

NARROW GAUGE WORLD

ISSUE 177
AUGUST 2023



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Cover: Corris Railway no 4, a Kerr, Stuart 0-4-2ST built in 1921, has now spent much longer on the Talylyn Railway than it ever did on the line it was built for – following closure of the Corris in 1948, no 4 and stablemate no 3 were in 1951 purchased for the Talylyn preservation project. Ever since both have been core members of the Talylyn loco fleet, no 4 'Edward Thomas' here photographed by *Joey Evans* on a photo charter earlier this year. It could, however, have been a very different, much shorter story for this loco with a firm ending, had not a stationmaster done all he could to stop the Corris pair going for scrap – 75 years on we tell the story in this issue.

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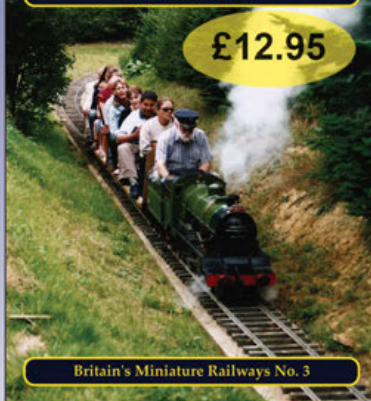
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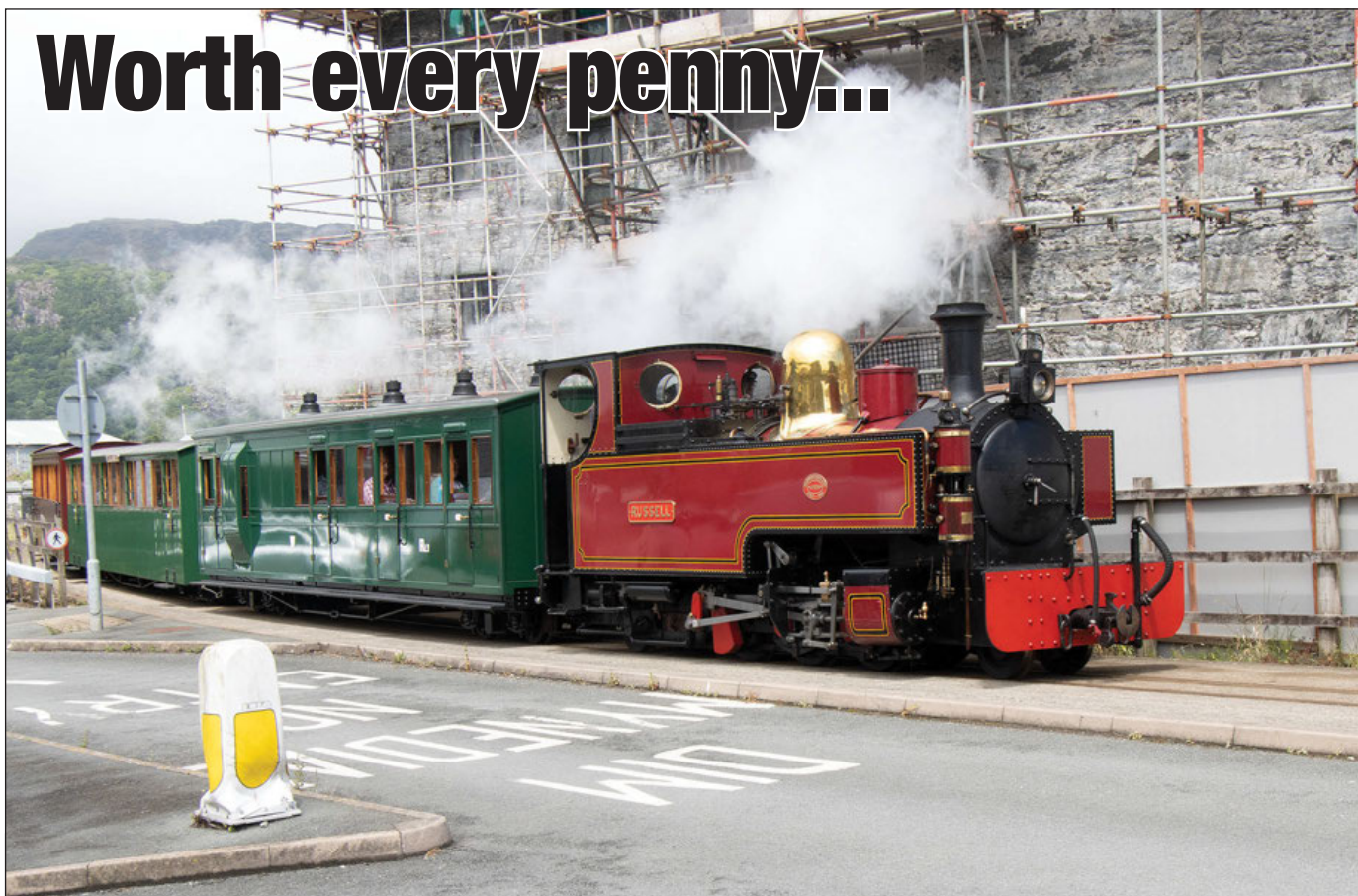
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Worth every penny...



Above: Welsh Highland Railway Hunslet 2-6-2T 'Russell' does the roadside tramway bit in the back streets of Porthmadog during the WHR Centenary event on 24th June. Deciding to walk back to the Ffestiniog Railway's Harbour Station from the WHHR's Gelert's Farm and not having followed the cross-town rail route before Andrew Charman happened upon this scene at just the right moment, during what was an excellent and enjoyable event.

Welcome to *NGW* 177, and regular readers may recall that last month I was happy to be writing a positive editorial after months of potential doom and gloom, though I hoped that a certain upcoming auction of a locomotive would not prevent me being equally positive with my words this month...

Well the news is good, as you can read over the page. The team formed to secure the Darjeeling 0-4-0ST 19B following the sale of late owner Adrian Shooter's assets and to ensure there was no likelihood of the loco disappearing from the UK, were successful – though they used every bit of the funding they had to get it and the two Darjeeling-style carriages. Now we know, this is a £250,000 locomotive, and worth every penny in my opinion...

Speaking to *NGW* after the auction Darjeeling Tank Locomotive Trust chairman Jeremy Davey said the event had been a tense experience, and anyone can see why, as a kindly enthusiast videoed it and put the film up on Youtube. You can find it <https://youtu.be/IHXTdcY2Lrg>.

Now I've watched plenty of episodes of *Bargain Hunt*, *Celebrity Antiques Roadshow* and the like on TV, and the auctions tend to be pretty swiftly conducted affairs – not this one... Not only did the

auctioneer try to start bidding at a faintly ridiculous £400,000, once the price reached £250,000 and stopped, he spent the best part of a full minute trying to weedle out a higher bid, almost sounding resigned when he had to settle and bring the gavel down!

No wonder Jeremy and his colleagues were feeling the pressure, knowing they were almost at the top of their available funds – they only just had enough left to buy the two carriages.

Thank goodness too, for the skills of Graham Lee – this is a man that really deserves his place in the narrow gauge preservation hall of fame, not only for assembling by far the most important collection we have at Statfold, a true mecca for those of us of a short-axe persuasion, but also for being able to bring no doubt hard-nosed skills to bear in bidding for auction prizes. We owe him a debt of thanks.

Co-operation good for all

News of the auction success quickly reached *NGW* Towers on the Wednesday after issue 176 went to press and that following weekend I headed off to the Welsh Highland Centenary celebration at Porthmadog in good spirits, despite the fact that the weather was looking a bit iffy and especially

that the scheduled star of the show, the 'new' WHR Baldwin 590, had been banished to the Gelert's Farm display shed in disgrace after suffering a wheel-bearing issue. Nothing abnormal here, newly restored engines often produce issues to be sorted in their early running and perhaps it was just unlucky that the loco's debut on the WHHR was so close to the big celebration weekend.

What it did show, however, is just how cordial relations between the heritage railways on the opposite sides of Porthmadog are these days. As soon as the issue was known all rallied round to make sure both railways could still put on an excellent show over the weekend. To those of us who still remember how once the two organisations regarded each other, this is very much a good thing...

This enthusiast was one of many who had a fine old time at the event. I've seldom seen the editorial inbox groan under quite so many photo submissions either, of which just a few are in our pages this month, so well done one and all. Let's hope once the Baldwin's issues have been sorted we can see it strut its stuff through the Aberglaslyn Pass on the Welsh Highland – something to look forward to... Enjoy your *NGW*...

Andrew Charman

The £250K loco – Darj 19B to stay in the UK



News that every UK narrow-gauge enthusiast had wanted to hear was confirmed shortly after *NGW* 176 went to press last month, when the Darjeeling Tank Locomotive Trust (DTLT) successfully bid to acquire Sharp-Stewart 0-4-0ST no 19B.

19B was the prime lot at the auction on 21st June of the assets of the Beeches Light Railway, owned by rail industry executive Adrian Shooter. Acquiring 19B, the only Darjeeling loco to work outside India, in 2003, he built the 2ft gauge Beeches line round his Oxfordshire home to run it on.

Following Adrian's death in November 2022 his widow decided to auction off the entire assets of the line, which also included two Darjeeling-style bogie carriages built by the Ffestiniog Railway.

Fears of bids from wealthy US buyers saw the DTLT formed, initially from the loco's support crew at the Beeches, and urgent fundraising started. With support from major figures in the industry £300,000 was raised by the time of the auction and a home for 19B agreed at the Statfold Narrow Gauge Trust.

Statfold founder Graham Lee, an auction old-hand, bid on behalf of the DTLT, and after an agonisingly long period

while the auctioneer sought further bids, 19B was sold to the Trust for £250,000. The two carriages were also secured, at £20,000 and £15,000 respectively, all three prices plus buyer's premium.

Speaking to *NGW*, DTLT Chairman Jeremy Davey described the auction as a tense experience; "Had the loco gone to one more increment in the bidding, we'd have lost the saloon carriage, two more we'd have lost both. Had it gone to three, we'd have left empty-handed. Graham did a superb job bidding for us, had we not asked him, I doubt we'd have achieved what we did."

It was a close-run thing, the Trust spending £1000 more than it had raised, the excess being covered by a supporter.

Jeremy added; "We didn't have enough for the 'original' plates she left India with, but three of them were secured by one of the team, and one went to a good friend - it is safe and we know where it is."

The loco arrived at Statfold on 26th June and the carriages followed on 11th July, 19B being successfully steamed for a fitness-to-run exam on the same day.

The Trust is now making plans for the loco's future care. Charitable status is being applied for while further fundraising will be

necessary to finance a required forthcoming 10-year overhaul.

The loco will be based at Statfold but visit other lines, something which Adrian was always an enthusiastic advocate of. The Trust has already received several requests.

Jeremy praised DTLT trustees Andy Savage, Fuzz Jordan, Gordon Rushton, Sarah Thompson and Phil Marsh "for doing such an incredible job – taking us from zero to £300,000 in three months."

"All thanks must go to our incredible supporters. And to Adrian – had he not shared this loco with everyone like he did, she would not have been so loved, and we would not have been able to save her."

Other notable results from the auction included Hunslet four-wheel diesel 9349, built in 1994, which was knocked down at £14,000 and one of several items to be acquired by the Ffestiniog Railway – it is set to become the Boston Lodge works shunter. A replica of a carriage from the Scindia State Railway in India mounted on Hudson bogies was sold for £5,000 to the Braxted Bakery Railway in Essex.

Above: Settling into its new home: 19B joins the Statfold collection. Photo: Joey Evans



The Vale of Rheidol Railway's decision to paint a rake of its passenger stock in 1950s British Railways 'blood and custard' livery for the 2023 season, detailed in *NGW* 173, has certainly pleased photographers, giving them a whole new look to capture on the highly scenic line. Nick Wise did just that on 26th June, capturing the 10.30 working out of Abestwyth on its final approach to Devil's Bridge with 2-6-2T 'Owain Glyndwr' in charge.

Lincs Coast wins £24k grant to build new station

The Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway has been awarded £24,250 which will be used to construct a new station and interpretation centre.

The grant has come from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and has been made by East Lindsey District Council, which is administering the grant scheme in the area the line is located in. Match-funding of a further £8,000 has been added by Ellis Brothers, owners of the Skegness Water Leisure Park in which the railway runs.

Construction of the new building at the LCLR's southern terminus will begin in September this year and continue until the start of the railway's 2024 operating season, the project being completed after the end of the 2024 season in the early autumn. Some of the physical construction work will be carried out by volunteers from the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway Historic Vehicles Trust.

Long-term future

Chief Executive Officer for Ellis Bros and LCLR company secretary John Chappell described the project as an exciting opportunity to create a long-term future for the railway and to enhance the existing achievements of the volunteers' work.

"This contribution from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund will enable Skegness to escape from the widely held perception that the town is some sort of 'cultural vacuum' – anything which does that by adding to the appeal of the heritage attractions of the Skegness district will benefit all of the town," John added.

Chairman of the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway Historic Vehicles Trust, Richard Shepherd, said: "This grant will enable us to create a 'destination' at the end of our line and let people learn about its unique history and heritage – at the moment trains terminate beside Skegness airfield but passengers cannot disembark there. The locomotive uncouples at South Loop from the carriages, runs round them and then re-attaches, to return to Walls Lane station.

"The grant will mean we can build a platform, with access from the train for disabled passengers and to place seating and an interpretation centre to tell the remarkable story of our line and its vintage locomotives, carriages and wagons and the role they played in the transport of goods and people in remote areas of Lincolnshire and beyond.

"It's an exciting prospect which will make the railway more attractive to visitors and so benefit the economy of the whole district. We are extremely grateful to the local authority, to the Government's fund and especially to Ellis Bros. Ltd for making this possible".



Local cheer as Alford closes on reopening

The Alford Valley Community Railway was set to reopen for public trains in July, its volunteer operators then planning to run every weekend until October.

As reported in *NGW* 176, the local community efforts to revive the Aberdeenshire 2ft gauge line, which had been closed for five years, have made rapid progress in recent times.

"The pace of action has increased within the group," Alford volunteer Karl Stevens told *NGW* prior to the reopening. "Over the last month we've remade the entrance, finished signage and carried out extensive work on the rolling stock.

"One of our supporters turned up at the weekend and started to expose the old turntable that's been buried since the '60s. Lots of rubbish came out and we still need to see if the original bottom ring stones are in place, but the centre pivot is in place which was a great find... we will need to make some decisions on how we use it in the future."

Karl added that stored items were making their way back to the station now that restoration work had been completed while the engineering team had been working on major servicing of the two running locos.

"We also have to realise how far

we've come," he added. "We won't rest in our laurels though – there are plans for example to replace all the buried sleepers with nice plastic ones."

Above: Volunteers take a break at the now fully restored Alford station.

Photo: Hugh Dougherty

Below: The turntable pit that has been unused since Alford station's standard-gauge days has been excavated in recent weeks.

Bottom: Pace of progress – two views of the same section of Alford line, taken a year apart.
Photos: AVCR



Moseley plans Apedale Listerfest for i/c icon



A new festival celebrating the ubiquitous Lister internal-combustion locomotive will take place next year.

Listerfest will be staged by the Moseley Railway Trust at its Apedale Valley Light Railway in Staffordshire over the weekend of 18th-19th May.

R A Lister & Co, based in Dursley, Gloucestershire, became well-known for the production of small internal combustion engines and then branched out into industrial vehicles which used these engines. Initially, these were the road-based Auto-Truck followed by the Rail Truck.

These lightweight, characterful little locomotives found a particular niche in industrial use – Lister products were some of the very last locos used on industrial narrow gauge railways in the UK.

MRT spokesman Simon Lomax told *NGW* that the ListerFest event will celebrate all things Lister; “Inevitably, there will be a focus on Rail Trucks, but the event

will showcase the vast variety of machines of all shapes and sizes which came out of the factory.

“As a starting point, the Moseley Railway Trust already has four operational Lister locomotives in the collection at Apedale – the fourth being Lister 52031 of 1960, which has been recently subject to a thorough restoration, and was launched into service at Apedale during the ‘Anything Goes’ event of 24th-25th June.”

The MRT is inviting owners of anything Lister, but most especially Rail Trucks, to get in touch at operations@avl.org.uk to register interest in attending. As event planning progresses more information will be published on the Trust’s website at www.avl.org.uk and will be announced both on the website and via social media.

Festival bound: A grouping of four Listers around the flat crossing at Apedale.

Photo: MRT



■ Definitely living up to the title of the Tallyllyn Railway’s ‘Anything Goes’ event on Saturday 2nd July was ‘Toby’ the rail trolley, which was pictured by *Kenny Felstead* passing through Dolgoch station on route to Abergynolwyn. The trolley, which was recently restored by TR volunteers, was the first internal combustion locomotive to run on the Tallyllyn when it was built by volunteer John Bate in 1954. John later became the railway’s Chief Engineer and has given a lifetime of service to the Tallyllyn – earlier this year he was awarded an MBE in the King’s Birthday Honours.

Corris new-build Falcon taken to bits – for painting

Visitors to the workshops of Alan Keef Ltd at the end of June could have been forgiven for thinking they had stepped back in time by 12 months, with Corris Railway new-build 0-4-2ST no 10 partially dismantled and resembling its condition in early summer 2022.

The dismantling is, however, a sign of completion approaching as the loco is prepared for fitting of its boiler cladding and painting. No 10 will carry a similar bright red to that sported by Corris Tattoo 0-4-2ST no 7 which has been working on the revived section of the Mid Wales line since 2005 (pictured on page 33).

CR volunteers are making a last funding push to pay the final invoices. Online donations can be made via www.corris.co.uk or cheques, payable to Corris Railway can be sent to Peter Guest, 38 Underwood Close, Callow Hill, Redditch, B97 5YS.

Manx Mona revamp close to completion

The cosmetic restoration of Isle of Man Steam Railway Beyer, Peacock 2-4-0T ‘Mona’ (1417/1874) was expected to be virtually complete in time for the island’s transport festival between 23rd-30th July marking the steam line’s 150th anniversary.

Members of the Isle of Man Steam Railway Association have been undertaking the work on the loco in the goods shed at Port Erin station. The Association has also been working on a cosmetic restoration of sister loco ‘Douglas’ which needed asbestos removed from its boiler. This will be put back in the frame later in the year.

■ *NGW* hopes to carry coverage of the Transport Festival in our next issue.



■ Orenstein & Koppel 0-4-0WT No. 7529 heads an evening train of invited guests along the Golden Valley Light Railway on 21st June. Built in 1914 the locomotive returned to service last year following an overhaul that took more than 20 years.

Photo: Stuart Chapman



New Bure Valley loco to be battery-electric first

The Bure Valley Railway has released details of the new battery-electric locomotive that is being built for it by Clayton Equipment Ltd – a loco that will be a pioneer example of sustainable rail transport in the UK.

The Co-Co (on two six-wheel bogies) will be the first all-battery new-build electric locomotive for passenger haulage in the UK. “Other railways have ex-industrial locomotives they use for passenger services, but they were not designed especially for that purpose whereas ours is,” BVR managing director Andrew Barnes told *NGW*, adding; “Those in standard gauge use are hybrid not pure battery-electric.”

The project will see the 15-inch gauge Norfolk line continuing its greener transport ambitions which have previously had the BVR playing a leading role in trialling sustainable replacements for steam coal.

The new loco will be very powerful; “The specification was to be able to haul a rake of 12 of our coaches, a guard’s van, generator van and a failed tender ZB steam loco at our line speed of 20mph up our maximum gradient of 1:76 on a constant basis – in other words it can recover a failed train and maintain section times,” Andrew said.

While drawing on Clayton’s proven battery-propulsion experience particularly in mine locos, the BVR machine is an all-new design to the railway’s specification. Weighing

just over 12 tonnes, it will employ two 20Kw AC traction motors on each bogie with gearbox drive to the third axle.

It will use a 96kWh battery of lead-acid construction rather than lithium to add traction weight and to allow easy replacement of individual cells if required. “Lithium is also far more expensive,” Andrew said.

The battery will be charged by a 32amp supply overnight and have a quoted range of 72 miles between charges; “This range is based upon the maximum power draw, load and speed, so will almost certainly be greater.”

Other highlights of the specification include regenerative electric braking alongside the traditional air brakes and anti-slip radar traction control and sanding gear. The loco will also become the largest in the BVR fleet at 26.75ft long and 6.25ft high; “It may be the largest 15” gauge loco yet built.”

Andrew added that the loco, which will be twin-cabbed, will comply with the latest main-line ergonomic and safety standards for crews – the driver’s seat is air-cushioned and adjustable to main-line and lorry standards.

“The control panel can actually be removed and the loco driven remotely via Bluetooth – not that we have any plans to do so,” Andrew added.

The loco, liveried in LNER apple green lined in LNER black and white style, is currently on schedule to be delivered to the line in November.

Above and right: The new Bure Valley locomotive will certainly bring a different look to the Norfolk 15-inch gauge line, as well as being mechanically a first in sustainable propulsion.

Images: BVR/
Clayton Equipment



BRIEF LINES

The clock is ticking...

The boiler of new-build double-Fairlie locomotive ‘James Spooner’, under construction at the Ffestiniog Railway, passed its hydraulic test on 14th July. The approval means that the 10-year boiler ticket has now begun – completion of the engine is expected before the end of 2023.

Bala fims extension hopes

The Bala Lake Railway has made a short film to explain the situation over the failed planning permission for its planned extension, reported in *NGW* 175, and what the next steps are. The film can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/xSWG5WKHxg>

Statfold pair at Threlkeld

Guest locos at this year’s Threlkeld Museum Gala in Cumbria on 29th-30th July, directly after this issue publishes, were set to be two Statfold Trust residents, Andrew Barclay 0-4-0 ‘Cegin’ and Peckett 0-6-0ST ‘Liassic’.

Award success for Rheidol

The Vale of Rheidol Railway has taken two accolades in the Menter Aberystwyth Aber First Awards, which acknowledge contributions of individuals, organisations and businesses in the Aberystwyth area. The railway was nominated in the tourism category and also scooped the overall winner prize. The line is getting used to awards success, even taking ‘Loo of the Year’ accolades including best railway and visitor attraction toilets in Wales.

Wickham return at Llanfair

A group of Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway volunteers have restored the line’s Wickham Trolley to service after several years out of use. Introduced by the Great Western Railway in 1940, the trolley is the only item of pre-preservation motive power on the line apart from the two 1901-built Beyer, Peacock 0-6-0Ts ‘The Earl’ and ‘The Countess’. *NGW* editor Andrew Charman, who sampled it in 2008, describes a ride on the trolley as “a unique experience...”





Glyn Valley 150 marked by two-end celebration

The two groups keeping alive memories of the Glyn Valley Tramway staged events over the weekend of 8th-9th July to mark the 150th anniversary of the mid-Wales roadside line that closed in 1935.

At Chirk the Glyn Valley Tramway Trust has steadily been bringing the Tramway's former station back into existence and as featured in *NGW*173 has recently been laying track in the station, with longer-term plans to build a running line towards the point where the former Tramway joined the road to Glyn Ceiriog, its opposite terminus.

The running line has been laid to 2ft 3in gauge rather than the original line's virtually unique 2ft 4½in, and over the anniversary weekend the reasoning became clear.

The only ex-GVT stock still in existence is today on the Tallylyn Railway, which has two of the line's four-wheeled carriages and some of its goods vehicles. For the 150 event two of these wagons were transported to Chirk and supported by the TR's Young Members Group, the GVT's earliest days were demonstrated with horse-drawn trains along the lengths of track already laid. Among those who took a ride was John

Milner, engineer, author and acknowledged authority on the Tramway.

A vintage bus service transported visitors to the other end of the line where the New Glyn Valley Tramway & Industrial Heritage Trust – despite its name the much older of the two groups – had its own 150 event.

The group has over many years restored the GVT's former engine shed into a museum of the line and more recently has been laying track in the former station yard. In 2020 a Ruston diesel locomotive (371932/1954) was acquired and this was demonstrated over the weekend, while a miniature electric version gave rides up and down the yard.

Despite the two events being hit by a heavy storm on Saturday afternoon both groups declared the weekend a success, entertaining several hundred visitors.

■ The NGVT&IHT has acquired a substantial amount of track with which it intends to complete the Glyn Ceiriog station layout and lay rails at the adjacent coal yard. *NGW* will be featuring the Trust's work in a forthcoming issue.

Photos: David Rowbotham



Volk's making plans for 140th anniversary

The Volk's Electric Railway will stage a weekend of celebrations over the weekend of 12th-13th August to mark the 140th anniversary of what is the world's oldest operating electric railway.

VERA, the Volk's Electric Railway Association, has joined forces with Brighton Council, which operates the 2ft 8½in gauge line running for just over a mile along the seafront of the Sussex city. Initially it was a quarter-mile long line of 2ft gauge, being extended and regauged less than a year later.

Events will commence on the Saturday morning with a line-up of Volk's trains near the line's Aquarium station for speeches of welcome from among others TV rail personality Tim Dunn and presenter Nick Owen, a major supporter of the Volk's line and a regular driver.

A procession of trains will follow, including the recently recovered ex-Southend Pier car featured in *NGW*176, while other highlights will include an illuminated twilight service and on Sunday afternoon tours of the workshops and sheds and a line-up of VER cars for photography.

More details of the anniversary celebration will be found on the VERA website at <http://volkselectricrailway.co.uk>

Welshpool plans Austrian pairing

The Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway is hoping to offer visitors to its annual Steam Gala on 1st-3rd September a distinct Austrian theme.

Franco-Belge 0-8-0T 'Sir Drefaldwyn', which returned to service for the first time in 23 years at the 60/120 event in June (reported in *NGW*176) is expected to share duties with the 1900-built Zillertalbahn ZB 0-6-2T 'Zillertal'.

On hire to the Welsh 2ft 6in gauge line since 2019, Zillertal has been out of service for much of the 2023 season after suffering boiler stay issues early in the year, requiring significant repairs.

These repairs have now been done, and the loco was successfully steamed early in July, raising hopes that it will be able to take its place in the Gala line-up, with 'Sir D' hauling the Austrian four-wheeled carriages that the W&L has in its fleet.

The 1972-built Mitsubishi diesel DL-34, which arrived in February on loan to the W&L from the Alishan Forest Railroad in Taiwan, is set to haul demonstration freight trains over the weekend as it awaits brake modifications enabling passenger train use.

Details of the Gala will be online at www.wllr.org.uk/upcoming-events



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■ The pace of progress at the Vale of Rheidol Railway shows no sign of slowing – the impressive new booking office and shop building at Aberystwyth is now complete and has come into operation this season, with as these pictures show have plenty of space for visitors.

Meanwhile the line's resident Kerr, Stuart Wren 0-4-OST has undergone an overhaul and repaint in the Aberystwyth workshops before being dispatched to Devil's Bridge to spend the high season on 'Driver for a Five' duties. The next major development will be the museum at Aberystwyth, not expected until towards the end of the year.

Photos: VoR



Grant boosts C&L's Tralee carriage restoration bid

The Cavan and Leitrim Railway has obtained a grant of €11,500 to aid the restoration of an original Tralee & Dingle Railway carriage.

Made by the Heritage Council Community Grant Scheme award, the funding will be used to restore the 1890-built chassis from T&L third-class carriage 7T.

The railway was successful in 2020 in obtaining support from the Heritage Council to restore an original Tralee and Dingle bogie along with donations to fund the restoration of further bogies from the 3ft gauge line. The wheels for two pairs of bogies are currently away for tyre turning, the bogie frames fully restored and the springs complete, along with brake-gear, while the axleboxes have been completely restored ready for re-fitting.

The carriage chassis has been shot-blasted and the metal solebars primed – while several cross timbers and

headstocks will need to be replaced, a large amount of the original timberwork is considered salvageable.

"Thanks to the Heritage Council we are now another step forward to funding the restoration of the carriage as a whole," said Project manager Darragh Connolly. "Once the chassis is restored we aim to display the restored bogies and chassis together which will be a huge milestone in our project".

The railway welcomes funding for the project – donations can be made by contacting the railway by email at dromodrailway@gmail.com.

■ Restoration of the C&L's Kerr, Stuart loco 'Dromad' of (3024/1916) is also gathering pace with boiler work proceeding. The inner firebox is completed and pending installation into the boiler barrel, the process of fitting stays will begin.

Above: The new funding will boost restoration of the carriage chassis. Photo: C&LR

Richmond goes for steel over plastic

The Richmond Light Railway has taken delivery of a quantity of steel sleepers to a design that has been produced by the owner of the private 2ft gauge line in Kent, Jeremy Martin.

Jeremy came up with the design after concerns over the expense of new recycled plastic sleepers. The plan is to relay the running line over the next few years using steel sleepers on the main line and plastic under the points.

The RLR purchased the majority of the points of the Beeches Light Railway at the recent auction (see lead story on page 6). These will be used to replace worn current points and for a future extension.

The RLR's charity steam fair this month is set to see the unveiling of an as-yet unidentified new locomotive – *NGW* hopes to carry details in next month's issue.

Photos: Tim Gregson/RLR



Co-operation beats bearing issue at WHR 100 weekend

Major disappointment at the start of one of the biggest narrow-gauge events of 2023 was quickly overcome by dint of much co-operation between the two organisations involved, the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways and the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway.

The star of the WHR centenary celebrations across both lines on 23rd-25th June was intended to be Baldwin 4-6-0T WD 794 – this has been restored to operating condition as its classmate no 590, which after the First World War went to the original Welsh Highland Railway. It worked there until 1942 when following the line's closure it was scrapped.

Following a successful debut on the WHHR on 27th May (reported in *NGW* 176) the Baldwin was set to work on the revived Welsh Highland line with the only surviving WHR locomotive, Hunslet 2-6-2T 'Russell' which is also owned by the WHHR.

During pre-event tests to Beddgelert, however, the Baldwin suffered a wheel bearing issue which despite input from both FF&WHR and WHHR engineering teams could not be fixed before the event.

The Baldwin was therefore relegated to the Gelert's Farm display shed of the WHHR while hurried reorganisation took place to roster available FF&WHR locos on its trains. This resulted in the line's Hunslet 0-4-0ST 'Lilla' spending much of its weekend operating trains with heritage stock on the WHHR, sharing duties with resident Bagnall 0-4-2T 'Gelert'.

Despite the obvious disappointment of the Baldwin's failure the centenary event proved a big success for both lines with many enthusiasts attending.

Top right: The late changes caused by the failure of Baldwin '590' resulted in the Ffestiniog Railway's long-serving Hunslet 0-4-0ST 'Lilla' spending much of its time on the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway, here accelerating away from Pen-y-Mount.

Upper right: Former Penrhyn Railway Hunslet 2-4-0ST 'Blanche' also spent some time visiting the WHHR's metals.

Both photos: Joey Evans

Centre right: The weekend recalled all aspects of the WHR's pre-preservation life – here Simplex 'Mary Ann' recreates the infamous demolition trains of 1941. *Photo: Matt Ditch*

Right: It could be the 1930s – 'Russell' crosses the Britannia Bridge in Porthmadog on a rainy Saturday morning. *Photo: Andrew Charman*



Government green light for Ziller hydrogen conversion



Plans by the Zillertalbahn to convert its trains to hydrogen operation have been endorsed by the provincial Government of the Austrian Tirol, despite criticism by opposition parties who claim the project is too expensive.

NGW first revealed in our May 2018 issue that the renowned 760mm gauge network had abandoned plans to replace its diesel multiple-unit trains with an electrified network, and was instead proposing to become the first narrow gauge railway in the world to employ trains powered by hydrogen fuel cells.

Hydrogen fuel cells convert energy from hydrogen gas to electricity to power the trains, with the only emission being water – the automotive industry has poured much investment into developing hydrogen vehicles as a potential alternative to the battery-electric transport that is now being widely adopted.

Announcing the project in 2018 and at the time predicting its cost would be around €80 million with the first trains envisaged to run in 2022, Zillertalbahn chairman Franz Hörl said that the line was

AUSTRIA

at the time consuming 800,000 litres of diesel fuel a year and putting 2610 tonnes of CO₂ emissions into the atmosphere. While hydrogen was unknown territory compared to simple electrification, “who wants to be there in the future has to go new ways and turn visions into reality.”

After many delays in early July the Tirol provincial Government formerly endorsed the proposals, while accepting that electrification of the 31.7km-long line would be a cheaper option.

‘Make it standard gauge’

Opposing the project, the FPÖ and the Green Party said that the now €100m estimated cost is too expensive. Among alternative suggestions was a plan to convert the entire line to standard gauge to facilitate through-running from the main-line ÖBB national network.

However Tirol region Governor Anton Mattle said that the region must become an energy pioneer. “It takes courage for a pilot project to prove how much potential

hydrogen has,” he added. “That is why today we launched the implementation of a climate-friendly, sustainable and hydrogen-powered Zillertalbahn.”

The Zillertalbahn operator Zillertaler Verkehrsbetriebe AG is expected to source its hydrogen in an environmentally-friendly manner through electrolysis. It is hoping that at least half of the project cost will be contributed by the Federal Government. Operating costs are expected to increase by around €2.7m a year, but potentially this could drop later as some predict that the cost of hydrogen will drop substantially in later years.

The next step will be to commission a project structure and implementation strategy and prepare a tender for the hydrogen trains. Until this is complete the new trains cannot be sourced, raising doubts that hydrogen trains will run on the line until at least after 2027.

■ The Zillertalbahn’s heritage steam operations are not expected to be affected by the plans, which of course they would have been had the calls for gauge conversion of the network been heeded...



■ The 750mm gauge Döllnitzbahn in Oschatz, GERMANY ran the final of its three summer steam weekend events on 9th July. NGW correspondent *Dominic Emery*, who visited the event, reports that the day also happened to be the hottest of the year so far with temperatures exceeding 30 degrees.

The trains are run by the volunteers from the DBV- Förderverein ‘Wilder Robert’ e.V. (supporting society) over the Döllnitzbahn line from Oschatz to Glossen and Kemmlitz via Mügeln. The morning train from Oschatz goes to Glossen and the afternoon working to Kemmlitz.

The trains were pulled by the class IV K no 99 584 built by Richard Hartmann, Chemnitz in 1912 and reconstructed by the Deutsche Reichsbahn in 1964 – it is one of three such locos on the railway and the only one that is in ticket. The picture shows the loco waiting to leave Oschatz.

Sadly Dominic reports that the trains were not well filled though with the temperatures this was perhaps not surprising.

US expatriate returns to museum action



NETHERLANDS

On the weekend of the 24th-25th June a 700mm type 5DM18B Whitcomb locomotive (40319/1943) entered service following a comprehensive three-year overhaul at the Gelderse Smalspoormuseum (the Gelderse Narrow Gauge Museum), a mere 29km from where it had spent its working life (writes *Sjors van Dongen*).

The US-built locomotive was originally exported to the Netherlands as part of the post-war Marshall Aid programme and worked at a brick factory in Echteld, close to Tiel in the centre of the Netherlands.

In November 1994 the loco joined the collection of the Gelderse Smalspoor Stichting on permanent loan from its original owners where it awaited its turn in the overhaul queue. The 5-ton engine still retains its original 39hp Caterpillar D3400 four-cylinder diesel engine and its fuel starter engine.

The Gelderse Smalspoormuseum has a collection of about 40 locomotives that are



exercised on a short U-shaped running line along the Lower Rhine on the grounds of the brick factory Randwijk, close to Heteren.

Photos: Sors van Dongen

Museum remembers founding member

Members of the Museum of FRENCH Steam Tramways and Secondary Railways (MTVS) have been making further significant progress at their site in Crèvecœur while mourning the passing of one of the group's founders.

Daniel Schulman, who passed away in June, was described by MTVS spokesman Olivier Janneau as "in love with steam, participating in all MTVS projects from laying the track to restoring and operating the machines."

The museum regained full access to its running line on 7th July following extensive work on a bridge that carries the D151 road over the line. Scaffolding on the rails was removed with only that covering the side walls remaining in place. This would allow trains along the line to resume on 16th July.

Meanwhile in the MTVS workshops at Butry the rebuild of Orenstein & Koppel-built Decauville design 2-6-0T 130T type no 5755 continues with, the most recent attention

focusing on beginning the alignment of the replacement cab sides and brand-new water tanks on the loco's chassis.

Work on the road bridge has meant no way through for MTVS trains in recent times.

Photo: Olivier Janneau



BRIEF LINES

Decauville in action

The Joikioisten Museum Railway in FINLAND held its biggest event of the year on 2nd July with two-train operation coinciding with a country market at Minkiö adjacent to the line. Finland's oldest operating steam locomotive, a 1901-built Porter, helped celebrate the 125th anniversary of the Jokioinen Railway.

Decauville in action

Type 157 0-8-0 no 157.73 has become the second-oldest narrow gauge steam locomotive operating in RUSSIA – on 7th May the loco made its first run on the 750mm gauge Sverdlovsk Children's Railway in Yekaterinburg following a nine-year restoration.

Readers can send in news from overseas lines for inclusion on these pages – contact details are on page 3

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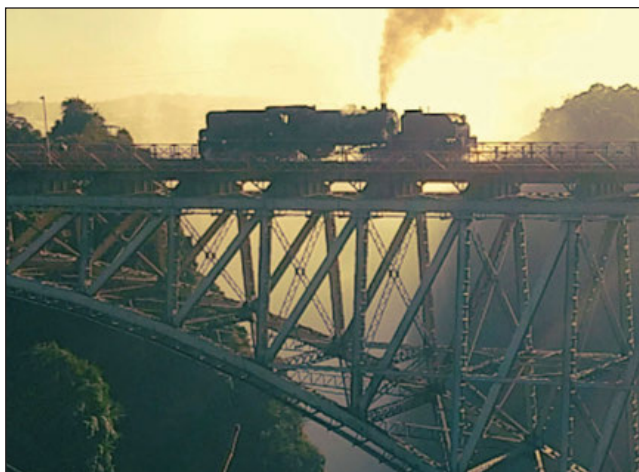
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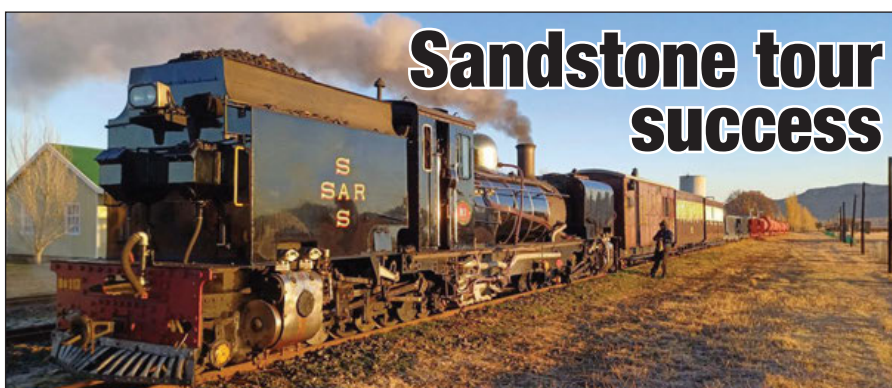
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■ **George Shields** was present to witness a steam return to ZIMBABWE on 11th July. The Beyer, Peacock 2-6-2+2-6-2 Garrett 14A no 523, built in 1953, is seen in the early morning light rolling light engine over the Victoria Falls Bridge from Livingstone in Zambia, bound for Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe to work a evening train for owners Bush Tracks which runs wine and dine trains from both sides of the border to the impressive Victoria Falls bridge.



A major International Rail Tour visited SOUTH AFRICA in June and July after a gap of almost 15 years, reports **Dave Richardson**, for both a main line and narrow gauge experience.

Tour operator FarRail, a German company, is well known for the meticulous attention to detail with its tours, recreating the past as close as possible. The major part of this tour was based in the Kimberley and Bloemfontein area for 3ft 6in gauge running with two Class 25NC locomotives after the group had visited Wonder Steam in Pretoria.

After five days of main line action, the tour arrived at Sandstone on 1st July for two days of 2ft gauge operations culminating in a sunrise session staged on the Monday.

Sandstone has a great deal to offer such tours with historically correct locos and rolling stock and is a self-contained network on private land with a heritage collection unrivalled in the world, able to add to photos with military vehicles, agricultural

equipment, vintage buses, cars and trucks, traction engines and even oxen.

Tour operators were able to maintain their visits to South Africa via Sandstone's various gala events after main line tours ended in the mid-2000s – the centre has an added bonus as a destination with on-site accommodation and catering.

For FarRail Sandstone steamed three different former South African Railways Garratt locomotives for photo sessions ranging from NGG13 no 49 built in 1928 to NGG16 113 (pictured above waiting its turn) and NGG16A 155 of 1968. On the final morning, German built NG15 'Kalahari' no 17 was added to the roster (below), well received by German members of the group.

This first tour for so many years was considered a resounding success. Some obstacles had to be overcome but were professionally dealt with by the organisers and Sandstone was proud to play its part in a piece of railtour history. The centre plans to host a UK group in May 2024.



Fundraising

Editor's note: In NGW176 we ran a letter from John Athersuch describing how readers can help the people of UKRAINE suffering from the effects of the Putin invasion, in a very narrow gauge way. John has since received more details of this initiative from Ukrainian enthusiast Dāvis Bušs, the man behind the project, which we are pleased to publish in this issue – John has assisted with the text editing for a UK audience.

“People around the world have reacted in many different ways to the dire needs of Ukrainians who are suffering the effects of the Russian invasion. But can a small locomotive help? It turns out, it can!

Financial as well as material help, whether it be food, medicine, clothes, generators or water purifiers, are crucial not only to those who have been displaced by the war but to all citizens. For those fortunate to be living far away from the active war zones, rockets still fly overhead and they are still affected by Russian attacks on energy networks, transport and civilian infrastructure.

So how can heritage railways help? There are 750mm gauge locomotives in existence of series ESU2a, each having an onboard 50kW three-phase mobile generator. These are powered by an old D108 diesel engine, a modified form of which is still being produced as the D160 today, and itself a descendant of a Caterpillar crawler tractor diesel dating from the 1930s. Built with simple, rugged engineering, it has mechanical transmission but also has an electrical drive motor.

These locomotives were built in the Soviet Union to propel narrow gauge tracklaying trains. An electric-powered crane would build or dismantle pre-assembled track panels in front of the crane. Thus the electricity for the crane and the propulsion during work movements would be fully electrically powered (even with remote control from the crane and no driver being necessary in the cab), while transport along the track would be achieved by mechanical transmission.

There are several of these locomotives still operational in the Baltic states on peat railways; some of them even continue to lay tracks, while others are used more for the haulage of peat.

Generating help

Narrow gauge railway enthusiasts from the Baloži peat museum railway in Latvia have started fundraising to purchase one of these locomotives with a view to sending it to the city of Haivoron in Ukraine.

There the locomotive would serve as a generator during the wartime, both on the rails, and off rails if necessary, to supply electricity to the city hospital, water well pumps or the refugee centre, in case the

for a narrow gauge loco for Ukraine

electricity network becomes unstable again.

After the war is over, the locomotive would become part of a narrow-gauge museum collection where it would enjoy true retirement and a heritage role.

Arrangements for the transfer have been made both with the Haivoron city council and railway enthusiasts from Ukraine, as well as with the current owner of the locomotive ESU2a-181. As the originator of the idea, I visited Haivoron in February 2023, so personally witnessed the constant air raids and the effects of an unstable electricity grid. Nevertheless, local enthusiasts continued to run heritage projects and I managed to enjoy a steam-powered trip on the Haivoron – Bershad route, a picture of which is included here.

Instant availability

As soon as the necessary funds are collected the locomotive will be ready to be delivered and could provide power straight away. The total cost of purchasing and delivery of the locomotive to Haivoron is €17,000 which is much cheaper than providing the more usual mobile generators of comparable power.

We would be very grateful for any donations that readers are able to make through the homepage: <https://bit.ly/loco4ua>. The project has also a dedicated Facebook page, simply search for 'Locomotive ESU2a for Ukraine', as well as a separate section under the Projects page of the Baloži peat museum railway homepage, at www.kudrasbanitis.lv.

We need to support Ukraine in these difficult times, and our support already has helped a lot, but we need to continue. Until full victory, Slava Ukraine!"

■ *NGW* will of course be closely following the progress of this project.

Top right: This Soviet-built diesel locomotive can bring significant aid to war-torn cities in Ukraine, and not just in rail form. ESU2a-181 is seen here in Lithuania on 9th May after a startup and full operational inspection after which agreement to purchase was made by the fundraising campaign.

Above right: This Mt-202 series locomotive was plinched as a monument in Haivoron city after the Second World War to proudly demonstrate the efforts of the locomotive repair factory to resume work after the conflict. A new war has meant a new plaque commemorating lost local soldiers has been erected on the monument.

Right: Optimism for the future. Loco Gr-280, is prepared at Haivoron depot on 17th February for an enthusiast trip to Bershad, a reminder that there will plenty for visitors to enjoy once the conflict is over. *Photos: Dāvis Bušs*



The Schafbergbahn

James Waite concludes an Austrian trilogy by celebrating one of the country's most visited mountain railways.



At an altitude of 1,782 metres Schafberg is not the highest mountain in the Salzkammergut range in Austria, but is probably the best-known, and certainly one of the easiest to visit thanks to the metre gauge Abt-rack Schafbergbahn which climbs to its summit.

The railway was always a part of the original SKGLB scheme though it was authorised separately. Indeed the SKGLB was obliged to complete it no later than the opening of the final section of the long Salzburg-Bad Ischl

760mm gauge railway. The rack line has always been relatively successful, even during the years after the First World War when the 760mm line began to struggle. The mountain was already a popular tourist destination long before the railway arrived. A hotel was opened at the summit back in 1864, the first of its kind anywhere in Austria, and the SKGLB acquired it soon after the first train arrived there in 1893.

The line starts at St Wolfgang, on the northern shore of Wolfgangsee at

"Beyond is a sheer drop and a stupendous view over Attersee, Mondsee and the mountains of south eastern Bavaria..."

an altitude of 542m. There has been a settlement here ever since its church was founded by Wolfgang, the Bishop of Regensburg, in 972, and it became a pilgrimage centre after he was declared a saint in 1052. Perhaps he is best known today for the Christian name of the composer Mozart, whose mother came from St Gilgen at the head of the lake.

The town's picturesque medieval buildings attract visitors from far and wide, though it has also become notorious as the location of the



outstation of the Dachau concentration camp after Nazi Germany annexed the country in 1938. St Wolfgang and the Schafbergbahn station were physically separated from the 760mm gauge railway which ran along the southern side of the lake. Unsurprisingly the SKGLB also operated the lake steamers, including the ferry over to the town's 760mm station.

The Schafbergbahn formed a part of the assets which the Austrian state tourist office bought in 1932, along with the steamers and the hotel. They were operated by them until Deutsche Reichsbahn took over in 1939, and after 1945 formed part of ÖBB, the Austrian state railway.

ÖBB still owns the line's fixed assets, but Salzburg AG, the regional transport company, took over responsibility for both it and the steamers before the start of the 2006 season, and formed a new company called Salzkammergutbahn GmbH to handle operations. The hotel has been greatly enlarged over the years, and has been run by generations of the Pasch family since 1966.

The station, the engine shed and the workshops occupy a cramped site metres away from the lake shore, just within Upper Austria. The lack of space means that locos coming on and off shed do so via a traverser. Most visitors arrive at St Wolfgang by car, although the road is narrow and winding. Public parking at the station and throughout the town is woefully inadequate, though nooks and crannies are available which seem to be known only to the initiated!

Once the line is away from the

Heading: Z 13 (SLM 5687/1996) sets off from the summit station. The unusual station building was constructed in 1986.

Main photo: Schafbergspitze, the summit station, offers a superbly scenic view back down the line to the lake of Wolfgangsee. The cable railway on the left is used to carry provisions and the luggage of hotel guests from the station.

Below left: Z 12 (SLM 5686/1996) outside the workshop at St Wolfgang in October 2012.

Above right: One of the line's first locomotives, 0-4-2RT no Z 4 (Krauss Linz 3823/1893, stands in St Wolfgang engine shed.

Photos by James Waite, all taken August 2013 except where stated



station a short climb brings it to a bridge over the Dilbach stream where it enters Salzburgerland. There's a recently constructed loop just beyond the edge of the town, and an old-established one with watering facilities after 2.7km at Dorneralpe. Much of the route runs through dense woodland, broken by occasional stretches of pasture land over which there are increasingly fine views over the lake and the mountains.

The tree line lies a little before Schafbergalpe station, beyond which the railway continues across the open mountainside, and passes through two short tunnels just before the summit station at Schafbergspitze, 5.8km from St Wolfgang. There's a steep climb to the summit itself and the hotel – ameliorated for its guests by a cableway to convey their luggage as well as provisions for its business. Beyond there is a sheer drop, and a stupendous view over Attersee,

Mondsee and the mountains of south eastern Bavaria – and on a really clear day Chiemsee, though I defy anyone to detect the travels there of the steam tram 'Laura' (see *NGW*163)!

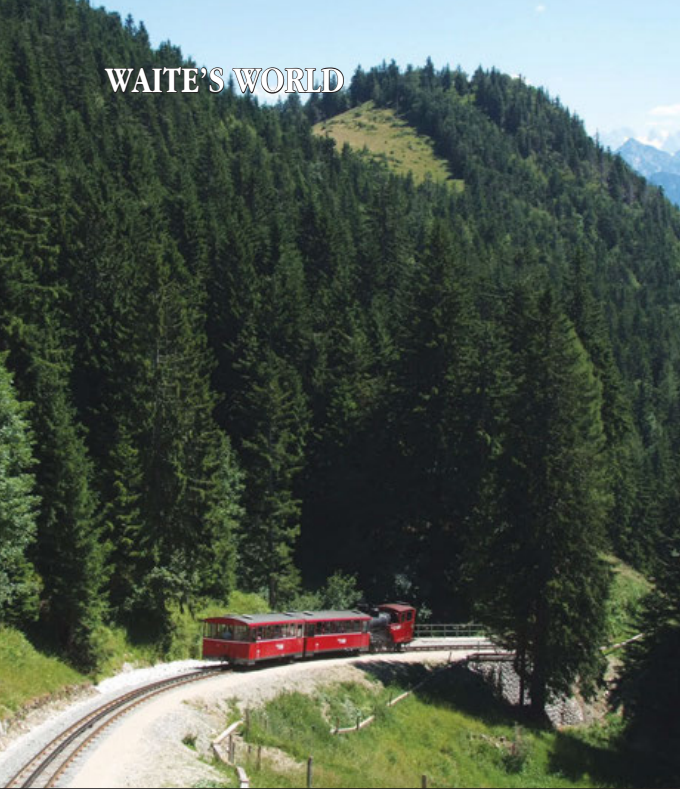
Rack locomotives

Four 0-4-2RT's were built for the line by Krauss Linz in 1893, followed by two more in the following year – originally they were SKGLB nos Z1-Z6 but renumbered under subsequent administrations.

The design was based on five locos built in 1892 by the Société Anonyme des Anciens Établissements Cail in Paris for the metre gauge Montserrat rack railway in Catalonia. A significant change was that they were fitted with steeply inclined boilers and superstructure, unlike the Montserrat machines whose original route involved running downhill as well as up.

Some aspects of the Schafbergbahn »





locos are similar to the 40 Abt-Brown type 1 locos built for Swiss rack lines between 1889 and 1894, with their high-pitched cylinders and rocking drive beams, though there are significant differences, not least that the drive of the Cail and Krauss ones is connected to the rear coupled axle instead of the leading one.

Like most of ÖBB's steam locos they were upgraded with Giesel ejectors in the 1950s, and in 1964 were fitted with a fourth braking system using compressed air from cylinders prominently mounted on the backs of the cabs.

The design was clearly successful and was closely copied for the five machines Krauss built for the Schneebergbahn, south of Vienna, between 1897 and 1900, save that the boilers and superstructure of the Schneeberg locos are inclined at less of an angle since the line's gradients are not so steep. They were also provided with conventional

front cab sheets with spectacles whereas the Montserrat and Schafberg locos had open-fronted cabs.

Also in 1964 two diesel railcars from Simmering-Graz-Pauker arrived on the line. With the steam locos able to take life more easily ÖBB 999.101 was transferred to the Schneebergbahn in 1970.

A happy event in 1992 was the construction of ÖBB no 999.201, a brand new 0-4-2RT from the Swiss builder SLM, part of a joint venture which also involved two Swiss railways. The loco spent its first season on the Schneebergbahn but was little used there, mainly because it was too big and could only go as far as the first tunnel.

Since 1993 this engine has lived at St Wolfgang and has been a great success, being much more powerful, speedy and efficient than the Krauss locos. Three sisters, nos 999.202-4, followed in 1996.

Between 2010 and 2020 steadily increasing passenger numbers encouraged the new administration to buy four diesels, nos VZ 31-4. Also 14 lightweight carriages have been built since 1990, and four more are planned. No 22, one of the 1964 railcars, is also serviceable.

Heritage operational

After the 2006 takeover Gunter Mackinger, Salzburg AG's transport director, lost no time in making the most of the superb opportunities which the Schafbergbahn offered. No 999.101 returned to St Wolfgang and was restored almost to its original condition including a pre-Giesel chimney. Heritage services were promoted using the three remaining Krauss locos, which now carry their original SKGLB numbers once more.

The old railway's carriage number 1 is another Kaiserwagen, built for Franz Joseph in 1893 like the one at Mondsee and just as luxurious. ÖBB had sold the vehicle off in 1996 but

the new regime bought it back in 2008, while two other old carriages were refurbished.

The heritage service is marketed along with journeys on the oldest vessel in the shipping fleet, a paddlesteamer built as long ago as 1873 and, perhaps inevitably, named 'Kaiser Franz Joseph I'. It was also thoroughly rejuvenated and restored to its historic appearance in 2008.

The other three historic locos and the second railcar are now in museums or on plinths, while the four Swiss locos, now numbered Z 11-14, continue very much in day-to-day operation. The line's management understands the public affection for steam operation, and despite the new diesels the stated intention is to keep the Swiss steam locos in service – the oldest one was only built 30 years ago.

When I first visited Austria in 1971 the two railcars worked most services, and there seemed little point in making the difficult journey to St Wolfgang when there was no certainty of steam operation. I eventually rode the line in 2013. There were huge crowds at the summit enjoying the superb views and more than filling the capacious catering facility.

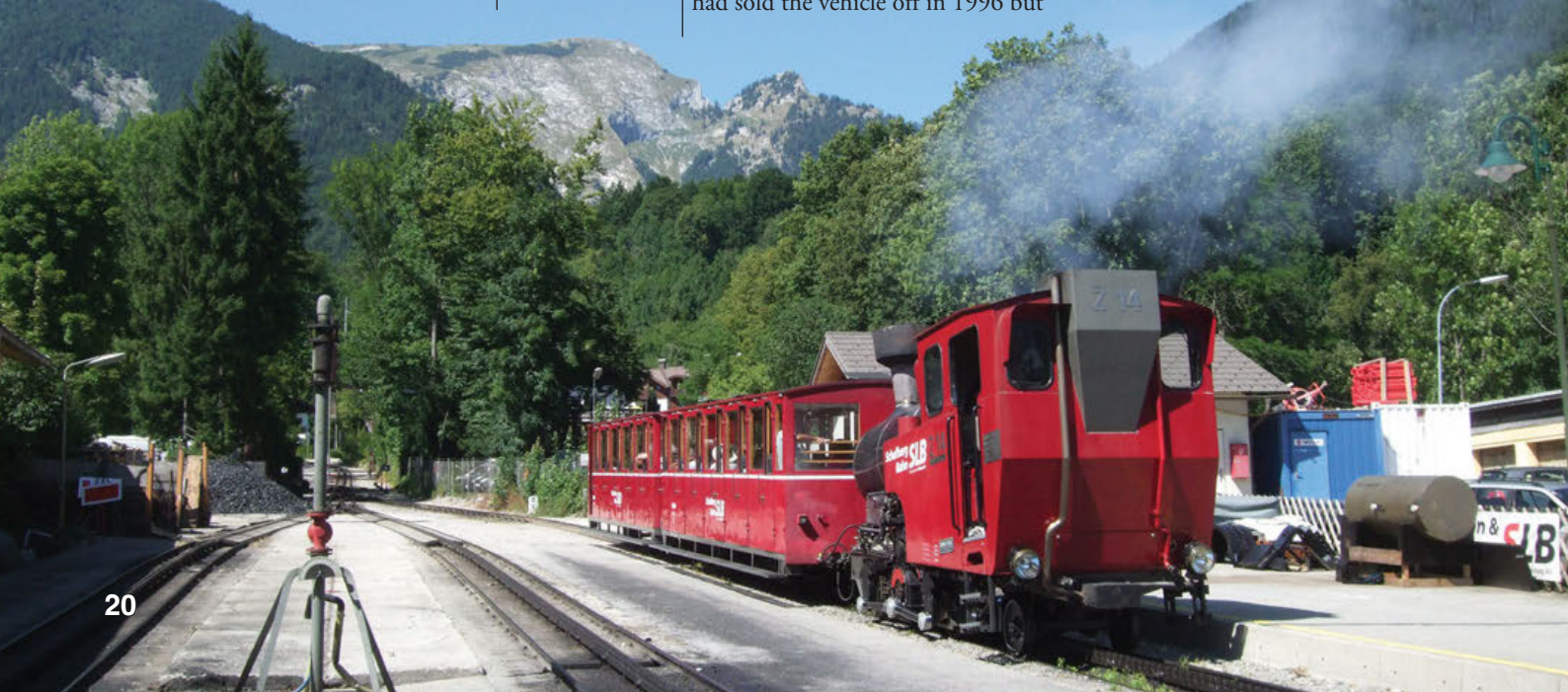
I walked down the mountainside to Schafbergalpe station, which in comparison was an oasis of quiet. The inn there was everything one expects of a traditional mountain hostelry, serving simple and tasty country food to a few walkers – and a hungry railway photographer! **NGW**

More Information

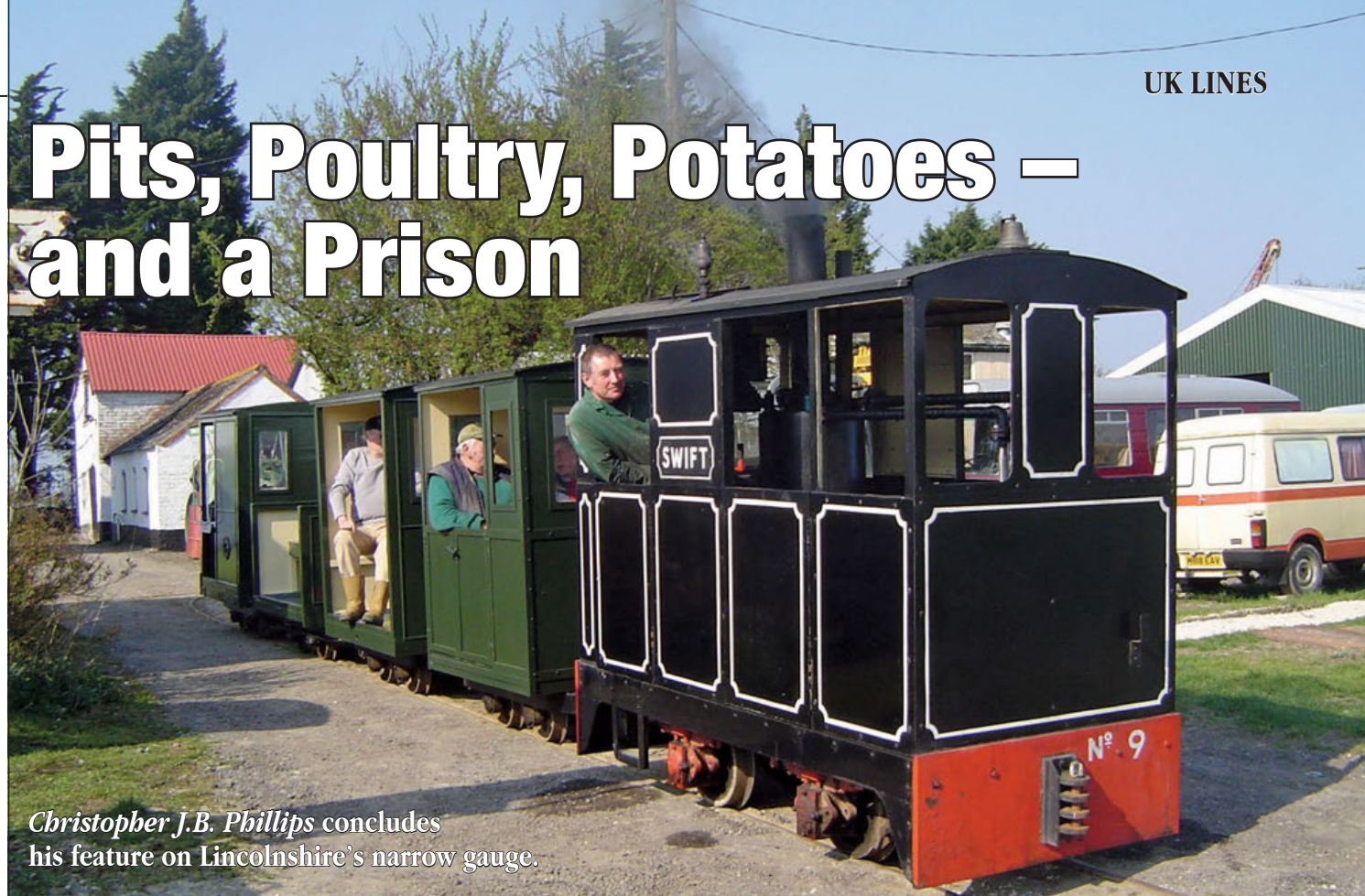
The 2023 main season timetable extends to 8th October. For details see: www/5schaetze.at/schafbergbahn

Main photo: The 0-4-2RT no Z 14 (SLM 5688/1996) sets off from the single platform at St Wolfgang station. A new covered station to make conditions less unpleasant for waiting passengers in rain or snow was due to be completed in summer 2023.

Above: Z 14 climbs through woodland towards Schafbergalpe.



Pits, Poultry, Potatoes – and a Prison



Christopher J.B. Phillips concludes his feature on Lincolnshire's narrow gauge.

Last month we began a survey of the variety of narrow gauges lines, serving both industry and tourism, that have existed across the flat lands of Lincolnshire. This month we conclude our study with other lines, some not widely known such as the 2ft gauge operation north of Lincoln at Burton Fen which served seven gravel pits. Operated by Lincoln Sand and Gravel Company, the U-shaped track opened in the early 1930s and closed in 1961.

Two locomotives are recorded as working at Burton Fen, both of Ruston Hornsby manufacture. The first was 170190, a Lister 18/2 with a 16hp engine, manufactured at Anchor Street Works, Lincoln in 1934. The second was 191685, a class 16/20hp with a Ruston 2VSO engine. It was produced at Boultham Works, Lincoln, famous for building more than two thousand aircraft during World War One, including many examples of the famed Sopwith Camel. Unfortunately the rolling stock used on the line is not recorded.

North Ings Farm

To the south of the county, between Lincoln and Sleaford, lies the village of Dorrington, its claim to fame being that it was home to Frank Whittle when he was designing the first British jet engine. It is also the home of North Ings Farm, converted from arable and animal farming in the 1960s to egg production.

This change resulted in 1972 in

Above: The Merryweather steam tram 'Swift' at North Ings Farm Railway. Since this photo was taken the loco has been out of service for several years awaiting a new boiler.

Below: The two locomotives on loan to North Ings Farm from the Narrow Gauge Museum, Tywyn. Ruston Hornsby 'Indian Runner' is coupled ahead of Motor Rail 'Penelope'.

Both photos: Malcolm Phillips

the introduction of a 2ft gauge line to serve the first five poultry sheds. Later it was extended to connect all 19 sheds but finally closed in March 1981. Subsequently the line began a new life as a hobby, with further locomotives acquired, until in 1990 it was opened to the public, the line now forming a quarter-mile circuit.

The North Ings locomotives embrace five Ruston Hornsby machines including 200744 'Indian Runner', a rebuilt Lister, two Hunslets, a Motor Rail no 8826 'Penelope', an Orenstein & Koppel, and 185904 'Swift' – a Merryweather vertical-boiler steam tram.

Passenger carriages were acquired from the Abbey Light Railway in Leeds after it closed in 2012, while the wagon fleet has been accumulated from various sources. A signal box was sourced from Holmes Yard in Lincoln, and the lever frame from the

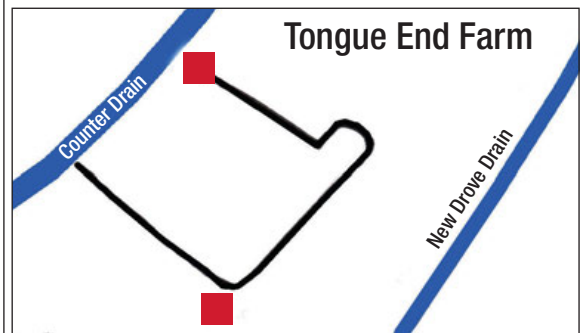
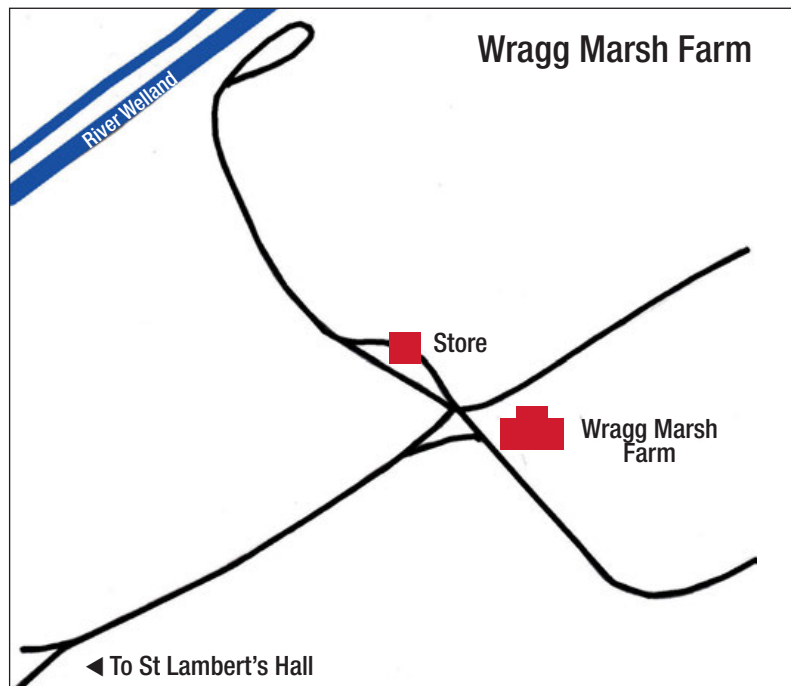
former Skellingthorpe signal box, near Lincoln.

Farming the Fens

South Lincolnshire encompasses the rich farmland of the Fens, an area noted for the growing of potatoes and sugar beet. Less known is the proliferation of narrow gauge railways to serve the industry. The close of World War One released a considerable amount of rail and rolling stock previously used extensively on the Western Front, with large amounts sold off by the War Department. The majority was of 60cm gauge, variously described as anything between 1ft 11½in and 2ft.

Although some lines had been installed prior to World War One to facilitate the collection of produce from the fields to various shipping points, a boom in these agricultural lines took place in the post-war years. »





“Many of these lines were short and utilised horse traction – much of their history as to gauge, rolling stock and method of operation is lost in the mists of time...”

In the early 1920s there was more than 106 miles of track, serving 33 locations in Lincolnshire, plus one in South Yorkshire. Many of these lines were short and utilised horse traction. Much of their history as to gauge, rolling stock and method of operation is lost in the mists of time.

A few of the big estates employed locomotives, the largest and perhaps best known being the Nocton Estate, ably described in *Potatoes and Peckets* (NGW171). This article covered the subsequent acquisition of Nocton's rail, locomotives and rolling stock by the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway, located in Skegness.

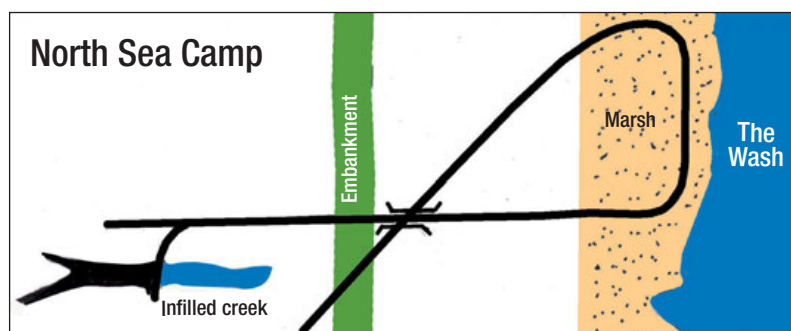
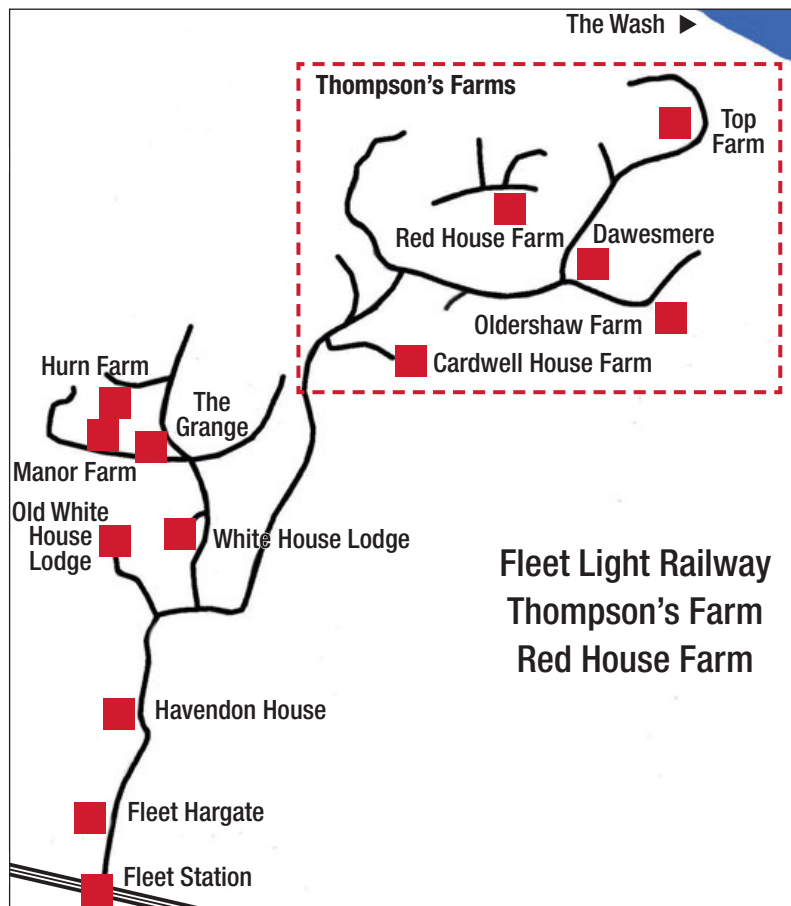
In addition, locomotives were employed at Tongue End Farm, Deeping St Nicholas; Wragg Marsh House Farm, Weston; the Fleet Light Railway and Thomson's Farms and Redhouse Farm, both at Dawsmere.

Tongue End Farm boasted 2.5 miles of track with six bogie trucks. Built in 1923/1924, initial traction was provided by horses. In 1930, the owner F.H. Cooke formed a partnership with Hugh Chatterton, at whose instigation a locomotive was introduced. Very small with a petrol engine, it had the ability to haul five tons in three trucks.

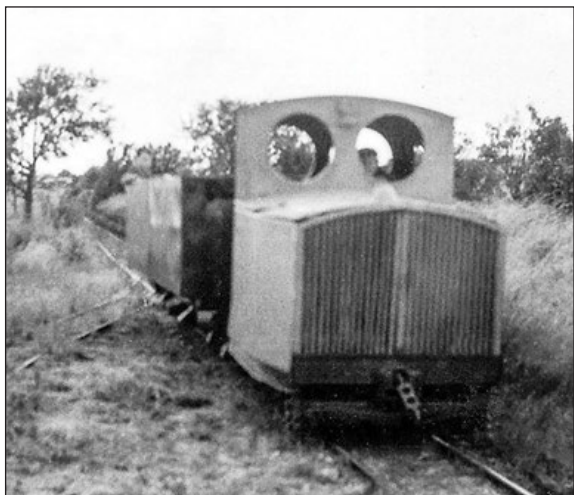
One incident of note was Mr Cooke's purchase of a passenger carriage from the Never Stop Railway which ran around the Wembley, London site of the 1924/1925 British Empire Exhibition. William Yorath Lewis and Benjamin Ratcliffe Adkins had joined together in the 1900s to patent the Adkins-Lewis System of Continuous Transport, consisting of two rails set at 2ft 10½in apart, the train driven by a large continuous screw underneath.

In the station the coils were placed close together slowing the carriages. Between stations the coils were placed further apart and the carriages accelerated. Passengers were required to get on and off whilst the train was still moving.

At the close of the Exhibition, the company folded and the equipment was sold for scrap, bar the carriage that went to Tongue End Farm. The line closed immediately after World War Two.



This page: Maps of the various lines, from top Tongue End Farm, Wragg Marsh Farm, the Fleet Light Railway (showing how it connects with the Thompson's Farm lines shown in the hatched rectangle) and the North Sea Camp Railway. Maps: Christopher Phillips and Andrew Charman



Wragg Marsh and Fleet

George Cauldwell purchased Wragg Marsh Farm in 1908 and immediately started building his light railway. By 1915 there were four miles of line, utilising 40 small four-wheel flat trucks and 12 truck-mounted water tanks. Initial traction was provided by horses that could haul up to six tons in three wagons.

By 1915 the line had increased to six miles in length running to St Lambert's Hall. But by 1930 it had deteriorated and so was relaid with concrete sleepers. Some 120 new trucks and 20 larger tanker wagons replaced the existing rolling stock. Additionally, a locomotive with a Ford tractor engine was supplied by Hudsons of Leeds. The line closed in 1947 and the equipment was sold.

The Cauldwells also owned Red House Farm where a 2ft gauge line, initially worked by horses, was installed in the early 1920s. In 1931 a locomotive was introduced and redundant wagons transferred from Wragg Marsh. This line lasted until the late 1930s.

The Fleet Light Railway was built in 1910 by the Worth family to serve their farms north of Fleet Hargate. Of 2ft gauge, with entirely new track and equipment, it joined Old White House to the Midland and Great Northern Joint Railway at Fleet Station. In the early 1930s the original 2.75 miles were extended to 12.9 miles to serve White House Lodge, Manor House Farm, The Grange and Hurn Farm.

The original rolling stock consisted of 16 four-wheel, flat trucks using horse-drawn traction. Due to the greater length of line and increasing loads, petrol-driven locos were introduced in 1923 and 1924 but quickly proved inadequate.

In 1925 came the introduction of a diesel loco with the capacity to haul a 20-ton load. In addition the line received ten bogie trucks with an individual capacity of 2.5 tons. It was

Above: Highly reminiscent of a scene on a Lincolnshire potato line is this 1962 view on the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway. The locomotive is ex Nocton no 1, a Motor Rail 'Simplex' of 1926. Photo: C.W. Underhill/LCLR

Above right: No 1 on the LCLR in July 1974. At right is ex-Penrhyn Hunslet 0-4-0ST 'Elin'. Photo: Donald Brooks

Below: Lister diesel locomotive 'Blackstone' on the North Sea Camp Railway in April 1993. Photo: Roy Burt/Gordon Edgar collection

gradually reduced in length after World War Two and closed in 1955.

The Fleet Light railway also formed an end-on junction with a system serving Thompson's Farm and Red House Farm in the Dawsmere area, some two miles from the Wash. This allowed its locomotive-hauled trains to access Fleet station. J.H. Thompson owned five farms in the area and built his 2ft gauge line extending to 7.7 miles in the early 1920s. Both horses and two small diesel locomotives were employed throughout its existence, the line closing in February 1940.

Prison service

Last but not least in the area of the Wash was HM Prison North Sea Camp, originally a Borstal establishment opened in 1935 with the arrival of 20 boys who had been marched from Stafford. The rehabilitation work carried out here centred on land reclamation, starting in 1936. In April 1949 two Lister locomotives arrived, JAP 500cc petrol engined of type RM2X.

The 2ft gauge line was divided into two sections. The first was the farm line and the second the temporary embankment line, which was moved as work progressed. The two sections were joined by what was called the 'main line'.

In 1960 came the acquisition of a

third locomotive, another Lister RM2X, fitted with a 7hp air-cooled diesel, after the first two had been successfully fitted with the same type of engine.

The Camp's use as a Borstal ended in 1968 when the site became an open prison, although work continued on land reclamation. In late 1970 a fourth locomotive was added, another Lister, this one fitted with a Lister SR1 engine.

A fifth Lister was acquired from Rich Morris, the railway enthusiast of Longfield, Kent. Originally supplied new to Bayliss Brickworks Ltd, Birmingham, the loco arrived without an engine and was fitted with an Armstrong Siddeley of 22bhp.

The line was eventually wound down and closed in the early 1990s, the prison's subsequent claim to fame being the place of Jeffrey Archer's incarceration in 2001-2002. **NGW**

More Information

The Lincolnshire Potato Railways by Stewart E. Squire (Oakwood Press, 2019)

Industrial Railway Locomotives of Lincolnshire and Rutland (Industrial Railway Society, 2010)

Open days in 2023 at North Ings Farm Railway are on 6th August, 3rd September and 1st October. More details can be found at: www.northingsfarmmuseum.co.uk



Centenary celebrations...

Charters and one major event certainly attracted the photographers this month.



Above: Photo charters are not so common at this time of year, but *Joey Evans* enjoyed the sight of Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0WT 1238 'Ashanti' on an evening freight working during the 30742 charter organised at the Amerton Railway in Staffordshire on 2nd July.

Below: The next day saw the attention shift to Amberley Museum in Sussex, where resident Bagnall 0-4-0ST 'Peter' was pictured sharing space with the novel one-tonne steam roller 'Trotter' owned by Alan Keef Ltd employee Jez Kirkwood. *Stuart Chapman* got the shot.



Right: *Joey Evans* was also on the Amberley charter and produced this highly atmospheric shot of Peter raising steam outside its shed.

Below: And talking of atmosphere... This could be from the loco's industrial working past whereas in fact it was taken by *Karl Heath* at the Beamish living museum on 11th July. The Andrew Barclay 0-4-0WT 'Glyder' is brewing up on shed on the narrow gauge system.

Overleaf: There was no doubting the big event of the month of June on the UK narrow gauge, judging by the amount of photos that dropped into the *NGW* editorial inbox! The Welsh Highland Centenary celebration saw a number of special trains on the line between Caernarfon and Porthmadog over the weekend of 23rd-25th June, but none were more welcomed by the photographers than those hauled by the line's sole surviving locomotive, Hunslet 2-6-2T 'Russell'. Here on the Saturday the loco was beautifully caught with an appropriate train in the Aberglaslyn Pass near Beddgelert by *Mike Heath*.



NARROW GAUGE WORLD







It's been close to 85 years since Russell, now based on the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway, last regularly worked the length of the Welsh Highland Railway, so over the weekend of the WHR 100 event on 23rd-25th June it was shown the way by today's regularly rostered Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway locos, firstly with the double-Fairlie 'Merddin Emrys' (above), seen here in the Aberglaslyn Pass near Beddgelert...

...and later (below) by the Lynton & Barnstaple Manning Wardle new-build 2-6-2T 'Lyd', here working 'The Harbourmaster' near Rhyd-Ddu.

Photos: Joey Evans



Preservation's first saviour?

Andrew Charman describes how 75 years ago, the actions of a Mid-Wales stationmaster may have prevented delay or even failure of the pioneering preservation of the Talylyn Railway.



On Friday 20th August 1948, 75 years ago, the final train ran on the Corris Railway. This was no auspicious occasion – the passenger service on the Mid-Wales 2ft 3in gauge line had ceased back in 1931, and the final train did not even include a few slate wagons from the quarries at Aberllefenni, instead consisting merely of locomotive no 3 pulling a brake van.

When this train returned to Machynlleth on that Friday evening driver Humphrey Humphries, single-manning the loco with guard/shunter Robert Pryce Owen in the brake van, oiled round as usual ready for the following Monday's service, not knowing that he had just worked the last-ever Corris train into Machynlleth...

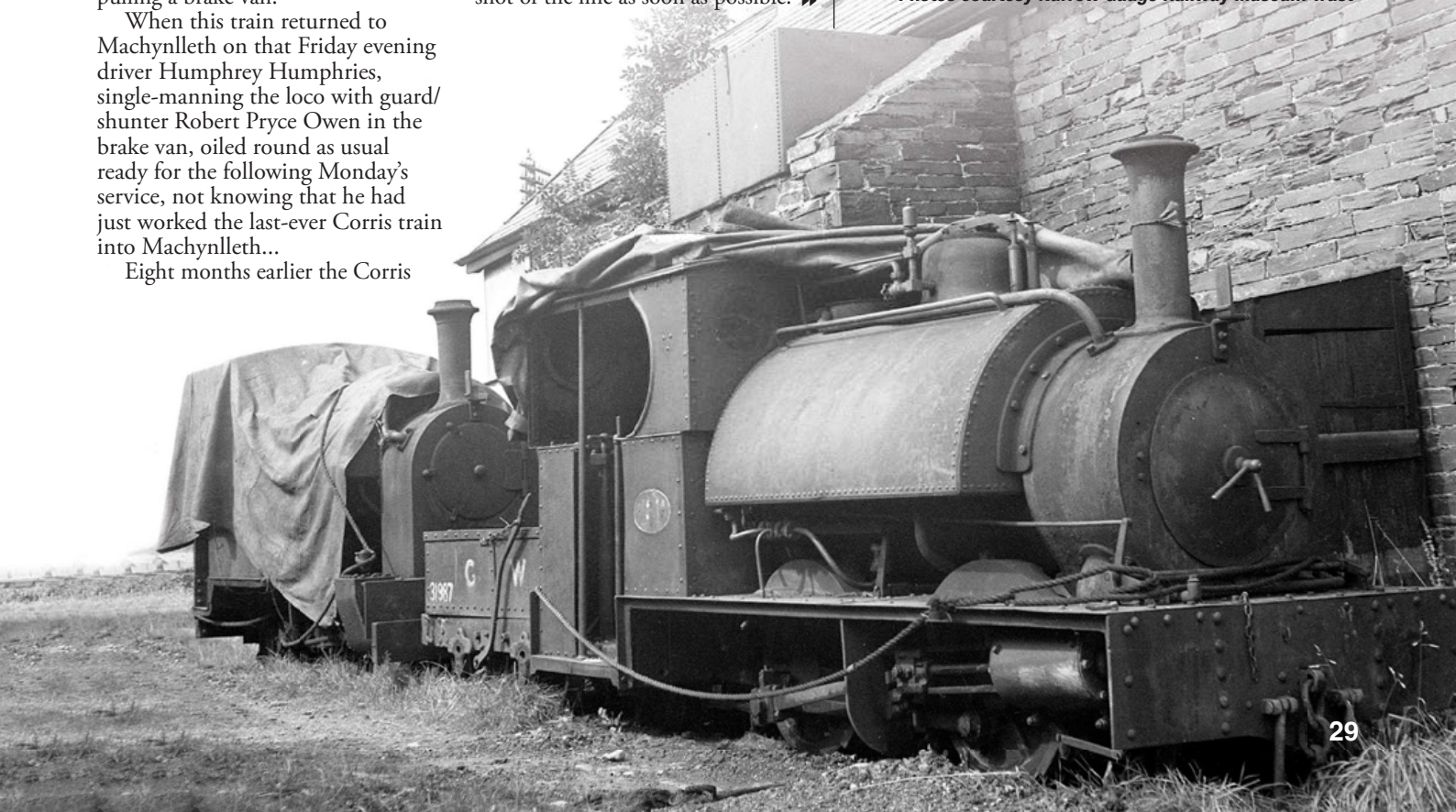
Eight months earlier the Corris

was probably one of the most anachronistic routes inherited by the then sparkling new British Transport Commission (BTC) from the now absorbed Great Western Railway (GWR). The GWR had tended to ignore the Corris and leave it to continue its own stuttering existence, but its replacement British Railways (BR) Western Region was keen to get shot of the line as soon as possible. »

Above: Almost off the edge of the picture, Machynlleth stationmaster Edward Campbell Thomas is pictured with guard Robert Pryce Owen in front of no 3 in Machynlleth yard. The noted railway photographer H C Casserley had arrived on Monday 23rd August hoping for a ride up the line, only to find that it had run its last train three days earlier.

Below: Covering the two locos in tarpaulins borrowed from wagons helped to conceal them from the prying eyes of officialdom that might be looking for stuff to scrap.

Photos courtesy Narrow Gauge Railway Museum Trust



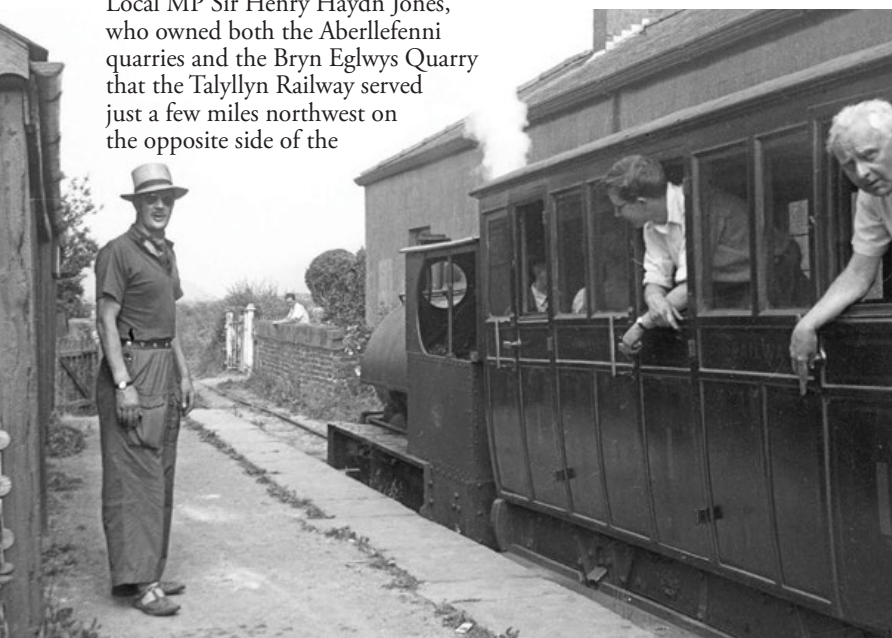


Edge of survival

For years the Corris had been kept going by carrying meagre loads of slate from the quarries at its top end. Local MP Sir Henry Haydn Jones, who owned both the Aberllefenni quarries and the Bryn Eglwys Quarry just a few miles northwest on the opposite side of the

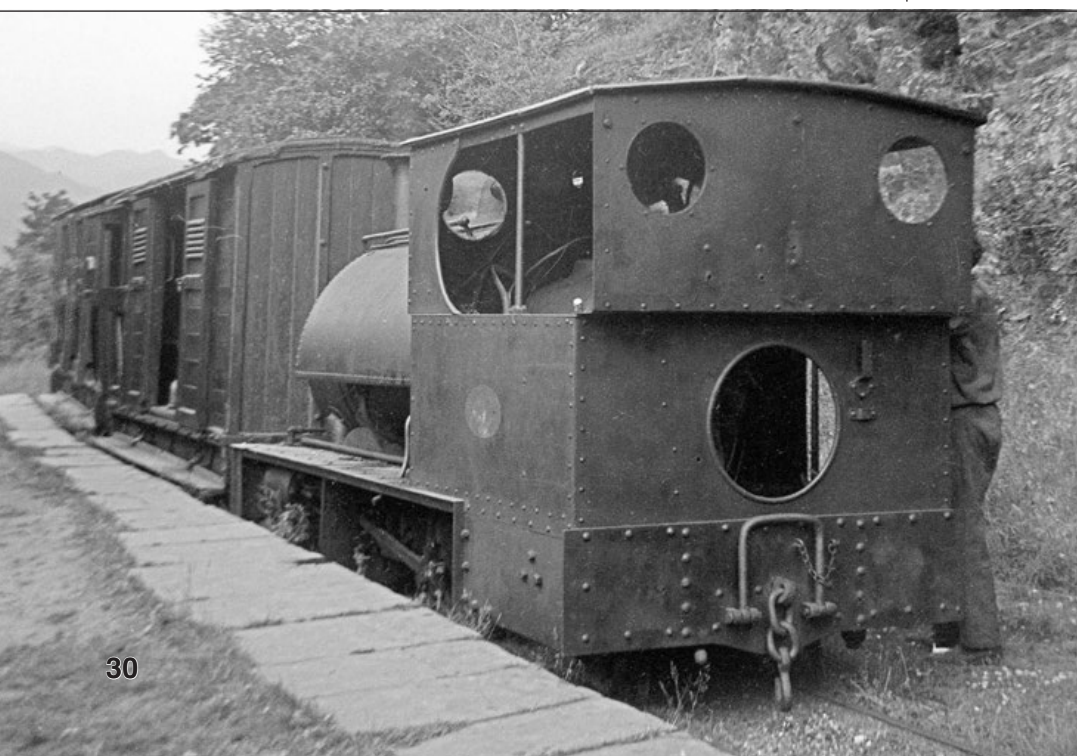
mountain, was keen to keep both the quarries and railways open to maintain local employment.

The year of 1947, however, had



Above: This widely known picture was taken shortly after the two locos arrived at the Tallyllyn, showing the crew that unloaded them onto the wharf. Someone has chalked '6000' on no 3's cab side from where the numberplate was removed - the number of GWR King-class 4-6-0 'King George V'.

Left and below: Two shots from no 3's first Tallyllyn Railway trip to Abergynolwyn on 21st July 1961. In the shot at left manager Tom Rolt looks on in hope and soon to be dashed optimism...



seen industrial disputes disrupting production at Aberllefenni, reducing the slate tonnages carried just before the line's future was due to be decided by the BTC. Closure rumours were rife and then the perfect excuse was provided by the Dovey (today Dyfi) river.

For some months Machynlleth stationmaster Edward Campbell Thomas, under whose management the Corris line fell, had been worrying about the river – when in flood it was steadily undercutting the embankment leading to the bridge by which the line crossed it just outside Machynlleth. Today that same route has disappeared under construction work for a new road bridge.

Water excuse

Over the weekend after what would be the final Corris train ran the river actually reached the ends of the sleepers at the Machynlleth end of the bridge. Had the line been carrying more traffic the damage would doubtless have been repaired but neither BR, or the river authority, was about to spend the money. On 24th August the *Liverpool Daily Post* newspaper reported that the Corris had officially closed on the previous day – ironically the waters then receded and the formation was never breached, but by then it was too late.

At the time of closure no 3, one of a trio of 0-4-2STs built for the Corris in 1878 by the Hughes Locomotive Company at its Falcon Works in Loughborough, was the only one of the two surviving locomotives in working order. In fact later inspection was to show that to refer to the engine as no 3 was somewhat of a misnomer, as parts from the loco's withdrawn sisters had been used to keep it going and it was actually somewhat of a hybrid.

The much younger no 4, a Tattoo-class 0-4-2ST built in 1921 by Kerr, Stuart & Co in Stoke-on-Trent, had been worked hard in previous years and inspection by BR engineers in May 1948 resulted in its firebox being condemned.

Chris Magner, long an advocate of Campbell Thomas's part in the birth of preservation, relates in his book *The Saviours of British Narrow Gauge Railways* that the Machynlleth stationmaster had a great affection for the Corris Railway and wanted to see its locos at least survive. While the Corris depot was at Maespoeth, at the other end of the line, in the final weeks no 3 had been based at Machynlleth, in case flooding severed the line, and before the closure no 4 had been brought down to join it.

Immediately after the line closed discussions took place with Sir

Haydn Jones about the possibility of the Corris pair being bought by the Talylyn Railway – these came to nothing but Chris Magner writes that Sir Haydn did compose a ‘holding letter’ of interest for the two locos.

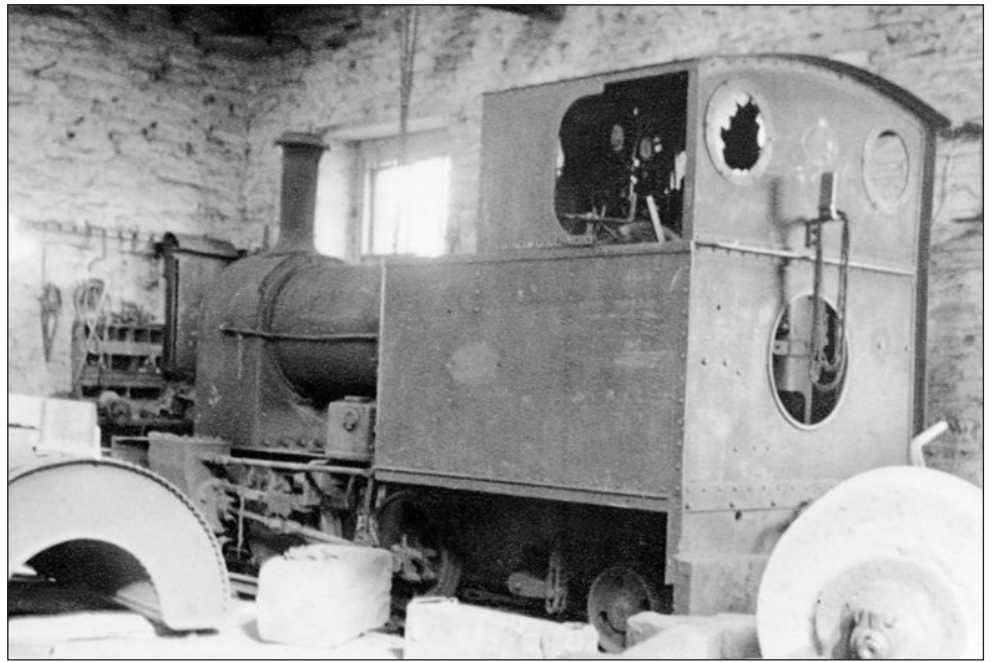
Hidden in plain sight

Campbell Thomas found a spot for the engines, and some goods stock including the tiny brake van, in Machynlleth yard. The chosen birth was behind a siding constantly occupied by a line of standard-gauge wagons, and once sheeted over with tarpaulins borrowed from wagons, the engines were virtually invisible from the main-line station and any officials who might have been travelling on the trains...

Despite this it has been suggested that Campbell Thomas had to fend off numerous orders to send the locos for scrapping issued by BR Western Region headquarters in Swindon and Oswestry, perhaps using Sir Haydn's letter as a reason to keep them from the torch.

Rail publications over the following couple of years routinely reported that the two were to go for scrap, but somehow they survived. Reports suggest that motion parts were kept oiled to help interest potential buyers and it's clear that while Campbell Thomas was the prime mover in these efforts, he had help from the staff at Machynlleth, with perhaps main-line locomotive crew aiding the maintenance.

It took almost three years but the efforts bore fruit – in early 1951 the two locos came to the attention of the fledgling Talylyn Railway Preservation Society, formed to keep



Above: When no 3's issues became apparent work began on no 4, here under repair at Tywyn Pendre.

Below: May 1952 and no 4 is about to be offloaded on its return from repair at Hunslet. But first no 3 is being turned to face down the line – at the time it only had only one cab entrance, as delivered in 1951 on the opposite side to the TR's station platforms.

the Corris line's neighbour going following the death of its owner Sir Haydn in July 1950.

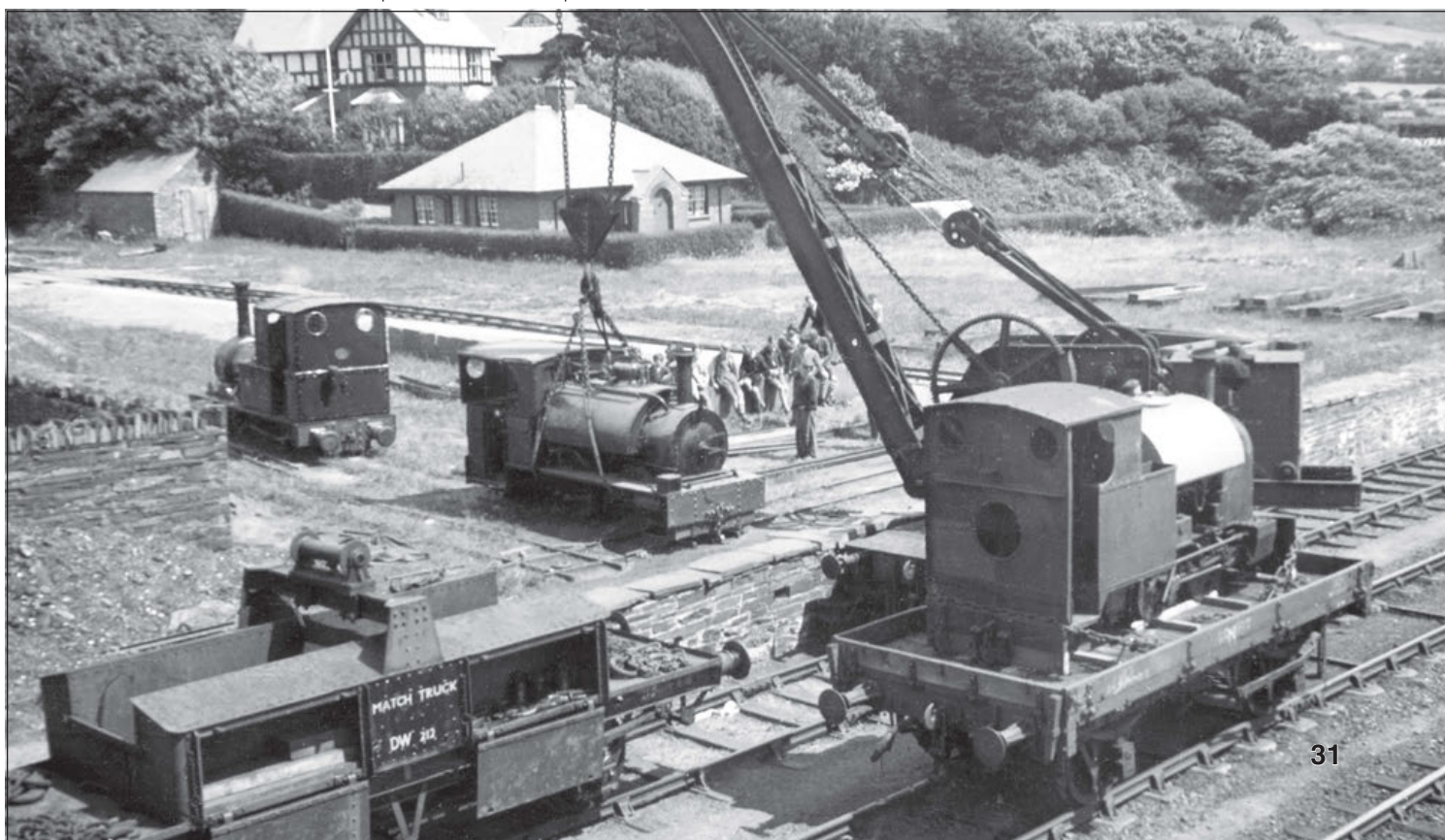
The TR had two locomotives both built by Fletcher Jennings – 0-4-2ST ‘Talylyn’, delivered in 1864, had been condemned and laid up in a barn, while its 1866-built 0-4-0WT sister ‘Dolgoch’ maintained the train service alone – in a reverse of the norm this was solely for passengers, the Bryn Eglwys quarry having closed in 1946. But to describe the worn-out Dolgoch as serviceable was being very economical with the truth and the new Talylyn management urgently needed additional motive power of a gauge virtually unknown in Britain – except a mere 10 miles away...

In *Railway Adventure*, his seminal

work on the saving of the Talylyn, Tom Rolt's description of the trip to inspect the Corris locos certainly paints a picture. “Our first view of the two engines in the searching sunlight of that March morning was not encouraging. They stood head to tail on the short length of track in Machynlleth yard that was all that remained of the Corris Railway.

“They had been covered with old wagon sheets, but, as rust and broken spectacle and gauge glasses showed, these had not adequately protected them either from the weather or from those inevitable hooligans who can never see a piece of glass without smashing it. But these first impressions were superficial and closer examination revealed that

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these two engines were not in such bad condition as we had been led to suppose”.

Bargain buy

British Railways Western Region, possibly somewhat surprised to learn that it still had these two locomotives on its books, asked £65 each for them – equivalent today to just under £2,000. It seems very little now, but in 1951 the perennially cash-strapped Talyllyn Society decided it could only just afford to buy one. So instead a delegation was dispatched to Swindon to plead their case – and succeeded beyond their wildest dreams.

The two were knocked down to £25 each and on 17th March the Oswestry steam crane lifted them onto standard gauge wagons for the journey of just 12 miles to the TR's then Towyn Wharf station. Campbell Thomas's foresight and years of

resourceful effort had been rewarded.

Even after arrival at the TR the dramas were not quite over. The two retained nos 3 and 4 on their new line, and were named 'Sir Haydn' and 'Edward Thomas' after the former owner and manager of the Talyllyn.

Being in better condition no 3 was prepared for service first, but high hopes were soon dashed. Unbeknown to all the loco had wheel treads half an inch narrower than the other engines, and at the time the Talyllyn's track was in poor condition with several sections of slightly more than 2ft 3in gauge, mainly to suit the long fixed wheelbase of Dolgoch.

Sir Haydn's first trial run on 20th July 1951 to the intermediate station of Rhydyronen was a success but on the following day on a trip to the end of the passenger section of line at Abergynolwyn, it briefly dropped between the rails at Brynglas.

Above: Shortly after its return to service no 4 took a trip up the mineral extension and through the Abergynolwyn incline winding house, demolished when the railway extended to Nant Gwernol. More recently thoughts have turned to reinstatement as part of a heritage programme that has already seen the watering point at Ty Dwr rebuilt.

Below: Colleagues in new roles – the Corris duo at work on the TR, Easter 1954. Photo: Peter Johnson Collection

Hopes derailed

Further trial runs resulted in more derailments and in the end the hugely disappointed TR team had to put no 3 aside and turn their attention to the extensive and expensive work required to no 4. Then not for the first time luck shone on the Talyllyn – the managing director of the Hunslet Engine Company, which had taken over the goodwill of Kerr, Stuart when the latter closed in 1930, joined the Society and offered to have the needed boiler work on Edward Thomas done free of charge.

The loco returned from Hunslet's works in Leeds just before the start of the 1952 summer season, finally taking the strain from the by now completely exhausted Dolgoch. A year later, with markedly improved track, Sir Haydn was able to enter service alongside its stablemate and the Corris locos have been mainstays of the Talyllyn fleet ever since.

Sadly Campbell Thomas did not have long to enjoy the fruits of his labours and to see the two locos he saved working in preservation. He died in Aberystwyth on 5th May 1952, aged 65.

Today, secure in the knowledge that Corris no 3 and 4 remain safely in the care of the Talyllyn Railway as pioneer players in the preservation era that are still essential members of the line's locomotive roster, we can afford to speculate on what might have happened had one mid-Wales stationmaster not made the efforts that he did to protect the two redundant hulks sitting in Machynlleth yard. Campbell Thomas is in many ways a forgotten figure in the story of railway preservation, for



example not even meriting a mention in *Railway Adventure*.

Course of history

Had the two locos been scrapped, then the Talyllyn Railway would have faced a much more difficult search for additional motive power, at a time when it was very much a fledgling preservation effort with little money and one barely working locomotive. Even if they had eluded the scrapman but remained in Maespoeth shed, the cost of recovery might have been significantly more taxing for the TR – Machynlleth and Tywyn were on the same line both with convenient transshipment points between the standard and narrow gauge.

The TR pioneers would not have been able to find anything else to run on their very rare 2ft 3in gauge at a time when any thought of regauging stock was a too-expensive pipe dream. So it's quite possible that the Talyllyn restoration might have had to go on hold for possibly some time until the money was found to put one of its two original locomotives back into proper working order.

Such increased difficulties might even have seen the project fail completely – even as the Talyllyn came back to life many of the pioneer preservationists were looking wistfully further north at the moribund Ffestiniog Railway, which offered a perceived much more interesting proposition for restoration and also possessed lots of its own motive power, some of which could be put back into working condition without massive effort or expense.

Thankfully, we'll never know, as history didn't turn out like that. The two Corris locos are very much still with us today, and even part of their former line has come back to life, on which a new-build version of no 4 already runs, and a final fundraising push is underway to complete a

Top right: 'Sir Haydn' brings the TR coaching stock out of the original carriage shed in around 1956. The loco was withdrawn a year later and an overhaul began in 1964 including a new cab. It returned to service in 1968 again facing up the line, not being turned again until this year for a photo charter.

Above right: 'Edward Thomas' waits at Wharf station in 1954. The loco had been a mainstay of the line for the previous two seasons, only latterly joined by its fellow Corris Railway survivor.

Below: The two Corris engines remain vital to Talyllyn operations today. They are seen here in 2012 framing a visiting new-build replica of no 4, which was built in 2005 for the revived Corris Railway. A new-build variant of no 3 is close to completion for the Corris line. Photo: David Mitchell

All uncredited Photos courtesy of the Talyllyn Railway Archives



second new-build of no 3 (details can be found at www.corris.co.uk).

What is certain, however is that Edward Campbell Thomas is as

equally deserving of his place in the preservation hall of fame as are the Tom Rolts and Allan Garraways of this world... **NGW**

More Information/Acknowledgments

Chris Magner's self-produced book *The Saviours of British Narrow Gauge Railways*, which was a great help in producing this piece, is currently not available but Chris tells us he has enough new material for a second edition, so watch this space.

Tom Rolt's book *Railway Adventure*, describing the first two years running the revived Talyllyn

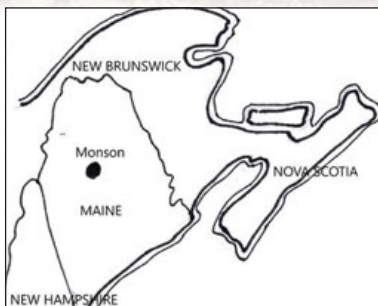
and essential reading for any student of narrow gauge preservation, is not currently on general sale, but used copies are widely available and not hard to track down.

The author is also grateful for help provided by Keith Theobald of the Narrow Gauge Railway Museum Trust and Talyllyn members Ian Drummond and David Mitchell.

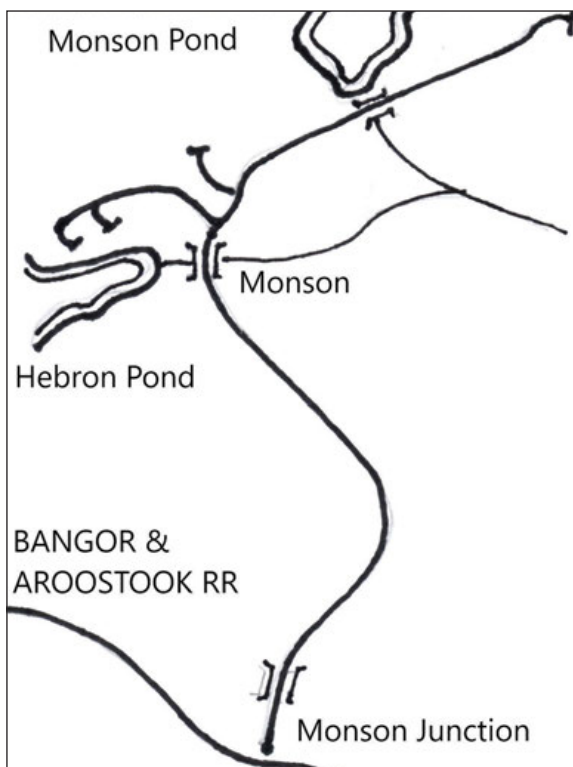


The Monson Railroad

Christopher J.B. Phillips looks at a six-mile long line that survived to become the last of the celebrated 'Maine Two-Footers' in commercial operation. Two of its locos went on to the Edaville Railroad, which as reported in NGW176 is now in serious decline.



"One of the shortest narrow gauge lines in Maine, it was often referred to as the 'Two-by-Six'..."



Festiniog, Tallylyn and Monson are three names, the first two more familiar than the third, all sharing one thing in common – slate. The Monson Railroad in the US state of Maine was incorporated in 1882 as the Monson & Athens Railroad Company. The standard gauge Bangor & Piscataquis Railroad (later the Bangor & Aroostook) contrived to miss Monson by six miles.

Slate quarrying began in Monson in the 1860s. Shipping of these heavy products was always difficult, especially in the springtime thaw that made roads virtually impassable.

Construction of the 2ft gauge railroad commenced in summer 1883 using 30lb rail and was completed on 4th September of that year with

operation beginning on 22nd October. The original railroad ran from Monson to Monson Junction in the town of Abbot, where it met the main line. One of the shortest narrow gauge lines in Maine, it was often referred to as the 'Two-by-Six' owing to its gauge and length.

The first two locomotives, numbered 1 and 2 and built by the Hinkley Locomotive Company of Boston, were based on the popular Forney design. Delivered in 1883 and 1884 respectively, works numbers 1621 and 1661, they were named 'H.A. Whiting' (after the company's president) and 'G.S. Cushing' (after the secretary and general manager).

Both engines shared the same specifications, a 14-ton inside frame,



32in 130 psi boiler, 9 x 12in cylinders, 30in driving wheels, 600-gallon water tank and a fuel capacity of three to four tons of wood. They were converted in 1900 to burn coal.

The usual arrangement for Forney tank locomotives was 0-4-4, the middle wheels being flangeless for tight curves and cab-first operation. However, the Monson Forneys had all wheels flanged and were operated smokestack forward and cab rearward. They were never turned as the turntables were too small and only suitable for the snowplough. Number 1 was scrapped in 1919 and no 2 was retired in 1913 to be converted to a snowplough in 1918.

Replacements came in the shape of a further two Forney-style locos – no 3 was delivered in 1912 and no 4 in 1918, both manufactured by the Vulcan Iron Works of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, works nos 2093 and 2780. This company should not be confused with other Vulcan Iron Works which existed both in the USA and Great Britain.

The rolling stock was supplied by the Lavonia Car Company of New Hampshire. It consisted of one 29ft passenger car, two 26ft box cars nos 1 and 2, and 25ft flat cars nos 3 to 16, all delivered in 1883. Box cars and flat cars had a carrying capacity of eight tons.

A 24ft wedge snowplough was delivered in 1888, followed in 1905 by further 26ft flat cars of 11 tons capacity, nos 17 to 22. Two additional flat cars, nos 23 and 24, were purchased from the Maine Central Railroad in 1916.

Wear and tear

The Monson Slate Company gained control of the railroad in 1908 and in summer and autumn 1909 extended the line by a further two miles with 35 pound rail to Eighteen Quarry and Forest Quarry on Monson Pond. But by 1912 the line was facing serious competition from automobiles for its passenger service. Additionally, the original locomotives were showing serious signs of wear, with cracked cylinders and leaking boilers.

Further problems arose in 1917 with the inauguration of the United States Railroad Administration, which pointed out that the Railroad's link-and-pin couplers and oil headlights did not meet federal safety regulations. In response the line continued operating with the same couplers for a further 25 years but removed the oil lamps, allowing the locomotives to run without them. Under pressure from the Interstate Commerce Commission, Franklin firebox doors (assumed to be of the »



Heading: Coloured postcard of typical Monson Railroad mixed train with boxcars and the line's only passenger car at the back. No 3 is departing smokestack first as the Monson did not adopt the normal practice of turning Forneys to work cab first.

Far Left: Map of the system and its location in Maine.

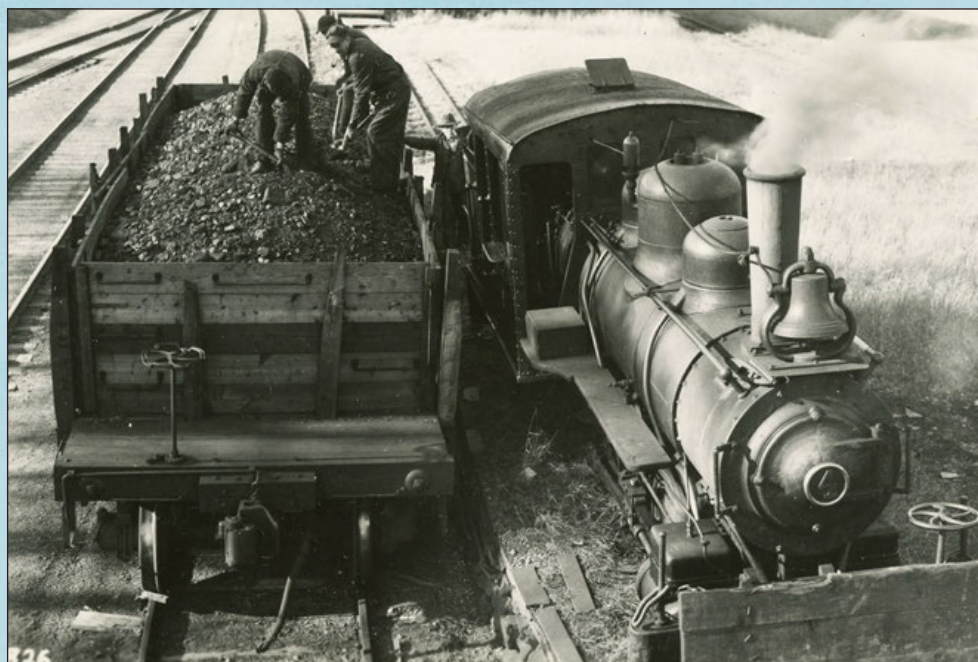
Below left: A damaged photograph that has definitely seen better days but still gives a good impression of the up-country Monson station. No 3 is preparing to depart.

Top: Two of the three flat cars are seriously bowing under the weight of their load at Monson. The loco is again no 3 and the passenger car is attached at the back.

Above: Serious problems for the passenger service stuck in deep snow a mile south of Monson.

Below: The prime traffic was slate carried on flat cars. No 4 is crossing Ladd Brook trestle in 1941, two years before the line's closure.





butterfly type) were installed on the locos along with battery-operated automobile headlamps.

On 3rd November 1919 the Monson engine house burned down. No 1 was a write-off but no 4 was repaired within ten days and no 3 by 20th November. The engine house was rebuilt in June 1920.

The Monson Pond quarry line was abandoned in 1922 and in 1933 the track crew was laid off with the permanent way becoming the responsibility of the train crew. By 1936, no 3 was the only locomotive in operation and the passenger service

ended on 1st November 1938.

When the Bridgton & Saco River Railroad was closed and dismantled in 1941, the Monson Railroad became the last of the nation's commercially operating 2ft gauge lines. But infrequent traffic brought closure in 1943 and the line was dismantled in the winter of 1943-44. The boxcars were removed from the track and set on fire to retrieve the metal fittings.

The Monson Railroad was never modernised – as mentioned operating with link and pin couplers as well as steam vacuum brakes solely on the locomotives and hand brakes on the rolling stock, whilst the turnouts were

all of the stub variety with harp-style switch stands. It was the only narrow gauge line in Maine to be ballasted with stone in the form of slate waste.

After closure, the roadbed remained open for a further two years for trucking slate. More recently, Monson slate was used for the memorial tablets to John F. Kennedy and his wife erected at Arlington Cemetery, Virginia.

Rescued from scrap

Monson locomotives 3 and 4 were discovered by Linwood Moody, writer and rail enthusiast, in a scrapyard in Rochester, New York in 1945/46. They were subsequently purchased by Ellis D. Atwood (1889-1950) for refurbishment and use on his Edaville Railroad in Massachusetts.

After Atwood's death the railroad was bought by F. Nelson Blount in 1957 and operated for a further ten years, the locomotives being loaned for part of the year to Freedomland, a theme park in the Bronx, New York. The railroad continued in operation as a visitor attraction under various management, although it was closed for seven years from 1992.

Nos 3 and 4 went in 1993 to the Maine Narrow Gauge Museum in Portland, where they still reside – no 3 is operational whilst number 4 awaits a new boiler, scheduled for 2023. As of September 2022, it was stored at the Wiscasset, Waterville & Farmington Railroad Museum in Alna, Maine. **NGW**

Above: Coaling no 4 from a standard gauge wagon at Monson Junction in 1941.

Below: No 3 during the period it was on the Edaville Railroad prior to its transfer to Maine Narrow Gauge Museum in 1993.

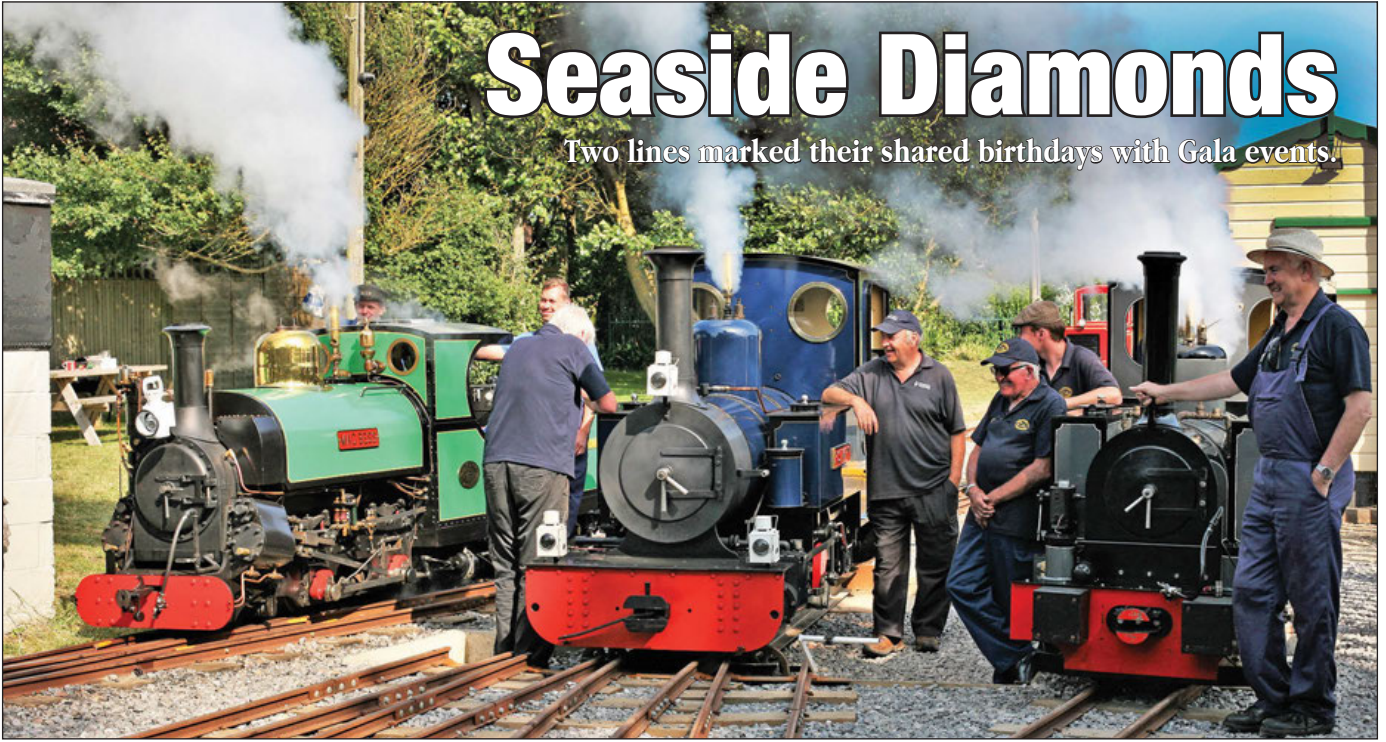
All photos courtesy of the Monson Historical Society

See also *Viewpoint* – page 46



Seaside Diamonds

Two lines marked their shared birthdays with Gala events.



This edition of *NGW* certainly has a theme – of 75. In 1948 just as the Machynlleth stationmaster Edward Campbell Thomas was trying to decide how he could keep two redundant locomotives in existence, described in our feature starting on page 29, on the south coast of England two lines of much slimmer gauge were running their first trains, the pair just 55 miles apart. This year celebrated their 75th birthdays within a fortnight of each other.

Over the weekend of 24th-25th June the 12¼-inch gauge Littlehampton Miniature Railway, marked the anniversary in style with a pair of visiting steam locomotives.

The line opened over the Whitsun weekend of 15th-17th May 1948, having been built by Billingshurst miniature railway specialist H G Cookson, who added an extra half-inch to the then popular 12-inch gauge for miniature lines in the UK, saying that the extra width would add more stability.

Surviving adversity

Running over a route of around half a mile between Norfolk Gardens and Mewsbrook Park in conjunction with the local council, the line became very run-down at one point and fought off several closure threats, most recently in 2015. A new volunteer-run Littlehampton Heritage Railway Association saved it and has run the line ever since.

Visitors for the 75th event included Exmoor Steam Railway-built 'Rosemary' from the Exbury Gardens Railway, and 'Mad Bess', the Penrhyn Hunslet-style loco from the

Above: 75th Gala weekend at the Littlehampton Miniature Railway saw the most impressive shed line-up for some time, left to right are 'Mad Bess', 'Rosemary' and 'St Christopher'. Photo: Julian Clark/LMR

Below: Resident Hastings 0-4-OST 'Firefly' paused at Marine Parade during the line's 75th Gala. Photo: Jonathan James

12-inch gauge Ruislip Lido Railway in north London.

Around 55 miles further east, the 10¼-inch gauge Hastings Miniature Railway celebrated its milestone over the weekend of 3rd-4th June.

This line owes its existence to Captain Howey, builder of the 15-inch gauge Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway. He owned a pair of 10¼-inch locos which he ran on a short line laid at St Leonards-on-Sea. Complaints by local residents resulted in it being closed after just a year, after which it was relocated to Hastings and sold to buyers including railway book publisher Ian Allan.

The line was established in 1948 at Rock-a-Nore, adjacent to a historic

fishing village, running along the beach and later being extended to Marine Parade, giving it a full length of 600 yards.

The line suffered a period of decline but in recent years has been fully refurbished the passing loop at the former East Beach Street station reinstated and an interesting roster of rolling stock and locos gathered.

Trains ran at frequent intervals over the anniversary weekend, with various special workings continuing right into the evening.

Vistoras included locos from the Ropley Miniature Railway at the standard-gauge Mid Hants Railway and the Eastleigh Lakeside Railway near Southampton Airport. **NGW**

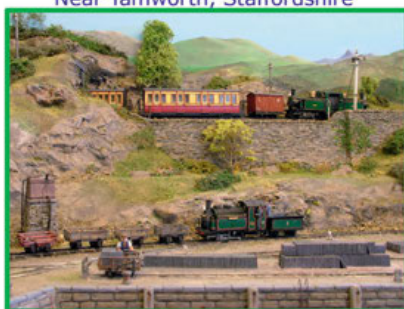




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Large-scale Shay delight

Unusual – and oddly appealing... This is the first image of a production version of Accucraft's latest live-steam model, produced by the manufacturer's US division in 1:20.3 G-scale and an excellent representation of a 13-2 Class A straight-boiler Shay locomotive.

The prototype locomotive was built in large numbers and widely used on lines throughout America and across the world. Today just one of this type of loco is known to survive, at the Nambour museum in Queensland, Australia.

As can be seen the model absolutely brims with quality detail down to the complex works plates and the editor's favourite, the great lumps of wood forming the bufferbeams.

The model is supplied gauge-adjustable between 32mm and 45mm, in black or green livery and with two smokestacks, the traditional version shown here and the design which held a spark arrestor.

Mechanically the model is to typical Accucraft standards, with simulated Stephenson valve gear, two cylinders and all

the gearing that is such a distinctive feature of the Shay. But other notable features that might not be so familiar from previous Accucraft product include two safety valves, a superheater and a hand-operated boiler pump that is mounted in the tender.

Expected UK price is £2145.00 ready-to-run, and it will also be available as an easy-to assemble kit at £1995.00 with first UK deliveries expected towards the end of the year. More details of this novel locomotive can be found on the website at www.accucraft.uk.com

Ready-to-run wagon boost to 7mm scale

Last month we published brief details of a new range of ready-to-run rolling stock in 7mm scale from Haskell Models and we are glad to provide some more details of this potentially highly useful range.

The wagons are made in Taiwan and imported exclusively by EDM Models – Paul Martin who runs EDM has long been known for his very fine 7mm scale kits particularly of British-outline narrow gauge locomotives, and talking to him at the recent WHR 100 event it's clear he thinks these wagons could prove a boon to modellers in a scale that offers very little ready-to-run stock suitable for British-themed layouts.

The wagons are supplied in sets of four vehicles each at £59.95 a set with some 11 different combinations available. The five different body types range across high and low-sided opens and flats with low ends, removable high ends or bolsters.

The bodies are 29mm wide and each vehicle finished with black underframes and bodies in either grey or red primer, using metal wheels and US-style Kadee couplers – these can easily be removed to fit UK-style couplings.

EDM models can supply more information and take orders for the wagons – they are at www.ngtrains.com



Peckett for the garden

The latest and likely to be popular live-steam locomotive offering from GRS/Bowande is given a challenging test by *David Pinniger*.



Following the success of the company's 16mm scale Quarry Hunslet 0-4-0STs in 2021, Garden Railway Specialists (GRS) has recently commissioned a batch of Peckett 0-6-0 saddle-tank locomotives from experienced builder Bowande.

The prototype 2ft gauge locos were made for the Rugby Lime and Cement Works at Southam over a period of 20 years from 1903 to 1923 and were named after periods of geological time.

Very fortunately, while 'Neozoic' was scrapped in 1943, four other locos, 'Jurassic', 'Triassic', 'Liassic' and 'Mesozoic' survived into preservation. Readers may be most familiar with Liassic which was repatriated back from Canada to the Statfold Barn Collection in 1912 and restored back to steam in 2017. Triassic is

in the Bala Lake Railway's heritage display, Jurassic working on the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway, while Mesozoic is believed to be in dismantled condition on the private Bromyard & Linton Railway.

The details and paint schemes of the four 16mm versions of the loco offered are all different. I had two locos from GRS to test, a 32mm gauge Jurassic in dark green, lined white and black, and a light green, lined yellow and black, 45mm gauge Liassic. The Pecketts are available as 32mm or 45mm gauge, but they are not gauge-convertible – you have to make your choice at the time of purchase!

Both have a pleasing satin finish with the lining very neatly done. All the appropriate details such as different sandboxes and rods are correct for the two

versions. The locos are fitted with standard Accucraft-type chopper couplings, but on my test runs I used the top hook with a loose chain as this is standard on my Ambledown Valley Railway stock.

Attractive visuals

GRS/Bowande have really captured the attractive look of the prototypes and the dimensions and details are close to scale. They measure up 5mm wider than scale, in order to accommodate the 45mm gauge option, but this is only really noticeable from the front view.

The locos have inside Stephenson valve gear and the wheels are sprung in hornblocks. There is a centre-flue gas burner, and the boiler has a gauge glass with the top-up valve under the lid of the cover on the saddle tank.

The gas tank in the rear of the cab has a



Above: 'Jurassic' in its element, passing Higher Buxton at the head of a Glyn Valley Tramway mineral train on David's long-established Ambledown Valley Railway.

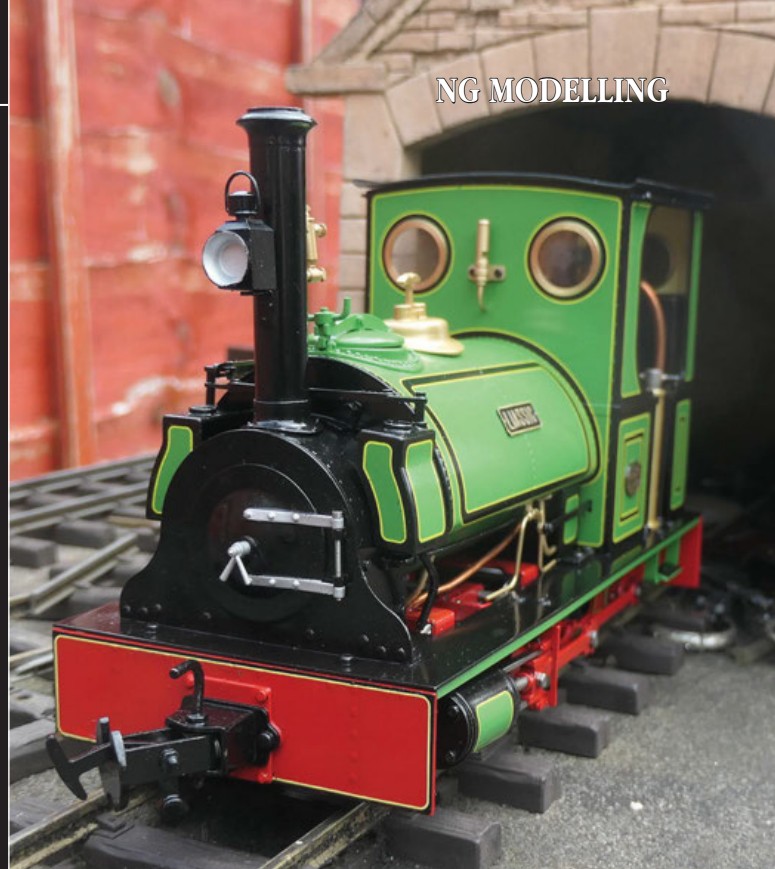
Left: Pleasing proportions: Jurassic raises steam at the start of the test runs.

Above right: The full-size 'Liassic' following restoration by the Statfold Narrow Gauge Trust.
Photo: Andrew Charman.

Above far right: The 45mm gauge and alternative-liveried version of Liassic.

Right: A proper test – hauling the full 12-vehicle Glyn Valley mixed train.

All model photos by David Pinniger



control valve neatly disguised as a brake standard handle. The reversing lever is on the right-hand side of the cab and the lubricator is on the left-hand side. The cab roof is removable to access the controls and is held in place with magnets.

Jurassic was prepared for a run following the instructions in the clear and comprehensive booklet. The gas was lit via the opening smokebox door and steam was soon raised.

The first run was light engine to get a feel for the loco and also to run it in. Jurassic soon settled down to a steady pace for 30 minutes until the gas ran out with two stops being made during this time to top up the water level.

After draining and refilling the lubricator, the next run was with a short Glyn Valley mineral train and this time I measured the length of the run. A total of 39 circuits of my track were completed in just over 30 minutes with again two stops for a water top-up. This is equivalent to

nearly half a real mile at a scale speed of about 20mph.

Heavy load

Encouraged by this excellent run, I then ran Jurassic on a period Ffestiniog passenger train and finally on a much-longer Glyn Valley mixed train. This train was quite heavy with 12 vehicles, but the loco ran very steadily demonstrating excellent slow running.

The 45mm Liassic was run on a friends' track and it seemed this engine was a bit tighter than Jurassic and would need a bit more running in to loosen it up.

There are a few annoying niggles on an otherwise excellent model. The chopper coupler centre height is 15mm compared to the standard Accucraft 25mm – GRS will be providing an alternative later for customers who want to modify their locos.

The very nice works plates are correct for Liassic but unfortunately both Jurassic and Triassic have the same plates which

therefore have incorrect dates and works numbers on them.

The dummy safety valve which sits over the working one underneath should have a spring on either side of the central column. I have mentioned this omission to GRS and they have ordered 300 springs to fit to the locos which they have not yet sent out, and to send for earlier customers to retro-fit to their locos.

GRS and Bowande have done a very good job with these attractive Pecketts which should perform well after a short running-in period. For those who want radio control, an RC-fitted version can be ordered from GRS. **NGW**

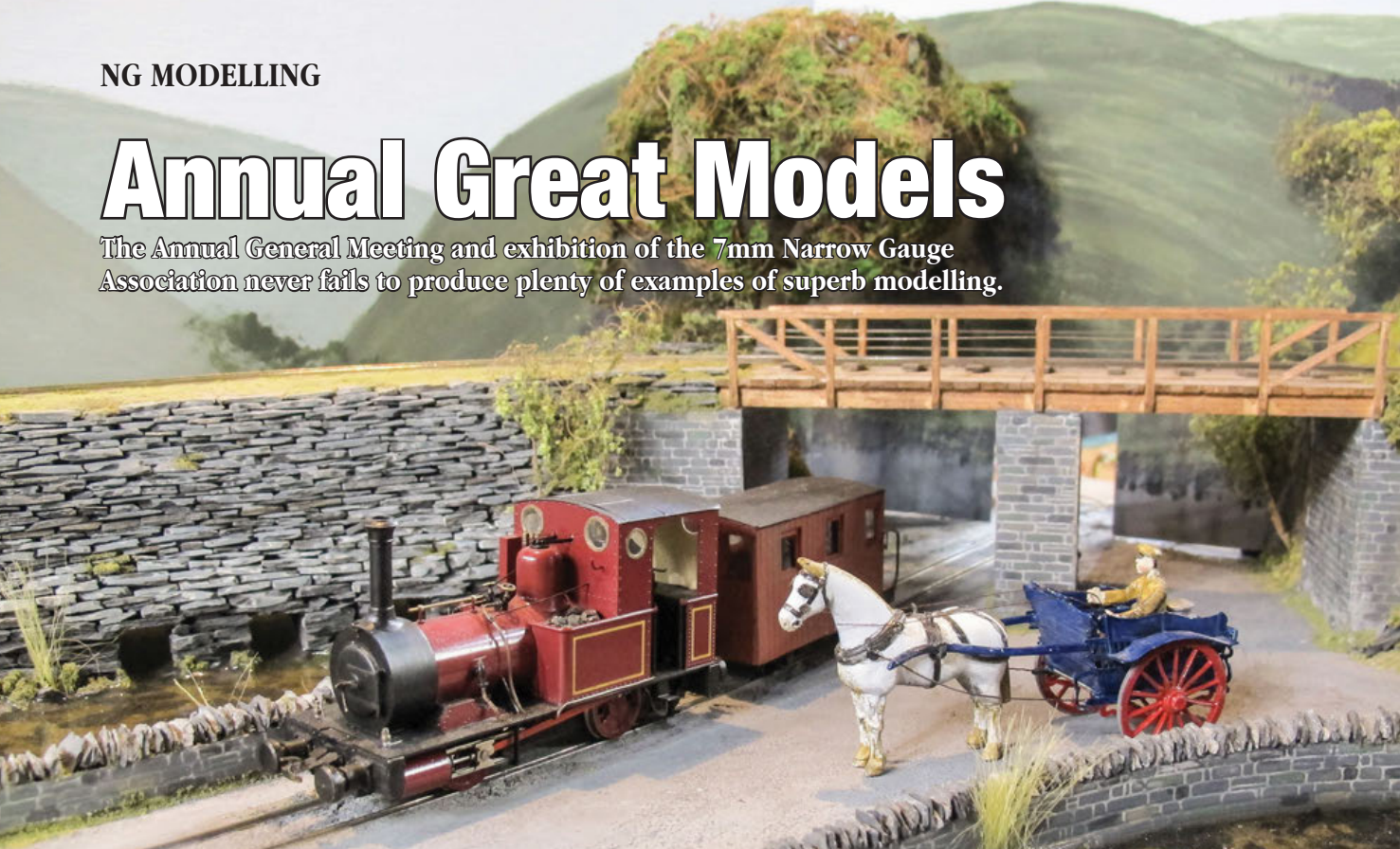
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Annual Great Models

The Annual General Meeting and exhibition of the 7mm Narrow Gauge Association never fails to produce plenty of examples of superb modelling.



The Annual General Meeting of the 7mm Narrow Gauge Association has been held in Burton-upon-Trent for some years now and combined with an excellent exhibition, this year attracting 16 layouts and as many trade stands.

Editor Andrew Charman was very annoyed that the 2023 event coincided with the Welshpool & Llanfair's 60/120 Gala, which he was required at. So we told Phil Parker, editor of our sister magazine *GardenRail*, that there would be plenty of cake in Burton and he went instead!

As the pictures on this spread show, 7mm scale is superb for very finely detailed modelling, and of course narrow gauge layouts can be accommodated in limited spaces. Readers wanting to find out more are encouraged to check out the Association website at www.7mmnga.org.uk

Top: Image in 0-16.5 scale of the Welsh slate lines – 'Melinau'r Abaty' by Chris Featherstone.

Above left: The simplest scenes can produce a very satisfying model – this is 'Withins', again in 0-16.5 by Dave Butcher.

Left: It's not just the trains – Nyall Rudge's 0-16.5 'Whiteoak Light Railway' includes this magnificent model of a trawler – note the fine representation of rust stains on the bow.

Top right: Tony Harwood's 1:27.7 scale 'Yellow Pelican Mining Company' is familiar to *NGW* readers and a favourite at shows.

Above right: Plenty of variety in the prototypes – this is 'Books Bridge', tram-inspired work by Stuart Marshall.

MODEL LINES



Wot no project layout?

A combination of lots of other modelling material coming in to *NGW* Towers and a requirement for our editor to venture out to various full-size railway events has kept him too busy to build model railways and means that our series on building the *NGW* project layout in 009 scale is taking the shortest of breaks this month. Next time we will resume the series by starting to build the upper levels, keeping things light by using foam board and making novel use of a smartphone to try and get the gradients right! All will be revealed next month...

Narrow focus for Corris show

The long-established Corris Railway Society Model Railway Exhibition will take place over the August Bank Holiday Weekend, and organiser Bill Newton has been working away to bring in a variety of layouts to entertain and interest visitors plus a number of trade stands.

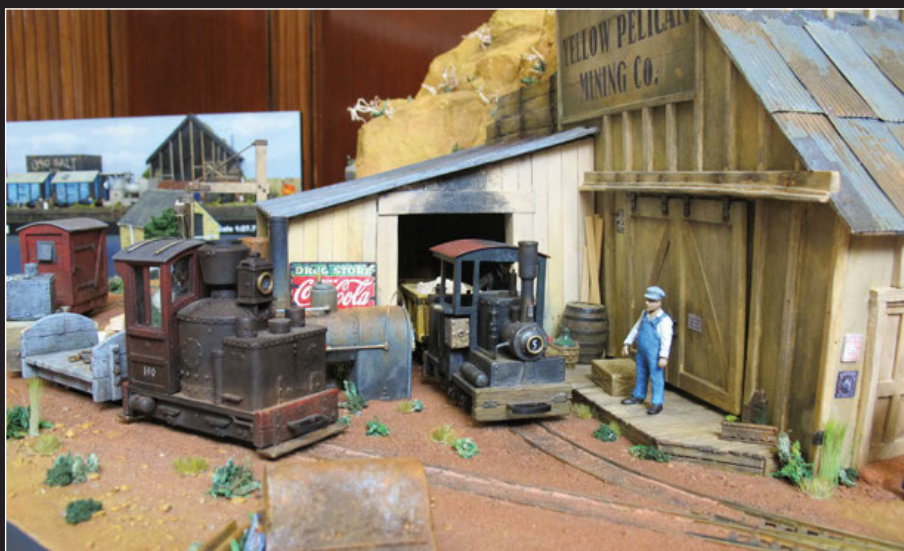
There is a real narrow-gauge aspect to the show this year with among the scheduled attendees five 009-scale layouts, one in OOn30 and, representing the growing interest in modelling miniature lines a 1.35th scale layout portraying an 18-inch gauge line – this scale is usually more associated with military modelling. Once again there will be a 16mm live steam display operating along with models in standard gauge.

The show is on 26th-27th August at Y Plas in Machynlleth. Tickets can be purchased in advance from the Corris website www.corris.co.uk and will also be on the door. Trains will also be running on the Corris Railway on both days.

More Bugs from Peco

Peco is continuing to expand the variety of its rolling stock offerings to 009 scale modellers, and the latest are a complete set of the recently released Ffestiniog Railway 'Bug Box' four-wheeled carriages, but in the plain 'Cherry Red' colour scheme that the FR applied to them in the 1970s and early 1980s.

Third-class vehicles 3, 4 and 5 are available along with the first-class observation car no 6. Three of them come in the plain livery but with the FR crest on the doors, while no 5 is presented with brown painted window edges and black end walls.



Right: The rather finely named 'Chuffineque' in Oe scale, is a representation of a 60cm gauge tourist line in northern France, inspired by the Froissy-Cappy-Dompierre in the Somme and built by David Jane.

Below: Jürgen Heinritz displayed some fine rolling stock modelling on his 0-16.5 'Mousehole'.

All photos by Phil Parker



The Story of the Groudle Glen Railway

By Barry Edwards

The number of narrow gauge lines which have not had their definitive history written up for posterity has diminished in recent years and now another glaring omission has been filled with this excellent new publication on the Groudle Glen Railway.

Some might wonder whether this particular 2ft gauge line has enough history to fill an A4 hardback running to 144 pages – and notably printed on good quality gloss paper that does so much in particular for the illustrations. This is a railway, after all that has never been more than just over half a mile long, built in the late Victorian age simply to take visitors in the Glen to a slightly odd cliff-top zoo. But the line has offered plenty to interest the enthusiast over the years, all well described by the author in words and particularly plentiful images, many previously unpublished and all excellently reproduced.

The line's creation and history until it closed in 1963 is covered first, and while this does not appear to fill many pages it's simply because the 'old' GGR never made any headlines. There is no scrimping on detail, however, and the narrative extends to memories of the Glen and the zoo, which did not survive the Second World War. There are also several images of the time when the line lay derelict between closure and the mid 1970s when it was finally lifted.

The book really gets into its stride with the revival, led initially by members of the Isle of Man Steam Railway Supporters Association. This saw trains return to the Glen at Christmas 1986, a formal reopening in 1986 and reinstatement to the line's full length by 1992. Progress and development since then is fully covered, including restoration of the original pair of Baagnall engines, the arrival of new locomotives and development of the facilities into the efficient but still very attractive operation that is the GGR of today.

The line has always been a favourite with modellers and they will find plenty to inspire with lots of detail photos plus quality drawings of the two original steam engines, the battery-electric 'Polar Bear' and the esoteric carriages. Operation, tickets, models and of course the many personalities that have made the line such a success are all included in a book that is a must-read for GGR fans, but will be enjoyed by anyone who likes tiny lines that nonetheless make their mark on the narrow gauge world – thoroughly recommended. *AC*

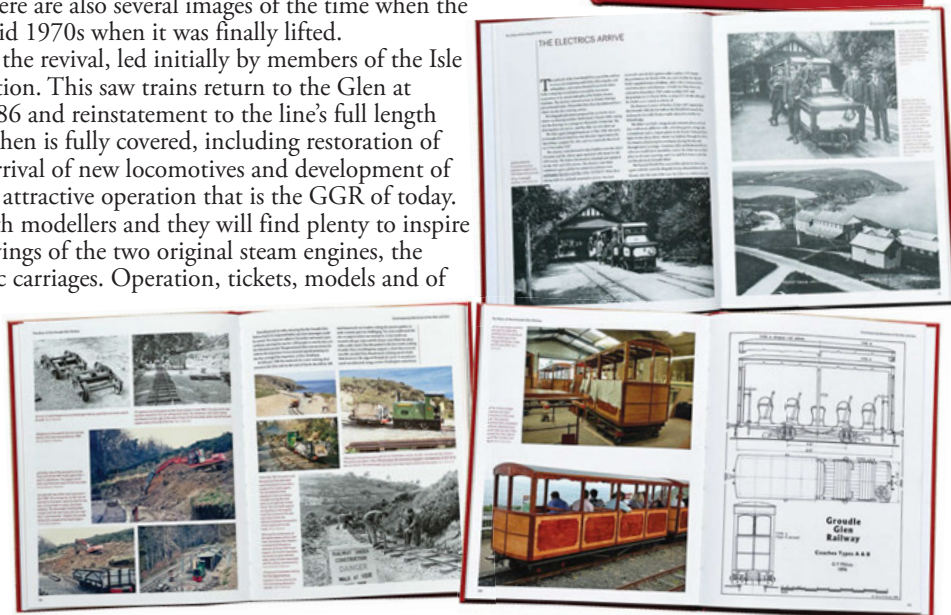
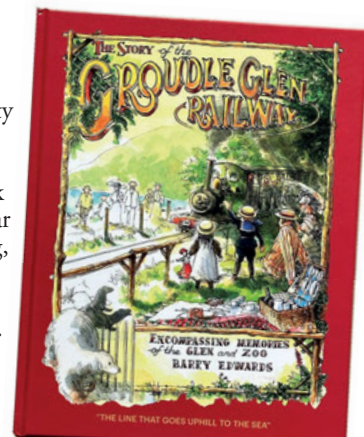
Published by Blackboards Publishing

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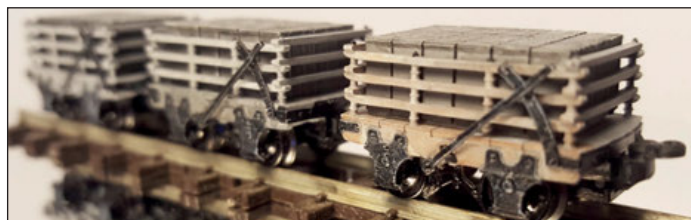
Thunderbirds are go for 3D Hunslet mine locos

Another month, another batch of hugely useful new releases in 4mm scale from Brooks 3D, currently one of the most prolific 'cottage industry' manufacturers around. And while Nigel Brooks highlights his now available Glyn Valley Tramway slate wagons at the top of his latest update, it's the planned next release that will likely interest several modellers – the Hunslet-Barclay 'Thunderbird' former tunnelling loco. Two of these have been at the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway since 2003 and have been named 'Emma' and 'Katie', while a third 'Peter Wood' is at the Leighton Buzzard Railway.

Nigel tells us that a chassis issue that was delaying the loco design is now sorted and final details and options are being added prior to release. The model, like all Brooks products 3D printed, will include a removable cab and two roof options along with "extra bits" depending on which loco is being represented.

As is typical with Brooks rolling stock the GVT wagons are supplied in sets of three at £13.00 plus post, or £24.00 for six. The buyer gets a trio of one-piece wagon body and chassis units with detailed axleboxes, brakes, and other fine details, Kato solid metal wheels and axles, slate loads which are hollow allowing the modeller to add extra weight if desired, and suitable couplings. These comprise both the standard fixed loop design and a new design of double-link units that allow prototypical close coupling.

Details of all the current and rapidly growing Brooks 3D range are at www.brooks3dmodels.com. As well as the Hunslet locos, Other forthcoming releases include a Penrhyn rubbish wagon and the Hudson bogies that have been used under home-built carriage bodies by so many narrow gauge lines.



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ROUNDHOUSE

VIEWPOINT

Edaville's locos

I have enclosed some photos irrelevant to your news item about the Edaville Railroad in *NGW176*, (*No more Thomas for Rail Park* - Ed) that may be of interest.

The first shows Raritan Copper no 11 plinthed at Edaville on 26th October 2011, and the next its sister no 10, also plinthed there. No 10 is mainly of interest because it still carried its saddle tank and so looked much as it did at Raritan, whereas no 11, the one which was later restored to working order, had lost the tank.

The final picture shows the restored loco 11 running at the Boothbay Railway Village on 4th September 2014. The loco had just been restored in the well-equipped workshops at Boothbay and was being tested and run-in before returning to Edaville.

Incidentally the Raritan locos and railway were 2ft 6in gauge, not 3ft as is stated in the news item. The copper works were located at Perth Amboy in New Jersey.

As an aside I was staggered by the cost of admission tickets at Edaville though I can't remember now what the cost was. I had driven there from Mount Washington in New Hampshire where I had spent the morning, and it was only about 20 minutes before closing time.

My flight home was due to leave Boston airport (close to Edaville) about three hours later. At first they didn't want to let me in at all, but after I explained I was only there to see the plinthed locos they waved me through without charging me - very kind!

James Waite

Andrew C replies: Thanks for the interesting pictures James. The feature on the Monson Railroad by Christopher Phillips which appears in this issue is also relevant to the Edaville story.

Longer peat run

I enjoyed the *Peat, Clay and Pleasure* article in *NGW176*, however, it is a little out of date. The Crowle Peatland Railway extended its track from 100 metres to 500 metres in March 2022, so longer rides were available throughout 2022 and 2023.

Secondly, the Hibberd 1881 is no longer at Steeple Grange. It was steadily deteriorating, and the railway asked the owner to remove it in around September 2022. As he had nowhere for it to go, a group of members from Crowle Peatland Railway clubbed together and bought it, in view of its local interest.

The chassis and superstructure are complete, but quite rusted. The

"I was staggered by the cost of admission tickets at Edaville – at first they didn't want to let me in at all..."



Above right: Edaville's two former Raritan Copper plinthed locos, that James Waite gained free entry to a theme park to view (see his letter at left), and below the restored loco running at the Boothbay Railway Village. Photos: James Waite

unattached wheelsets have been regauged to 2ft. The group also got a large box of bits, including dismantled engine parts and gearboxes – initial thoughts were to restore the loco cosmetically, but now they are wondering whether it can be returned to working condition. This is currently being assessed.

Bob Evens

Andrew C replies: Thanks for bringing us up to date Bob. I can feel some sympathy for our correspondent as I have found

consistently through the years that it can be difficult to obtain the most up-to-date information from railway groups – and not just the smaller ones either! The chronology on the Crowe Peatland line's website, for example, offers no guidance any more recent than the end of 2021.

A matter of half an inch

In answer to David Mitchell's question posed on the *Viewpoint* pages of *NGW176* as to why the Cruden Bay Hotel tramway was 3ft-6½in gauge. The answer is quite



simple, but first a short history of the beginnings of this short line.

The Great North of Scotland Railway built a hotel near its station at Cruden. It was not far to walk but too far to carry the guests' luggage. So the railway company decided to build a railway, 930 yards long. For motive power, steam was out of the question on such a short line.

A delegation was sent to the Isle of Man to inspect the Manx Electric Railway. They were impressed so ordered two Peckham Excelsior units with 15hp motors and 6ft 6in wheelbases, of the type made for 3ft 6in gauge tramways. But this was a railway built with bullhead rail.

Those who are familiar with tramway wheels that run on grooved rails will know that the flanges are a lot smaller than railway flanges. Those on the Cruden Bay tramcar wheels were similar but not the same as the Manx Electric Railway tramcars. According to the drawing of the open four-wheel trailer built to carry coal, the flange was deeper at 1 inch and wider at 1¼ inches.

If the Cruden Bay wheels had the same back to back measurement of 3ft 4in as a standard 3ft 6in tramway truck then with wider flanges it would need to fit on a wider gauge railway hence the 3ft 6½in gauge.

Tramcar no 2 is still in existence – it has been rebuilt and can be seen in the Grampian Transport Museum in Alford Aberdeenshire.

John W. Price

Olympic hope for lost line?

I had to write to congratulate James Waite on his article on the Salzkammergut Lokalbahn (or SKGLB) that was published in *NGW* 176. The SKGLB quickly became the Austrian equivalent to the Euston Arch in terms of highlighting lost railway heritage to the more general population.

It's encouraging to hear that some of the local authorities along the route of the line support efforts to commemorate it – unlike others elsewhere in Austria who seem to have an antipathy to tourist railways, such as the remaining section of the Ybbstalbahn.

Perhaps the SKGLB's time may still yet come. Salzburg has regularly mounted bids to host the Winter Olympics since 2003, and the plans to move visitors around the region have in the past included a revived SKGLB, electrified and built to modern standards as a mass transit system. Although Salzburg isn't in the running for the 2030 Games, it can surely only be a matter of time before those plans get dusted off again. We can but hope!

Robert Day

From a different age...

Sad times for a Manx Peacock...



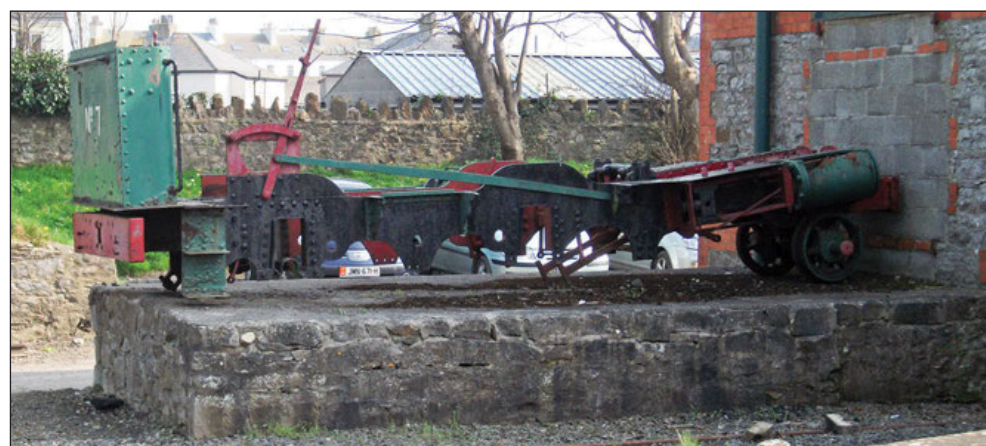
"I was fortunate to visit the Isle of Man in April 1980" writes *Mike Marr*, "at the point when Douglas station was being rationalised and much of the old stock cleared from the station yard but before the sidings were lifted. The Dutton signals just added to the period feel.

"Tucked behind the large carriage shed in the undergrowth were the remains of No 7 'Tynwald' (Beyer, Peacock 2038 of 1880) dismantled in 1945. I asked and was allowed to visit the old-fashioned shed and workshops which were very interesting with a carriage under restoration and the opportunity to climb aboard County Donegal railcar No 20, which was still in use at that time. I have enclosed a couple of photos which may be of interest."

Andrew C replies: The checkered lives of the Isle of Man railways continue to fascinate so many of our readers. No 7 was the first of the IOMR locos withdrawn in 1947 – its remains, which included the frames, cylinders, rear buffer beam and coal bunker, spent many years at the back of the Douglas carriage shed and following purchase in 1978 by the now defunct Isle of Man Railway Society they were stored at various intermediate stations before going on display at Castletown in 2009 – the Editor saw them there in 2011.

Only a year later the frames left the island and today are stored on a farm in Suffolk, with no indication as to what might be their future – a sad tale.

Good too to see an image of the rarely photographed interior of a County Donegal railcar. If only the Manx authorities could be persuaded to return one to service – but at a time when it's felt necessary to again "Review" the future of the island's railways, such hopes are likely in vain...



That was the year that...

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

From 50 years ago

Ffestiniog Railway (1ft 11½in gauge)

During the Spring bank-holiday week the full 13-trip timetable was worked with the two ladies, the Alco and double-engine... A crisis developed on the Thursday... the water supply at Porthmadog proved unequal to demand, and early in the afternoon the tank was empty. Traffic was very heavy, trains leaving well-filled or even leaving passengers to await the next trip.

Advantage was taken of this and on at least two occasions, tightly-packed trains were dispatched some minutes early to use the emergency water supply at Minffordd. This gave the Porthmadog tank time to fill up as the supply had not actually ceased - with the saddle tanks this situation is not too critical, as the combined capacity of tender and tank can just about take them right round, watering at Tany-Bwlch. With the Alco and the double-engine, however, it is not so easy, and a serious shortage could cause some embarrassment.

(NGN, August 1973)

Basic struggles in the mid 1960s which would not happen today – would it?

Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway (1ft 3in gauge)

This season there will be another steam locomotive visiting Ravenglass, a recently discovered 4-6-2 named 'Blue Pacific'. Completed in 1937 the loco was apparently only steamed once before being pushed back into its Surrey hide-out where it has remained until recently. The loco has to be moved as the site of its 'hide' has been sold and (the loco) is purely on loan to the Ratty and NOT for sale.

Blue Pacific has inside valve gear, outside cylinders, cowcatcher, bell on the bufferbeam and headlights. A rather 'square' looking dome perches upon the top of the Belpaire firebox. An eight-wheel LNER-style tender is provided. In general the loco is of about similar proportion to 'River Mite' though rather shorter and narrower.

(NGN, August 1973)

Regular readers of NGW will know that our Editor has a particular passion for the 15-inch but he admits to never having heard of this loco – can any reader provide further information, particularly where it might be today?

Bressingham Steam Museum Waveney Valley Railway (15in gauge)

The new 15in gauge line is not yet finished but a section was being worked at the end of May with a 4-6-2 at either end of the train. The identities of these two locos has now been confirmed as being 'Rosenkavalier', Krupps 1662 and 'Mannertreu' Krupps 1663 both of 1937.

(NGN, August 1973)

Sadly these two locos have not run on Bressingham's 15-inch gauge line for some years and Rosenkavalier is displayed in the museum (picture). However overhaul of Mannertreu has now been underway for some time.

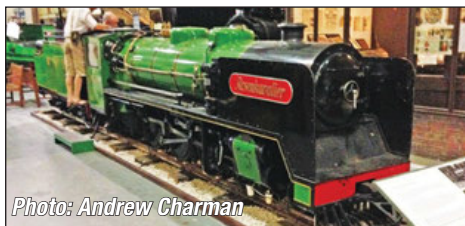


Photo: Andrew Charman

Hollycombe House Steam Museum near Liphook, 2ft gauge

Mr Baldock's appeal to the Department of the Environment in respect of the refusal to allow the development of a steam museum at Hollycombe House has been unsuccessful, although the department expressed the view that they hoped the collection could be kept intact and exhibited on another site with better road access. Mr Baldock... commented to the *Midhurst Observer* that the decision was "likely to mean the end of the collection".

Thankfully that didn't happen! Sense prevailed and Hollycombe museum thrives today.

Extracts from **Narrow Gauge News**, the news journal of the Narrow Gauge Railway Society – for more details go to www.ngrs.org.uk or see the advert on page 45.



Diary & Special Events

■ No responsibility can be accepted for dates on these pages and anyone planning a visit for a ride or to an event should check the line's website and/or social media feeds for the latest update before travelling. Not all trains operate over full lines so check before travel.

Special Events in August

Only events of interest to rail enthusiasts are included in this guide.

■ **Every Saturday, Great Laxey Mines Railway operating;** novel 19-inch steam line on Isle of Man. www.laxeyminesrailway.im

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

■ **1st, 8th, 15th, 20th, 22nd August, Abbey Pumping Museum Rly Operating Day.** Leicester LE4 5PX, 11.30am-4pm. Steam on 20th

■ **2nd August, Talyllyn Railway Sunset Steam Special.** Evening working, returns to Tywyn for approx 9pm

■ **5th-6th August, Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway Steam Day & Invicta Model Railway Exhibition.** www.bwlr.co.uk

■ **5th-6th August, West Lancashire Light Railway Summer Steam Gala.** Three engines in steam, model railways, real ale bar

■ **11th-13th August, Talyllyn Railway Beer Festival.** Real ales at Tywyn Wharf, entertainment

■ **26th-27th August, Corris Railway Model Railway Exhibition.** The Plas, Machynlleth, trains running at Corris both days

■ **26th-28th August, Bala Lake Railway August Steam Gala.** Visiting engines, intensive timetable

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



Visitors are promised for the Bala Gala but quarry Hunslets will still be play a central role. **Photo: Andrew Charman**

Tramways

■ **Douglas Horse Tramway** www.iombusandrail.im/heritage/ Daily except Mondays, running on Monday 28th

■ **Great Orme Tramway:** Conwy 01492 577877, www.greatormetramway.co.uk Open daily between 10am and 6pm

■ **Manx Electric Railway, Snaefell Mountain Railway:** Isle of Man, 01624 662525, www.iombusandrail.im/heritage/ Daily services

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

Miniature Railways

■ **Audley End Railway (10.25in):** Essex 01799 541354, www.audley-end-railway.co.uk Daily services

■ **Beer Heights Light Railway (7.25in):** Devon 01297 21542, www.pecorama.co.uk Daily services.

■ **Lappa Valley Railway (15, 10.25, 7.25in):** Cornwall 01872 510317, www.lappavalley.co.uk Open daily. Steam Wknd 18th-19th

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

■ **Moors Valley Railway (7.25in):** Hants 01425 471415, www.moorsvalleyrailway.co.uk Daily – Summer Gala 25th-26th

■ **North Bay Railway, Scarborough (20in):** Yorks 01723 368791, www.snbr.org.uk Daily services

■ **Rhyl Miniature Railway (15in):** Clwyd 01352 759109, www.rhylminiaturerailway.co.uk Daily services in August

■ **South Downs Light Railway (10.25in):** Sussex 07518 753784, www.south-downs-railway.com, Weds, weekends, Gala 26th-28th

Visit our forum: <http://www.narrow-gauge-forum.co.uk>

What's On	Tue 1st	Wed 2nd	Thu 3rd	Fri 4th	Sat 5th	Sun 6th	Mon 7th	Tue 8th	Wed 9th	Thu 10th	Fri 11th	Sat 12th	Sun 13th	Mon 14th	Tue 15th	Wed 16th	Thu 17th	Fri 18th	Sat 19th	Sun 20th	Mon 21st	Tue 22nd	Wed 23rd	Thu 24th	Fri 25th	Sat 26th	Sun 27th	Mon 28th	Tue 29th	Wed 30th	Thu 31st	
Alford Valley Community Railway: www.avcr.org.uk																																
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Ruislip Lido Railway: 01895 622595 www.ruislipidorailway.org																																
Sittingbourne & Kemsley Railway: 01795 424899, www.sklr.net																																
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Steeple Grange Lt Rly: 01629 55123 www.steeplegrange.co.uk																																
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Welsh Highland Heritage Railway 01766 513402, www.whr.co.uk																																
Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway 01938 810441, www.wllr.org.uk																																
West Lancashire Light Railway 01772 815881, www.westlancs.org																																
KEY Trains (steam or diesel), Special events, No trains	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	



Sweet Steam Stopped by Strike

Keith Chester looks back almost 40 years to a frustrating visit to India.

When in autumn 1985 I was planning a tour of northern India in the following December and January, care was taken to include a number of sugar factories in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. In the time available it was not possible to visit every one and those chosen mostly fitted in with the overall itinerary.

Letters were sent off to the managers of the selected mills and in nearly every case a courteous and positive reply was received three to four weeks later. Once on the ground, however, the initial experience was not too reassuring.

Motipur sugar factory boasted, amongst other delights, a metre gauge E-class 0-4-2 dating from 1877. The veteran was indeed there and even looked serviceable, but the factory

was closed due to a prolonged strike. The next mill I went to, Sakri, was working, only its railway was not and I was presented with the sight of seven forlorn engines.

One factory that was to be visited, come what may, was Saraya at Sadar Nagar. This was a dual-gauge affair (2ft 6in and metre) with an interesting collection of locomotives, at the head of which was 'Tweed' from a batch of nine 0-4-0s delivered to the Bengal & North-Western Railway by Sharp Stewart in 1873.

I arrived at Saraya sugar factory mid-morning on 8th January 1986 to be welcomed by the manager. I was put up in the mill's comfortable guest bungalow and, more importantly, given free run of the place.

Tweed, unfortunately, was

Above: The crew of no 54 (Kitson 3971/1900) peer anxiously ahead at the angry strikers. The large toolbox mounted on the 0-6-2's running board detracts from its overall appearance.

Below: Object of a long pilgrimage: sadly not running but well worth the effort – 'Tweed' was a rare 0-4-0 and a venerable old lady.

Photos by Keith Chester, taken in January 1986

standing out of use but looked in reasonable condition while three other engines were working. Though the mill's connection with Sadar Nagar station was closed and lifted in the early 1980s, it retained its metre gauge internal system and this was being shunted by a former BNWR O class 4-4-0 built by Vulcan Foundry in 1884 – a youngster in comparison with Tweed but still a centenarian.

Secondhand steam

Two locos were in action on the mill's 2ft 6in lines. Both had come to Saraya secondhand from the legendary North Western Railway. No 145, a handsome N-class Pacific built by Kitson in 1918, shunted the yard. Working the line to the loading point at Hetimpur was no 54, a C-class 0-6-2 and another Kitson product. My original plan was to ride this powerful looking loco into the fields the next morning, an idea quickly abandoned when I learned departure was set at about 4am. Five weeks into an Indian bash that was a call to duty too far.

And our title? When no 54 returned to the mill mid-morning, its entry was blocked by a large and noisy crowd of men. They were on strike and had been locked out. The main gate was closed and it was almost an hour before the 0-6-2 could proceed. What was a little piece of paradise for me was a hard, insecure and very low paid job for those living in Sadar Nagar.



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