at its launch event on 27th May.

Left: WHHR chairman Graham Farr received the 'deeds' to the locomotive from the Imperial War Museum.

Below: Braking issues required a quick appeal to the Ffestiniog for suitable stock and resulted in a highly appropriate scene – a picture that could have been taken in the 1930s.

Photos: Joey Evans



no 699.01 'Sir Drefaldwyn' – the loco, built in occupied France in 1944 for the German Army, had last hauled trains on the mid Wales line in 2000.

W&LLR chairman Steve Clews revealed to attendees at a special first train for donors to the project on 13th June that at the time the overhaul started in 2014, the line's Trustee Board had been told the work should take around a year to complete!

Big challenge

Instead it turned into one of the most challenging restorations the railway's workshop team has ever faced. It soon became apparent that more extensive boiler and frame work was needed, which led to a decision to carry out a much more extensive restoration. The restoration team then faced numerous challenges, including the closure of their workshop firstly to deal with asbestos and then as a result of the Covid pandemic.

All this was put in its place however as wearing a green undercoat (the final black will be applied once any potential engineering snags are sorted) the locomotive performed faultlessly on its first train, which was comprised of the correct four-wheeled Austrian carriages in the W&LLR's passenger fleet.

'Sir D' then played a major role in the W&LLR's 60/120 anniversary Gala held over the following weekend, during which it made its re-entry into public passenger service.

A full celebration of 699.01's return to service will be staged at the annual W&LLR Steam Gala in September, when it is hoped to pair it with fellow Austrian loco ZB2, subject to the latter's firebox repairs being completed in time.

■ A Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway produced 12-minute video of Sir D's return to service can be viewed at https://youtu.be/Dq3v_CjgMCs

Above: Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway Franco-Belge 0-8-0T returned to operational status hauling a special donors' train on 13th June – this included a couple of photo runpasts, here at Heniarth halt.

Right: Over the following weekend the loco was a star turn at the W&LLR's Gala celebrating the 120th anniversary of the line's opening and the 60th anniversary of preservation – here the centre of attention at Welshpool.

Below: 699.01 and its suitable train of Austrian stock powers up to Coppice Lane crossing during the 60/120 weekend.

Photos: Andrew Charman



Zig Zag returns in style with sold-out opening weekend



An enforced 11-year closure finally came to an end on 27th May when the Zig Zag Railway resumed passenger services.

The spectacular 3ft gauge line returned in style, selling out all of its opening weekend trains over the 4.3-mile long route from Lithgow to the Blue Mountains in New South Wales.

AUSTRALIA

As reported in previous issues of *NGW* the unique line was forced to close in 2012 when authorities removed its safety accreditation. It was then heavily damaged by major bush fires in 2013, storm damage and further bush fires following in 2019.

The first train out of Lithgow, hauled by Queensland Railways AC16 2-8-2 'The Yank', was blessed by Auntie Sharon of the Mingaan Wiradjuri Aboriginal Corporation, the line running through Wiradjuri land.

The line estimated almost 900 people had travelled on each day of the opening weekend, one passenger saying that there was cheering and clapping as the train departed and that, "everyone was so happy to be there."

Acting chief executive of the Zig Zag Railway, Dan Zolfel, told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation that after enduring "sucker punch after sucker punch" over the past decade, all involved with the line were overjoyed to be reopening. "It's an incredible feeling, we're so very excited," he added.

The line now intends to open on every second weekend with Dan adding that the company will work to secure its sustainability and then expand operations. Details of opening times are at <https://zigzagrailway.au>



Above: A moment long-awaited as 'The Yank' heads out of Lithgow with the reopening services on the Zig Zag Railway.

Below: Crowds flocked to every vantage point to be part of the railway's reopening weekend.

Photos: Salty Dingo on behalf of NSW Crown Lands – see also Gallery pages



■ *NGW* reader **Dominic Emery** visited the Steam Days at the 'Pollo', the Prignitzer Kleinbahn Museum e.V. – a 750mm gauge, 9km-long line in Brandenburg, GERMANY which connects the two remote villages of Lindenberg and Mesendorf.

The line does not own its own operational steam locomotives so for the Steam Days between 13th and 21st May Günther-Meyer Sächsische IV K 0-4-4-OT no. 99 608, built in 1921, was hired in from the Sächsische Dampfeisenbahn Gesellschaft mbH.

The loco was temporarily renumbered for the event to represent 99 557, a loco formerly based in the Lindenberg region. On 18th May, a German public holiday, Dominic pictured the loco pausing at Brünkendorf.



No more Thomas for Rail Park

USA

A rail-themed heritage theme park with a 2ft gauge railway in Massachusetts, USA has announced plans to only open at Christmas and abandon a Thomas the Tank engine theme applied to the railway.

The Edaville Railroad and family theme park opened originally in Carver in 1947, built by Ellis D Atwood on his cranberry plantation. It is today one of the oldest heritage railroad operations in the USA.

Atwood purchased two locomotives and most of the passenger and freight stock from the Bridgton and Saco River Railroad following its closure in 1941, and then added two former Monson Railroad locos and vehicles from the former Sandy River and Rangeley Lakes Railroad in Maine.

Initially the line was used for the Cranberry harvest but as more locos were added to the collection it grew into a tourist attraction, with Christmas rides becoming a local highlight.

Following Atwood's death from an oil burner explosion in 1950, enthusiast Nelson Blount took over, adding to the

locos but also leasing Edaville equipment to operate on other lines he owned.

Later Edaville went through several changes of ownership, eventually closing in January 1992 with much of the heritage equipment controversially sold to become the nucleus of the Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad Museum.

Edaville reopened in 1999, the line cut back from 5.5 to two miles and many of its original buildings demolished and replaced. The theme park was further developed with in 2015 the addition of a 'Thomas Land USA', trains on the railroad headed by a diesel loco pushing an unpowered representation of the children's character.

Following difficulties arising from the Covid pandemic Edaville passed to new local management in 2022 which announced an intention to reflect the history of the site, including using steam on the running line as much as possible.

The plans involve abandoning the

Thomas land part of the attraction. Owner Delli Priscolli told local media that they had concluded that the Thomas concept has not worked. "Our partner, unfortunately, did not follow through. And Covid really hurt us."

Priscolli also proposes building seven buildings housing 337 rental units on an unused part of the large estate, and focusing opening on November and December "with some off-season events" – the park is staging a 'Christmas in July' event on Fridays and Saturdays this month.

The operating locomotive is currently an originally 3ft gauge Porter 0-4-0T (6976/1925), built for the Rariton Copper Works in New Jersey; it was on static display for many years before being returned to steam. A 1936 Hudswell-Clarke 0-6-0, similar to 'Fiji' at Statfold, is described as undergoing restoration.

Above: Edaville's future is likely to involve no more diesels pushing 'Thomas the Tank' replicas on its 2ft gauge line.

Photo: Wikipedia Commons



■ A surprise exhibit for visitors to the Statfold Narrow Gauge Trust's Enthusiast weekend at the Tamworth, Staffordshire venue on 10th-11th June was this 3ft 6in gauge 2-6-2T, which has been transported from its home line in NORWAY to Statfold Engineering for overhaul. The loco is a member of the Norwegian State Railways XXII class designed exclusively for the Setesdal line and built by Skøyen-based Thunes Mekaniske Værksted in 1902.

The Setesdal Line was a 78km-long railway in southern Norway, opening to Haegeland in November 1895 and to Byglandsfjord a year later. Its original XXI class of locomotives were built by Dubs & Co in Glasgow in Scotland in 1894, before Thunes Mekaniske Værksted produced its own XXIs and then the XXII.

The original line closed in 1962 and most of it was lifted, but a 3.7-mile section between Beiholen and Grovane was retained and reopened as a heritage line by local enthusiasts. Today two of the Dubs XXIs are based here along with a Thune version and the XXII currently at Statfold, no 5.

Photo: Peter Johnson

BRIEF LINES

Diesels to beat fire risk

Soaring temperatures and a lack of rain across Europe have again raised the threat of a fire risk to railways operating steam locomotives. The Musee des Transports de Pithiviers in FRANCE announced that from Sunday 18th June it would switch to diesel traction and other lines were widely expected to follow suit unless there is a marked change in the weather.

Ukraine festivals continue

Further evidence of a determination to show that it is 'business as usual' in the war-torn nation of UKRAINE has been the continuation of festivals based around the narrow gauge railway in Haivoron. A recent event in February saw plenty of attractions for visiting enthusiasts including a 'draisine' built directly by placing a luxury car from the Gorky Automotive Plant on rail wheels!

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Yukon Porter to find new life in California

Californian enthusiast Hayden Seabold has become the owner of an 1890-built 3ft gauge Porter 0-6-0, which he intends to complete the restoration to operation.

The loco, which worked originally for Northern Light Power Coal & Transportation, ended its operational career in the Yukon mining industry where it was withdrawn in 1918. It lay abandoned until the 1960s when three enthusiasts acquired it along with a smaller Porter 0-6-0T and one of the Yukon 0-4-0T variants.

The engine then spent some time by a roadside in Whitehorse, capital of the Yukon and the largest city in northern Canada, before passing on to another enthusiast, Dave Gould.

"While in his ownership Dave put an incredible amount of time and money into brand new castings, machine work and brand new parts – it is thanks to him that I will complete the restoration and now own the locomotive," Hayden told *NGW*.

He added that the intention is to return the Porter to operational condition. "A lot of work has been done already to get it

USA

closer along that path – the drive wheels received new tyres, crankpins, hubliners and such, all-new shoes and wedges have been made as have new brake beams, brake shoes cast, new crosshead guide bars made and such."

Hayden, who runs his own machining and restoration business in Grover Beach, California, intends to do all of the work at his own premises. "Down the road when it's done I have the option of running it at the Santa Margarita ranch, which is a 1½-mile long, 3ft gauge railroad in Santa Margarita – it's also known as the Pacific Coast Railroad Company.

Hayden also has a close friend with his own private 3ft gauge line, running in a quarter-mile loop around a 2.5-acre ranch. "Those will be the immediate places it can run, but I won't rule out traveling with the locomotive," he said.

Hayden has also promised to keep *NGW* updated on progress with the Porter.

Above: "Right, so where does it all go..." Hayden with his 1:1 scale locomotive jigsaw puzzle. Photo courtesy Hayden Seybold



Tanks a lot for the donation

Restoration of the Museum of French Steam Tramways and Secondary Railways (MTVS) Decauville-design, Orenstein & Koppel built 2-6-0T no 5755 of 1913 is continuing to make rapid progress – in mid-May members were trill-fitting the locomotive's boiler cladding at the museum workshop in Butry, **FRANCE**.

Meanwhile a major advance towards the end of the month was the delivery of the loco's brand-new water tanks. A fundraising appeal for the tanks achieved its 30,000 Euro target with the aid of a matching contribution from FDP, Fondation du Patrimoine which has supported MTVS activities for more than a decade.

Photos: Olivier Janneau/MTVS



Rack veteran back on the climb

The Achenseebahn rack line in **AUSTRIA**, which was not long ago under serious threat of closure following maintenance issues and a loss of public funding, has returned its locomotive no 3 to service after a major and extended overhaul.

The 4.2-mile metre-gauge line, which runs from Jenbach to Lake Achen in the Austrian Tyrol and is Europe's oldest fully steam-operated rack railway, was declared bankrupt in 2020. Services resumed in May 2022 under a new company with day-to-day management being taken over by the Zillertalbahn, which is also based in Jenbach.

Loco no 3 'Georg' was one of three original locos built in 1889 by Wiener Lokomotivfabrik, Floridsdorf for working the line's combined adhesion and Rigenbach rack route.

Photo: Achenseebahn



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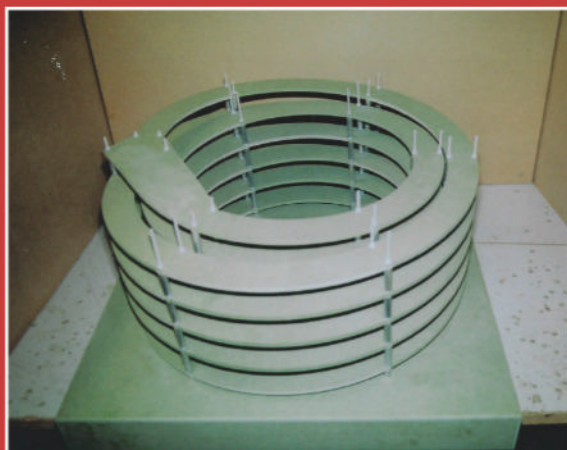


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Sad Loss in the Austrian Alps



In the second of a three-part series, *James Waite* looks at a superb line that acted as a wake-up call to local enthusiasts when it was suddenly closed in 1957.

The Salzkammergut, the picturesque region of lakes and mountains to the east of Salzburg in Austria, became a major tourist and recreational district in the 19th century. It was favoured not least by the Austrian Kaiser Franz Joseph I, who in 1853 established his summer residence at Bad Ischl, one of the region's most attractive towns.

Much of the world views Joseph as a flawed character, whose failure to think through the consequences of his decisions was largely responsible for the First World War, but he remains a revered figure throughout Austria – nowhere more so than in the Salzkammergut where reminders of him seem to be everywhere.

The area is served by a number of main-line railways, notably the Salzkammergutbahn between Stainach-Irdning in Steiermark and Schärding in Upper Austria, and also a secondary line running through Gmunden and Bad Ischl. Branches off the Westbahn between Vienna and Salzburg approach from the north. They include three metre gauge lines, the Atterseebahn, which reaches the shore of the region's largest lake, and the Gmunden-Vochdorf and the Lambach-Vochdorf-Eggenberg railways. The latter had associations with the 1,106mm gauge Budweis-Linz-Gmunden Bahn, originally

"The track was lifted with indecent haste, even while a rescue was being attempted..."

a horse-worked railway that reached Gmunden as long ago as 1836 and saw steam trains from 1855.

There was an obvious need for a connection through the superb countryside between Salzburg and Bad Ischl. Construction of the 760mm gauge Salzkammergut Lokalbahn, or SKGLB, began early in 1890. By 1897 the 63km line had been completed, including a short branch to Mondsee, a market town on the lake of the same name. The railway company also built the metre gauge Abt-rack Schafbergbahn that climbs one of the region's most spectacular mountains.

The 760mm line flourished at first, but struggled following the First



World War. Three locos, 0-4-0T no 1 and 0-6-2Ts nos 5 and 8, had been requisitioned by the Austrian army during the war and their loss became permanent after 1918.

The state railway stepped in to manage the line for four years from 1920 with the aid of its own locos until the company could obtain replacements and get back on its feet. Later in the decade it sold off many of its peripheral properties, but this was not enough to stem its losses and in 1932 the Austrian state tourist office bought the remainder of them, leaving it with just the 760mm line.

The line's problems continued into the 1950s. Electrification and other updating schemes came to nothing, closure was mooted, and though fiercely opposed locally the end came depressingly quickly. Huge crowds rode on the last trains on 30th September 1957, or just turned out to see them go by. At 7.30pm the very last one left Salzburg for St Gilgen hauled by 0-6-2T no 12.

The loco bore a placard which, translated into English, read: "Today I am going through the beautiful green valley for the last time, my dear mountains and lakes, goodbye, goodbye." Stops on route became so protracted that the train reached St Gilgen more than one hour late.

It was said that the closure was encouraged by central government, which wanted to use the trackbed for road improvements. Certainly the track was lifted with indecent haste, even while a rescue was being attempted, and road construction began soon after. It was the first closure of any railway of significant length in Austria.

Motive power

No 1 and its sister loco no 2 were built in 1890 for the easily graded section near Bad Ischl. Nos 3-12 were all 0-6-2Ts built between 1890 and 1906, typically Austrian machines though not the same as the celebrated U-class ones used elsewhere.

0-8-0T no 20 arrived in 1923. Like all its predecessors this trim little machine was a product of Krauss's Linz factory. It was the last loco to be built new for the line, and was

Heading: No 31 approaches St Lorenz with a branch train from Mondsee, October 1956. It was one of the line's two Orenstein & Koppel 0-6-0Ts, built in 1940, neither of which has survived.

Below left: No 12 (Krauss Linz 5513/1906) at St Gilgen in September 1957, a few weeks before it hauled the last train on the SKGLB.

Below: In October 1956 a service from Salzburg to Bad Ischl approaches St Lorenz hauled by a 0-6-2T.

All period photos by Neil Sprinks

Above right: Krauss Linz 0-6-2Ts nos 9, 4 and 5 at Mondsee engine shed, October 2012.

Uncredited photos by James Waite



identical to the four C-class locos built in 1908 and 1912 for kkStB, the pre-First World War state railway.

The 'C' stands for Czudin, the operating centre of a 760mm gauge line on which these locos first ran. It lay in North Bukovina, which was then in the Austrian empire but became part of Romania after the war and is now in Ukraine. Two of the engines finished their days at sugar factories in Poland, while one went more than 6,000km away to the Soviet pioneer railway at Irkutsk in Siberia – none have survived. Czudin was also where SKGLB no 1 ended up under the army, and it and the railway duly became the property of CFR, the Romanian state railway.

The massive 0-10-0T no 21 was built by Maffei and arrived at the SKGLB in 1928 secondhand from the Holzverkohlungs Industrie AG at Konstanz in southern Germany. This was a wood-charring concern, which produced charcoal and other wood-derived products and was downsizing after the development by rivals of synthetic alternatives. The first of four railcars was bought in the same year.

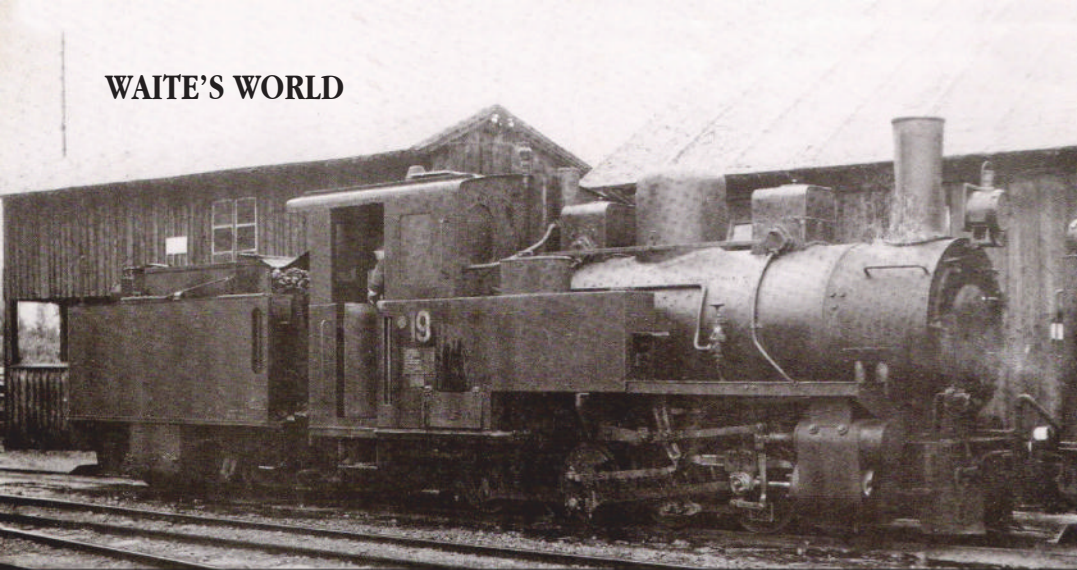
Nos 30 and 31 were small 0-6-0Ts built by Orenstein & Koppel in 1940 for service in Japanese-occupied Manchuria. They could not be delivered because of the Second World War, and the SKGLB bought them two years later, mainly for light passenger and freight work on the Mondsee branch and for shunting.

After the Second World War nos 19, 22, 32 and 33 came from the German army. Having stockpiled large quantities of field railway locos and equipment before 1914, the army did this only on a small scale in the late 1930s because it believed that its newly developed Blitzkrieg doctrine would render them superfluous. It soon discovered its error when its advance into the Soviet Union ground to a halt late in 1941. Many 600mm gauge lines were hurriedly built, and existing 750mm railways were adapted, to carry the vast quantities of provisions and armaments that were needed, especially in eastern Ukraine and around Rostov-on-Don.

For locos the army initially plundered German-occupied territories elsewhere, principally

»





France, which lost probably all the numerous Péchot-Bourdon Fairlie-like 0-4-4-0s that its army had stored along the Maginot Line and elsewhere. Around 40 Péchot-Bourdonns are known to have worked on the Don flood plain, along with others on the Taman peninsula and in north-eastern Ukraine, and 11 on the Optucha-Bolkhov line in Oryol oblast nearer Moscow.

For new construction the army at first adopted several types for the 600mm and 750mm gauge lines. Most if not all were readily gauge-convertible. SKGLB no 19, formerly army HF2855, was a Franco-Belge HF160D-type 0-8-0T+T. The design dated from 1944 when it was decided to concentrate on just two steam types. No HF2855 found its way to a large storage facility at Mittersill, on

***"It has
always had a
commitment
to preserving
SKGLB
equipment..."***



the Pinzgau Lokalbahn, which was captured by the Allies early in 1945.

No 22, formerly HF191, was built by Borsig in 1939 as the prototype of the planned HF210E-type of 0-10-0T+Ts, but remained the sole member of its class, though five generally similar locos were later built by Henschel. From October 1942 to March 1943 it was used on construction of a 600mm gauge line between Tuleblja and Demjansk, midway between Moscow and St Petersburg, but by 1945 was at Mittersill, from where both these locos moved to the SKGLB.

Nos 32 and 33, formerly HF2187 and HF11778, were HF110C-type 0-6-0T+Ts from Schwartzkopff and Henschel. No HF2187 also ended the war on the Pinzgau line, possibly at Mittersill, but no HF11778's pre-SKGLB career is unknown. There was also no D40, an ex-army diesel.

Preservation

The closure of the SKGLB acted as a wake-up call to Austria's enthusiasts, just as the demise of the Lynton & Barnstaple did in the UK 22 years earlier. No fewer than eight of the 20 steam locos have survived. They include 0-6-2Ts nos 4 and 9, which were rescued by the Vienna Technical Museum and for many years have lived in the old engine shed at Mondsee as part of the excellent SKGLB museum. Its founder and director is August Zopf, a long-time devotee of the line.

Among other exhibits at Mondsee is the Kaiserwagen, a richly luxurious saloon built in 1893 for Franz Joseph's use during his sojourns at Bad Ischl. This is a superb and fascinating museum – Mr Zopf was extremely hospitable when I visited in 2012, and kindly moved the saloon out into the sunshine for photography.

Nos 2, 21, 32 and 33 were all scrapped between 1948 and 1955. As a young man Mr Zopf tried to buy no 20 after the closure, but was narrowly outbid by the scrapmen, who also bought nos 10, 30 and 31.

Nos 7, 11, 12, 19 and D40, and the only surviving railcar, were purchased by the Steiermarkische Landesbahnen, which rebuilt the steam locos with extended side tanks, while no 19 also lost its tender.

The five StmLB locos have all survived into preservation. No 19 moved to the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway in Wales in 1969 where it was named 'Sir Drefaldwyn' (the Welsh name for Montgomeryshire) and is still in its rebuilt state. Out of service since 2000, the loco has made its return to operation in the last month following a comprehensive overhaul (*see elsewhere in this issue*)

-Ed). At the StmLB it was numbered 699.01, which must have caused some confusion since the first of the seven similar locos in ÖBB's 699 class carried the same number.

The Welshpool line also has three of the distinctive 'balloon' four-wheel carriages, two of which were built specifically for the SKGLB and have been returned to a correct livery.

Locos 7, 11 and D40 went to the Taurachbahn, which once formed the westernmost section of the StmLB's Murtalbahn. It closed to regular traffic in 1981 and was reopened as a heritage railway in 1988 by Club 760, the enthusiasts' society which also owns the Bosnian 0-8-2 at the Pinzgau line. It has always had a commitment to preserving SKGLB equipment and operates a train of original or replica SKGLB carriages.

After periods elsewhere no 12 also went to the Taurachbahn in 2004 and was restored to working order in its SKGLB condition one year later. It is perhaps no surprise that Mr Zopf has been one of the Taurachbahn's directors for many years, and Gunter Mackinger, Salzburg AG's transport director until 2014, used to be its traffic manager.

No 22 was bought by the Zillertalbahnhof, becoming its no 4, and in 1963 was named 'Castle Caereinion' in honour of its twinning arrangement with the Welshpool & Llanfair. From 1974 the loco was loaned for tourist service on ÖBB's Bregenzerwaldbahn in western Vorarlberg until that line closed in 1980 and it was sold. It lost its name but the W&L has one of the plates. It led a nomadic life for many years but has recently found what should be a permanent home at the Taurachbahn.

Lost and found

The preservation of 0-6-2T no 5 was little short of miraculous. After being requisitioned during the First World

Top left: SKGLB no 19, a Franco Belge 0-8-0 (2855/1944) was originally a tender loco, as seen here. Photo: W&LLR Archive

Left: Welshpool & Llanfair members found no 19 laid upon a siding at Weiz, pictured here in 1966 by David Mitchell.

Below left: SKGLB scene on the Welshpool & Llanfair in July 1972. 699.01, now 'Sir Drefaldwyn' is alongside SKGLB carriage no 572, built in 1947.

Top right: The SKGLB's Kaiserwagen at the Mondsee museum in October 2012.

Right: The two vehicles built for the SKGLB that now run at Welshpool have been returned to their correct liveries. Photo: Andrew Charman

Below: Neither of the SKGLB's two HF110C-type 0-6-0T+Ts survived, but an example of the type is preserved by the Estonian Railway Museum at Lavassaare. It is seen in July 2007 alongside a former peat depot.



War it worked along with no 8 on the Steinbeisbahn, a long forestry railway in western Bosnia, as its no 44. The two locos were later set aside as inoperable and were presumed to have been scrapped.

It was, therefore, an enormous surprise when an Austrian photographer found no 5 in industrial service at Travnik, in central Bosnia, in 1967, looking very smart and still complete with its SKGLB brass numerals. It took Mr Zopf many years to negotiate its return to Austria but this was achieved in 1980. Until 2018 it

shared the Mondsee engine shed with nos 4 and 9, but both it and no 11 are now at Club 760's storage shed at Frojach on the Murtalbahn.

There's the Club SKGLB which promotes the rebuilding of the old line, and they are supported by some of the local authorities along its route. There are also more modest proposals to rebuild a section of the Mondsee branch as a part of the museum there. With its location alongside the lake it would make a marvellous attraction, and maybe at least part of the line will one day begin a second life. **NGW**





Peat, Clay and Pleasure

The first of a two-part feature by *Christopher J B Phillips* on Lincolnshire's narrow gauge.

Lincolnshire is a county of level land – a geography well suited to construction of light, narrow gauge railways. The requirement to move natural products gave rise to a need for a cheap and efficient method of transporting peat, clay, poultry products and potatoes from their point of production. Besides these, the county also provided narrow gauge services for land reclamation, as well as tourist attractions.

In North Lincolnshire, extending into Yorkshire, peat extraction from the late 19th century formed a major industry, particular on Thorne and Hatfield Moors. A number of companies amalgamated in 1896 to form the British Moss Litter Company, which took control of peat workings on the moors. The construction of 3ft gauge lines began in the same decade.

Initially 9lb or 12lb rail was installed, later replaced with 18lb and finally 30lb when locomotives were introduced. The first locomotive was built at Swinefleet works in 1947 from a wooden wagon and parts of an Austin Swallow car, with a modest 8hp engine. Although intended for hauling wagons, this engine found its main use in transporting personnel around the site.

The first purpose built locomotive was a four-wheeler fitted with a petrol engine, most likely built by James and Frederick Howard of Bedford. A year after its construction in 1955, the petrol engine was swapped for a Dorman diesel.

Two further locomotives were ordered in 1959 from Ruston & Hornsby of Lincoln, described as LBTs by the manufacturer and each of 31.5 horsepower. With works

Above: Industry in Lincolnshire – Motor Rail 'Ivor' takes a load of clay under the elevated approach to the Humber Bridge in February 1998. Photo: Steve Thomason

Schöma 4w + 4w 'Sir Thomas Buck' on the Crowle Peatland Railway, September 2019. A second Schöma locomotive is outside the shed. Photo: Crowle Peatland Railway

numbers 432661 and 432665, they were named 'Simba' and 'Tania'. A third loco from the same supplier was ordered in 1962, to the same specification and named 'Sheeba'.

The company was taken over by Fisons in 1963. Three new 8.5hp locomotives of a basic construction were ordered from R. A. Lister & Co of Dursley, Gloucestershire. Two were type RM2X (53976 and 53977) and one was type RM24 (54184). In 1967 came the introduction of a 4-wheel 4.25hp Lister RM1 (55471) and a Simplex RM1 (40S302).

A further Simplex 40S (49S378) powered by a Dorman 2LD 40 hp engine was acquired in 1971. Three more locomotives were introduced in 1974, two of them Hunslets (7366 and 7367) with Perkins engines.

The third of the 1974 batch was a Diema DFL 10/11 (3543) from German manufacturer Fritz Schoetter, initially with an 8.5hp engine, replaced later with a 10hp Deutz. A further Diema loco was constructed at Swinefleet from parts supplied in 1976.

In addition, three secondhand Simplex locomotives were obtained – 10159 in 1949, and two from the London Brick company at Arlesey (10160 in 1950 and 10455 in 1955). The last Simplex locomotives arrived in 1978 and 1983, respectively 40SD507 and 40SD527.

The final delivery of locomotives began in 1990 with two Schöma CHL-60G 4w + 4w comprising a 65kW master unit with a powered slave unit (5129+5131 and 5130+5132). They were followed the next year by a similar unit (5220+5225). In 1993 this



locomotive was named 'The Thomas Buck' after a peat industry employee.

The termination of peat extraction started in 1971 and by the end of the century a large part of Thorne and Hatfield Moors had been designated a National Nature Reserve. From 1947 to the close of operations, 23 locomotives were employed. At the finish nine were acquired for preservation and regauged to 2ft 6in, eight going into private collections.

The Lister (53977) was loaned to Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery in 2007. A Simplex (40S302) was abandoned at Bank Top and became the focus to form what is now the Crowle Peatland Railway.

Those behind the project discovered two of the original Schöma locos and three slave units in Norfolk. Planning permission was gained for a workshop in 2017 and the Schömas transferred there when the building was completed in 2018, while the original Simplex locomotive was transferred to North Lindsey College, for restoration by the engineering students. The existing line of approximately 100 metres is to be extended to 500 metres to improve the visitor experience.

Clay pits and brickworks

North Lincolnshire had other narrow gauge workings including a number of clay pits, one at Far Ings Tileries which became the very last of its type in Great Britain. A 2ft gauge line of just half a kilometre joined clay pits to the tile work's pug mill.

Two locomotives were initially in use, both of Ruston manufacture, a 20DL class and 13DL class acquired



Above: Night-time operations at Crowle in September 2020. Photo: Crowle Peatland Railway

Below: A pair of diagrammatic maps showing the Thorne Moors peat railways in the 1980s and the Hatfield Moors peat railways.

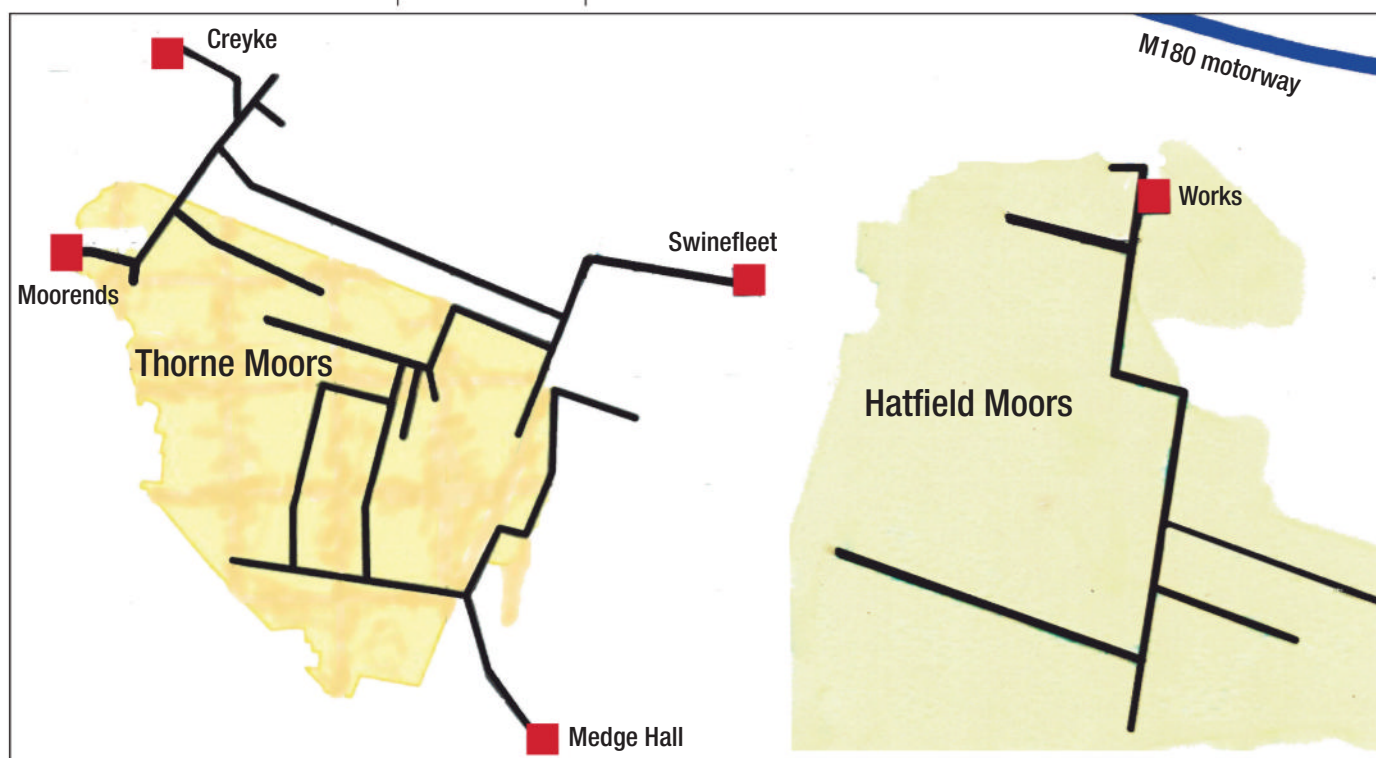
in the 1940s. These are also recorded as two 20DL Rustons, one eventually being scrapped and the other acquired by the Leighton Buzzard Railway. They were replaced in 1989 by a Motor Rail locomotive number 8678 named 'Ivor'. The only rolling stock was a half cubic yard tipping truck built by Robert Hudson Ltd., of Gildersome near Leeds.

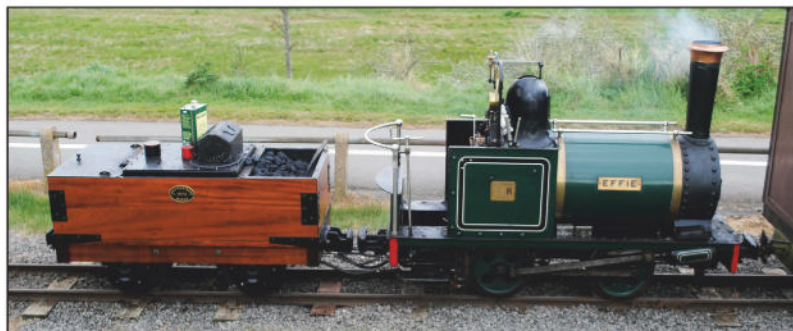
The line had closed by early 2001. A minor claim to fame was that it ran under the southern elevated approach to the Humber Bridge.

Returning to Crowle, a further industrial line was at the market town's Brick and Tile Works founded in 1880. After a chequered history of sales and bankruptcies, the premises were acquired by Redbourn Steelworks in 1919-1920, specifically to make bricks for steel workers' houses in Scunthorpe.

The company was taken over by Richard Thomas in 1925 and merged with Baldwins to form Richard Thomas Baldwins. In 1951 it became part of British Steel under nationalisation and was sold off to Innes Lee of Overton near Wrexham in 1972. The works eventually closed in 1980.

A 1ft 8in gauge locomotive constructed in 1934 was basically a Hibberd Y-type (1881) with a cab and 8hp Ford engine. The line was closed in 1968 and the locomotive acquired by Richard Morris, a founder member of the Gloddfa Ganol narrow gauge collection that was displayed in the former Oakley slate quarry in Blaenau Ffestiniog, north Wales between 1974 and 1998. The loco then went to the Steeple Grange Light Railway near Wirksworth, Derbyshire. »





Cleethorpes Coast

Is the Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway miniature or narrow gauge? Or a hybrid? Originally built to 10¼in gauge in 1948, it is a tourist line for leisure and pleasure that has seen many changes in ownership, length and stations. Operated by Cleethorpes Borough Council, the original gauge was inexplicably changed in 1972 to 14½in, requiring acquired locomotives and rolling stock of 15in gauge to be re-engineered. Against a background of falling trade and gauge incompatibility, the line was sold in 1991 to become the Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway.

In 1994 there was considerable investment with various station alterations and a change to 15in gauge. This allowed the exchange of locomotives with other lines and the facility for gala days.

In 2007 the line was extended southwards for 900 metres to a new terminus named Humberston North Sea Lane (this section is currently closed). In the same year work began on the northern terminus building, an impressive station that is now named Kingsway.

A large number of locomotives have graced the Cleethorpes rails, their description and type indicating whether they are miniature or true narrow gauge. This article defines miniature as small replicas of larger locomotives and narrow gauge as purpose-built.

Among those in the latter category is 'Bonnie Dundee', originally built by Kerr Stuart in 1900/1901 as a 2ft gauge 0-4-0WT for Dundee gasworks. Donated to the Ravensglash & Eskdale Railway in 1976 by Ian Fraser, it was rebuilt and regauged to fifteen inches. In 1996 it was rebuilt again, with a new boiler and a tender added. It is now a 0-4-2 and was to be seen at Cleethorpes in 2022.

Another locomotive of note is 'Effie', a 0-4-0T+T replica of Sir Arthur Heywood's 1875 original and currently undergoing a rebuild. There has also been 'Mountaineer', a 0-4-0 tank built by Willheim van der Heiden of Rotterdam in 1970. It operated in Holland until 1985 before transferring to the Bush Mills Railway in Tasmania. When the Bush Mills line closed, it came to Cleethorpes from 2006 until 2015.

Apart from the various steam

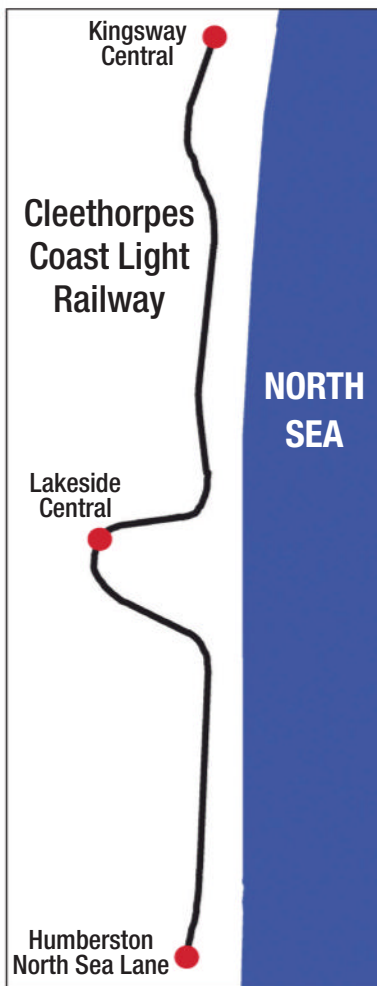
"The original gauge was inexplicably changed in 1972 to 14½in, requiring acquired locomotives and rolling stock of 15in gauge to be re-engineered..."

Above left: The locomotives of the Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway include Kerr Stuart 0-4-2 'Bonnie Dundee', seen here in April 2021 and the Great Northern Steam replica of the Heywood 0-4-0T+T 'Effie', pictured here in May 2015.

Above right: Sketch map of the Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway.

Below: The epitome of the Cleethorpes Coast, a train of open and closed carriages hauled by the 0-4-0 'Mountaineer' in March 2014.

Photos courtesy Peter Walker, Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway



locomotives, the Cleethorpes line operates a selection of diesel units. Rolling stock consists of three carriages and a guard's van, originally built for the Longleat Railway by Severn Lamb and sold to the CCLR in 1990. Additionally there is a rake of carriages for wheelchair users, built in 1987 by Alan Keef Ltd at Ross-on-Wye in Herefordshire. **NGW**

More Information

The Peat Railways of Thorne and Hatfield Moors by Adrian Booth (Industrial Railway Society, 1998). Details of present operations on the Crowle Peatland Railway can be found at www.peatland.co.uk and on the Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway at www.cclr.co.uk



High season – peak interest

Days of hot sunny weather that stretched into weeks and events with new and interesting attractions have ensured there's plenty for us to feature in these pages this month...

Right: For its Gala on 17th-18th June celebrating 120 years since opening and 60 years of preservation, the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway 'borrowed' one of the former Upnor & Lodge Hill Railway toastring carriages that provided the first passenger accommodation on the mid-Wales line in the early 1960s. These vehicles are now at the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway in Kent, the S&KLR sending the carriage back to Wales in pristine condition.

The presence of the carriage allowed the recreation of a mixed train from the line's early preservation years with Drewry diesel 'Chattenden'.

Photo: Harry Billmore/W&LLR

Below: Nothing was going to interrupt this lady's good book, not even the approach of Fowler 0-4-2T 'Zambezi' at the Bredgar & Wormshill Railway's open day on 4th June.

Photo: Joey Evans



Overleaf: The reopening of the 3ft 6in gauge Zig Zag Railway in Australia after an enforced 11-year closure, fully reported in our *World News* pages, has again made possible pictures such as this illustrating the sheer drama of the line.

Photos: Salty Dingo on behalf of NSW Crown Lands

**NARROW
GAUGE
WORLD**







Above: The Fairbourne Railway's annual Steam Gala on 27th-29th May featured several visiting locomotives but it was one of the residents, Darjeeling Himalayan-style 0-4-OST+T 'Sherpa', resting in the evening at the very end of the 12.25-inch gauge line at Penrhyn Point, that provided *David Rowbotham* with the opportunity to take this stunning photograph.

Below: *Karl Heath* is a master of creating superb monochrome images and found plenty of War Department subject matter at the Apedale Valley Light Railway on 28th May. Hudswell Clarke 104 was being serviced on shed as Hunslet WD303 worked up the line past the sheds with a passenger train.





Above: More Fowlers, this time paired at Statfold on 11th June, as visitor 15513 and resident 13355 'Saccharine' passed the K1 Garratt. Despite appearances, the leading Fowler was burning coal!

Photo: Joey Evans

Below: And finally... This is from earlier in the season but too good to ignore, as Tallyllyn Railway 0-4-2ST 'Sir Haydn', running 'wrong way round' for a photo charter, enters Rhydyronen station on 22nd March with rain clouds gathering in the background. As these words are written storms are widely predicted across the UK and for many looking at their parched ground they would be welcome, as they would for steam operators concerned at their currently tinder-box surrounding environment...

Photo: Ralph Ward





From Southend to Brighton

Volk's Electric Railway Association members Derek Smith and Tim Steven tell the convoluted story of the Sussex electric line's car no 9, dating from 1898 but obtained from Southend Pier in 1949.

The well-known Volk's Electric Railway has been part of the seafront in the Sussex city of Brighton since 1883 and until 1938 the line, regauged from 2ft to 2ft 8½in a year after it was built, had been owned and operated by the Volk family.

The 1938 Brighton Corporation (Transport) Act absorbed the railway into the Corporation's transport portfolio, but it leased the railway back to the Volk family. However, with the Second World War declared, Brighton Corporation took full ownership of the railway on 1st April 1940, closing it in July while seafront defences were constructed.

When peace arrived, the

Corporation decided to restore the railway, anticipating the demand for holidays by a population heavily reliant on public transport, but urgently needing seaside breaks. New station buildings replaced the derelict or demolished pre-war structures and most of the track was renewed with new rails and concrete sleepers.

An assessment was made of the rolling stock and the two original 1884 Volk's Cars 1 and 2 and the 1930 metal 'Winter Saloon' were deemed to be beyond economic repair and scrapped.

The other cars were overhauled and made ready for the railway's first post-war season in 1948. This proved

so busy, with day trippers and holidaymakers positively flocking to the town, that the loss of three of the cars was sorely felt. It would not be easy to find replacements if the line was to retain its vintage charm.

Above: Car no 9 in its heyday in 1950, just a year after it was acquired from Southend Pier. Photo: Derek Smith collection

Below: Later life – the car in operation in 1984 at Halfway station. Photo courtesy David Jones

Used opportunity

Fortuitously, the Southend-on-Sea Pier Railway, which operated the electric line along the Essex resort's 1.3-mile-long pier, was in the process of upgrading its rolling stock with new trains from AC Cars, the first deliveries being expected in March 1949. Much of Southend's original fleet dated from 1898, being contemporary with the Volk's cars.

This was an ideal opportunity for Volk's to obtain more vehicles and in the same year the railway bought two open sided un-powered trailer cars from Southend shortly before they were due to be scrapped at Benfleet. These were the vehicles that would become nos 8 and 9 in the Volk's line's fleet.

Dating from 1898-99, the two vehicles were built by the Brush Company at its Falcon Works in Loughborough (successor to Hughes that built the original steam locomotives for the Corris Railway – Ed). They were both virtually identical except that Car 9 had 'wrap around' end dashboard panels.

Much thought was given at Brighton on how to motorise the cars



as the usual 8hp Compagnie Electrique Belge Volk's-type motors were no longer available. Eventually, Car 8 was fitted with two 140-volt underfloor electric motors, each providing power via belt drives in one direction. It entered service in 1950.

Car 9 took longer to convert from non-powered trailer to motor car, being fitted with two underslung 60-volt DC 'milk float' motors wired in series, each driving single axles via inclined propshafts and gearboxes. 'Face-plate' style controllers were fitted rather than the traditional Volk's overhead rheostat type.

Both 8 and 9 were soundly built and although open sided, there were glazed bulkheads at each end separating the passengers from the driver. Our Victorian and Edwardian ancestors were hardy folk indeed, though most archive photos suggest they did tend to dress warmly for visits to the seaside!

In the 1960s the decision was taken to adapt several Volk's cars to work in pairs. This was fine for the original Volk's cars as most were interchangeable. However, the ex-Southend Cars 8 and 9 were completely different, could only run together and after 1966 they rarely ran alone.

Both cars had their foibles and only a few drivers were approved to drive them. Their non-standard motors gave them a fair turn of speed and drivers had to be careful when approaching stations not to overrun. Singly they were more docile, but coupled together they demanded constant concentration and were often referred to as 'the high-speed train'. With each having completely different motive power units, wheelbases and transmissions, they often provided moments of excitement for passengers and their drivers alike.

Museum piece

By the 1990s, Cars 8 and 9 were seeing less and less service and were eventually withdrawn, pending decisions on their future. To make room in the Volk's sheds for a new engineering train, Car 8 was offered to the Southend Pier Museum. There it received a coat of green and white paint and was displayed on the pier in the open, which was clearly not going to help the long-term preservation of this historic vehicle.

Eventually the car was moved to secure storage before being thoroughly restored by Alan Keef Ltd, being returned to original unpowered condition and repainted in Southend livery for permanent display in a sealed outdoor showcase at Chelmsford Museum.



Above: The two former Southend cars running together in their final years of operation, with no 8 leading, on a warm summer's day in July of 1984. Photo: Andrew Charman



Right: What next? Car 9 out of use in the Volks shed in 1995. Photo: Derek Smith collection

Below: Open storage at a Hassocks garden centre did not help the car's condition. Photo: Tim Steven

Car 9 remained at Brighton and was donated to the Volk's Electric Railway Association (VERA), which had been formed in 1995. It had to be removed from the railway and after a couple of false starts the Association loaned it to the fledgling South Downs Heritage Centre which was run by Bates at the company's nursery and garden centre in Hassocks; it was

planned to be the centrepiece of a display about Magnus Volk and his railway. However, Bates' plans changed and Car 9 then spent many years under a tarpaulin while its future was decided.

Agreement was finally reached this year with Brighton & Hove City Council for Car 9's return to the Volk's Railway for a temporary

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ELECTRIC LINES

period. So, it finally left the storage compound at Hassocks, its home for the last 15 years, on Wednesday 7th June, never to return. On behalf of VERA, Sussex Transport with Southern Cranes retrieved the car from its awkward landlocked location and transported it back to Madeira Drive on Brighton's eastern seafront.

Home again

The Volk's Railway management had kindly arranged temporary blockades (with power isolations) for the long-awaited lift back onto Volk's metals at the railway's east loop. Later that morning Car 9 was slowly hauled to the sheds by the line's diesel locomotive, where it was safely berthed by lunchtime.

During its time away from Volk's, renumbering of the fleet has resulted in the line now having a traditional style Volk's 'Car 9'. So, if all goes well, one day we will either have to renumber our own vehicle – or perhaps even give it a name...

On 12th August this year the 140th anniversary of the Volk's Electric Railway will be celebrated. Ex Southend Car 9 will play a part in this and during the event an appeal will be launched to seek funding for its restoration. During its chequered career, this historic vehicle has narrowly escaped being sent to the scrapyard twice before. Will its luck hold this time round? **NGW**



Having been lifted back onto Volk's metals after 15 years away (main picture), car no 9 was hauled by the line's diesel locomotive (above) to safe undercover storage in the stock shed (below) while future plans are made. *Photos: Les Kenward and Tim Steven*

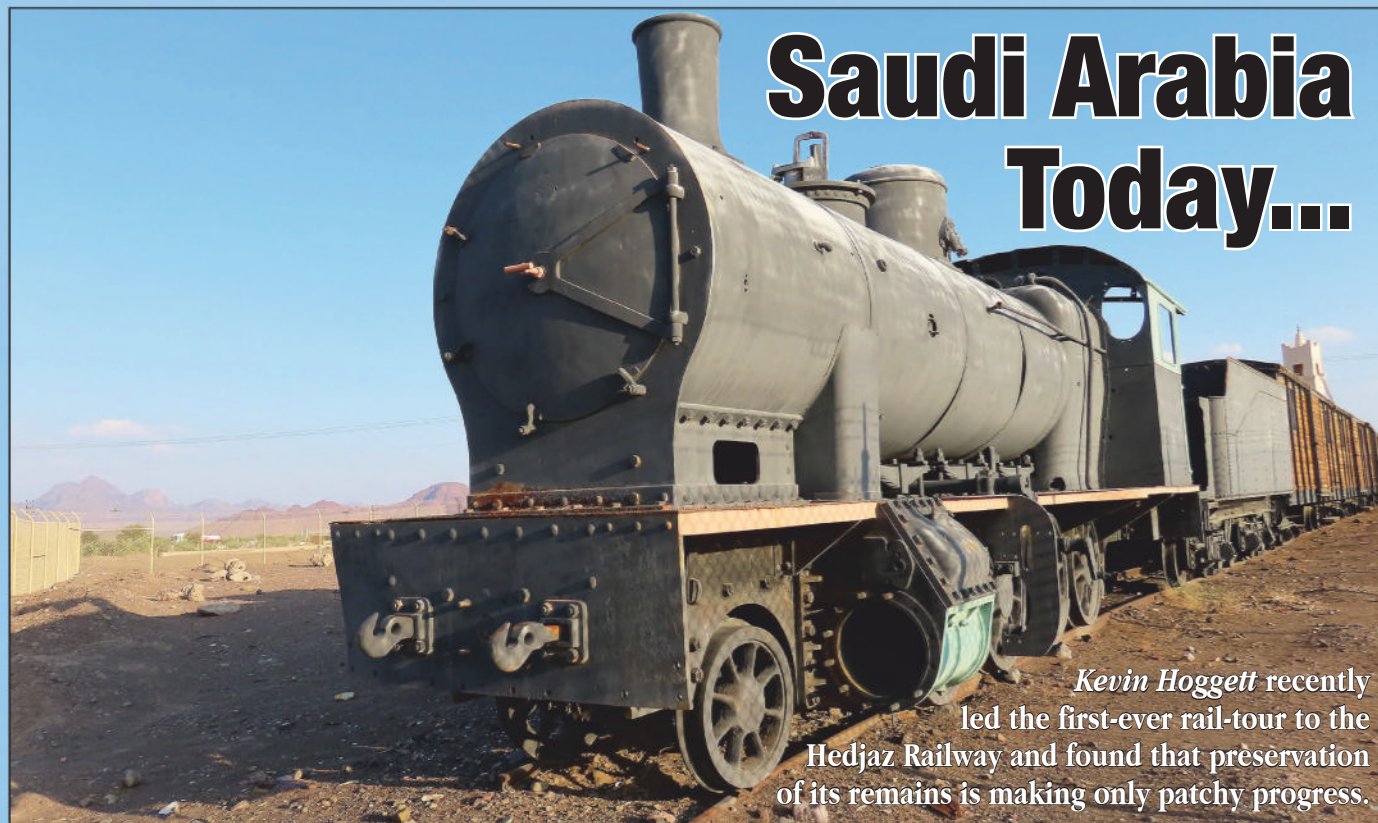


More Information

Details of the Volks Electric Railway, including the line's history and current operating days, plus information on the Association's activities can be found on the VERA website at <http://volkselectricrailway.co.uk>. Anyone wishing to donate to fundraising efforts for the car's restoration can contact Tim Steven on 07970 049921



Saudi Arabia Today...



Kevin Hoggett recently led the first-ever rail-tour to the Hedjaz Railway and found that preservation of its remains is making only patchy progress.

The Hedjaz Railway was a project of the Turkish Ottoman empire to connect Damascus and hence Turkey to the Muslim Holy cities of Medina and Mecca. These were places every Muslim was expected to visit at least once in their lifetime, the journey having been long and perilous by camel train. Additionally, there was a branch line to the Mediterranean Sea at Haifa. At the time the whole project was dubbed as impossible to achieve due to the hostile desert environment through which it had to pass.

The line was built by German contractors to the unusual gauge of 1050mm, possibly a metric rounding down of the more common 3ft 6in Cape gauge. It opened to Medina in 1908, but the section to Mecca was never built, possibly due to hostility from camel train operators who saw it as a threat to their livelihood.

Above: Hartmann 2-8-0 and its train, formerly abandoned, but now conserved at Buwair station.

Below: The Krauss 1904-built 0-6-0T loco no 17 laying on its side at Hedia.

All photos taken November 2022. Uncredited photos by Kevin Hoggett

In 2019, however, a new standard gauge 300km/hour high-speed line using Spanish Talgo rolling stock opened from Medina, via Jeddah, to Mecca. This may be considered as the fulfilment of the dream, pilgrims today flying into Medina.

Hedjaz Railway locomotives were mainly supplied by a variety of German builders with a number of 2-8-0s to a Hartmann design being built by the Swiss SLM and small 0-6-0 tank locos coming from several Belgian builders. Rolling stock was of German or Belgian build.

The portion of the original line in Saudi Arabia was destined to have a short life. It was not only useful for pilgrims, but also for strategic military purposes carrying troops and supplies. The Turks took the German side during the First World War, and the British, represented by Captain T

E Lawrence, better known as Lawrence of Arabia, inspired the local Arab tribes to rise up and carry out attacks on the railway. With further support from the British Military, the Turks' means of communication with the southern outposts of the Ottoman Empire was destroyed.

After the war, the southern section of the railway never fully recovered. Occasional trains still made it to Medina until 1925 when torrential rains washed out large parts of the route and the line was abandoned. Many items of rolling stock and locomotives were simply left where they stood.

There have been schemes since to revive the line. Repair work to infrastructure began in 1966, but was soon abandoned. Today, much of the line in Saudi Arabia is still traceable and some preservation has been achieved. At Tabuk, the loco shed has been restored as a museum »





containing a Tubize (Belgian) built 0-6-0 tank loco of 1893 which was originally intended for the French Damascus to Muzeirib line, and if one follows the line southwards, station buildings, bridges and other earthworks are still intact.

Meda in Salah

Formerly a major station along the line with a two-road loco depot, Meda in Salah is very close to Hegra, a 2000-year old architectural site with large tombs carved into rocks by the Nabateans who were also responsible for the better known Petra site in neighbouring Jordan. The rock formations here can only be equalled by some of those in the west of the USA. The station buildings here were restored in the 1980s with a train of wagons headed by Hartmann 2-8-0

locomotive no 101 placed outside.

The restored loco shed was, until recently, a museum containing a 1906-built Jung 2-6-0. However, in 2022, the whole station site was being redeveloped as a hotel complex and entry was impossible. From outside the 2-8-0 was visible, but the shed had no doors or window frames in it and it was impossible to establish if the 2-6-0 was still present. A local guide said it had been taken away, but she didn't know where it had gone.

Some 25km further south, the former station buildings at Al Ula have also been preserved and are floodlit at night.

About halfway to Medina is the former station site at Hedia. Station buildings, including the typical Hedjaz Railway stone-built twin-tank water tower, are still intact and two cast-iron water columns remain in

Top: The station site at Hedia with its water tower and columns intact, almost 100 years after they were last used.

Above: The imposing terminus building survives. Photo: Rika Laporte

Below: Restored loco depot and water tower at Medina. The main station building can be seen behind. Photo: Rika Laporte

place, almost a century since they last serviced a locomotive. The remains of some wagons stand on a siding.

The station layout featured a turning triangle, still easy to make out, and on its spur are the remains of Krauss 0-6-0 tank loco no 17 of 1904, a tender and some wagons.

Unfortunately, the loco has in recent years been turned onto its side – not the work of Lawrence of Arabia, as some local guides will have you believe! Scrap metal thieves have completely removed the inner and outer firebox – the inner box would have been made of copper. On top of this several wagons have been wholly or partly cut up. Signs of burning looked recent – in spite of the complete site having been fenced off to protect it, a large part of the fence had been pulled down to allow vehicles to pass. It is not the only location to have been attacked by the thieves – two 2-8-0 locos at isolated sites further north have illegally been virtually scrapped in recent years.

Further south, alongside the main road, is the station of Buwair. This site has also been fenced off and another Hartmann 2-8-0 loco and its train of wagons, which were formerly abandoned, have had some restoration work done as have the station buildings.

Medina

The railway finishes at an imposing stone-built terminus station in Medina. It is only a short walk from the Prophet's mosque, the second most holy site of Islam. The main station building, loco shed, four-tank water tower and all other railway buildings, including the residences of the station master and maintenance supervisor as well as staff and passenger accommodation, were all restored in around 2004, as was the Suqia Mosque next door. Even today, major Saudi railway stations and airports have a mosque attached.

The main building is now a history museum containing Muslim and other historic relics. The loco shed was made into a railway museum, and locos





and rolling stock which had been left abandoned on site were sent to India for restoration.

One loco, SLM 2-8-0 no 151 of 1912, has been sectioned and another, Hartmann 2-8-0 no 105 of 1910, restored to working order to run on re-laid track in the station area. How often this has happened is uncertain, as no Saudi had the skills to operate a steam loco, and foreign crews had to be relied on.

Upon visiting the station site with the PTG tour group in November 2022, it was found that the museum in the station building was open, but the yard only opened at 4pm. The loco shed museum had been closed since before the Covid pandemic and had not reopened.

After much negotiation, we managed to gain access to the yard, but it was claimed that no one had a key to the loco shed. However, we were able to photograph the three locos, the restored 2-8-0, and 2-6-0 no 54 of 1907, both by Hartmann, the sectioned 2-8-0 by SLM, and a restored Belgian built 3rd class bogie carriage from Baume and Marpent.

In the yard, another Hartmann 2-8-0, no 111 of 1912, without its tender which is on an adjacent track, and a variety of Belgian and German built bogie and four wheel goods vehicles were displayed. These included a bogie wagon with two tanks for transporting water, a precious commodity in the dry desert areas, and two covered wagons with



Top: Hartmann 2-8-0 no 111 of 1912, with tender on the adjacent track, at Medina. Photo: Rika Laporte

Above: Restored Hartmann 2-8-0 no 105 of 1910 and sectioned SLM built sister, no 151 of 1912, inside the shed at Medina.

Below: A long viaduct on the main line north of Hedja. Photo: Rika Laporte

raised brakeman's compartments.

Further north, in Jordan and Syria, the railway survived much longer, but the situation today is not good. The last passenger train from Damascus to Amman ran in 2011 when the Syrian war broke out. At Amman, there are occasional tourist trains which run to Jiza, 38km south and near the airport.

These trains are usually diesel hauled, but a couple of steam locos are maintained in working order. However, even this is under threat since work is due to start shortly on upgrading the line to form a metro style link from Amman city to the airport.

Further south in Jordan, a new

branch line was built in 1975 to link the Hedjaz Railway with the port of Aquaba and heavy diesel-hauled trains of phosphate began using it to reach the mine sites. However, due to redevelopment of the port in Aquaba with a new shipping terminal, at present not rail connected, these trains ceased in 2018. There is some hope that they will eventually resume.

The only trains running are on a short section of the branch line at Wadi Rum where a tourist service features a re-enactment of an attack by Lawrence of Arabia and his Arab tribesmen on camels and horses. This service is mainly diesel hauled, but on occasions the train is steam worked by a 1959 Nippon Sharyo 4-6-2, Jordan Hedjaz Railway no 85. **NGW**



Were We the First?

Peter Deacon wonders if he was a trailblazing British passenger on a reopened Greek line in 1996.



During a visit to Greece in 1980 my late wife Nicky and I went to Volos. The 600mm gauge Pelios Railway to Milies had closed long before, but stock was still stored in the terminal station, and the famous 'triple-gauge' was still in place on the quayside. On a later trip in 1996 we booked a house in Milies itself.

I had in the back of my mind of reading that part of the line was re-opening. I assumed – quite wrongly – that this would be the part in the city where I had seen all the stock stored back in 1980, and where one might expect to attract more passengers.

However, when we went en route

for Milies to the old station in Volos, there was no sign of any activity and much of the stock I remembered seemed to have gone. I suppose I should have realised the significance of that, but I didn't. As we then made our way along the coast before climbing inland we saw the old line covered in sand and/or parked cars, and assumed the prospect of re-opening was bleak. We did not, as we should have done, explore where the line left the road, but instead made our way directly to Milies, parked our hire-car and found our house. After unpacking, we went back to the village square and settled down for drinks.

Above: A window seat provided ample opportunity to record engineering highlights as the reopening train traversed the line to Milies on 25th August 1996.

Below: Tubize 2-6-0T no 1 being made ready at Ano Lechonia.

Photos by Peter Deacon

"Isn't that your railway?" said Nicky, pointing to a poster. Indeed, it was! A drawing of a Tubize 2-6-0 headed a notice that the line was operating for a number of Saturdays, beginning in three days' time, between Ano Lechonia and Milies. Then it clicked – that was the far more scenic part of the line and not, except for one or two bridges, alongside a road.

That was the good news; the bad news was that we had promised to be in Halkidiki that Saturday, and the return working down to Ano Lechonia did not get there till late afternoon, which would be too late. We thought about this and eventually worked out that the best plan was to drive down in our car to Ano Lechonia and leave it there, come up on the train – always better for steam effects – and try to get a taxi back down to our car.

Fortunately the partner of one of the local taverna owners was Irish, and she was able to explain our needs to a local taxi firm; we would, we were assured, be taken by a driver called Kostas.

Over the next two days we toured the Pelion peninsula and on the Friday went to the station at Ano Lechonia, where we saw the two working Tubizes being fettled and fired up for the next day. On the Saturday morning, August 25th, we drove down again and parked near the station.

A train of three passenger carriages



stood at a low platform, with one of the 2-6-0Ts on the front. The carriage seats were longitudinal benches facing inwards. We climbed aboard, and I picked seats on the right-hand side, which I calculated would be on the outside of the train as we ascended. We settled down and other passengers, many of whom were German, joined us.

Suddenly, to my horror, I realised that others clearly had tickets, which we did not – I'd assumed we could pay on the train. I left Nicky guarding my seat – her fluency in German was a great asset – and went to look for a ticket office. It was in fact a small trailer with a window, surrounded by a hoard of people!

I was horrified at the thought we might not be able to get tickets, and I can honestly say that the next five to ten minutes were among the worst of my life as I wormed my way to the front of the queue. When I got our ticket – two for one-way to Milies – I nearly fainted with relief.

Fabulous journey

After a few minutes we set off, and were followed by a motorised 'draisine' carrying a water tank and pumping equipment. The weather was excellent and the journey up was fabulous. I did indeed have a splendid position for photography, leaning out of the open window behind my seat; I think I took over a roll of slide film on the one trip! At a halt about halfway up there was a stop for water and we took turns to have a look around. One significant,



"Frantically trying to extinguish a burning bush set on fire by a spark..."

Above: A cab-end view of no 1.

Below: A welcome break was made at a water stop halfway up the Pelios line.

and indeed portentous, event was that we could see the draisine, on the opposite side of the valley cutting into the hillside, frantically trying to extinguish a burning bush set on fire by a spark. The later well-publicised problems with such fires can be seen, ironically, to have begun on the very first public running.

The glorious journey then resumed and we duly reached the heavily shaded station at Milies, where we disembarked. We walked up the station approach, and there in front of us by a row of parked cars stood a tall local man with a luxurious moustache. As I said to Nicky, "If he isn't a 'Kostas', I don't know who is!" – and he was!

He did not have much English, but as he had, like so many Greeks, been a 'guest-worker' in Germany, Nicky's fluency in German again came in handy. With me by now truly ecstatic at our wonderful trip, we were driven back down to our car.

Now, the question! I am as sure as I can be that there were no other 'Brits' on our train, which was the very first public running of the newly re-opened service. However, there was, I believe, an unadvertised trial run that carried passengers on 31st May that year. If there were no British passengers on that train, then I believe we were the first over the re-opened railway. Can anyone refute my claim – I'd love to know? **NGW**



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Having a slice of modelling fun...

Our *NGW* project layout series that has been running over recent months has apparently proven popular with many readers, which is always good to hear. What we also hear though, and on a regular basis, is that “I’d like to have a model railway, but I don’t have the time or the space for one...”

Well that’s a view we don’t agree with one bit, and the two layouts illustrated here prove the point. These are what is known as ‘Pizza layouts’, for reasons that are fairly obvious, and they were both built by Irene Wittich.

File under innovative

Now yes, pizza layouts by their very nature tend to be a bit gimmicky, but there’s nothing wrong with a bit of escapism now and then and anyway, micro layouts generally don’t have to be flights of fancy. The late-lamented Expo NG annual exhibition used to feature the ‘Dave Brewer Modelling Challenge’ which often as not involved building a very small layout or diorama – for example one that would fit in a standard box-file...

The resultant models, featured in previous editions of *NGW*, were always fascinating and innovative, and most of the time featured believable scenes, such as in factory yards or at out-of-the-way stations.

The one fact that runs across such layouts, is that they are very easy to

build, taking not very long at all, and once complete will take up virtually no space. Not that you should hide such things away – you could put your completed layout in the corner of the room to provide a real talking point when friends come round, admiring your modelling prowess...

We’ll be looking more closely at the art of the micro layout later in the year, featuring Irene’s work and that of other talented modellers. *NGW*



Larger scale, just as smooth a curve...

The latest episode of the *NGW* project layout build in last month’s issue, which among other things described the employment of a template called a ‘Tracksetta’ to produce smooth curves in 9mm gauge track, sparked memories of using such devices with Michael Field, whose name regularly appears (including this month!) on our *On The Shelf* pages as a producer of rail-related videos. Describing the Tracksetta as “a very useful bit of kit” Michael took the concept to a new level!

Having used Tracksettas when modelling in N Gauge in the 1970s, once Michael started making films in Germany on the ‘Steam Railway/Steam Breaks’ trips in the ’90s he acquired an LGB Harz 99 2-10-2 tank and then a special edition of the NGG13 60 Garratt, both running on 45mm gauge track.

“They both looked ridiculous going round a tight circle on the dining room floor, so a garden railway was born – it’s basically a dog-bone shape with a station on one side based on Drei Annen Hohne in the Harz with three loops,” Michael told *NGW*.

“On the opposite side of the line I wanted wide flowing curves, which is where Tracksetta comes in again! I had to make my own out of ½-inch plywood. The largest radius was going to be 18 feet – it was not at all easy marking out the shape on 4ft by 8ft board

but it was worth it as you will see from the attached picture.”

Michael added that he initially laid the track on marine ply; “but of course it didn’t last! About 12 years ago I rebuilt the main track using rubber Crete.” *NGW*





Talybont Tales – Power Games

Andrew Charman unravels just a little of the mystery involved in installing model railway electrics.

This month in our series building the *Narrow Gauge World* project layout in 009 scale we look at a subject that scares many a rookie modeller – the electrics.

In truth, even some highly experienced modellers baulk at the thought of wiring up their layout, and perhaps with reason as there are many pitfalls, as this modeller has discovered! But thinking things through methodically I've managed to put electrical errors right and trains have been happily running around my fledgling layout.

I should say at the start that the full subject of electrics can get very complex and is beyond the scope of these articles. What I can do is give the rookie modeller some basic pointers and take away some of the mystery, then point you at further sources of information at the end of this episode.

Now if your layout comprises just a simple circle or oval of track, like the pizza layouts shown on the previous page, the electrics are simple – take your chosen controller of which plenty are available, run a plus wire from it to one rail of your track,

a minus feed to the other, and off you go.

At which point I slightly divert onto the connection between feed and rail. When I started the project layout I bought some traditional electrical rail connectors, but I quickly discovered these are both unsightly and hard to hide adequately, and can easily become disconnected.

Far better and manufactured by Peco and others are fishplates (rail joiners) with feed wires ready-soldered to them – you buy these in multiple packs and simply replace a pair of normal fishplates with them, drilling small holes in your baseboard adjacent to the joiners and poking the leads through them for connecting to the controller.

Of course if you are skilled with a soldering iron you can simply solder your lead to the rail – your editor isn't...

Wiring becomes complicated as soon as you introduce loops and sidings to your design, as they need points. And at this point you need to make some fundamental decisions that will determine how you wire the layout – firstly, whether you intend to

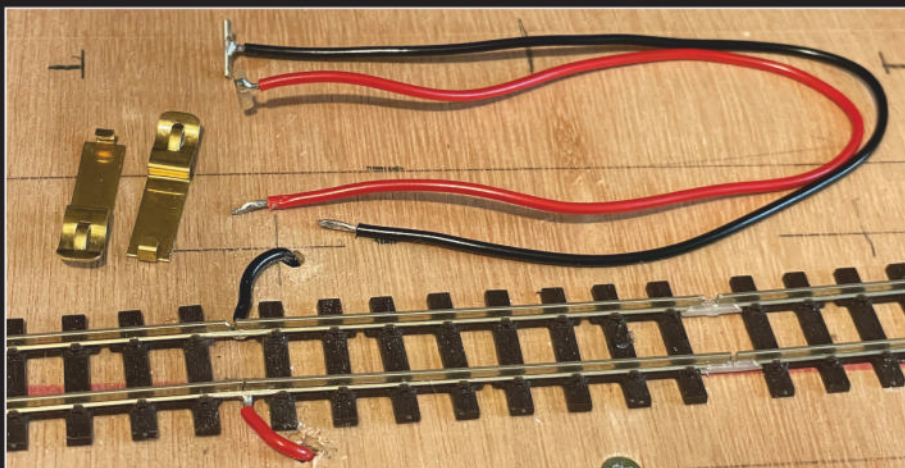
control your layout in traditional fashion, or use the 'new-tech' option of DCC – digital command control.

In traditional form the controller sends power to the track which the loco picks up through its wheels. Put two locomotives on a section of track being fed by one power source and both will move when the controller is turned on – if you want to park a loco in a siding while another moves past it, that siding will need to be isolated from the power source.

Call to attention

With DCC, the aim is to have all of the track 'live' all of the time. Each loco is fitted with a decoder or 'chip' which has a unique code. When you want that loco to move you enter its number into the DCC controller and only it will respond to commands – you can have half a dozen engines on one section of track but only one will move at a time.

Wiring such a layout does not require multiple power sources, just one. You can feed the two wires from the power source



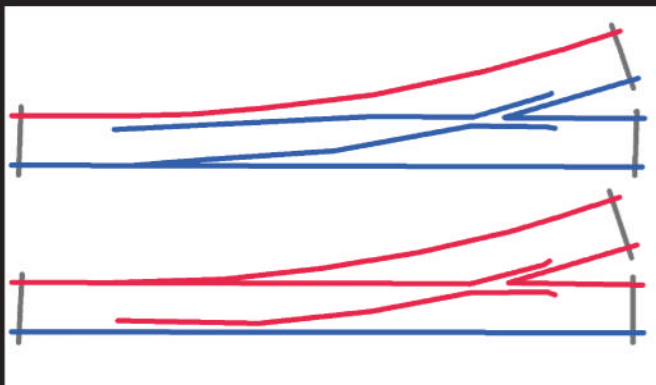
Heading: Providing the power to make your locos go is of course essential to having an enjoyable model railway layout – but is an aspect that scares many a new modeller...

Left: Two ways of taking power feeds to the track – your editor initially bought traditional joiners, left, but found the fishplates with power leads soldered onto them a much more preferable option.

Note in the track a pair of leads has been fitted – you could place the hole in the board much closer to the fishplate leaving very little lead to hide in the ballast. Note too at right the use of a pair of insulating joiners.

All photos and diagrams by Andrew Charman

This simple diagram demonstrates an issue with live-frog points – depending on which direction they are switched the polarity of the inside rail changes – positive to negative or vice versa. This can cause short circuits particularly on continuous running setups such as ovals. All such points come with instructions on how to avoid any problems.



into splitters, which are available from any electrical supplier and then take multiple feeds from them. You can even take a feed off one section of rail and join it to another.

The real complication happens as soon as you introduce a point. In *NGW*174 we explained the difference between dead and live-frog points. Dead-frog versions are much simpler to wire because power only flows in the direction the point is set – if it's set to the main line, for example, a siding will be isolated.

The problem is dead-frog points are not the best option for narrow gauge locos as such locos tend to have very short wheelbases (none more so than the new Bachmann quarry Hunslet). These can easily stall on the plastic frog.

Live-frog points have no such issues, all of the rail having all of the power all of the time. What this means, however, is that if on an traditional layout you want to store a locomotive on a siding, you will need to fit insulating fishplates (described last month) at its entrance and a separate, switched power feed. With DCC it won't matter as the loco won't move without its specific code being activated on the controller.

Polarity problems

More complicated of an issue with live-frog points is that depending on which direction they are switched the polarity of the inside rail leading out of the point changes – from positive to negative or vice versa (see the diagram above). This throws up a potential issue of short circuits, particularly with DCC when the whole of your trackwork is permanently live.

There are ways round this, either by careful wiring or by modifying the point and introducing a switch to manually select the polarity of the inside rail. Points such as Peco Electrofrog units are designed to accept this modification and come with instructions on how to make it. They can also be combined with point motors which can accommodate the switch, automatically changing polarity as the point changes.

The simple rule of powering any layout is that the feed should flow into the point from the toe, the single end. So an end-to-end layout, perhaps with run-round loops at each end, is very simple to wire as you put the power feed in the middle.

Of course we don't want things that simple, which is why we have to start thinking about polarities and using insulating fishplates or some other break in the rail to avoid short circuits. With DCC layouts in particular you will be building in a lot of insulating breaks.

This is where things start getting more complicated – space precludes trying to explain the various machinations here and very likely confusing you further, and it's far better to point you in the direction of more learned works on the subject.

For a start, many people when they buy Peco points immediately throw away the packaging, but included is a leaflet offering quite a bit of useful advice (albeit in very small text!) on how to wire up various layout scenarios to avoid suffering short circuits and frustration.

Even better, Peco publishes a couple of inexpensive pamphlets on the subject as part of its *Shows you How* series. *Wiring the Layout* parts 1, 2 and 3 provide easy-to-understand guidance, with diagrams, on increasingly complex electrical layouts – and live-frog crossings are even more complicated than live-frog points!

Confused? Don't be discouraged. Currently I'm running the *NGW* layout in traditional form but planning for a switch to DCC as soon as I can budget to buy a system, and so far I've made more mistakes with the electrics than with anything else. These errors are initially frustrating but methodical working through what one has done soon provides a solution! **NGW**

■ Parts one to three of this series appeared in *NGW*173 to 175 and are available as printed or digital back-numbers at <https://www.world-of-railways.co.uk/store/back-issues/narrow-gauge-world>

MODEL LINES



Bala plans September show

■ The Bala Lake Railway's annual model railway show will return on 16th-17th September, this year being held at the north Wales town's secondary school, Ysgol Godre'r Berwyn. Already more than 20 layouts have been confirmed, seven of them narrow gauge and including models of both Port Dinorwic and Porth Penrhyn, north Wales haunts of quarry Hunslets. The latter, a veteran layout featured in *NGW* back in 2010 (above), has recently been acquired by a Bala member who is in the process of restoring it. More details of the show are at <https://bala-lake-railway.co.uk/events/model-show/>

Golden weekend for 009 Society

■ The 009 Society will celebrate its 50th anniversary over the weekend of 16th-17th September with a special show at the Statfold Narrow Gauge Trust in Staffordshire. More than 50 layouts are expected at the event which will showcase the wide range of skills and interests within the Society, which is recommended as a must-join for anyone modelling narrow gauge in 4mm scale. Saturday is for members only, and will be followed by an anniversary dinner in the evening, but on Sunday the exhibition will be open to the public. More details can be had on the Society website, <https://009society.com>

7mm wagons ready to go

■ Ready-to-run stock in 7mm scale suitable for operating on British-outline models is still few and far between so the arrival of a range of wagons from Haskell Models is welcome. Made in Taiwan and imported exclusively by EDM Models (www.ngtrains.com) the metal-wheeled wagons come in sets of four vehicles each at £59.95 a set. Some 11 different options are available ranging from simple flats to ore cars and bolsters. US-style Kadee couplers are fitted but these can easily be removed to fit UK-style couplings.



Wiring a simple end-to-end layout such as this can be very easy with just one feed so long as its power flows through the toe-end first of all of the points. The problems start when you introduce facing sidings such as marked in orange, as these will need their own power source.

Small object of delight



Andrew Charman checks out the latest, and tiny, 009 locomotive release from Bachmann.

It is likely no exaggeration to state that when Bachmann's 4mm scale (009) models of the iconic Quarry Hunslet 0-4-0ST finally started reaching shops at the start of the year, they were some of the most eagerly awaited models in the history of the scale.

Offered in four versions, the cabless Dinorwic quarry 'Alice' and Pernhyn quarry 'Nesta', and the cabbed variants 'Britomart' (formerly of Pen-yr-Orsedd quarry) and 'Dorothea' built for the quarry of the same name, the models were quickly snapped up by eager 009 enthusiasts.

Equally unsurprising is the fact that Bachmann has wasted no time expanding the range, releasing a fifth variant, 'Holy War' (779/1902). Formerly employed at Dinorwic, this is today one of six of the little locos preserved at the 'Quarry Hunslet retirement home' of the Bala Lake Railway in north Wales – the model was officially

launched at the railway earlier this year.

First impression on opening the usual Bachmann-sized box is just how little space this loco takes up within said box – it is tiny, even in the cabbed form with blue livery that Holy War wears today at Bala. We are looking at something 51mm long, 23mm wide and when stood on rails 40mm tall, or should that be small...

Wonder at the size is followed pretty quickly by an appreciation of how exquisite this model is. We have of course grown used by now to the excellent levels of detail one gets on Bachmann 009 locos, but one cannot help but marvel at the riveting, fine pipework and a superb cab with no intrusion whatsoever from the electrics despite the model's diminutive proportions.

There are even Hunslet works plates with all the correct information, though you can only see this with the aid of a magnifying glass. Those attached to the

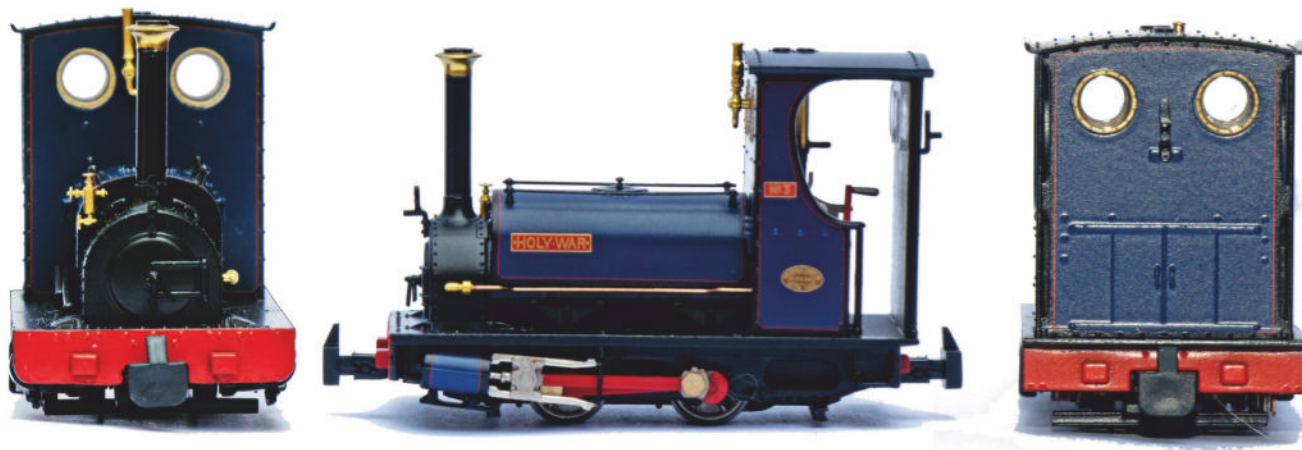
model are printed, but Bachmann supplies separate etched name, number and works plates in a bag along with the tiniest pair of fire irons you'll ever see, a pair of lamps and two sets of dumb buffers, thin or thick for those who want to model the loco in its correct quarry form.

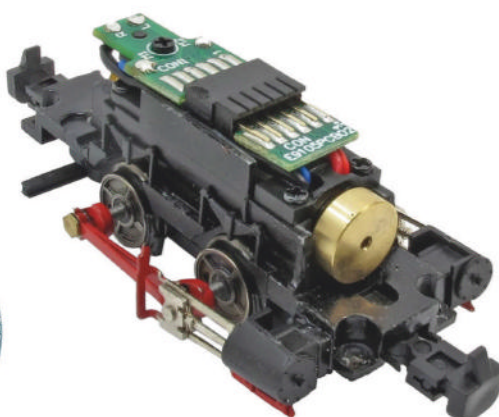
Silent code

The body-off picture shows how the model is powered by a coreless motor and how a six-pin micro DCC decoder has also been squeezed in – this is easy to access, the metal footplate and plastic body held in place on the diecast chassis by four screws, one in each corner of the footplate.

Bachmann's designers clearly decided that fitting a sound speaker was a step too far on such a small loco, though we know of at least one enterprising owner who has found room for one in the cab...

So the model looks great – how does it





run? Well not surprisingly, very well, though you do have to give it some running-in time – ours was a little tight straight out of the box but soon freed up once it had been circulating the nascent *NGW* project layout for half an hour or so.

Pulling power is good – certainly the model is capable of dragging around loads more than comparable to what its full-size inspiration would have been expected to cope with, and it isn't unduly bothered by the over-steep gradients of our layout.

There are considerations to be borne in mind when running the model. Being so small it will be stalled by anything out of the ordinary, such as any dirt on the track or the slightest drop in power supply. And while the prototypes would have worked over the tightest radii in the quarries, you can do without short-radius points on your layout due to their dead frogs – the short wheelbase will often be defeated by them.

The model costs £149.95 and Bachmann is donating part of each purchase to support the Bala Lake Railway. Even better, you can further support the BLR at a time of need (see the news pages)



by buying your loco from the online shop at <https://shop.bala-lake-railway.co.uk>.

In conclusion, this is a superb model, and yet another reason to argue that if you work in 009, you've never had it so good...

■ A reminder that miniature figure specialist ModelU produces specific crews for the quarry Hunslets, both cabbed and uncabbed with the driver sitting on the

backsheet, at £7.20 a set. We pictured them in *NGW* 173 and details are at www.modelu3d.co.uk

Produced by Bachmann Europe
Tel: 01455 245 577
E-mail: customer.services@bachmann-europe.co.uk
Web: www.bachmann.co.uk or <http://shop.bala-lake-railway.co.uk>
Recommended price £149.95 DCC ready

Generic Quarry transport

In an excellent month for 009 scale we've also been able to take a look at the latest rolling stock offering from Peco.

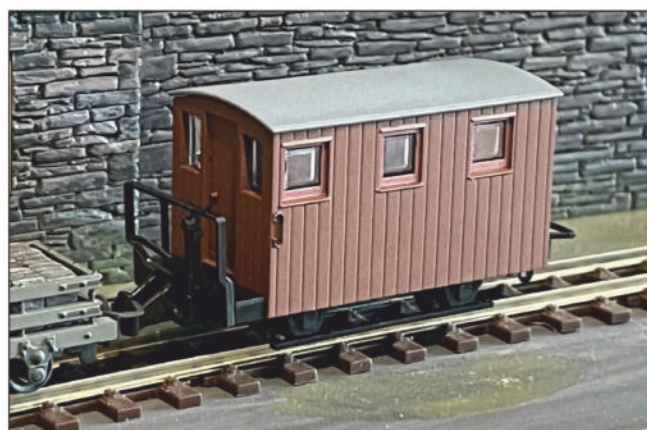
We first saw these Ffestiniog Quarrymen's carriages last year, and they proved immediately popular. Now Peco has released a new trio, removing all of the FR markings to turn them into generic vehicles that can be run on any layout.

Pictured here is the single-balcony brake van – also available is a double-balcony version and a carriage, with three windows no bigger than those on the brake vans. They come in green or brown liveries and each has a press-fit roof so that the modeller can populate them if desired – the wall-mounted benches are represented inside.

The vehicles are free-running and include pleasing amounts of finely moulded detail, including on all three vacuum brake fittings – something some modellers will need to carefully remove if their layout represents a line running stock without such braking.

These are tiny vehicles, around the size of the Quarry Hunslet, and while at a recommended price of £33 may seem costly, they are quality items. We're now looking forward to the Ffestiniog bogie carriages on their way from Peco...

Produced by Peco
E-mail: info@peco.co
Web: www.peco-uk.com
Recommended price £33.00



Large-scale Kerr Stuart, and inexpensive to Boot...

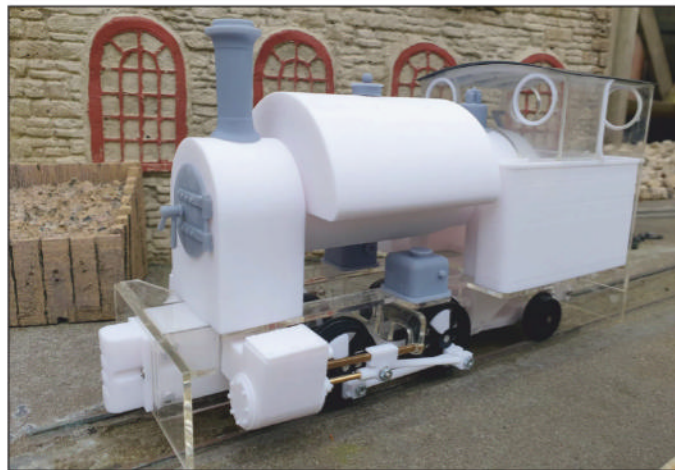
■ Several readers have told us they would like to get involved in the popular 16mm garden railway scale, but are put off by the cost and complexity of live steam locomotives. Well you don't have to go that way as this new release from Boot Lane Works shows.

'St Crispin' is a kit to make Corris Railway Kerr Stuart 0-4-2ST no 4, either in original form or post 1952 on the Talylyn Railway when as 'Edward Thomas' it gained cab openings on both sides.

The kit is built from 3D printed filament and resin parts, with frames and cab in laser-cut acrylic. The kit includes a 3-6volt motor, nylon worm gears, Binnie Engineering 29mm wheels on 1/8-inch stainless steel axles plus all the nuts, bolts and such you need to build the model. A micro-slide switch is supplied plus a selection of resin detailing, and even an Awdry character smokebox 'face' should you want to amuse the youngsters.

All the builder needs supply is the batteries – the smokebox can accommodate four AA cells or a 3.7v lipo unit – and some form of speed control. The effective smartphone-operated Loco Remote unit (www.locoremote.co.uk) would work very well in this model.

Phil Parker, editor of our sister magazine *GardenRail*, tells us that the kit is not for beginners but reasonably easy to build, requiring only basic tools. Once complete you will have an impressive loco measuring some 230mm long and 126mm high, able to negotiate 24-inch curves or tighter.



Boot Lane produces a range of 16mm scale kits, starting from just £75 for a loco and with rolling stock also on offer – are you sketching out that garden line now?

Produced by Boot Lane Works
Web: www.bootlane.org.uk
Price: £140 (including UK P&P)



Plate work...

■ Not a month seems to go by without new product from Nigel Brooks at Brooks3D and while the latest stock to join his range includes nailbeach Railway hopper wagons, he's also launching into something different that will interest many a modeller – name and numberplates.

Again 3D printed, these will be available at £3 per pair (with spares) – a minimum of four names, 2mm high, in various styles. Nigel tells us that these are not on his website yet so anyone interested needs to email him to discuss requirements.

Meanwhile he has also produced number plates in nos 1 to 9 – the photo on the side of a loco shows the 4mm scale version.

A host of useful and highly varied items are in future plans for Brooks 3D, and no doubt we'll be bringing you details as they are released.

Produced by Brooks 3D Models
Email: Nigel@nigelbrooks.com
Web: www.brooks3dmodels.com



■ For the 16mm modeller who has everything, this is a model of the Ffestiniog Railway's gravity and sail-powered inspection vehicle Spooner's Boat. Made by Porterhouse Models this is a 3D printed model, non-motorized, and intended for towing behind rolling stock. If you want to propel it by sail you'll need to make your own... The model comes ready-to-run



at £35, just requiring painting, and more details are at www.porterhousemodels.co.uk

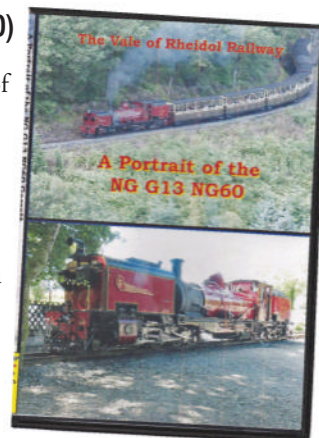
A Portrait of the NG G13 NG60 (DVD)

■ Among the more interesting happenings of the 2022 UK narrow gauge season was the entry into regular service of an articulated Garratt locomotive, on a Welsh line that wasn't the Welsh Highland! NG 60, of the NG G13 class which is slightly smaller than the WHR's NG G16s, was acquired in 2017 by the Vale of Rheidol Railway. Bought from South Africa by a Swiss enthusiast in 1986, the loco's operation on the Schinznachen Baumshulbahn had been ended by alterations to the track layout of the Swiss museum line. Overhaul for the VoR was interrupted by the Covid pandemic, but now the imposing loco is on the operational fleet providing a very different alternative to the usual 2-6-2 tanks.

Michael Field visited the VoR in late August last year and this video, running to 38 minutes, provides an enjoyable look at the Garratt in action, both from onboard the train it was hauling and from various locations along the line on both the up and down trips – these benefit from recent cutting back of vegetation that has opened up vistas of the trains working their way along the ledge cut into the hillside.

An interesting extra is some footage of a trip Michael made in 2006 to South Africa where he saw Garratt locos stored and in operation at the Sandstone Heritage Centre. AC

Produced by MFVP, The Rowans, Bishop Kinkell, Conon Bridge, Ross-shire IV7 8AW Tel: 01349 861129 E-mail: m.fieldvideo@googlemail.com
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Ukraine assistance

Some readers may be familiar with the Ukrainian city of Haivoron (often transcribed as Gaivoron) and its 78km narrow gauge railway. The city now provides hospital treatment and short-term accommodation for thousands of refugees fleeing the atrocities in Ukraine, and the railway provides onward transport to safety.

An enthusiast friend of mine in Latvia has initiated a fundraising campaign to help Ukraine in the way he knows best. He has asked me to help spread the news to a wider audience of railway enthusiasts. Readers will appreciate that as Latvia is another of Russia's neighbours, citizens there are fearful of a similar situation if Russia is successful in the current conflict in Ukraine.

Briefly, the plan is to purchase a narrow-gauge diesel locomotive with an onboard 50kW generator which could be used to provide enough power to supply an entire hospital or refugee centre. After the war it is proposed to leave the locomotive in Ukraine as a museum exhibit. The project is being led by Baložu kūdras bānītis (Baložu peat railway) in Latvia, in cooperation with colleagues in Ukraine and in particular in the municipality of Haivoron.

More information is available at: bit.ly/3p6ArCU and there is also a dedicated Facebook page to the appeal at bit.ly/3XdEHx9

I am sure my friend will be very grateful for any assistance from readers to this campaign. Please donate via the web link from the project page. If you open it in Google Chrome the page will be translated into English.

John Athersuch

Andrew C replies: The effects of the Ukraine conflict range very wide. We are glad to give space to this initiative.

Family Affair

I was delighted to receive my copy of *NGW175* and spotted an interesting coincidence with the picture in the *Manx Memories* feature as the driver lubricating the former County Donegal railcars is the late Arthur Buttell. You may recognise the surname as his son Mike's 4mm scale layout of Peel is featured later in the very same issue!

I came to know Arthur well after my 1963 visit and when Pauline and I holidayed on the island with our baby son Andrew five years later, we were invited back to their house for tea after arriving on the second train after the reopening of tracks through to Port Erin.

The Manx Electric Railway tram featured on the following page was a special for a VIP lady who had been



"For the next three rather unpleasant hours I assisted the police with their enquiries..."

Above: The only surviving LNER narrow gauge loco, today a resident of the Moseley Railway Trust at Apedale. **Photo:** Simon Lomax/MRT

Right: The piece in *NGW175* by Donald Brooks on the Welshpool & Llanfair's flirtation in 1978 with motor-rail services (see facing page) encouraged **Cliff Thomas** to send in this picture, from the Tallylyn Railway's Anything Goes event in 2019. The Mini belongs to engineering manager **Chris Smith** and **Chris** is 'driving' the car!

the several millionth passenger to arrive at Ronaldsway. The trouble is I can't remember how many million!

Michael Farr

Andrew C replies: Mike Buttell also let us know of what was certainly an unusual and happy coincidence!

LNER narrow gauge

Noting Chris Jackson's letter in *NGW175* (commenting on Philip Williams' *NG at the Grouping* feature in the previous issue - Ed), readers may like to know that the LNER had at least one more narrow gauge railway – and that they can still see a surviving loco from it!

The LNER had a large sleeper depot at Lowestoft, which was served by a 3ft gauge railway. This line had two locos – a Motor Rail, scrapped in 1964, and a large Ruston, type 48DL, works number 224337 of 1944.

The Ruston left Lowestoft in 1964; it was later re-discovered in a yard in March (Cambridgeshire). Andrew Wilson bought it and moved it to his house in Leeds, where it was stored until his sad death in 2020. He left the loco to the Moseley Railway Trust in his will, and it arrived at the MRT's Apedale site in August 2020. It is the only ex-mainline railway company loco on site, and the only surviving ex-LNER diesel loco.

The Ruston was displayed outside for an event in September 2020,

when the photo here was taken; the British Railways-era lettering 'Chief Civil Engineer – Eastern Region' is still legible on the rear of the cab.

As befits such a historic loco, it is now safely stored under cover. There is a long-term plan to build a stretch of 3ft gauge track at Apedale for this loco to run on.

Simon Lomax

Northern Ireland missing

I was disappointed to see (in the *NG at the Grouping* feature) that the LMS lines in Northern Ireland didn't even raise a mention in passing – it is still part of our country.

Most of the LMS's narrow gauge mileage was there – the NCC lines, the Strabane & Londonderry and its part ownership of the rest of the County Donegal Railway. The stock on the NCC lines got the full LMS livery treatment and new carriages including LMS standard parts.

At a more industrial level (but surely comparable with the Nantlle which was never a passenger operation) they had the remains of the NSR system at Caldron Low quarry – the locos not being scrapped until 1936, and the works railways at Crewe and Horwich.

Andy May

Another LMS line

Mr Jackson's letter in *NGW175* regarding the Cruden Bay Tramway makes a good point. However if it is to be included in the



grouped lines, the LMS-owned Burton & Ashby Light Railways should be added.

This 3ft 6in electric tramway was built by the Midland Railway. Opened in 1906, it closed in 1927. Interestingly it had running powers over part of the Burton Corporation Tramways. Apart from the main line between Burton and Ashby there was a branch to Church Gresley. One car is preserved at Statfold.

One minor point on the Cruden Bay Tramway – the gauge is given as 3ft 6½in in the definitive works on the line; the RCTS LNER loco books vol 10B and LRTA Regional books on tramways, *The Tramways of Eastern Scotland*. I have never seen any explanation provided for the unusual gauge. **David Mitchell**

Andrew C replies: I did suspect that this would be one of those features in which suggesting something would bring lots more lines out of the woodwork! Many thanks to all who have supplied further information on this subject.

Relegated earlier

I much enjoyed James Waite's item on the Krimlbahn in **NGW175** but would take issue with one small point. The very handsome Bosnian 2-6-2s, of which no 73-019 is the only surviving active example, were not working the narrow gauge main lines into the 1970s, at least not as express engines.

The influx of the larger 0-8-2s and ever heavier trains in the inter-war years saw them relegated to secondary duties long before this. Their last turns were on the Steinbeisbahn, four or five allocated in the early 1960s (if not before) to Prijedor to work local trains to Sanski Most.

These were the engines that survived into the 1970s and I was lucky enough to see no. 73-019 doing a little shunting of coal wagons at Prijedor in August 1975. I was less fortunate in the fact that, unbeknownst to me, the local police station was directly opposite the yard and I was arrested shortly afterwards. For the next three rather unpleasant hours I assisted the police with their enquiries.

Keith Chester

Monochrome to colour

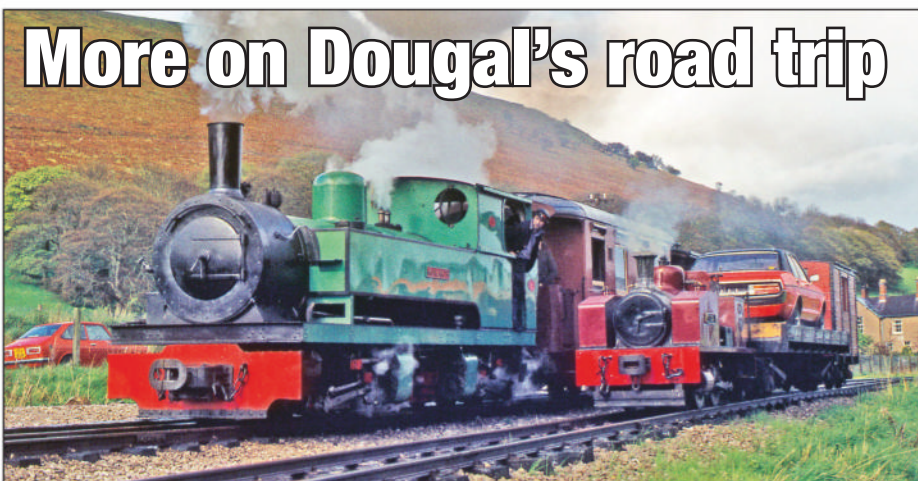
Regarding the two photos from Mike Lister's Balkan honeymoon of 1970 in **NGW175** – one of these shows a photo of a four-car DMU at Hum.

This photo is notable as it is in colour and also shows an original four-coach set. This can be cross-referenced to my article on these railcars in **NGW167**. This illustrated that the units had a later life in Portugal and for some of them finally in South America.

My article included my black & white photo of two of the Yugoslav cars at Herceg Novi in 1967. Only the leading car had a cab, which had to be uncoupled and turned at the end of its journey.

Phil Horton

From a different age...



In **NGW175** Donald Brooks described his surprise at coming across a scene in 1978 on the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway, Barclay 0-4-0T 'Dougal' hauling a truck with a Ford Granada car on it.

Admitting that his notes from the time left a lot to be desired, Donald commented; "It must have been a Gala or special event with five locos, 'The Earl', No.85, 'Joan', 'Sir Drefaldwyn' and Dougal on a mix of passenger and goods trains," adding that he never discovered more on the reason for the Motorail-style train.

Well **NGW** editor Andrew Charman can now supply some more enlightenment on the event, having made an appeal to fellow members of the W&LLR whose involvement with the mid-Wales 2ft 6in gauge line goes back rather longer than our AC's 26 years...

It turns out that the event was indeed a Gala, the first in many years at the W&LLR and the last until 1991 – it was run jointly with the Tallylyn Railway and a connecting bus service ran between the two lines.

Chris Warner remembered the occasion well, saying that the car was owned by fellow member Basil Roberts, described as a capable but somewhat eccentric engineer of long standing – he drove the car onto a flat wagon using ramps with much burning of the clutch and careful manoeuvring.

"Basil had a reputation as quite a fast driver of both locomotive and car and I well recall a hair-raising journey back to Shrewsbury when he said to me 'I wonder if

there's a speed limit along here because we're probably exceeding it!'" Chris added.

Fellow member Steve Davidson recalled that the railway had promised to have all its working locomotives in steam for the Gala. "As Dougal was serviceable at the time, Basil had decided upon loading his car as a sort of novelty – at the time British Rail was running down its Motor Rail service, so Basil wanted to say that the W&L was running more Motor Rail services, as said he was rather eccentric!"

As the picture from the W&L archives above shows, as well as the locos listed by Donald the line-up included the articulated Bagnall 'Monarch', which had been rarely working services in that period. Hunslet 2-6-2T No.85 was making its official debut after repatriation from Sierra Leone.

Road and Track

This was not, however, the first time cars had travelled on W&L wagons! The picture below, also from the railway's archive, shows the occasion in 1968 when some "young people" wanted to film a pilot for a possible TV advert showing a car driving along a railway track.

The W&L would not allow them to drive it along newly resleepered track so the car, a Hillman Imp, had to be loaded on a wagon and taken to a suitable spot on the line! The filming was done but as far as we know nothing ever became of the ad...

■ Thanks to the W&L members who contributed information for this piece.



From 50 years ago

(NGN, June 1973)

From 40 years ago

(NGN, July 1983)

(NGN, July 1983)

A woman in a blue dress is standing on the stairs of a green steam locomotive. The locomotive is on a track, and another train is visible in the background.

Diary & Special Events

Special Events in July

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Visiting locos, check website for details

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www.greatormetramway.co.uk Daily between 10am and 6pm
■ Manx Electric Railway, Snaefell Mountain Railway:
Isle of Man, 01624 662525, www.iombusandrail.im/heritage/
 Daily services, Heritage festival details at www.rail.im
■ Seaton Tramway: *Devon* 01297 20375, www.tram.co.uk

Miniature Railways

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- **Beer Heights Light Railway** (7.25in): *Devon* 01297 21542, www.pecorama.co.uk Daily services except Sunday & Monday.
- **Lappa Valley Railway** (15, 10.25, 7.25in): *Cornwall* 01872 510317, www.lappavalley.co.uk Open daily.
- **Littlehampton Miniature Railway** (12.25in): *Sussex* www.littlehamptonminiaturerailway.co.uk Weekends, daily from 25th
- **Moors Valley Railway** (7.25in): *Hants* 01425 471415, www.moorsvalleyrailway.co.uk Daily services
- **North Bay Railway**, Scarborough (20in): *Yorks* 01723 368791, www.nbr.org.uk, Daily services
- **Rhyl Miniature Railway** (15in): *Clwyd* 01352 759109, www.rhylminiaturerailway.co.uk Daily except 3rd-6th
- **South Downs Light Railway** (10.25in): *Sussex* 07518 753784, www.south-downs-railway.co.uk Weekends and 26th

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‘The Fair Maid of Foyers’

Donald Brooks remembers a visit to Falkirk in 1977 when the Maid was definitely not so Fair.

L P Hartley’s novel *The Go-Between* famously opens with ‘The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there’. It is often recalled when I look back 40 or 50 years to the early days of railway preservation, a completely different world from today’s slick and sophisticated heritage operations.

In August 1977 I visited the Scottish Railway Preservation Society’s then depot at Wallace Street in Falkirk. The SRPS collection was almost entirely standard gauge, but I was seeking its sole narrow gauge steam locomotive, ‘The Fair Maid of Foyers’, a 3ft gauge industrial 0-4-0T, Andrew Barclay 840 of 1899.

The engine was not always a Fair Maid as its first owners were the

Above: ‘Fair’ was perhaps the last epithet to apply to the Maid in 1977. This side of the loco bore a more uniform livery than did the other side.

Below: The yard, its surface dotted with unrestored machinery, may not have met 21st century standards but the exhibits could be viewed at close quarters.

Photos: Donald Brooks, Aug 1977

Glasgow contractors Morrison and Mason, which simply numbered it 5. Like many contractors’ locomotives it led a peripatetic existence, including jobs in England and Wales, before being sold on via the Welsh engineers C D Philips to the British Aluminium Company (BA).

In narrow gauge terms BA is most famous for operating the lengthy Lochaber railway, based on Fort William, the complex history of which is well described in the Narrow Gauge Railway Society book *The Puggy Line*.

By the Loch

Although the Lochaber Railway was also of 3ft gauge, when BA obtained 840 in 1916 it was despatched to a much less well-known site at Foyers, located halfway down Loch Ness. The railway here measured little more than half a kilometre long, linking a lochside pier to the main aluminium plant and being used to transport materials and products to and from connecting boats.

The line was rarely visited by enthusiasts and it is possible that the name by which the loco had become known was unofficial – a railway with just a single item of motive power has no need of names or numbers.

By the 1960s the loco was out of use and in 1964 BA donated it to the SRPS, which transferred it to Falkirk three years later. It presented a rather forlorn spectacle when I encountered it in 1977, with rusty and battered metalwork, varying shades of faded paintwork and something very like an upturned frying pan over its chimney. Its hang-dog look was emphasised by the massive dumb buffers. It stood on two rails, lying on their sides, in the middle of the unsurfaced yard.

Yards full of stock in various stages of restoration or decrepitude were common in the 1970s and in its contemporary guide book the SRPS emphasised that Falkirk was not a museum but an active workshop to which the public were admitted. Since then everything has changed.

The SRPS started its move to Bo’ness in 1979, with the Fair Maid being temporarily renamed ‘Borrowstounness’ after the full name of the town. The locomotive, now fully restored and wearing lined green livery but no longer a name, has been properly housed in the modern Museum of Scottish Railways at Bo’ness station, where it remains despite some talk a few years ago of a move to the Fintown Railway in Donegal, Ireland. **NGW**



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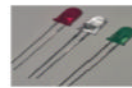
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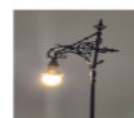
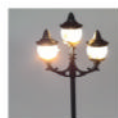
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