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ISSUE 187
SEPT 2024



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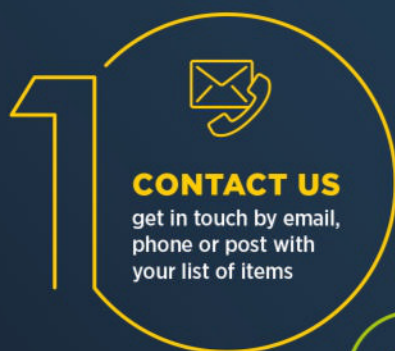
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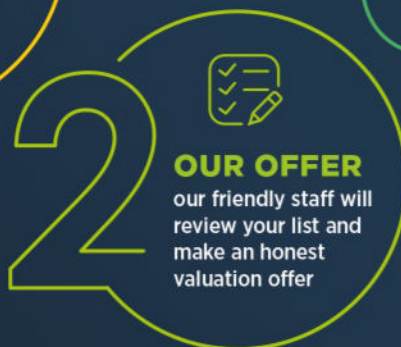
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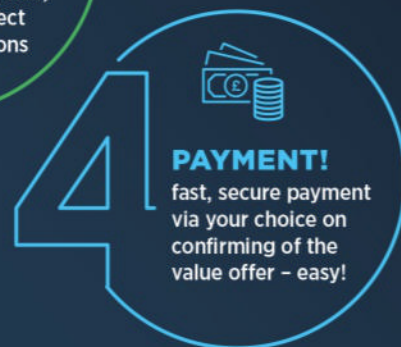
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Cover: The distinctive shape of the Richmond Light Railway's Decauville 0-4-0T 'Lily' but in unfamiliar surroundings – the loco was the first visitor for eight years to the annual rail Gala at Amberley Museum in Sussex, and is seen here on 22nd July with one of Amberley's extensive collection of i/c locos.

The inset shows the evocative interior of the original locomotive shed at the Ffestiniog Railway's Boston Lodge works, now the climax of behind-the-scenes tours being operated for visitors by the railway – we've tried out one of the tours and report on it in this issue.

Photos: *Joey Evans and Andrew Charman*

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More pros than cons...



"With my coffee at Spooners station I watched pleasingly full trains departing in opposite directions..."

Photos: The joys of working on the narrow gauge – the six locos in steam at the Richmond Light Railway's charity steam fair take part in a cavalcade on 10th August. There are six – you can just see the blue tender of Decauville 'Chiquitanta'! Photo: Steve Town

Welcome to *NGW* 187 and I start this month by referring to the picture above – when Steve Town sent it in I immediately thought I'd be using it on this page, simply because it illustrates the simple pleasures of being involved with the narrow gauge.

There's a lot of contented faces in the picture and why not? There's little better than being on a narrow gauge footplate, and having had to give up firing on the Welshpool & Llanfair due to having rubbish knees, I do miss it...

As is typical these days this issue contains its mix of good and bad news from across the narrow gauge world. Having only a couple of years ago visited for the first time a narrow gauge line that until I relocated to Wales in 2007 was the closest to my home, I was concerned to hear that the Old Kiln Light Railway is facing an uncertain future – I hope the Rural Life Museum, where the line is sited, can raise the £150,000 it needs to remain open.

It's always sad to hear of lines being severely affected by storm damage, especially when they have to close for the rest of the season and face millions in rebuild costs, as has befallen the Brienz-Rothorn Bahn rack line in Switzerland.

The death of a railway staff member, however, adds a tragic aspect to any news. The Alishan Forest Railway's track worker was in the wrong place at the wrong time, simply doing his job.

Even apart from this, how much patience is needed to be involved with the Alishan? Its line was severed by a typhoon in 2009, it rebuilt the damage and was within a week of reopening in 2014 when the same thing happened again.

Then after another huge rebuild involving cutting a new tunnel, as we described last month, the line finally reopened in full in July, only to close again a couple of weeks later after yet more typhoon damage. Thankfully it's a lot less serious this time and trains should be running again by September, but how frustrating is that...

Glass half-full

I mentioned good news and there is plenty, not least the welcome occasion of reporting something positive from the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway. There's a new plan for an extension, only half a mile but from little acorns as they say, and a newly restored locomotive. We also hear on the grapevine that following the election of some new trustees there's real optimism around Woody Bay, which is surely what everyone wants to hear...

Meanwhile if one wants to see just how vibrant the narrow gauge is, you just need to take a visit to the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways as your editor did recently, taking part in one of the new and very good Boston Lodge tours for a feature in this issue. So much was going on – from the moment

I arrived, and with my cuppa at Spooners on Harbour station watched pleasingly full trains departing in opposite directions into the mountains on the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland lines, to the variety of projects the line's chief engineer Jon Whalley told me about during a chat later, everything from Manning Wardle replica loco components to Talyllyn carriages and new stuff you'll hear about soon.

And one of the most pleasing aspects? The number of younger staff, both paid and volunteer, at work on the day – as we report in this issue three of them have just celebrated 25 years at the FF&WHR after first encountering the line on a 'kid's week'. When you read about that, and the enthusiasm of others such as 20-year old Matthew Forman-Clark on the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway, it's easy to feel more positive about the future of the narrow gauge...

As I write these words we are already halfway through the peak season – by the time you read them Autumn will be looming ahead of the wind-down towards the end of the operating year. But before that a glance at the events diary on page 48 shows that there is a glut of special events for enthusiasts to enjoy through September. Why not try to get to one or two? You're likely to have a grand day out, and the line, or lines, you go to will appreciate you being there. Enjoy your *NGW*...

Andrew Charman



Old Kiln line under threat as museum fights for its future

The only operating narrow gauge line in Surrey could be forced to close at the end of 2024, unless £150,000 can be found to guarantee the future of the museum at which it is sited.

The 2ft gauge Old Kiln Light Railway is entirely contained within the Rural Life Living Museum near Farnham. At the start of August the museum launched an urgent appeal to raise £150,000 by the end of October – without such funding, the museum stated, there is a very strong chance that it will be forced to close.

Rising costs, particularly “crippling” electricity charges, have caused increasing problems, resulting in a scaling back of maintenance and staff redundancies.

“Our footfall has dropped significantly in 2024 so far, caused by the weather and that two thirds of our normal audience are families, many of whom simply cannot afford a day out,” the museum stated, adding that ticket prices had been kept as low as possible.

“We know that we need to change the way the Museum operates, and diversify its income streams to achieve ongoing

financial sustainability – a huge amount of work has gone into researching and planning those changes (but) unfortunately it looks like 2024’s cashflow is going to put a stop to our plans before we get off the start line,” the statement added.

The Old Kiln Light Railway started life as the Wey Valley Light Railway, established by enthusiasts in the early 1970s around a disused pumping station in Farnham.

When the land was sold for redevelopment in 1982, the line was relocated to the then Old Kiln museum, and over the years since the railway has been extended around the perimeter of the museum site to reach its current length of half a mile.

The line is home to three steam locomotives, Penrhyn Quarry Hunslet 0-40ST ‘Pamela’ (920/1906), Orenstein & Koppel 0-6-0WT ‘Elouise’ (9998/1922) and ‘Emmet’ an 0-4-0T built by Jim Haylock in 2005. An extensive collection of internal-combustion locomotives are also resident on site.

Willy Field, a long-time volunteer and footplate member at the Welshpool &

Llanfair Light Railway, started volunteering at the Old Kiln, which is much closer to his home, around six years ago after meeting chairman David Knott at the W&LLR.

“They invited me down for a visit and I was hooked straight away. It’s a lovely little setup, and I joined straight away as it was only 35 minutes down the road from me.

“It had a lovely feel to the place and the people were very friendly and welcoming, I felt I was one of them straight away. The heritage railway community are a fantastic bunch of people and I count myself very lucky to be a part of it.”

Donations to the museum’s fighting fund can be made at <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/26592>

■ The Old Kiln Light Railway will have three working steam locos at its Working Weekend gala event on 28th-29th September. Well-travelled Kerr, Stuart Wren 0-4-0 ‘Peter Pan’ is set to work alongside residents Elouise and Emmet.

Above: ‘Emmet’ at the Old Kiln Railway’s 40th anniversary Gala in September 2022, with Willy Field driving. Photo: Andrew Charman



■ Last month following the return to service of Bagnall ‘Pixie’ we suggested that a gathering of the 0-4-OSTs would be a good idea, and four of them came together for the annual Gala at Threlkeld Quarry Museum over the weekend of 27th-28th July. Left to right the locos are Amberley museum’s newly overhauled ‘Peter’, Threlkeld resident ‘Sir Tom’, Amerton Railway’s ‘Isabel’ and the even more recently restored ‘Sybil’ from the West Lancashire Light Railway.

Just to confuse visitors there was another Sybil at the Gala, the Statfold-based quarry Hunslet ‘Sybil Mary’. **Photo: Joey Evans**

Lynton reveals plans to extend by half a mile

The Lynton & Barnstaple Railway has announced details of plans to head further in the direction of Barnstaple.

The proposed extension of the current line of just under a mile by 0.6-mile will take it to Cricket Field Lane, just short of the L&B's original halt serving the village of Parracombe – the halt was closed with the rest of the line in 1935.

The extension will require the reinstatement of one bridge and building of another directly beyond the present limit of operations at Killington Lane.

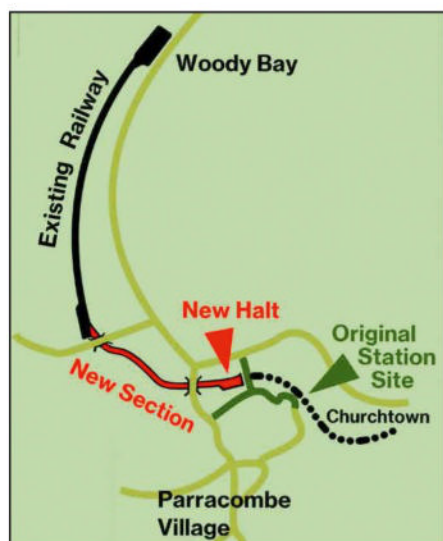
At Cricket Field Lane a run-round loop and platform will be provided but there will be no other passenger facilities or parking, all services remaining focused on return journeys from the L&B's Woody Bay headquarters.

Objections from local residents have proven a stumbling block to the L&B's aims in the past and the line was unable to acquire a short stretch of trackbed at Parracombe during an earlier extension bid – this floundered due to conditions imposed by the Exmoor National Park Authority on the planning permission.

The L&B Trust is trying to address local concerns – its extension document includes a commitment to careful control of smoke and minimal use of locomotive whistles, while two consultation days were held in the village on 12th and 13th July to allow residents to put their concerns directly to L&B personnel.

The line at Cricket Field Lane will be several feet higher than the original trackbed to enable running round on the level. Should the railway in future be able to continue towards Barnstaple the halt will be closed and the trackbed returned to its original 1 in 50 gradient.

The extension will take the line just short of its original halt in Parracombe. Map: L&B



Restored and renamed Bagnall makes debut

The Lynton & Barnstaple Railway now has another mainline locomotive on its operational roster following the entry into service on 14th August of Bagnall 4-4-0T 'Sir George Newnes'.

The loco first arrived at the Devon line's Woody Bay headquarters in 2014. Built as the first of 13 similar engines for the Tongaat Sugar Co in South Africa in 1946 (works no 2819) the Bagnall was named 'Charles Wytok' after a director of the sugar company.

Both it and sister locos 'Sinembe' and 'A. Boule' were purchased in the early 1990s by enthusiast Graham-Walton Binns and repatriated to the UK, two of them being displayed for some time at the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway before a long restoration effort began.

Sinembe is currently in storage at the Teifi Valley Railway and A. Boule on display in the Roundhouse Museum at the Statfold Narrow Gauge Trust, which operates another Tongaat Bagnall, 'Isibutu'.

Charles Wytok entered service on the Lynton & Barnstaple in 2014 but after just two years was withdrawn amid concerns over the condition of its boiler.

In 2019 a group of L&B Trust members formed Bagnall 2819 Co Ltd to purchase the locomotive and ensure it remained at

the L&B. They have subsequently overseen its restoration to working order.

Anne Belsey, chair of the Bagnall 2819 Co Ltd, told *NGW* that members of the group decided to rename their locomotive after the first chairman and main financier of the L&B.

"Sir George Newnes himself was a publisher, specialising in popular magazines and books. Most significantly, he popularised the Sherlock Holmes stories of Arthur Conan Doyle," Anne said.

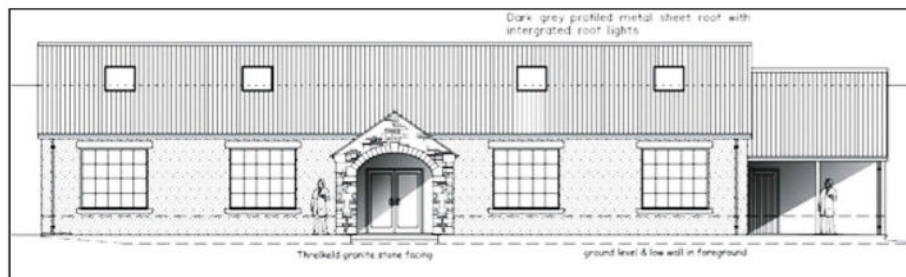
"He came to love the beauty of North Devon and in addition to the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway, he financed the Lynton & Lynmouth Cliff Railway, Lynton Town Hall and a hydro-electric generating station in Lynmouth."

A naming ceremony was carried out on 13th August by Christopher Newnes, the great-nephew of Sir George Newnes, accompanied by six members of his family. On the same day a hire agreement with the L&BR CIC was signed and the engine entered into revenue-earning service on the line the following day.

Photos: 'Sir George Newnes' in steam on the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway shortly before its renaming ceremony on 13th August.

Photos: Barrie Cann/Bagnall 2819 Co





Threlkeld museum gets £170k boost

The Threlkeld Quarry and Mining Museum is pressing ahead with plans for a new museum building after securing £170,000 in grant aid.

The Cumbrian museum, which has a recently extended 2ft gauge line, has been awarded £120,000 by Cumberland Council as part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), and £50,000 from Cumbria Waste Management Environment Trust.

"These grants will enable us to start the construction of our new museum building very shortly – this is a project that has been quietly developing in recent years and we are so excited to see it become a reality," Threlkeld's Dickon Chaplin-Brice said.

The current museum building was the former canteen and laboratory for the quarry. Its limitations include a flat roof in an area of very variable weather, poor levels of insulation and a lack of storage space and accessible toilet facilities.

Design work on a new building commenced in 2014 with the aim of providing better facilities for visitors, staff and volunteers, and expanded display space in conditions that will not cause deterioration of the collection.

The building will be closer to the museum's entrance and the 2ft gauge line is being extended to meet it. Planning permission for both was gained in 2017 and excavation of the site began soon after, but shortly after steel for the structure arrived on site the Covid pandemic brought work to a halt.

Recovery from the pandemic has included the museum team sourcing funding for the project and now that this has been secured the build has been split into three phases.

Construction of the building to a wind and weathertight shell forms Phase 1, with Phase 2 encompassing internal fitting out with lighting and heating systems, toilets and kitchen/cafe space. Finally Phase 3 will see the installation of exhibits, new interpretation and interactive elements.

The museum is applying to other funders to help with the later stages of this project while a crowdfunding campaign has been launched with a variety of rewards on offer to suit a wide range of budgets for those supporting the plans. The page is at <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/preserving-lakelands-industrial-heritage-1>

Keef open day to feature IOM and TR projects

Long-established rail engineers Alan Keef Ltd will be staging an open day on Saturday 28th September 2024 at the company's premises near Ross-on-Wye – the first event since the highly popular 50th Anniversary open day held in 2022.

Steam locomotives in operation will include Alan Keef Ltd managing director Patrick Keef's Bagnall 0-4-0ST 'Woto', which will be sharing duties hauling restored former Dalmunzie Railway carriages with the Keef family's De Winton vertical boiler replica 'Taffy'. A newly restored Dalmunzie wagon will debut – the Scottish line's petrol Motor Rail loco is also in Patrick Keef's care and awaiting its turn in the restoration queue.

Work in progress on view in the workshops will include current projects for the Isle of Man and the Tallylyn railways, while also on show will be the newly restored locomotive and carriages for the new railway at Blair Drummond Safari Park in Scotland, work on this nearing completion. Details of other work available to see on the day will be confirmed closer to the date at www.alankeef.co.uk.

Various trade trade stands will be attending and the usual 'bunker' sale of parts will be available for those interested in adding to their own collections. The gardens will be open for those looking for a quiet corner.

Doors open at 11am, the event closing at 4.30pm, with admission £8.00 for adults and £3.00 for children. Hot and cold refreshments will be served throughout the day with all proceeds going to the local church. More details of the event will be available on the website.

Tallylyn's Douglas goes to the Severn Valley

The Tallylyn Railway's 1918-built Andrew Barclay 0-4-0WT 'Douglas' has gone on display at the standard-gauge Severn Valley Railway's Engine House museum at Highley station.



The 2ft 3in gauge loco, which was withdrawn from service in January, made the journey from Gwynedd to Shropshire on 15th July, and is set to remain at the museum until November.

Douglas will then attend the National Festival of Model Railways, organised by NGW's parent company Warners at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham on 23rd-24th November, before returning to Tywyn.

In the Engine House Douglas has appropriately been placed next to the standard gauge 2-10-0 locomotive 'Gordon', one of the largest engines to work in the UK and which dwarfs its narrow gauge company.

While both engines wear similar blue liveries they are also both military veterans, even serving in the same county. Douglas was built to work at the Royal Air Force base at Calshot, Hampshire, while Gordon is a War Department Austerity loco – it was built in 1943 and employed by the Royal Engineers on the Longmoor Military Railway near Liss where it ran until 1969, being acquired by the SVR in 1972.

Rhapsody in blue: The Tallylyn Railway's 'Douglas' sits very much in the shadow of fellow war veteran 'Gordon' at Highley. Photo: Joey Evans

■ A six-strong steam line-up including recently restored Bagnall 0-4-OST 'Pixie', featured in *NGW* 186, helped the Richmond Light Railway enjoy a highly successful charity steam fair on 10th August. Seven steam road engines, a Stanley steam car and seven portable engines added to the atmosphere of the event which raised £3,250 for the Riding for the Disabled Association. *Photo: Steve Town*



Electric shunter earns praise at Boston Lodge

A battery-electric locomotive brought into service at the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway's Boston Lodge works has proven a major success, according to the line's chief mechanical engineer Jon Whalley.

The loco was one of a pair of 2ft 6in gauge Clayton 9-tonne engines acquired by the railway in 2023 from the Thames Tideway Tunnel project in London. One of the two has now been regauged for its new employment as a works shunter and during an update tour of the works with *NGW* editor Andrew Charman, Jon revealed that the loco is proving popular with staff.

"It's very good, rated at 150hp and has plenty of power available – it will happily push a Garratt locomotive around," he said. "It's quite a heavy loco with smooth electric power that you just switch on. The works staff like using it because it is so quiet."

He added that a charging supply had been

sorted out and the railway had gained six batteries for the two locos, all of which are in good condition; "We can swap the batteries around though we don't exactly need the locos for shift working."

The only drawback of the locomotives is the size of their cabs, due to being designed for work in tunnels, and a likely winter project at the FF&WHR will be to construct a larger and more commodious cab; "to a sensible size and height, able to accommodate two people."

Jon added that in future a vacuum exhaust might be added to the working loco so it can then be employed in such roles as taking carriage sets across the Cob to Porthmadog Harbour station.

Photo: The battery locos shortly after arrival at Boston Lodge. Suitably regauged, one of them is now proving very useful. *Photo: James Waite*



BRIEF LINES



Taliesin awaits its boiler

Evident when *NGW* visited the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway's Boston Lodge works on 24th July was the newly retubed boiler of single-Fairlie 'Taliesin'. According to CME Jon Whalley the unit only needs a new smokebox before it can go back in the frames, putting the loco close to a return to service for the first time since 2020.

Prince overhaul tanking on

The overhaul of Ffestiniog Railway England 0-4-OST 'Prince' has seen the lower portion of the loco's saddle tank replaced for a second time, the much older upper portion still fit to continue in service. The loco is expected back in service in 2025 in time for the 70th anniversary of the line's reopening.

Palmerston off to Devon

The Ffestiniog Railway's well-travelled England 0-4-OST 'Palmerston' will take a very circuitous route back to the line after its summer spent on the Vale of Rheidol Railway. The 1864-built loco will be the guest at the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway's Autumn Gala on 28th-29th September before arriving back at Porthmadog in time for the FR's Bygones weekend on 4th-6th October.

Busy Awdry weekend at TR

The Tallylyn Railway ran one of the most intensive timetables in its history over the fourth 'Awdry Extravaganza' weekend on 20th-21st July, celebrating the mid-Wales line's connection with the Reverend Wilbert Awdry's Railway Series of children's stories. On both days Tywyn Wharf station saw 10 steam departures. The event produced income close to £70,000.

K1 back to Wales

The original Garratt locomotive K1, now based at the Statfold Narrow Gauge Trust, will return to its home of the Welsh Highland Railway on 14th-15th September for the line's Super-power Weekend.



■ The Vale of Rheidol Railway has moved another loco from its extensive heritage collection into the museum in Aberystwyth. 'Brigadelok' 0-8-0T no 4766 was built by Munich-based Maffei in 1916 for the German war effort and after the war used by a contractor in France. The VoR acquired the loco in 2002. Meanwhile the Ffestiniog Railway's 1864-built 0-4-0ST 'Palmerston' has been working summer services on the VoR following the completion of a contract overhaul by the line. *Photos: VoR (Brigadelok), Andrew Simmonds (Palmerston)*

Matthew: youngest loco driver in Lincolnshire?

The Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway believes it has passed out the youngest qualified diesel driver in Lincolnshire – Skegness resident Matthew Forman-Clark qualified on 17th August in time for the 2ft gauge line's main summer season.

Matthew, now 20, qualified as a guard two years ago and is now targeting driving the LCLR's steam locomotive, 1903-built Peckett 'Jurassic'.

"It's something I have always wanted to do," Matthew said. "The railway's diesels are between 80 and 104 years old, so it is a real privilege to be able to drive them – there's a real sense of history and heritage on the railway I enjoy being part".

LCLR training officer and secretary of its Historic Vehicles Trust, Tim Drury, said that Matthew shows a careful, thoughtful approach; "Safety and safe operation are the

most important aspects of driving our vintage trains and Matthew seems completely at home in the driver's cab and with everything involved in the operation of the train."

Matthew began volunteering on his 18th birthday, the youngest age at which volunteers on the LCLR can assist. Chairman of the Historic Vehicles Trust, Richard Shepherd, said that all at the line had been impressed by Matthew's diligent approach to his duties and added that he is an indispensable part of the small team of volunteers that operate the line.

"We have succeeded in attracting other younger volunteers and hope more will follow to ensure the railway can continue and so enable the public to enjoy this unique part of Lincolnshire's heritage", Richard added.

Fowler back to Bredgar

The annual Gala at the Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway on Sunday 6th October will see a repeat performance – privately restored Fowler 0-4-2T 'V11', which ran at the 2023 event alongside its resident classmate 'Zambezi', will make a return visit to the Kent 2ft gauge line.

The Bredgar team promise to have as many engines in service as possible at the event, steam and diesel, while also on display will be numerous vintage engines and vehicles and a large model railway.

More details of the Gala are at www.bwlr.co.uk and tickets can be advance purchased on the site with what is described as "a good discount".

Making Mannings at FR

The Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway has been quietly making progress with construction of components for two of the four Manning Wardle 2-6-2T locos being built for the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway.

F&WHR CME Jon Whalley told *NGW* that a container at Dinas yard is filling up with components; "We've done cylinders, the hornblocks, axleboxes and keeps and the driving wheels."

The line has been contracted by the 762 Club, which is overseeing the project, and is using the drawings and patterns created when it built the first replica Manning Wardle 'Lyd', based on the FF&WHR.

"We are keeping our machine shop busy, timing production to fit in with our own needs," Jon added. "Lots of replica loco projects start by erecting the frames, great big things. These parts need lots of work but don't take up too much space."

More details of the Manning Wardle project are at www.762club.com



LCLR Company Secretary John Chappell (left) presents Matthew Forman-Clark with his driver's certificate at Walls Lane station. *Photo: LCLR/Dave Enefer*

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■ The Heatherslaw Light Railway welcomed its first visiting loco since opening 35 years ago last month when the Ravenglass Railway Museum's Heywood 0-4-0T 'Katie' spent four days on the Northumberland line. Between 1st-4th August the loco hauled special trains and took part in a photo charter. David Moseley pictured the diminutive loco on the Heatherslaw turntable.

Tuesday gang add gravity vehicle to Corris history

The latest item of Corris Railway rolling stock recreated by the line's 'Tuesday Gang' of volunteers has been placed in the mid-Wales 2ft 3in gauge line's museum at Corris Station.

The four-wheeled wooden-bodied velocipede recalls a vehicle once used by the permanent way workers. Known to former Corris Railway staff as the Manrider, it is believed that the velocipede was towed at the rear of a train proceeding along the line until it reached the work site where it was detached.

Once the train had been left tools were unloaded and the body and then wheels removed from the rails. At the end of the working day the vehicle was reassembled with the body turned through 180 degrees, tools reloaded and the workers returned home by gravity, controlling the vehicle by a simple brake acting on one of the wheels.

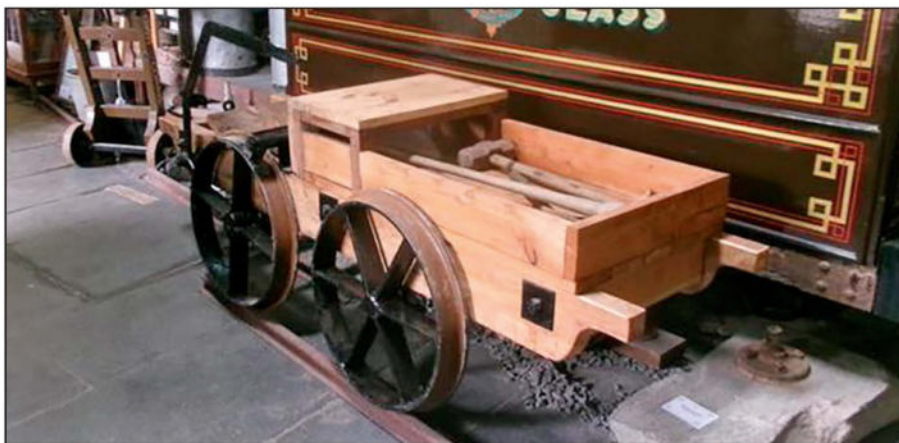
There was a facility to allow the velocipede to be pedalled along if required

but a combination of very basic axleboxes and the Corris line's gradients and curves would not have made this a popular practice. A curiosity which will probably never be explained is that the wheels have six spokes on one side, four on the other.

After the line was closed in 1948 the Forestry Commission took over the locomotive shed at Maespoeth Junction and the vehicle was dumped in the inspection pit inside the shed. The Corris Railway Society acquired the remains and these and the one existing picture of the velocipede were used in the reconstruction.

Unlike the manriders on the Hendre Ddu Tramway and Spooner's Boat on the Ffestiniog the Corris vehicle was unique in being able to be dismantled rather than a solid vehicle. It has earned its place in the Museum where it will remain as an exhibit.

■ Next month's *NGW* will feature progress on the embankment required for the southern extension of the Corris line.



Trio clock up 25 years on F&WHR

The Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway rostered three of its staff together on 4th August, the exact 25th anniversary of their first becoming involved with the line.

On-train steward Oliver Bennett, guard Stephen Greig and volunteer driver Chris Harrison joined as members of 'Young Volunteers Week' (known then as 'Kids' Week') in their early teens in 1999.

Stephen, now the F&WHR Visitor Experience Manager, said that the team that worked on the weeks were passionate about making the railway as inclusive and open as possible to volunteers.

"Group leader Eileen Clayton encouraged and engaged people at a level that was suitable and safe for them, ensuring that volunteering on the railway was made possible for everyone once they were too old for children's activities – matching peoples' skill sets and levels of ability to volunteering roles," he said.

Stephen added: "It is especially important to not only say just how much our volunteers do for the railway, but the other way around as well. The railway has taught all three of us many skills, life lessons and experiences.

"It is thanks to these skills that Oliver and I have had the opportunity to work here full time. Chris was also a paid staff member but moved on to drive for other railway companies – again, using the skills that he learnt on the F&WHR."

Oliver, now F&WHR On Train Services supervisor, added: "I did not expect, when I started all those years ago, to work my way up to a senior position. It is fun working here and busy – and you make lifelong friendships."

Chris, who in 2007 became the F&WHR's then youngest qualified steam driver, today drives for the mainline Great Western Railway in his day job. He added: "The best thing about being here, as well as the friends, has been qualifying as a driver – that was what I wanted to do when I first visited the railway."

Photo: Chris Parry/F&WHR



■ As featured on this month's cover the annual Railway Gala at Amberley Museum this year featured the Richmond Light Railway's Decauville 0-4-0 'Lily' (648/1912), first loco visitor to the Sussex museum's big event in eight years. Lily was kept busy all weekend, seen above passing Amberley's loco shed deep in the former chalk pit with on the regulator Simon King, joint head with Gerry Cork of Amberley's Railway Group.

The cavalcade around the triangle on Sunday included the rolling chassis of Fowler diesel 'Peldon' (21295/1936), driven by volunteer Chris Hollis (right). The loco has been undergoing a major overhaul to its clutch, flywheel and gearbox – the cab and hood were missing along with the 'proper' fuel tank, so an improvised device was fitted to the top of the engine in order to ensure an operational fuel supply.

As is typical at Amberley the Gala recreated truly industrial scenes; all three sides of the turning triangle are visible below as W&R battery loco 'Baby Blue' propels a rake of tipper wagons down towards Redcar Sidings whilst Ransomes and Rapier no 80 heads out of Brockham station in the background.

Photos: Phil Barnes



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Brienzi and Alishan shut by storms

Alishan permanent way worker killed by rock fall after making track inspection.

The Brienzi Rothorn Bahn in **SWITZERLAND** and the Alishan Forest Railway in **TAIWAN** have both been hit by serious storms in recent weeks. The Taiwanese line, only recently reopened in full for the first time since 2009, was hoping to be back in service by the end of August, but the Swiss rack line will remain closed for the rest of the 2024 season.

A severe storm on 12th August caused major damage to the Brienzi Rothorn Bahn (BRB), a 2ft 7½-inch gauge rack line that climbs at a maximum gradient of 1 in 4 and is comparable to the Snowdon Mountain Railway in Wales. The river Milibach in Brienzi burst its banks carrying debris of rocks and boulders into the village districts of Seematte, Rybi and Steiner.

Buildings, parked vehicles, roads and public transport infrastructure were damaged while a 2.2km stretch of the 7.6km long BRB suffered serious structural damage to its trackbed and drainage. A further 1.4km of ballast was washed away.

On 15th August the chairman of the BRB board of directors Peter Flück and engineer Roger Flückiger explained to Swiss media the size of the task they faced, stating that there had never been such an event in the more than 130-year history of the line.

“On Tuesday we flew the route by helicopter and walked a bit down from the Planalp middle station, and we thought ‘we can fix it’ – the next day we examined

the railway line from the Rothorn with engineers, and it looked completely different,” Flück said.

Flückiger added that almost half of the route had suffered damage of some form. “Only the rails are still standing for 2.2 kilometres, and (there is) severe structural damage to the route, the stone bed foundation and the drainage. In addition, the ballast is contaminated over a length of 1.4 kilometres,” he said, while adding that bridges, culverts and retaining walls remained in good condition and generally the trackbed had held up well.

The goal is now to repair between 20 and 40 metres of track per day and trains have been halted. “This is the only way the work can be carried out to the required quality as quickly as possible,” Flück said.

He added; “I am convinced that we can overcome these challenges – we have highly motivated staff and we quickly managed to bring specialists on board. As long as nothing else happens, we can do it.”

Closure will affect access to the railway’s summit hotel, Rothorn Kulm – bookings for the rest of the year have been cancelled.

Initial estimates put the repair bill at 5 million Swiss Francs. The railway is insured and a crowdfunding campaign has also been launched to help cover the costs.

Flück said that the goal would be to resume pre-season operations to Planalp in May 2025 and over the full line in June.

The floods also affected other lines in the region with the metre-gauge Berner Oberland-Bahn forced to suspend services between Zweilütschinen and Grindelwald for several days.

Frustration & tragedy in Taiwan

The worst typhoon to hit Taiwan in more than 15 years saw services on the Alishan Forest Railway (AFR) suspended, just weeks after the full line reopened for the first time since 2009.

Typhoon Gaemi also caused major disruption across eastern China and the Philippines. It hit Taiwan on 24th July and anecdotal reports from the Alishan area stated that 1.5 metres of rain fell in a day.

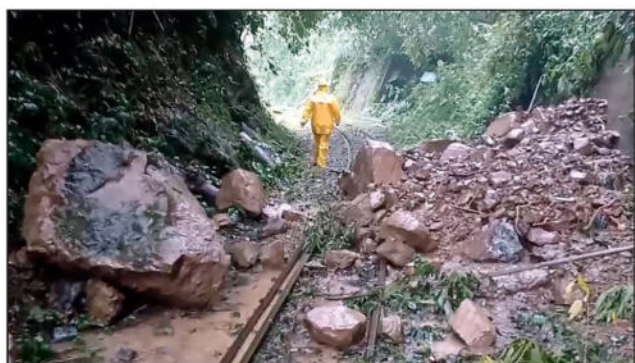
By the time the storm abated three days later at least 10 Taiwanese people had been killed. One of them was an AFR track maintenance worker – Mr He was returning down the mountain after inspecting the line for typhoon damage when his road car was crushed by a rockfall.

Rocks and fallen trees blocking the line forced the suspension of services, but the damage was not nearly as severe as that caused by the devastating Typhoon Morakot in 2009, which severed the line, and 2015’s Typhoon Dujuan which collapsed a tunnel just as the AFR was preparing to reopen after repairs.

Subsequent repairs required the building of a new tunnel, detailed in last month’s edition of *NGW*, and this was only completed, reconnecting the line, early this year with the AFR reopening on 6th July.

In a statement issued on 27th July the Alishan Forest Railway and Cultural Heritage Office, which runs the line, said that a total of 89 different locations were covered by fallen trees and landslide debris.

Since many areas are inaccessible by road, repair and restoration would take place a step at a time, and further rain might affect progress, the statement added. The work was expected to be completed and the line reopened by the end of August.



Above: The Brienzi Rothorn Bahn suffered extensive damage at several locations on the rack line, forcing its closure for the rest of 2024.

Photos: BRB

Left: The Alishan is used to coping with challenges from the weather which has this time produced another frustrating delay to the line’s full reopening.

Photo: AFR



Zittau success points to oil-fired future for Saxony steam operations

Efforts to find alternatives to coal have seen more extensive use of 750mm gauge 2-10-2 no 99 787 in Saxony, GERMANY (*writes Christian Jummrich*).

The 1956-built loco of the Sächsisch-Oberlausitzer Eisenbahngesellschaft (SOEG) was in 2022 converted to burn light fuel oil during a general inspection at the Meiningen Steam Locomotive Works, using a combustion system developed by DLM AG from Winterthur.

The conversion cost around 1.9 million Euros (approx £1.6m) and was funded by the Federal Ministry of Economics and Climate Protection.

The core of the work is the installation of a burner plate with two individually controllable pilot burners and four switchable load burners, fed by an oil storage container installed in the bunker.

The locomotive also received a Lempor ejector during the conversion, which is said to reduce CO₂ emissions by around 40 per cent and remove any fire risk from sparks.

No 99 787 began tests and staff training on the 16km line between Zittau and Jonsdorf in January. An official acceptance run was made on 3rd May and after pulling some service trains that month, the loco began daily operations in mid July.

Authorities hope that continuing success with the loco will lead to further conversions. The metre-gauge 2-10-2 no 99 7244 of the Harzer Schmalspurbahnen GmbH is expected to be next in line while Zittau's 99 760 is also a potential candidate – both locos are currently undergoing general inspections at Meiningen.

Above left: The success of oil-firing 99 787, seen here at Zittau, could have far-reaching consequences for Saxony steam.

Above: Where once was a coal hole is now a window to view the oil burner.

Photos: Christian Jummrich

Motive power surprises boost Zittau Gala weekend

The 750mm gauge Zittauer Schmalspurbahn held its 18th 'Historik Mobil' weekend on 3rd-4th August (*writes Dominic Emery*), the main event of the line's year with five different train sets running including an open wagon working with live music.

Surprise attractions included 2-10-2T no 99 731 pulling the Reichsbahn-liveried train in works white livery (some of which had been washed away by heavy rain the day before), and the presence of Saxony Railway 0-6-0T IK no 54, built as recently as 2009 – publicity for the event stated that this loco would not be attending as it was visiting the Rügensch-Bäderbahn on the Baltic coast. It double-headed with Saxony Railway 0-4-4-0T IV K no 145.

The railway ran an hourly service from Zittau to Kurort Oybin with 2-10-2T no 99 758 and Bo-bBo diesel 199018 and a half-hourly service from the junction at Bertsdorf to Kurort Jonsdorf, the Saxony-carriage train pulled by no 145 and the 'Reko'-livery train by 2-10-2 99 787 (see story above).

Above right: Saxony 0-6-0T no 54 was a surprise arrival at the Sittau event, seen here with 0-4-4-0T no 145.

Right: Heavy rain has caused some of the works white livery on 2-10-2T no 99 731 to be washed off.

Photos: Dominic Emery





Legs all the way...

The Puffing Billy Railway in AUSTRALIA has restored in full its unique facility to ride with one's legs hanging out of the side of a carriage.

The feature on the 2ft 6in gauge line was suspended after a collision with a minibus at Menzies Creek level crossing on 5th March 2018. The suspension was lifted on 4th February 2022 but only on part of the line between Belgrade and Lakeside.

On 2nd August the line announced that passengers would now be able to ride with legs out the side on the remaining six-mile section of the railway from Lakeside to Gembrook, restoring the experience to the entire 15½-mile line.

Photo taken in 2022 by Michael Chapman



Dresden line's 140th

The 750mm gauge Lößnitzgrundbahn, near Dresden in GERMANY, plans to stage a special anniversary 'Schmalspurbahn Festival' over the weekend of 14th/15th September 2024 (*writes Dominic Emery*).

The event on the 140-year old line will feature an expanded timetable of seven steam-powered trains over the complete route from Radeboul Ost through to Radeburg, plus two extra workings to the main station at Moritzburg.

Alongside the normal Sächsische Dampfeisenbahngesellschaft mbH (SDG) and the Deutsche Reichsbahn (DR) liveried trains, the IV K-powered Saxony train from the Railways Historical Society will also be in action.

Various other attractions for visitors of all ages will be available at the three main stations with the centre of activity at Moritzburg including field and garden railways and stands from the local public transport companies.

■ The Museum of FRENCH Steam Tramways and Secondary Railways (MTVS) has dispatched its Billard railcar to classic vehicle specialist B Karmann at Moselle to have its sheet metal cladding restored, following three weeks of sandblasting and renovation work to the vehicle's frame.

MTVS spokesman Olivier Janneau said that as much of the railcar's original cladding as possible would be re-used but the roof will be new. The vehicle is expected back at MTVS's Crèvecœur-le-Grand base by the end of the year.

Photo: Olivier Janneau/MTVS

Funding push to return cane loco to steam

A group of enthusiasts in AUSTRALIA are raising funds to return a former 2ft gauge sugar cane locomotive to steam.

'Chiverton' was one of a class of 18 0-6-2T locos that were built by Perry Engineering in Adelaide in 1938 and worked at the Kalamia sugar mill southeast of Townsville, Queensland.

Following its withdrawal the loco spent 17 years plinthed in a children's playground before being acquired by an enthusiast to protect its future.

Now the Cobdogla Steam Friends Society has launched an appeal to purchase the loco and transport it from Junee in New South Wales to workshops in Loveday, South Australia for restoration.

Once restored the plans are for the loco to operate trains at the revived Cobdogla Irrigation And Steam Museum. The museum was operated by volunteers for more than 30 years but they were locked out following significant flooding in 2022,

landlords S A Water claiming this was due to flood damage and safety concerns.

The volunteers have since been in negotiations with several bodies in a bid to enable a transfer of the museum to them

and its reopening – these are ongoing.

At press time the Steam Friends had raised \$15,000 of the \$30,000 needed to transport Chiverton to Loveday. The crowdfunding page is at bit.ly/4cvD2c8.



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Inside the Lodge

Andrew Charman checks out the latest heritage innovation at the Ffestiniog Railway, giving visitors access to hallowed quarters...



Your Editor first rode on the Ffestiniog Railway in around 1980, on holiday with his parents, and like all narrow gauge enthusiasts I stared avidly for signs of goings on as the train rounded the curve by the fabled Boston Lodge works.

In those days the FR had a bit of a reputation as 'Network Narrow Gauge', focused more on moving tourists from one end of the line to the other than its heritage, and for

young and then unconnected enthusiasts like me actually seeing inside the works was something we thought very unlikely.

Things are very different today – the FR and its now sister line, the Welsh Highland Railway, still move very many tourists about each year, but heritage now has a much higher profile – a typically Welsh Wednesday (i.e. damp...) in July found me trying out the latest innovation in that area,

the newly-launched public tours of Boston Lodge works.

A decade-long project

The tours, which typically last three hours 'door to door', start in the best possible fashion with a train ride from Porthmadog Harbour Station to Boston Lodge Halt, but before we embark FR general manager Paul Lewin explains how this latest innovation has come about.

The tours are one result of a major reorganisation of Boston Lodge that started some 10 years ago, a time when the site was being overwhelmed by trying to service two railways, having been designed in the 1860s for one line which had a few steam engines and a lot of horses. "The drains were inadequate, our electricity supply was like a piece of wet string on the end of the grid," Paul says.

Initial plans centred on finding a place to build a new works, which had to be within three miles; "All our people work at Boston Lodge and location matters..." But nowhere was suitably flat, road and rail connected

Above: Wandering through history, visitors pass 'Princess' in the old loco shed at Boston Lodge.

Left: First step on arrival at Boston Lodge Halt – tour guide Stuart gives an essential safety briefing.

Below: From the volunteers' memorial the breadth of the Boston Lodge site becomes clear, the oldest part of the works to the fore with renovation work still going on.

All photos by Andrew Charman



with enough space for what was needed – sites with the room were on a flood plain and regularly deluged.

So the decision was taken to redevelop the existing site, and before any shovels went in the ground the first five years were spent in planning. “We had meeting after meeting deciding what could go where and how – it’s so complicated. And we couldn’t stop using our workshops to do the work as we have to run a railway, so the redevelopment has gone on at the same time, which I think is quite a miracle.”

The first phase was to install a new access road to the site and carry out all the underground work, drains, electricity and a water supply, Paul adding that virtually every piece of ground the tour attendees would walk on had been dug up and put down again. “We’ve put in infrastructure fit for the next 50 or 100 years – a proper sewage processing plant for example which is very important. All heritage railways get asked as to whether they are environmentally friendly and people talk about smoke, but the big concern is groundwater pollution – we are next to the sea and a site of special scientific interest.”

Remove to create

The next phase involved removing rock at the northern end of the site and putting it at the southern end to create more flat space, on which have been built new and very large carriage sheds – the longest, three roads wide and 10 vehicles long, accommodates half of the passenger fleet.

The roofs of these sheds have been covered in solar panels, the energy generated from these used to power the works during the day, reducing reliance on outside electricity. “If we want to have steam engines in future everything around them must be thinking about the environment in the modern world,” Paul comments.

The new space generated allowed the transfer of much of the day-to-day operations that had made use of the more historic buildings on the site, in turn allowing the heritage aspect of this area to be developed. This aspect provided the impetus for the National Lottery Heritage Fund to contribute close to £3.8 million of the overall £5.2m cost of the project, with the Ffestiniog Railway Society and Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway Trust each putting in £568,000 and the remainder coming from volunteer time and in-kind contributions.

An essential element, Paul says, was to create a place for volunteers to work, the crushing pressure of two railways in one place often seeing volunteer projects pushed out of



Above: Inside the blacksmith's shop with the new lottery-funded heritage learning centre to the rear.

Right: Isometric map of Boston Lodge created for the tour groups by volunteer guide Jim Embrey.
Key: 1) Heritage carriage shed; 2) Carriage works; 3) Paint shop; 4) Carriage shed; 5) Small loco shed; 6) Engine shed; 7) Erecting shop; 8) Main yard; 9) Machine shop; 10) The Den & washrooms; 11) Iron Foundry; 12) Boston Lodge 1 & 2 (will become control offices); 13) Blacksmith's shop; 14) Brass foundry; 15) National Lottery Heritage Fund research & training centre; 16) Top yard; 17) Waggon repair shed; 18) The Memorial; 19) Old engine shed; 20) Boston Lodge Halt.

sheds to enable necessary work by paid staff, followed by a “massive shunt” each weekend to provide the volunteers with shed facilities. “It didn’t send the right message to volunteers and wasn’t sustainable. Now we’ve built spaces for them to work in as well as paid staff – looking after volunteers is so important, as no volunteers, no heritage railways.”

Basic training

Paul adds that the facilities now also allow proper training of volunteers, in skills no longer learnt as a matter of everyday life, right down to striking matches, using shovels... “You show them how, they have fun and you draw in more volunteers. The lottery funding is in part allowing the training of a whole range of railway skills at varying levels. And we’ve had

existing volunteers undergo training they’ve never had, the resulting qualification giving them more confidence, which is really positive.”

Finally the redevelopment has made possible the reason for my visit, the tours, which according to Paul are indicative of today’s tourism market, people now looking not just for a train ride but for something a bit special and a bit different.

“When you are spending a lot of money, you expect a bang for your buck. On a behind-the-scenes tour people can touch things and ask questions. People want to get up close to steam engines and spend time they don’t have when the engines are pulling trains; now you can see the engines not in use, and tour guides can tell you about them and answer most of the questions – though even »





I get floored by some and I've been here a long time!"

The guides are all volunteers and have been trained and tested on the railway's history as well as receiving professional training on how to be a guide. Paul admits to having expected the guides to be older volunteers who felt they could no longer do such things as drive trains; "A bit of that has happened but a load of new volunteers have also come in wanting to do this role – I didn't expect that."

Armed with this knowledge we then board our train to start the tour. The FR does not guarantee the train will be steam hauled but rostered on this occasion is quarry Hunslet 'Lilla', duly depositing the party at Boston Lodge Halt, where we are first given a safety briefing by Stuart, our lead guide for the day. After all the works is just that, with plenty of vehicles moving, and things to trip over, pits to fall down – the railway takes great care to ensure its visitors proceed around the site in a safe manner.

Panoramic view

An early stopping point involves a short climb to the volunteers

memorial, relocated from the end of the Cob to a site where one can get an impressive overall view of the Boston Lodge site before going down to move through the various buildings. The oldest come first, dating from before steam and restored or in some cases recreated, including the original stables for the horses, waggon repair shops and the blacksmiths' forges.

Just how knowledgeable our guides are is very evident as they describe the history of each element of Boston Lodge, but they've also been well trained as everything is imparted in a friendly and interesting manner, appreciated by this attendee who unlike many of the other visitors knows most of what he's being told!

The tour moves from the historic part of the site to the active sheds and there are tantalising views inside the workshops, how far one sees within depending on what's going on – one could hardly, for example, have welding underway with a tour party walking by...

The highlights are without doubt towards the end of the tour, firstly with time spent in the still fairly new

small loco shed, where out of use locos and stock are placed for display – participants allowed plenty of time to wander among them and even to climb on the odd footplate.

Out of the shadows

Finally, the party moves to the original two-road loco shed, a building that within oozes history just in its construction, let alone what's within it. And these are more gems – the redundant frame and boiler of 'Welsh Pony' arranged to recall the scenes that greeted the first preservationists in 1954, and the 1979-built 'Earl of Merioneth', brought down from out-of-site storage at the Glan y Pwll works in Blaneau Ffestiniog.

At the end of the shed a video presentation extolling the delights of volunteering at the railway concludes the tour before we head back to the halt and our return train to Harbour station, a very enjoyable three hours that seem to have passed very quickly.

Tours currently run on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sunday mornings though Paul adds there is capacity to add more if there is demand. And while they are mainly aimed at general visitors there is scope to develop more enthusiast-themed events.

Also underway are workshops, allowing visitors to get their hands dirty on such things as loco preparation; "recently we had people learning how to do lime mortaring on a wall we were restoring – the key to it all is getting people to interact with us," Paul concludes. "We love to share and learn and we've tried to make a place where that can happen." **NGW**

More Information

For more details of the tours go to <http://festrail.co.uk/boston-lodge-tours-and-workshops>

Above: Plenty of time in the small loco shed to wander among the locos and even climb on one or two.

Below left: In the old running shed, recreating scenes from the earliest days of the FR's preservation.

Below: The 1979-built Fairlie 'Earl of Merioneth' is now able to be viewed by the public once more.



Centenarian Steam at Madiun



James Waite looks back almost 50 years to a memorable visit to Java when steam was on its last legs.

The Dutch governed the archipelago which now forms Indonesia from the early years of the 17th century, at first through the Dutch East India Company and, after 1799, as a colony. Java, with its dense population, was by far the most economically important island, and the Dutch established a seat of government at Batavia, the present-day Jakarta, almost on first arrival.

They remained the colonial power until the Japanese invaded early in 1942. A powerful independence movement thwarted their attempts to resume control after the war and they withdrew in 1949.

By the mid-1800s there was an obvious need for a railway system, but the Government of the day preferred to leave its development to the private sector. Construction of a standard gauge network inland from the port city of Semarang was begun in 1864 by the Nederlandsch-Indische Spoorweg (NIS). It reached the inland cities of Solo and Yogya, but there was little prospect of any significant profit and it never progressed much further.

In the late 1860s the Government decided that a narrower gauge was needed to reduce costs. It consulted on gauges between 1,000mm and 1,100mm and set up a commission which reported in September 1869 in favour of 3ft 6in or 1,067mm, mainly because the gauge was already in use in Norway and Queensland and acquisition of equipment would likely be more straightforward.

Above: Busy scene at Madiun shed. On the left of Sharp Stewart B5012, built in 1884 are two years older classmate B5007 and Hartmann-built B5307 (3578/1912).

Below: B5012 was a loco James followed several times. It was turned on the turntable at Ponorogo before heading tender-first to Slahung.

Photos by James Waite, September 1978

The state-owned Staatsspoorwegen (SS) was set up in 1875 to promote more extensive construction. Its first line opened in 1878 between Surabaya, Java's second city and the centre of its mercantile activity, to Pasuruan. This line was extended in the following year from a junction at Bangil to the city of Malang, up in the hills and a favoured retreat for Surabaya's residents.

Through the mountains

The main project, however, was to link Surabaya with Jakarta, 660km away to the west. Both cities lie on the north coast and are separated by a fertile plain which was already well developed. Further south the terrain was wild, and nearer Jakarta it was also mountainous. The new railway

could have been built along the plain relatively inexpensively, but the powers-that-be decided that instead it should run through the mountains, both to promote development and to enable troops to be transported quickly if the island were ever to be invaded from the south.

A section to Nganjuk from Sitoarjo, near Surabaya, opened in 1881. It was extended to Madiun in 1882 and reached the standard gauge at Solo two years later. In 1887 a long line opened westwards from Yogya to Cilacap, the only significant port on the south coast. In the west the NIS already ran a 3ft 6in line south from Jakarta to Bogor and this was to form a part of the new route.

An extension from Bogor to Cicurug also opened in 1881, but »





Sharp, Stewart & Co, three 2-4-0Ts and three 0-6-0Ts for shunting and local work in 1879, and 28 much larger 2-4-0 express locos between 1879 and 1883, intended for the level or lightly-graded lines around Surabaya and Madiun.

None of the tank locos were duplicated, but the elegant 2-4-0s must have provided great satisfaction since seven more batches were built until 1896, when their numbers reached 65 in total. They were equipped with 1,427mm diameter driving wheels and were designed for a maximum speed of 60kph, plenty fast enough in the system's early years. Their long wheelbase included a leading Bissell truck which allowed for 50mm side play.

A shapely polished brass dome was mounted on the rear boiler ring and, on at least most of the locos, a sandbox on the front one. Slatted-wooden shutters were fitted to the cab windows for protection from the tropical sunshine, and the locos were equipped with four-wheeled tenders.

The design was modified in 1884 to reduce slightly the coupled wheelbase and increase the distance to the Bissell truck, but otherwise it remained much the same throughout the 16 years of construction. In its early years the SS numbered its locos in the order in which they were ordered, but in 1912 they were renumbered by class, and the 2-4-0s became nos 201-265.

Preferred builders

The growing length and weight of trains, and a desire for faster speeds, eventually brought a need for larger locos, but no more orders went to Sharp, Stewart, nor to any other British builders. Hartmann of Chemnitz had been constructing a successful series of 2-6-0Ts for the mountainous section since 1879, and they became the system's preferred builders, along with Hanomag and, later, Werkspoor of Amsterdam. Some 44 two-cylinder compound 4-4-0s were supplied by the three of them between 1900 and 1910. In 1912 these became the 601 class.

They were followed by the 11 generally similar 651 class superheated 4-4-0s which dispensed with the complications of the compound system, but by the time these were delivered the SS had acquired its first 4-6-2 Pacifics, and it would rely on the type for principal passenger trains during the remainder of its independent existence.

One might have expected the 2-4-0s to spend a few years on lighter duties, and then gradually to fade away, but for some their careers had barely begun! Early in the 1900s five



Above: B5012 approaching the station at Ponorogo after being turned...

Left: ...marshalling its train before continuing to Madiun on the following morning.

progress through the Parahyangan mountains towards a junction at Maos, near Cilicap, was much slower, and the railway wasn't completed until 1894. At first the journey to Surabaya from Jakarta took no less than three days. Through running wasn't possible until a third rail was

added to the standard gauge between Yogya and Solo in 1899.

The SS bought seven 2-4-0Ts for the lightly-graded Pasaruan line in 1876 from Fox Walker, a predecessor to Peckett in Bristol, along with five 0-6-0Ts for the hilly extension to Malang. Its next locos came from

Below: B5012 is running through the streets of Madiun on its way to the station. It has added two tank wagons to its train, collected from the oil depot located to the south of the town.



2-4-0s were fitted with Serve fire tubes, and in 1919 Werkspoor fitted two with superheaters, all on a trial basis, but there was little benefit. The splashers over the leading wheels were later removed, and on many locos the brass dome covers were replaced by a plainer, flat-topped version. In most other respects they remained remarkably unchanged. The SS valued them sufficiently to buy a new tender from Werkspoor, to the original design, in 1925.

The state railways in South Sumatra received 22 of these locos between 1914, when the first section opened, and 1923, after which some of the 601 class began to join them. Another 14 remained in service in Java to become the B50 class under a numbering scheme introduced by the Japanese when they brought all the island's railways under a unified administration.

As in the mother country the Dutch authorities encouraged the development of steam tramways in the flatter parts of Java as an inexpensive way of expanding the system, running alongside or in the roads and streets. These were often promoted by local concerns, most of which bought fully-enclosed tram locos with skirt tanks which partly concealed the wheels and motion. Many came from Beyer, Peacock. Newer ones dispensed with the bodywork but often retained the distinctive skirt tanks below their running plates.

Later the SS began to build its own tramways. The first of them ran south from Madiun for 31km to Ponorogo, mostly beside the main road, and opened in 1907. It was later extended to Badegan in the west and Slahung in the south, at the foot of the hills where limestone quarries provided important sources of traffic. North of Ponorogo it ran through sugar-cane plantations serving the Kanigoro and Pagottan mills, which had their own 700mm gauge railway running parallel for much of the distance from Madiun, sometimes on the same side of the road as the SS line, sometimes on the opposite one.

Mixed train daily

The SS did not buy dedicated tramway locos and instead relied upon old machines no longer required for their original duties. The Badegan line was lifted by the Japanese and never reinstated, but when friends and I visited in 1978 the line to Ponorogo and Slahung still saw a mixed train once a day.

Amazingly this train was worked by the old B50 2-4-0s, and it is tempting to think that they may have run there ever since it was built. At



Above: B5012 at the level crossing near Dolopo with Pagottan no 8 on the right.



Left: Pagottan no 8 with its derailed train near Dolopo.

Below: Kanigoro no 4 'Diwisinto' (O&K 5152/1911) heads away from the mill with a short train of empty cane cars.

least four B50s were in working order and hauling all trains on the line. The prospect of seeing them in action was what prompted us to visit Indonesia.

Other duties included a short trip along the mainline towards Solo to deliver tank wagons to an air force base with sidings which were too

lightly laid for heavier locos. They all appeared to be in excellent working order, perhaps because Madiun was also the home of the state railways' only major steam workshops.

No B5001 still carried its original polished brass dome cover in the early 1970s, but all the ones we saw had »





the flat-topped version. They were based at Madiun shed, and provided a distinct contrast with several large D52 class 2-8-2s which also lived there, built by Krupp in 1951 and Indonesia's newest steam locos. At least one B50 was an oil-burner, but the ones we saw were all wood-fired.

The footplate crews were clearly very fond of them and they were kept reasonably clean, unlike the D52s which appeared not to have seen a cleaner's rag for a very long time. One or two others lived at Jatibarang, on Java's north coast, latterly used for pumping water up to water towers, and one derelict loco noted in Sumatra as late as 1985 had perhaps seen relatively recent service.

A few superheated 651 class 4-4-0s, by then known as the B53s, were also based at Madiun, and once worked many trains as far as Ponorogo, but by 1978 this had

become a rare occurrence. We found one in steam, but it never left the shed yard.

Sunny days

Our visit was blessed with glorious sunny weather. No B5012 (Sharp, Stewart 3195/1884) set off on its southbound journey late in the afternoon, and watching the ancient loco running through the cane fields was a sheer joy. It was the only B50 we saw which didn't have a boiler-mounted sandbox.

The loco worked tender-first from Ponorogo after making use of the turntable there, necessary because the watering facility at Slahung lay immediately next to the buffer stop. The train reached Slahung after dark, and after spending the night there it set off for Madiun very early the following morning, with the loco running chimney-first all the way.

"Footplate crews were clearly very fond of them and they were kept reasonably clean..."

Above: B5002, another Sharp, Stewart & Co product (2923/1880), takes water at Madiun shed.

Below: Pacific D52073 (Krupp 3297/1951) in Madiun shed yard.

Another joy was meeting the occasional sugar trains from Pagottan, with its green locos, and from Kanigoro where they were painted a beautiful sky blue. Early in the morning we passed Pagottan Luttermöller 0-10-0 no 6, (Orenstein & Koppel 10606/1923) heading out towards the fields, and later came across a well-laden train hauled by Klien-Lindner 0-10-0 no 8, (O&K 10442/1923), standing at a level crossing with the 3ft 6in line. Some of its wagons had derailed – no 8 manoeuvred them out of the path of no B5012 and then waited for it to pass, an excellent and unexpected opportunity to photograph the two locos together.

Nos 6 and 8 were two of three Pagottan locos to be rebuilt as fireless machines in 2011. They are amongst the very few steam locos still in commercial service anywhere on Java's sugar railways, though nowadays they are confined to shunting the factory yard and no longer venture out into the fields. The 700mm gauge line disappeared from the roadside many years ago.

The Madiun-Slahung railway closed in 1984, worked by the B50s to the end – by then some of them had reached their century. At the time this seemed likely to be a unique achievement for non-heritage machines, but now they have been joined by Pagottan nos 6 and 8, and maybe a few other sugar locos!

The last B50 was likely withdrawn in 1985. No B5004 (Sharp Stewart 2936/1881) has become the only survivor and is one of many locos preserved at the Taman Mini cultural exhibition in Jakarta. Currently it looks less than happy since its tender is attached to another loco. Maybe one day they will be reunited! **NGW**



Photo fun in the summer sun

High-season events and charters have provided plenty of inspiration for the photographers.



Above: *Mike Heath* visited the First World War-themed event at the Apedale Valley Light Railway on 3rd August and captured this well set-up scene of a Simplex and its driver at rest on the front line.

Right: We don't get many non-UK pictures for consideration for our Gallery pages, so this offering from *Adrian Garner* was particularly welcome. Taken on 20th July during a special weekend at Maria Pfarr on the Taurachbahn in Austria, former Salzkammergut-Lokalbahn no 22, built by Borsig in 1939, and ÖBB 699.01 'Lungau', built by Franco/Belge in 1944 and not to be confused with the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway's own 699.01 'Sir Drefaldwyn', double headed the last train of the day back to Mauterndorf. Coal and related pollution did not seem to have been a concern on this particular occasion...



Overleaf: Threlkeld Quarry museum in Cumbria always produces evocative pictures and the recently opened extension to its running line has merely added to the options. *Joey Evans* took a low angle to capture Amberley Museum's Bagnall 'Peter' recalling its days at the Cliffe Hill granite quarry.

NARROW GAUGE WORLD







Left: The Groudle Glen Railway may be short but it traverses an impressive route along the Isle of Man coastline. *Joey Evans* pictured Bagnall Sipat 0-4-0ST 'Otter' and its train on 4th August during the island's Heritage Transport Festival.

Below: The Isle of Man's electric railways play a full role in the Heritage Festival but generally attract fewer photographs. *Karl Heath* stayed up late on the evening of 31st July to capture Manx Electric Railway car no 2 at Laxey in a Victorian-era scene. No 2 dates from the 1893 opening of the original Douglas to Groudle tramway and was combined with the recently overhauled trailer 19 – the work has seen the refitting of curtains as carried by the trailers in the 1890s/1900s.

Bottom: On 25th July the Tallylyn Railway bade farewell to visiting new-build Falcon 0-4-2ST no 10 from the Corris Railway by posing the loco with its predecessors, former Corris locos 'Edward Thomas' and 'Sir Haydn' that have been on the Tallylyn since 1951. *Photo: Andrew Simmonds*





Above: "I go all the way to another railway on holiday and I still can't get away from those Garratts..." England 0-4-0ST 'Palmerston' crosses Hanomag 2-6-2+2-6-2 Garratt NG/G13 'Drakensberg' at Aberffwrdd during the Ffestiniog Railway loco's summer sojourn on the Vale of Rheidol Railway.

Photo: Andrew Simmonds

Below: The Richmond Light Railway's charity steam fair on 10th August ended with the traditional firework display which was as ever spectacular, lighting up Hunslet 0-4-0ST 'Elin' and the recently restored Bagnall 0-4-0ST 'Pixie'.

Photo: Steve Town



Exmoor Extra



James Waite enthuses over new Exmoor Steam Railway locos – and the lines where they are operating.

My recent articles on the locomotives built by the Exmoor Steam Railway in *NGW* 181 to 183 have brought many comments. It has been good to discover how many admirers these robust and trim little machines have attracted, and I thought that this update would be appropriate.

Space restrictions prevented me from commenting on Exmoor's 2-4-0 tender-loco type, one of the firm's more striking designs of recent years. At least three 7¼-inch gauge examples have been built, along with the larger 10¼in 'Jack' (no 342/2018) for the Delamont Miniature Railway in Northern Ireland. The earliest, 'Maia' (no 339/2014), was also built for a customer in Northern Ireland, but he has moved to the East Midlands and

the loco is now at the superb Echills Wood Railway near Tamworth in Staffordshire, still carrying its Belfast & County Down Railway crest. No 340/2018 was at Exmoor's base at Bratton Fleming in Devon when I visited in September 2023, and when I began the series no 343 'Sapphire', built in 2021 for the Pugney's Light Railway at Wakefield, was believed to be Exmoor's newest product.

This is no longer so. I mentioned that a most interesting new loco was being built. When I visited it consisted of a completed rolling chassis, fully painted, and this was clearly going to be a splendid machine. Nearby stood the boiler and cab, and only the sheet metalwork of the tender remained to be produced before the loco could be assembled. It occupied most of the erecting shop.

Above: 'Carol Ann' runs round its train at the so far unnamed station by Statfold's Oak Tree Halt.

Below: Carol Ann under construction in the erecting shop at Exmoor, 15th September 2023. To the rear a long-term resident, 0-4-2T 'Denzil' (Exmoor 299/ 1995) was under overhaul.

Photos by James Waite – Statfold 12th May 2024, North Cornwall 30th June 2024

At the time its existence was kept under wraps, but now it has been unveiled as the magnificent 2-6-2 no 350 'Carol Ann' on the recently established 12¼in gauge Mease Valley Light Railway at Statfold – a few miles away from the Echills Wood line on the other side of Tamworth.

The loco is generally similar to 'Mariloo' at Exbury Gardens and 'Black Beauty' at the Ree Safari Park in Denmark, but is a little longer, and as such is the largest and most powerful machine that Exmoor has ever produced. The whistle sounds as much Great Western as it looks! Carol Ann is the wife of Graham Lee, Statfold's founder. They must both have felt very honoured at its naming ceremony on Saturday 11th May 2024. Trevor, June and Tony Stirland, the loco's creators, were also there.



Early morning at Statfold

I couldn't attend the ceremony, but the loco was running again on the following day. This was something not to be missed, and I set off for Statfold early on a sunny morning, arriving soon after 8am which I figured would be best for photography – and anyway it was good to be able to admire the loco as it was prepared for its day's service.

I wasn't alone, since this was Statfold's Steam in Miniature weekend. Large numbers of people, present with their model traction engines, had set up base in the car park next to the Mease Valley's station, and several took a break from preparing their machines to come over and admire the superb new red-painted loco which was positively glowing in the early spring sunshine.

Next to it, in a similar shade of red, stood no 332 'Victoria', the 0-4-2T built by Exmoor back in 2007 for a project at Tintern which, sadly, never got off the ground. It later became a static exhibit at the Scarborough Fair Collection near Filey, and was still virtually unused when it arrived at Statfold in February 2023 in readiness for the line's opening in the following month.

Also standing close by was Alan Keef Ltd diesel no 73. It was built in 2005 for a short-lived private railway in North Devon, and after its closure migrated, perhaps inevitably, to Bratton Fleming where it worked for a number of years.

Some of the carriages began life as long ago as 1984 on the 15in gauge railway at the Liverpool International Garden Festival; although the line there was temporary they must have been robustly built as they are still in good shape 40 years later. They came to Statfold from the Windmill Farm Railway at Burscough in Lancashire and had previously lived elsewhere. There are also other carriages which were built for the Tintern project.

The Mease Valley has clearly been planned on a grand scale. There's a large terminus station, and access to the adjoining four-road depot is via a sizeable turntable, albeit only just long enough for Carol Ann. After crossing a public bridleway and access road the line enters a long straight section along the edge of a large field, heading almost due south towards woodland, where it curves abruptly to the east to arrive at Mallard Halt, the railway's initial terminus during the 2023 season. Its name was inspired by the birds which live on the lake close by, and has nothing to do with A4 class Pacific locos!

By 2024 an extension had been built, running close to the lake shore before turning north to reach a new station, close to Oak Tree Halt and the roundhouse complex on Statfold's 2ft gauge railway. This station has a canopy and, like Mallard Halt, is clearly intended to be a permanent feature, though the plan is that the line should continue to join up with the existing railway close to the bridleway crossing so as to form a circuit – the point for this is already in situ.

Photography was trickier than I had expected, largely due to fences which hug the line closely on both sides along the long straight section. Work was still in progress beside the line beyond the woods.

On the plate

James Gorton, a director of the Statfold Narrow Gauge Trust, was overseeing operations, and very



Above: Jordan, the driver of Carol Ann, prepares the loco before its first run of the day on the Mease Valley line.

Right: View from the footplate of Carol Ann running over the new extension on the Mease Valley.



Below: Plenty of pressure – Jordan at the controls of Carol Ann during James's footplate ride.

kindly offered me a cab ride on Carol Ann as the two locos made a test run with two Liverpool carriages and a van before the start of the day's services. What an excellent, and wholly unexpected treat!

Jordan, the driver, was also making his first trip on the new locomotive, though one wouldn't have known it, a testament both to his driving skills and to Exmoor's high standard of design and engineering. He »





commented that Carol Ann seemed almost to drive itself...

North Cornwall

Carol Ann only remained Exmoor's most recent loco for a few weeks, because in mid-June 2024 2-4-2T no 351 'Pengelly' was delivered to the 10¼in gauge North Cornwall Miniature Railway. Its construction was begun some 28 years ago for a customer who died before he could take delivery, and it was one of four part-built locos at Exmoor when I visited. The Cornish line lies near St Teath, one of the county's many fascinating villages named after its otherwise somewhat obscure saints.

The current line is far from being the first railway in the district; the Pengelly after which the loco is named is the location of the huge Delabole slate quarry, just over three

miles away. The quarry has been worked for centuries, and is known for the quality of its slates which are often claimed to be the most versatile and long-lasting from anywhere in the UK. Its 2ft gauge railway probably opened before 1834 and was still in situ, though inactive, when I visited in the 1970s.

Its first locos, 'E. Jago' and 'John Allen' (Hunslet 219 and 220/1879) were in most respects pre-prototypes of the Dinorwic Quarries' Alice class, the earliest of Hunslet's quintessential Welsh quarry locos, the few built earlier for Wales being markedly different. The Delabole locos were scrapped in about 1930 but a later Simplex diesel is on public display at the quarry.

Even closer is what used to be Port Isaac Road station on the mainline North Cornwall Railway, the London

South Western Railway's old Halwill Junction-Padstow line which opened in 1896 and closed 70 years later. This beautiful railway still stirs fond memories among those of us fortunate to have known it in its working days; a part of its route is now home to the 2ft gauge Launceston Steam Railway.

Troublesome Triang

The St Teath line was the brainchild of Bob Lanaway, who moved from Brighton in 1985 and began to manufacture spare parts for classic cars. He also established what he modestly describes as a toy museum. It's a huge collection, and includes a train from the Triang Minic 10¼in gauge ride-on electric model railway system manufactured from 1963 – remember its Pullman cars and E5001-series locos adorned with the Golden Arrow insignia? The motor was made by GEC and was designed for garden mowers.

The system was expensive, and also troublesome. While Triang's 2-rail electric system worked fine indoors on its 12-volt OO and TT gauge railways it didn't translate well to outdoor use at 35V. The relatively high voltage, along with the need for an all-weather mains lead, gave rise to obvious health and safety concerns – albeit years before that particular phrase was invented!

The locos and carriages relied upon plastic wheel bushes for insulation; these caused their own issues, and the system was incompatible with conventional 10¼in equipment. The current supply was justified on the basis that parents could override anything their children might get up to while driving, but this was never very

Above: The 2-4-2T 'Pengelly' (Exmoor 351/2024) shortly after delivery to the North Cornwall Miniature Railway in mid-June 2024.

Below: Pengelly is coupled with the 0-4-OST+T 'Trispen' at the North Cornwall line's St Teath West station.



convincing. Reputedly only 89 locos were built before production ended after just two years. Nowadays enthusiasts often adopt battery operation with a modern 24V motor, but Bob's loco remains as built.

Magnificent railway

Bob went on to acquire other 10¼in gauge stock which formed the nucleus of the magnificent railway he now runs. It consists of three interconnecting loops and a long out-and-back section that serves the loco and carriage sheds, a terminus named St Teath West and a siding into the museum on which the Triang train stands, though this is currently disconnected. St Teath stands on the high ground behind Cornwall's Atlantic coast, and the railway's fearsome gradients include a sharply-curved section at 1 in 30.

There are two other steam locos. Probably the earliest is 'JeThRo', named after the stand-up comedian who came from the far west of Cornwall and was a Covid victim in 2021. He liked to spell his name with this unusual combination of upper and lower case letters.

The loco was originally a somewhat ungainly 0-6-0 home-built by a Mr Murcott in the mid 1960s for his garden railway in Wales. Some 50 years later it was bought by Adam Jeffrey, whom we met earlier in this series. He passed it on to Bob, for whom it has been drastically rebuilt by J Hawkins Engineering (South West Steam), at the delightfully-named Tre Pol and Pen near Egloskerry, further along the old North Cornwall line. It is now a very elegant machine.

It's not known who built the Quarry Hunslet-style 'Trispen', but it

has been thoroughly rebuilt for Bob by Exmoor, a reminder that repairs and reconstruction form a significant part of the company's business, and this work is not confined to its own products. Trispen is highly appropriate for the district in view of Delabole's pioneering role in the history of the quarry locos.

There are several diesels. They include two miniature BR (WR) Hymeks built by the long-lived Mardyke miniature loco business, which was founded in Essex by the late Des de Smedt, a Belgian gentleman who emigrated to the UK after the Second World War, and is now run by his son Richard and his wife Beryl. I never thought I'd see a Hymek operating in North Cornwall, let alone two! The carriages include examples which once ran at Paignton

Zoo, and others thought to originate in the USA.

Fundraising for charity is an important part of the enterprise, though planning constraints mean that the railway can only open to the public on four days each year. Bob kindly invited me to arrive early on the day when Pengelly was inaugurated, to see the locos being prepared; again the Stirlands were in attendance and must have been very proud of their latest creation. All three steam locos are painted in a matching shade of dark blue and look absolutely superb. It's well worthwhile keeping an eye open for future open days at this superb little railway. **NGW**



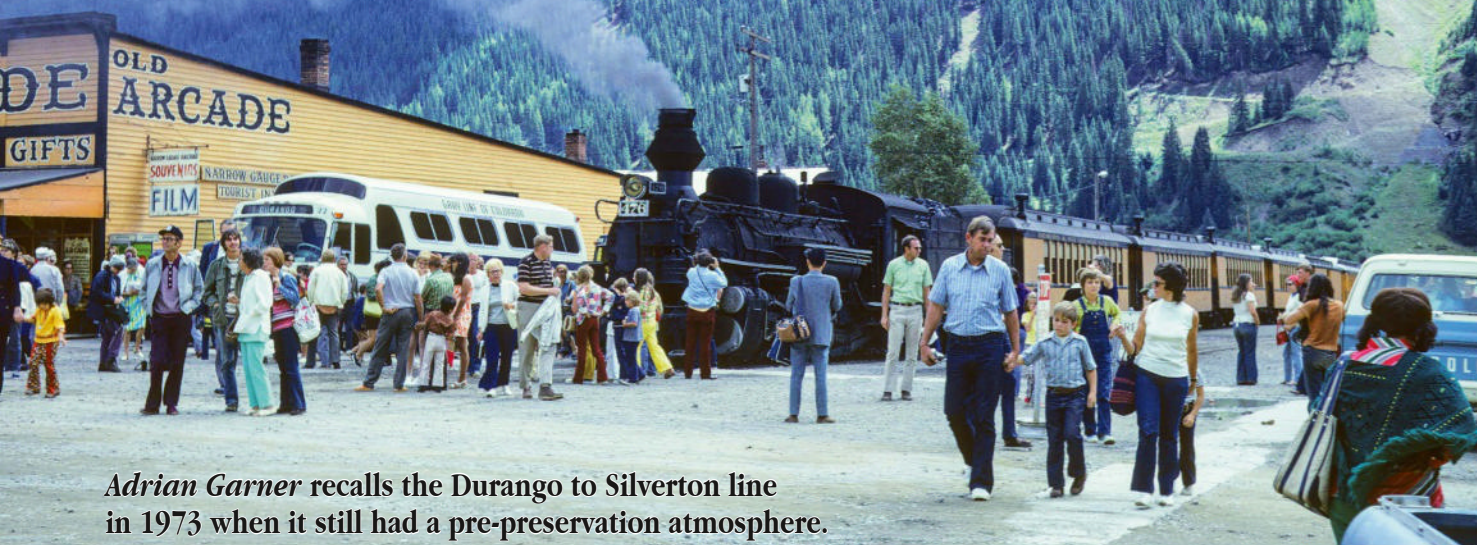
Above: Pengelly in steam close to one of the North Cornwall's interconnecting loop lines.

Below left: Trispen stands outside St Teath station. It is yet to receive its nameplates.

Below: The 0-6-0 'JeThRo' (South West Steam no 02) raises steam on the North Cornwall Miniature Railway.



Last Days of the Denver & Rio Grande Western



Adrian Garner recalls the Durango to Silverton line in 1973 when it still had a pre-preservation atmosphere.

In the late 1960s R. Stephen Polkinghorn, a professor of economics at Sacramento State College, visited the UK on an exchange with the London School of Economics (LSE). He had written two books – one was on micro-economics but he was most proud of the other on his greatest interest, a

history of the logging railroads of the Michigan-California Lumber Company, titled *Pino Grande*.

I began to meet up with Stephen at the LSE and was always amused to find him in the library with a large academic tome in front of him, inside which he was reading the latest copy of *Model Railways* or a similar

Above: Spirit of the D&RGW: Class K28 no 476, built by the American Locomotive Company in 1923, has arrived at Silverton. This loco had regularly pulled the 'San Juan', a daily deluxe train between Alamosa and Durango that ran until 1951. The now dated Gray Line bus awaits passengers who required a speedier return.

Centre left: On show in Camino, California and probably the oldest Shay in existence, no 2 was built by Lima in 1884.

Left: Also in Camino in 1973 was this hefty Vulcan 0-4-OST dating from 1900-01.

All photos by Adrian Garner, taken in 1973

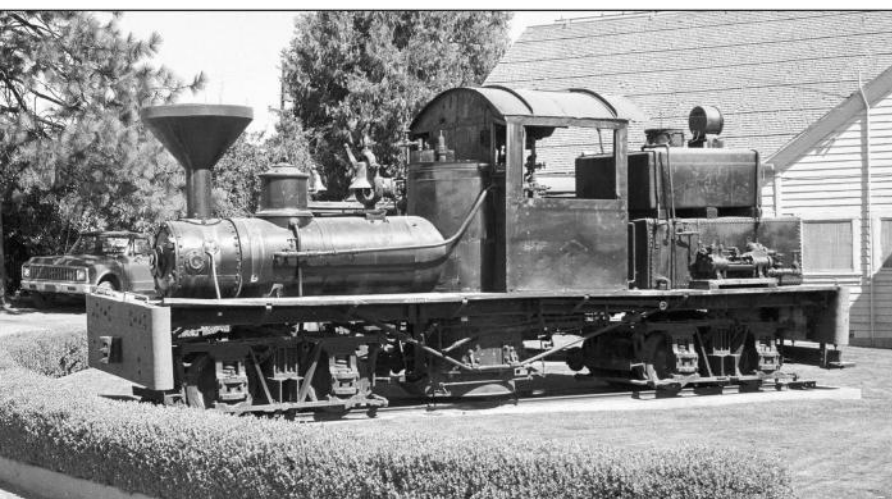
magazine! We continued to correspond after he returned to the USA and he suggested I join him on a camping holiday with his family from Sacramento through to Denver where his elderly parents lived. He promised we would detour to every possible narrow gauge site on route – his family were used to his enthusiasms. This was too good an opportunity to miss.

Paying respects

So after a flight by Pan Am – there is a name from the past – we set off from Sacramento and inevitably our first stop was to see the remaining locomotives he had written about in his book. Michigan-California nos 2, 6 and 11 were plinched at Camino, California, the shipping point for lumber from these logging lines.

No 2 was built by Lima in 1884 and is probably the oldest Shay in existence. The two vertical cylinders, 10in by 8in, acted on driving wheels initially 26in in diameter but reduced to 24in by the time the loco was retired. No 6 was probably built by Porter in 1899 but had lost its wooden cab in a roundhouse fire and scarcely looked attractive.

No 11 was Vulcan works number 244 of 1900/01. It was acquired by the Michigan-California Lumber Co in 1916 from a Folsom gravel pit operator but had already had a varied life. Its first owner was Waddle & Fitch Co, Delaware, Indiana and it ran as no 7. It was next owned by P W McTurk Coal Co and then C Cooper, who may have been a dealer in used locomotives.





Over to Denver

After due reverence we headed to Denver. The highlight of the trip was the time spent travelling on and photographing the line from Durango to Silverton. This 45-mile long 3ft gauge line was built as part of the Denver & Rio Grande Railway Company which had been incorporated on 27th October 1870. Its objective was to build a line from Denver south to El Paso in Texas and possibly to extend to Mexico City. A number of branches were proposed including the so-called San Juan Extension from Antonito to Silverton via Durango which opened in 1882. Its primary purpose was to safely carry the gold and silver from the mines in Silverton.

Once the gold rush ended the 3ft gauge line carried a dwindling number of passengers, livestock and freight and might well have closed before the Second World War. Three things saved it— to cut costs the then Denver & Rio Grande Western (it had been renamed after restructuring of its finances in 1921) experimented with early forms of railcars, the so-called 'Galloping Geese', to cut fuel and staffing costs. The line from Durango to Silverton was, and still is, impressively scenic and thus this part of the San Juan Extension developed seasonal tourist traffic. Lastly and more importantly

"The area around Silverton was a key source of uranium for the development of the atomic bomb, generating freight working..."

Above: Durango yard was still firmly in the pre-preservation era. Class K28 no 473, also an ALCO built in 1923, has just come off duty in the setting sun. Beyond it can be seen the turntable and the sand hopper gantry.

Below: The sand hopper gantry looking in the opposite direction into a near empty landscape.

the area around Silverton was a key source of uranium for the development in the 1940s of the atomic bomb, generating freight working for the railway.

Mixed trains operated throughout the 1950s but with the improvement in roads these became increasingly uneconomic. By the late 1960s the Denver & Rio Grande Western wanted to abandon the whole line from Antonito to Silverton. To do so required the agreement of the Interstate Commerce Commission which thankfully recognised that with the decline in the mining industry, tourism needed to be encouraged to maintain the economy.

Moreover, the branch to Silverton from Durango had been designated a National Historical Landmark by the National Park Service in June 1967 and a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark by the American Society of Civil Engineers in March 1968. The Commission therefore approved abandonment of the line from Antonito to Durango in 1968 but did not grant the request for closure of the Durango to Silverton section of the line. It became the last 3ft gauge operation of the Denver & Rio Grande Western.

After the abandonment the states of Colorado and New Mexico, encouraged by the state

railroad authorities, the local towns and preservation groups, purchased the first section of the San Juan Extension. Running from Antonito in Colorado to Chama in New Mexico, this is now operated as the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad.

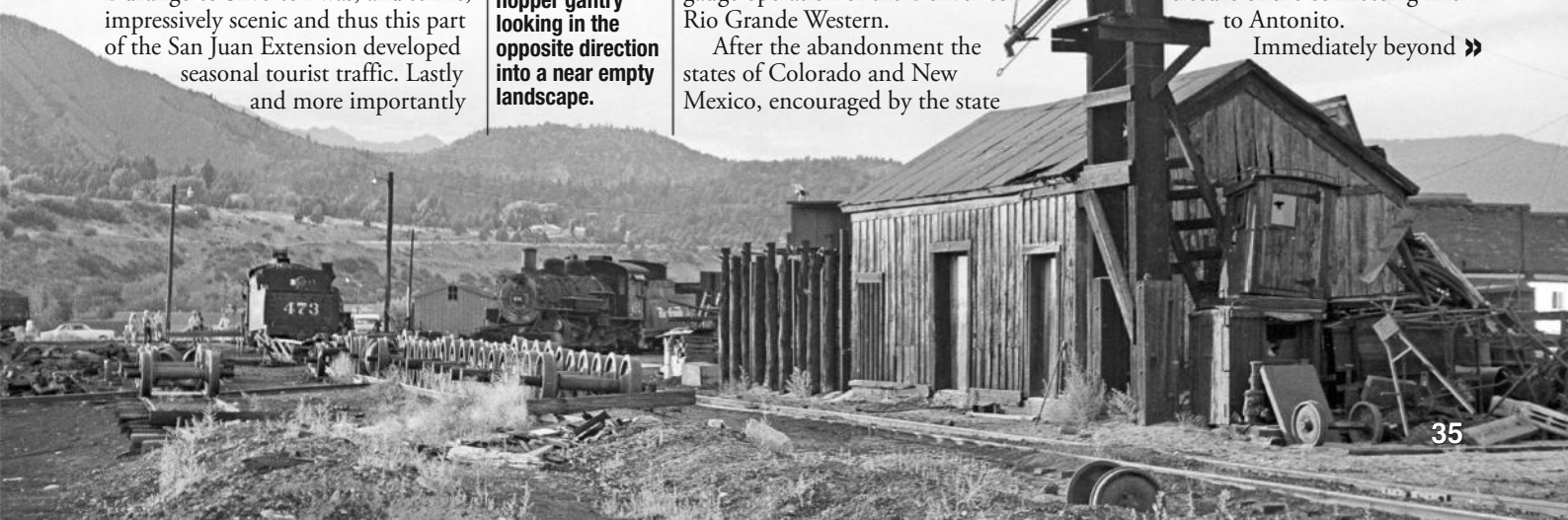
Little changed

Forced into keeping the line to Silverton open, the Denver & Rio Grande Western made efforts to promote it. By the time Stephen Polkinghorn and I visited in 1973 it was clearly a tourist and not a freight operation. Limited accommodation in Durango, however, slowed development and the condition of the station, rolling stock and tracks had not changed. It maintained the feel of the original line and was distinctly 'pre-preservation'.

There were no fences or notices to limit access to the yards at Durango.

There were plenty of trip hazards, oil patches and pits to fall down but one was just expected to be careful. The turntable was the focus of the site surrounded by spares and disused parts accumulated from the closure of the connecting line to Antonito.

Immediately beyond »





it was a wooden gantry supporting a sand hopper with a loading chute. The climb to Silverton, an average 1 in 40, needed sand on wet days or when the rails were slippery. Sand is still needed on today's line but the wooden gantry has been replaced by a metal structure.

In 1973 the yard at Durango was the resting place of numerous unwanted vehicles, many of which have since been destroyed. One of the more interesting was the so-called Living Car – Water Service no 010145. It is believed to have been built as a passenger car as the clerestory and window arrangement is similar to the early mail cars. It had a varied life starting as narrow gauge, then converted to standard gauge and subsequently converted back to narrow. It was used in a train with other vehicles for maintenance all over the narrow gauge system.

Both the carriages and locomotives still retained their Rio Grande Western lettering in 1973. Then as now it was easy to take pictures at the termini and on the initial open section near the road leaving Durango, but there are very few places to see the train in the superb scenery of the San Juan mountains. Stephen had been brought up in

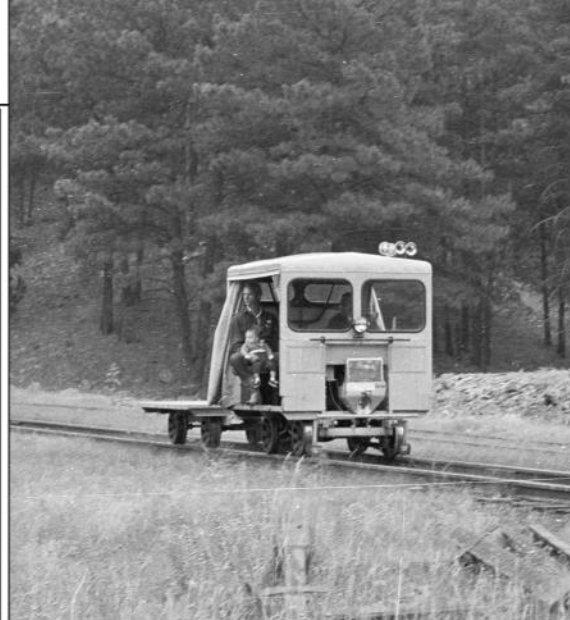
Colorado and I followed his lead across the countryside to see the trains go by. Unfortunately with only one or two each day all our effort generated few pictures!

Tourist transformation

Not unexpectedly, tourist operation did not fit with the parent company, Rio Grande Industries, and a purchaser was sought. The purchaser materialised on 25th March 1981 when the line was acquired by Charles Bradshaw Jr for US\$2.2 million. The last trains operated by the Denver & Rio Grande Western had ceased the previous year in October 1980.

Charles Bradshaw Jr transformed the line into a major tourist operation. Whilst it lost much of its earlier character, like so many preserved lines it would not have survived without these changes. Durango benefited and became a major tourist hub in Colorado.

During his ownership, however, there was one disaster. On 10th February 1989 the roundhouse built in 1891 at Durango caught fire and was destroyed. All six operable locos were inside and were initially thought to have been lost. Luckily, however, they could be repaired and a new and



Above left : The Living Car was one of many unwanted items of rolling stock in the yard.

Above: The possibility of a rock fall causing a derailment was as real in 1973 as now and therefore every train was preceded by a works car. Life was then more relaxed, the driver accompanied by a friend with his young son on his lap for the day out.

Below: No 476 heads home to Durango through the long grass surrounding the track. Car no 330 named 'Cascade' was only ten years old, having been built by the Denver & Rio Grande Western in 1963 to replace its ageing stock.

larger roundhouse has since been constructed – while this has been done sympathetically it was a further step away from the character of the original line.

Charles Bradshaw Jr decided to sell the line in 1997 to First American Railways Inc and subsequently American Heritage Railways, owned by Allen C Harper, in 1998. It has continued to promote and develop the railroad and today it is a great place to visit.

It would be good if the story stopped here but unfortunately fire struck again in June 2018. This time the line had to be closed due to fires in the area through which it runs. The railroad was accused of causing these fires which damaged over 50,000 acres of forest. The US Forest Service filed a lawsuit for US\$25 million against the company to cover the fire-fighting costs of air tankers, helicopters and over 400 fire fighters.

Whilst the railroad denied these were caused by its coal-fired locos, it has since changed some of them to oil firing and has acquired two diesel locos for use in very dry conditions. The latter is very similar to the policy adopted in Australia by the Puffing Billy Railway and other lines during hot dry seasons. Rock slides in late June 2024 closed the northern end of the line for almost a week, but full services resumed on 3rd July. **NGW**





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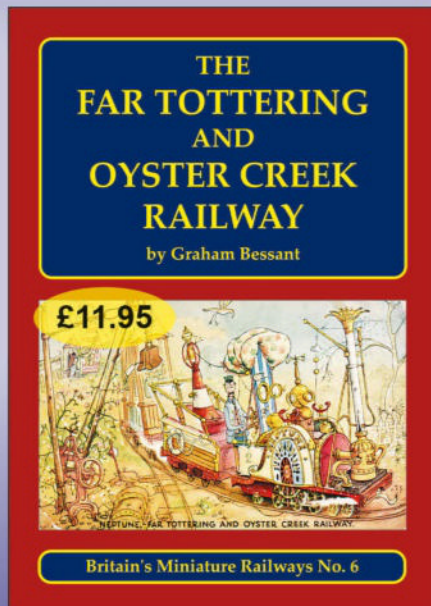
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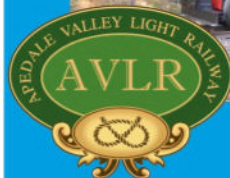
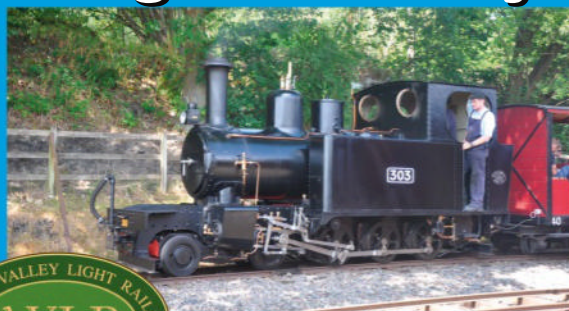
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Fiction to fact...



■ We start this month's modelling page in nothing short of reverence, to a standard of work in 009 4mm scale that few of us can hope to get close to. Some of us who peruse social media have been lucky enough to discover the Facebook pages of Tom Foster and the remarkable photos they contain. Tom has basically taken the Talylyn-inspired narrow gauge line on the fictitious Island of Sodor in the Reverend W. Awdry's *Thomas the Tank Engine* books, and modelled it as if it was once a real line. So the names of stock and stations, the liveries are the same, but the engines don't have faces...

As these two photos taken by Tom illustrate, not only is his modelling of the very highest order, but he is also a remarkable photographer, able to create scenes that add so much atmosphere that one could at a glance easily be fooled into thinking one is not looking at a model at all...

For readers wanting to see more of Tom's Skarloey railway, it is due to be featured shortly in an issue of our sister magazine *British Railway Modelling* (yes, they got in ahead of your editor!). Meanwhile we hear that the launch of Bachmann's NG7 stock has encouraged Tom to make a detour into a larger scale to create a new Dinorwic quarry-inspired layout in 7mm. We can't wait to see that...



England expects...



Andrew Charman checks out the latest 009 locomotive offering from Peco/Kato, the Ffestiniog Railway 'large England' 0-4-OST.

Every time we state in *NGW* that it's never been a better time to be modelling the Ffestiniog Railway in 009 (4mm/ft) scale, another new FR release comes along. And it goes on – just as the latest ready-to-run locomotive arrived at *NGW* Towers for review, both Peco and Bachmann were announcing new releases of FR structures (detailed over the page) – they'll be running out of suitable prototypes before too long...

The subject of our attention this month is the 'large England' 0-4-OST marketed by Peco and manufactured for the company in Japan by Kato. The arrival of these, together with the earlier small Englands produced by Peco/Kato, and Bachmann's double Fairlies, sees almost all of the FR's pre-preservation steam locomotives now reproduced, with only the single-Fairlie 'Taliesin' missing (hint hint...).

Bigger and better

George England & Co of London supplied the FR's four original engines in 1863 and 1864 and then added two enlarged versions, 'Welsh Pony' and 'Little Giant' in

1867. Their wheelbases were six inches longer, the driving wheels solid rather than spoked, and from the start they had the large saddle tanks fully enclosing the larger boiler and coming down to meet the stepped footplate, rather than the straight one of their then side-tanked smaller sisters. The small Englands would soon gain similar saddle tanks.

While more powerful, the large Englands were soon outclassed by the arrival of the double-Fairlies. Little Giant became only the second England 0-4-OST not to survive, the loco withdrawn in 1924.

Welsh Pony lasted into preservation and initially appeared likely to be an early loco restored to service, until the FR acquired the Penrhyn Railway's two Hunslet 0-4-OSTs in working order. Welsh Pony would not haul another FR train until 2020, by which time it was virtually a new loco, though the saddle tank and various fittings date from before preservation.

Early livery

Our review sample of the new Peco loco is of Welsh Pony in the highly attractive deep

brown livery dating from the Victorian era, while the model can also be purchased either as Little Giant in the later maroon finish, and in a fictitious livery of Southern Railway green and named 'Exmoor Pony' – yes, Peco produces a range of Lynton & Barnstaple rolling stock...

The model loco impresses from first opening the box, with an excellent paint finish, very fine lining and lots of nice detail, including all the saddle tank rivets and a reproduction of Welsh Pony's distinctive wooden nameplates.

There is also a small pack of accessories supplied, including various grab handles that go on the cylindrical sandpots, and a set of Arnold Rapido-style couplings as an alternative to the standard Bemo-style units.

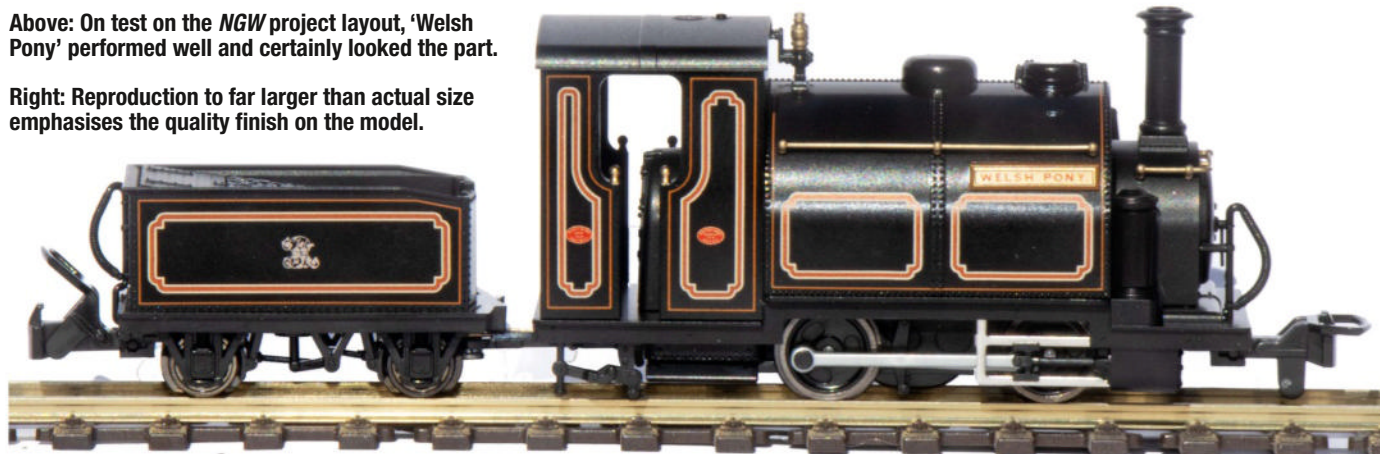
Proven chassis

Not surprisingly the model chassis is the same Kato unit used in the small Englands – very few 009 modellers will be concerned with a 2mm discrepancy in the wheelbase, and you do get the correct solid wheels.

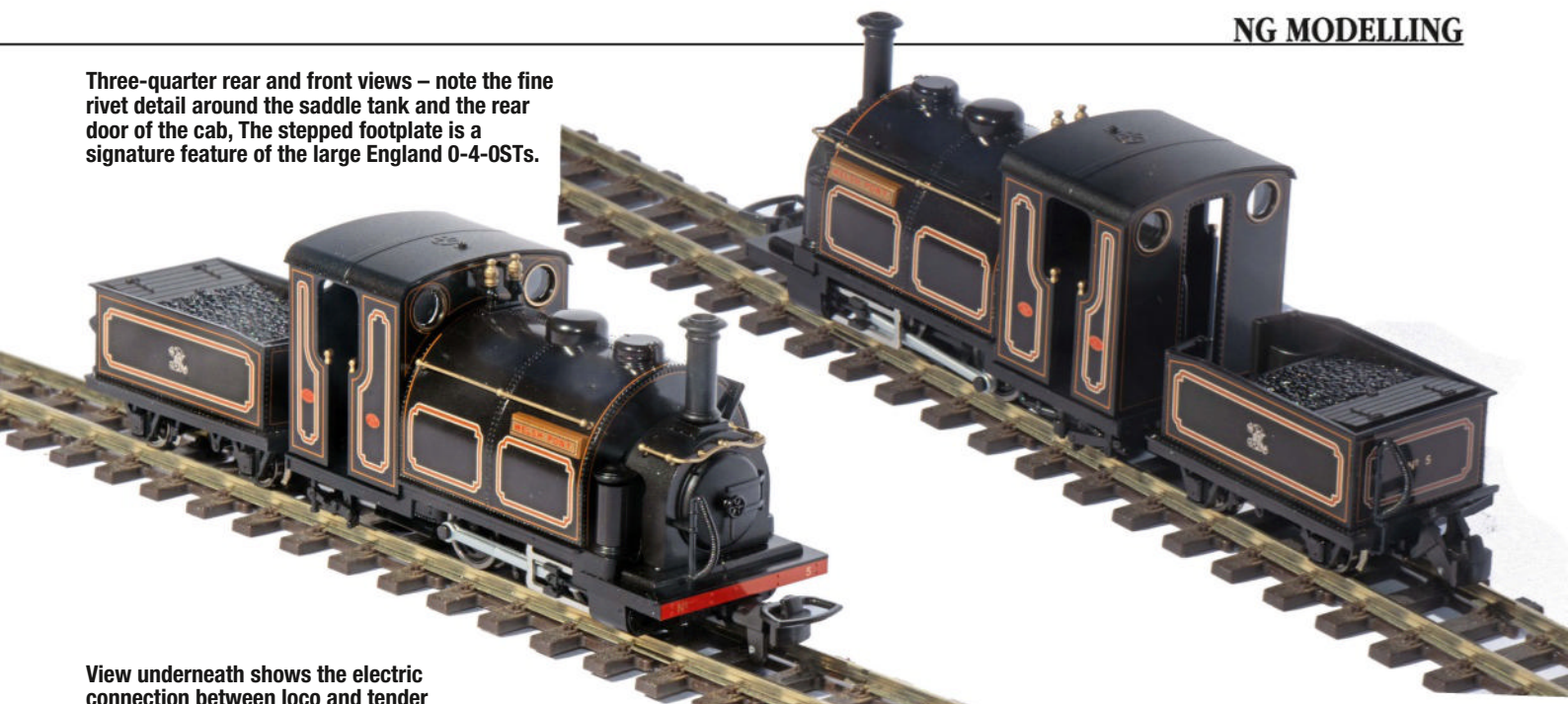
A major plus is an electrical connection between the chassis and tender, which

Above: On test on the *NGW* project layout, 'Welsh Pony' performed well and certainly looked the part.

Right: Reproduction to far larger than actual size emphasises the quality finish on the model.

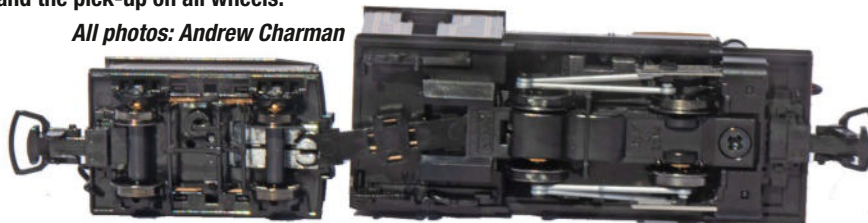


Three-quarter rear and front views – note the fine rivet detail around the saddle tank and the rear door of the cab. The stepped footplate is a signature feature of the large England 0-4-0STs.



View underneath shows the electric connection between loco and tender and the pick-up on all wheels.

All photos: Andrew Charman



enables electrical pick-up from all eight wheels and makes less likely any issues with the short-wheelbase locomotive traversing dead-frog pointwork.

The coreless motor drives the rear loco axle and all the wheels have traction tyres. A brief test on the *NGW* project layout (yes, it is still underway, update soon we promise...) demonstrated that not only does the model run in a very smooth manner, it also has plenty of haulage capacity, easily coping with the level of carriage rakes appropriate to the full-size England tanks.

Silent running

The model comes apart easily for maintenance, at which the lack of any facilities to fit DCC with sound becomes obvious, though there are rumours this feature could be added in future.

In summary this is another excellent 009 model which will no doubt prove a highly popular addition to the ever-increasing range of locos available in the scale.

■ Just to emphasise the 'everything FR' comment, at the same time as releasing the Large England's Peco has added an additional small England loco to its range, no 4 'Palmerston'. This is the most well-travelled of the FR's original motive power, counting the Lynton & Barnstaple and Vale of Rheidol lines amongst its various visits, so there's a very good excuse to add one of the models to a wide variety of layouts...

Produced by Peco/Kato
Tel: 01297 626204
E-mail: info@peco.co.uk Web: www.peco-uk.com
Price £170.00



■ A new 009 locomotive means a need for another crew and as usual ModelU has come up with the necessary, producing this suitably Victorian pairing to suit the England 0-4-0 tanks. You get a bowler-hatted driver leaning out one side complete with oily rag on the regulator, and his fireman leaning out the other side. The figures are supplied unpainted for the modeller to add their own preferred finish, and interestingly can also be ordered in the larger 7mm scale.

Produced by ModelU
Tel: 0117 941 5326 E-mail: info@modelu3d.co.uk
Web: www.modelu3d.co.uk
Price 4mm scale £7.95, 7mm scale £12.95



■ We've also been sent samples of Peco's range of Ffestiniog Railway four-wheeled carriages – pictured here are a pair of the ubiquitous 'bug boxes', being from left the oddly-named semi-open 'zoo car' and a third-class vehicle in the livery from the period when the FR was part of the rail empire administered by Colonel Holman F. Stephens. The third vehicle is one of the much more spartan quarrymen's carriages. These are fine little models and as well as the excellent exteriors all have some interior detail – the third and quarrymen's also boast removable roofs so they can be populated. Curiously the zoo car doesn't, but one can squeeze figures through the sides. Note that the bug boxes, running so close to the ground, can be quite challenging to actually put on one's track! Retail price of the carriages is £37.50, contact details as in the loco review.

Peco joins the 009 property market



The latest expansion in the ever-growing number of models available to those working in 009 scale sees a trait standard-gauge 00 modellers are more used to – two manufacturers producing the same thing!

However Peco's move into offering Ffestiniog Railway structures at the same time as Bachmann Europe announces extensions to its already existing range (see opposite) actually gives the modeller two distinct options.

Both manufacturers will now offer models of the distinctive wooden building at the FR's Tan-y-Bwlch station, but while the Bachmann Scenecraft model comes as a

finished resin building with the usual fine paint finish, Peco's offering is the first of three new laser-cut wood kits. As a result it is less than half of the recommended price of the Bachmann offering – so you can either save money and do the building and particularly painting yourself, or go for the more expensive but faster option of buying ready-built and painted.

Alongside the station house Peco is also releasing the original slate loco shed at Boston Lodge (featured on page 20 of this issue) and the corrugated extension that sits alongside it. The stone shed has a choice of roofs and can be built with or without chimneys, while both sheds can be finished with a single or double ends. The stone shed and station building kits also include examples of the FR's distinctive signals.

Common to all the kits is some very fine laser-cutting of the plywood, particularly with regard to texture overlays which excellently recreate the finish of the building and should make somewhat easier in particular painting the individual stone colours that are a feature of buildings in slate.

We will soon test that theory – *NGW* has been sent samples of the kits to review and we will report back next month.

Produced by Peco
Tel: 01297 626204
E-mail: info@peco.co
Web: www.peco-uk.com
Price Station building £17.95,
stone loco shed £29.95,
corrugated shed £19.95



MODEL LINES

30 layouts heading for Bala

A host of upcoming narrow gauge-themed model shows start with the long-established Bala Model Railway Show, taking place this year on 20th-21st September at the north Wales town's Ysgol Godre'r Berwyn secondary school in Ffrydan Road, LL23 7RU.

The show promises 30 layouts in both narrow and standard gauge including live steam, plus trade and society stands. It's open from 10am to 4pm both days, entry £6 adult (£5 concession) and £2 child with the first child per adult free. As usual a vintage bus will connect the show with the Bala Lake Railway station.

Now time for a Notts visit

Narrow Gauge Now is the annual open day of the East Midlands Narrow Gauge Modelling Group, affiliated to the 009 Society. This year's show on 26th October is set to feature 25-plus layouts, mostly in 009, and 15-plus trade stands.

The show will be held at Portland College, Nottingham Rd, Harlow Wood, Mansfield, NG18 4TJ, open between 10am and 4pm with admission £10 for adults and accompanied children free. More information can be had at www.narrowgaugenow.uk

Steaming up in Dunstable

Jumping substantially in size, the annual 'Steam in Beds' 16mm narrow gauge show is set for Saturday 23rd November at Eaton Bray village hall, which is near Dunstable, postcode LU6 2DJ.

There will be three running layouts (16mm scale takes up a lot of room...) with as the show title suggests plenty of live steam, plus 14 of the scale's specialist traders. The show opens from 10am to 4pm, with admission £6 for adults and accompanied children free – more details are on the website www.bag16mm.org.uk

Tiny loco coming from Kato

Kato has shown a first prototype of its tiny 009 loco 'Oscar', based on a full-size example inspired by cartoonist Emmet, that runs on a 600mm gauge line at the 'Railway Park' established at the Japanese manufacturer's factory. When it eventually appears the model is likely to be as popular for its chassis for use in build projects as it will a finished loco.





■ Brooks 3D Models has updated its 009 scale 3D printed body kit for the Baguley RNAD diesel, as used by the Talylyn Railway, adding a great deal of prototypical detail. The kit, pictured left, costs £19.00 and can be combined with a Kato 11-109 chassis or similar, while for those who just want a loco on display a dummy chassis is available from Brooks.

A recent addition to the Brooks range is the distinctive curved-end wagon used by the Southwold Railway. It was requested by the Halesworth to Southwold Narrow Gauge Railway Society which provided information, drawings and photos, and have since ordered so many it's already only available in limited numbers! Cost is £21.00 per set of three with wheels and couplings and details are on the website at www.brooks3dmodels.com

Nigel Brooks will be taking his range to the the Halesworth to Southwold NGRS Blythburgh Model Railway Exhibition & Open Day on 8th September and the Bressingham Model Railway Show on 22nd September.

Bole limited edition aids 19B boiler campaign

New from Bole Laser Craft in 16mm scale is a limited edition ready-to-run Darjeeling Himalayan Railway wagon, specifically designed to help the appeal underway by the Darjeeling Tank Locomotive Trust (DTLT) to replace the boiler of Sharp, Stewart 0-4-0ST locomotive no 19B.

Bole Laser Craft will donate all profits from the sale of the wagon to the appeal and just 135 will be made available, one for each year of 19B's existence.

Appropriately carrying a load of scale boiler tubes given the boiler appeal, the wagon is available in either 32mm or 45mm track gauge and shipped in its own bespoke laser-cut storage box. It measures 250mm (over couplings) by 100mm and carries 24 tubes in a wooden rack.

DTLT Treasurer 'Fuzz' Jordan said that the fundraising team was grateful for this welcome offer of financial support, which marks the start of a number of model initiatives to help raise the estimated £75,000 still needed to finance the new boiler.

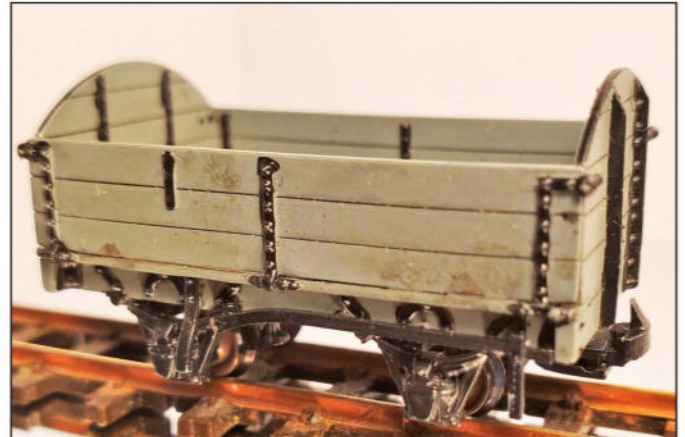
These will include a live-steam garden railway locomotive version of 19B complete with tender from renowned 16mm manufacturer Roundhouse Engineering, and an unpowered 'dummy' 19B for those without a garden line. Roundhouse already offers a generic version of the Darjeeling locos.

Other model rolling stock will include a flat wagon carrying a genuine slice of expired boiler tube removed from the real 19B, while Bole Laser Craft will also be offering a limited edition of the two replica Darjeeling Himalayan Railway blue-liveried carriages that run with the locomotive.

The real 19B is now dismantled for overhaul at the Statfold Narrow Gauge Trust near Tamworth – if fundraising carries on at the current pace it is hoped the loco will return to steam in 2026.

The boiler tube wagon is available direct from Bole Laser Craft at bolelascraft.com or via the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway Society shop at www.dhrs.org.

Produced by Bole Laser Craft Tel: 07900 995164
E-mail: info@bolelascraft.com Web: <https://bolelascraft.com>
Price: £148.00 (state gauge when ordering)



■ Latest announcements in the expanding range of 009 Scenecraft range of resin ready-built Ffestiniog buildings from Bachmann Europe are these two, the wooden station building and slate cottages at Tan-y-Bwlch station. They display the usual quality detail and excellent paint finish of this range, and are available with either brown or green woodwork. Recommended retail price of the station building is £49.95 and the cottages £59.95, but they may be found cheaper by shopping around.



Hunslet delights

The quarry Hunslets were and in my opinion remain one of the finest locomotive designs ever. Their working environment must have been one of the harshest with which steam locomotives were ever tasked.

Anyone who entertains more than a passing interest in the subject could do worse than get hold of a copy of Carrington & Rushworth's *Slates to Velinheli*. This slim booklet contains a wealth of information about the working of Dinorwic slate quarries at Llanberis. It was first published in 1971 by the Maid Marian Locomotive Fund – the first run rapidly sold out and demand since has been such that the Bala Lake Railway Society has reprinted it a number of times. I imagine that it will still be available.

Let me get to the point. You were taken to task by two volunteers on the Bala Lake Railway for referring to these engines being in retirement (*Viewpoint*, NGW186). In itself this is a strange concept, but in the preface to the edition of the booklet I own the then president of the Bala Lake Railway Society, Peter J Miller, talking about these locomotives specifically urges readers to "...remember that this is their RETIREMENT," (his emphasis, not mine). You are in good company!

Hunslet was one of one of the most successful locomotive builders. Many years ago I worked for a few years, before business demands got in the way, as a volunteer on the Welshpool & Llanfair. Among other experiences I did a number of trainee firing turns and Hunslet SLR 85 was without doubt a most accomplished machine and by a country mile my personal favourite – in my opinion by far the most elegant loco on the line then or since.

Reverting to Dinorwic, I would recommend a visit to Llanberis and to the National Slate Museum which is contained within the former Dinorwic workshops. It has been tidied up a bit since I first visited when the impression gained was that the men had walked out on Friday night and would be back after the weekend. It was not only the Hunslet locomotives that endured a harsh existence: life for the workers was unbelievably tough. **Tony Baggott**

Andrew C replies: Thank you Tony – so much I agree with in your letter, the inexpensive delights of *Slates to Velinheli*, the value of a visit to the National Slate Museum and without doubt the experience of firing SLR 85! I too trained on this loco and I can confirm that your view is shared by many in the W&L footplate

"It has been tidied up a bit since I first visited when the impression gained was that the men had walked out on Friday night and would be back after the weekend..."

Above right: Your editor never misses any opportunity to publish a picture of former Sierra Leone Hunslet 2-6-2T No. 85, known by many at its current mid-Wales home of the Welshpool & Llanfair as the gentleman's sporting engine... See the letter by Tony Baggott. **Photo: Andrew Charman**

Right: Part of a Swiss narrow gauge line, or equipment used by International Rescue in *Thunderbirds*? See the letter from Robert Day...



department, where the loco has long been affectionately known as "The gentleman's sporting engine"... Sadly it is currently out of use awaiting a major overhaul with the Friends of the Sierra Leone National Railway Museum (the engine having originally worked in the West African nation) seeking to raise the funds needed to do the work. Donations can be made at bit.ly/3WLiEy5

Swiss Thunderbirds

NGW186 was an excellent issue, with much of interest. It was nice to see Teddy Boston's 'Pixie' back in traffic but my attention was drawn by the article on the Bergbahn Lauterbrunnen-Mürren (BLM) in Switzerland.

My last visit was back in 1997, when the link to Lauterbrunnen was still in the form of a funicular; but what really attracted my attention was when we got off the funicular at Grüttschalp to transfer to the BLM railcar for the trip to Mürren.

Goods for the village were transported up the mountain and transhipped, and handling consignments between funicular and railway were in the hands of a

remarkable piece of kit that seemed to me to be almost directly lifted from Gerry Anderson's *Thunderbirds*! Think of a two-sided fork-lift truck, able to rotate through 90 degrees whilst travelling up an inclined plane (see photo below).

I understand that this device has been adapted to transfer goods from the cableway to the railway.

Meanwhile, the discussion about terminology for NG7 (7mm narrow gauge modelling) has engaged me. Have the possibilities presented by Hornby's resurrection of TT been considered? The possibility must now exist for there to be a ready-to-run range of (4mm scale) Isle of Man 3ft gauge prototypes; possibly even a range commemorating the Irish narrow gauge? Export possibilities could equally be possible for RTR models of South African, Australian or New Zealand prototypes!

Robert Day

Andrew C replies: As a *Thunderbirds* fan I can understand exactly what Robert means! In terms of 3ft narrow gauge in 4mm scale, Isle of Man models were marketed back in the 1960s in the days when the original »



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TT scale was popular, by long-lost maker Gem. But I agree with modern-standard trackwork now available in the UK some 3ft gauge prototypes would be a very welcome addition to the modelling scene.

Alishan memories

I was especially attracted to your August issue by the article on the Alishan Forest Railway's tunnel rebuilding – a most interesting article. I was perhaps even more interested for personal reasons in the item on page 7 about the Alishan diesel, DL-34, on loan from the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway.

When I lived in Taiwan I went up to Alishan a number of times and on one occasion travelled behind sister engine DL-33 up to what is called Monkey Rock. I photographed the train on another of its trips that same day, 11th November 1990.

In the postcard I sent to myself as a record at the time I noted that on the way back down from Monkey Rock to Alishan Station – the trip takes about 20 minutes – the driver had to brake suddenly to avoid some hikers too near the track and had some difficulty restarting the engine. I thought at first that it must have derailed, but fortunately not.

The front of the postcard shows Monkey Rock itself, but with a train behind one of the 28-ton Shays, no 32. I never actually saw any of the Shays in action out on the line but two of the 28-tonners, nos 21 and 22, were at the shed at the intermediate station at Fen-chi-hu when I went up to Alishan on the train on my first trip to Taiwan some years earlier, from Hong Kong in March 1976.

My train on that occasion was headed by DL-26, another of the sister engines to the Welshpool & Llanfair's loaned DL-34.

Nicholas Pertwee

Andrew C replies: Thanks to Nicholas for another most interesting letter. He has done what sadly I have not yet managed, which is to ride the Alishan line. While I was able to visit the line's Chiayi headquarters on the first day of my visit in December 2018 as a special guest for the signing of a sister railway agreement between the Alishan and the Cierny-Hron line in Slovakia, the schedule for my visit hosted by the Taiwan Sugar Co did not allow for a journey up the line – it's still on my bucket list...

I did, however, get to see a Shay in steam at Chiayi – a fascinating if rather odd machine and I'd definitely like to see one of those working in anger in the hills!

"The driver had to brake suddenly to avoid some bikers too near the track and had some difficulty restarting the engine..."



Above right and right: Two pictures from journeys made by Nicholas Pertwee on the Alishan Forest Railway – see his letter on this page. We love the cheery wave from the driver of DL-33, while locomotive sheds are always more evocative when they are in the misty mountains – and provide a home to Shays...



Regular readers of *NGW* will be well aware of correspondent James Waite's recent fascination with the products of the Exmoor Steam Railway – indeed his latest feature is in this issue. Now James has sent us this picture from the 'Exmoor Gala' that was staged by the 7¼-inch gauge Barnards Farm Railway in Essex on 20th-21st July.

"They hoped to attract some visiting ones to join the four which live there but couldn't persuade any private Exmoor owners within range to make the trip," James told us. "Nonetheless the four were all in steam, a sufficiently unusual occurrence for the volunteers to pose them for this photo – what a delightful sight! Even the sun co-operated by coming out on what was mostly a cloudy and damp day.

From left to right the four are 337 'Bernarda von Barnards', one of two German-style locos built together in 2013, 321 'Doris Hilburn' built in 2004, 314 'Amy Louise' built in 2003 and 309 'Jean' built in 2000. They all went to Barnards at least secondhand, if not thirdhand."

Barnards Farm consists of an extensive gardens and woodlands, which are opened to the public under the National Gardens Scheme. James added that this railway is run by a very helpful and friendly group of people – more details can be had at <https://barnardsminiaturerailway.eu>



Tanks for the memory...

The fellow in the picture above is Phil Parker, editor of *NGW*'s sister magazine *GardenRail* – Phil sent in this picture after seeing the shot on the *Viewpoint* page of *NGW*186 by Richard Booth of the Grouldle Glen Railway, showing the Manx 2ft gauge line's Bagnall 2-4-0T 'Sea Lion' under test in 1988 following a rebuild by apprentices at British Nuclear Fuels at Sellafield.

That rebuild included the fitting of new tanks, visible in Richard's picture. They in turn wore out, being condemned and replaced at the loco's most recent overhaul in 2018 – at which point Phil, a great enthusiast of Manx rail matters, purchased one of them. Coincidentally it was only a few weeks ago that he finally got to recover said tank out of storage and take it home with him – that's one heck of an ornament...



■ A Guinness locomotive, in steam? Well this picture is not quite what it seems – extricating one of the novel William Spence 0-4-0 engines that operated the brewery system in Dublin from Amberley Museum's Narrow Gauge display hall, and inserting a smoke machine, produced the shot taken during a photo charter arranged on 21st July around the Sussex museum's Gala.

Amberley's 1ft 10 in gauge loco, no 23 built in 1921, was originally preserved with the haulage wagon and hoist that enabled it to work the brewery's 5ft 3in track at Brockham Museum, near Dorking in Surrey, and moved counties with the rest of the Brockham collection in 1982.

Regular *NGW* photographer *Joey Evans* and a friend manually moved the engine "after dinner late on a Sunday evening". Apparently shifting it required a great deal of human tractive effort...

From a different age...

One of your editor's irritating occasional lapses is to trust his memory and put something down on paper without checking first – and so it was with our assertion in last month's edition of *That was the Year that was...* that we had not featured anything on the 2ft gauge railway built by John Vernon at Church Farm, Newbold Verdon in Leicestershire...

Step forward regular correspondent **Donald Brooks**, who reminded us that in *Encounters with the Narrow Gauge* in *NGW*137, March 2019, he wrote about a trip he made to the Newbold Verdon line in February 1974, describing 'Sybil Mary' at that time as "a rusting kit of parts awaiting restoration around the side of the shed." Donald sent us a picture from the day that illustrates his point, taken as he describes "in appalling light".

We also received a picture of Sybil Mary from **Michael Bishop**, taken much earlier on 14th May 1966, the occasion of a pre-AGM visit by the Narrow Gauge Railway Society and attended Michael tells us by Colin Pealling, the loco's owner at the time.

Looking at Donald's picture, it seems all the more remarkable as to just how pristine Sybil Mary is today, in the care of the Statfold Narrow Gauge Trust and a regular visitor to other lines. Never say a restoration is impossible...



That was the year that...

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

From 60 years ago

Isle of Man Railway (3ft gauge)

The cleanest locos on the line are 10 and 12, which are really spotless. Most of the rest tend to be in need of a good clean, especially 'Mannin', which is in poor condition externally. The stock generally is very smart, being clean and well painted...

The track in places tends to be rather rough riding, though the Port Erin line is generally better than the Peel and Ramsey lines. Some of the stations, and certain sections of the track are now spread with spent oxide from local gas works, presumably to keep weeds down, but this imparts a gas works odour totally out of keeping with a rural narrow gauge station!

The locomotives are gradually becoming less efficient than they were, partly because of their age and also because of the 'best steam coal' that is available. By the time this arrives at the loco shed, after repeated loadings and unloadings, it is often composed of dust and small coal, which hardly makes for economy of working. Spares too are hard to come by...

Manx Electric Railway (3ft gauge)

The MER, now Government owned, has had the benefit of thousands of pounds of Government money for reconstruction, and almost the whole of the track has been relaid with new rails and sleepers... The cars themselves are now all in the attractive red, teak and white livery, and present a superb example of coachpainting at its best.

The depot yard at Derby Castle has been given a tarmac surface, and Laxey station has also been tarmaced. A new waiting shelter of varnished timber with a transparent roof has been erected in the trees alongside the Snaefell departure track, and loudspeakers in the trees now relay light music in the evenings! Ramsey now has a very fine station alongside the Plaza cinema, where a large single-storey building of stone and fancy concrete blocks with a slate roof has been built... (NGN, Sept 1964)

What a contrast – the Isle of Man Railway facing increasingly bleaker times and its electric neighbour living a Government-backed high life. Today both are owned by the Manx Government and while the Isle of Man Steam Railway looks rather better than in the mid 1960s, as Karl Heath's photo below shows, the Government involvement these days attracts more criticism than praise...



Photo: Karl Heath

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



Tramways

- Douglas Horse Tramway www.iombusandrail.im/heritage/ 1st, 3rd then Wednesdays to Sundays in September
- 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 except 16th, 23rd and 30th.
- Seaton Tramway: Devon 01297 20375, www.tram.co.uk Daily services from 10am

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.

Special Events in September

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

■ 30th Aug-1st Sep, Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway Steam Gala; 699.01 in finished livery, Taiwan diesel DL-34, displays

■ 7th-8th Sept, Kirklees Light Railway (Whistlestop Valley) Steam & Diesel Gala; Visiting locos, intensive service

■ 7th-8th Sept, Old Kiln Light Railway Steam at Work Gala; Three steam locos operating including visiting Wren 'Peter Pan'

■ 14th-15th Sept, Amerton Railway Everything Goes Gala; All available stock operating, demonstration freight trains

■ 14th-15th Sept, Apedale Valley Light Railway Full Steam for Forces; WW1-themed event, WDLR stock, field kitchen, trenches

■ 14th-15th Sept, Leek & Rudyard Railway Steam Gala; Intensive service, visiting locos, freight trains

■ 14th-15th Sept, Welsh Highland Heritage Railway 60 Years of Volunteering Weekend; Special timetable

■ 14th-15th Sept, Welsh Highland Railway Superpower; Garratt K1 return, Intensive service, mixed trains, NG15 in steam at Dinas

■ 15th Sept, Groudle Glen Railway Steam Gala; All steam locos in operation, two-train service with passing at midway loop.

■ 21st-22nd Sept, Bala Lake Railway Model Railway Show; Show in Bala (LL23 7RU), vintage bus connection to railway

■ 22nd Sept, Bressingham Model Railway Show; Layouts in various scales, trade stands, three narrow gauge lines running

■ 22nd Sept, West Lancs Light Railway Working Engines Gala; Parade of working locos, diesel freights, drive a diesel, displays

■ 28th-29th Sept, Leighton Buzzard Railway Gala weekend; Details tba, check website www.buzzrail.uk

■ 28th-29th Sept, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Autumn Gala; Visiting engine 'Palmerston' from Ffestiniog, intensive service

■ 28th-29th Sept, Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway End of Season Gala; Details tba, see website www.skrlr.net

■ 28th-29th Sept, Talylyn Railway Heritage Weekend; Intensive timetable, evening trains, historic train sets, demonstration goods

■ 29th Sept, Gartell Light Railway Open Day; 2ft Somerset line, frequent timetable. 01963 370752, <http://newglr.weebly.com>

Miniature Railways

- Audley End Railway (10.25in): Essex 01799 541354, www.audley-end-railway.co.uk Daily services except 2nd
- Beer Heights Light Railway (7.25in): Devon 01297 21542, www.pecorama.co.uk Daily services except Mondays.
- Lappa Valley Railway (15, 10.25, 7.25in): Cornwall 01872 510317, www.lappavalley.co.uk Open daily.
- Littlehampton Miniature Railway (12.25in): Sussex www.littlehamptonminiaturerailway.com Weekends
- Moors Valley Railway (7.25in): Hants 01425 471415, www.moorsvalleyrailway.co.uk Daily to 8th then wknds, 30th. Gala 7th-8th
- North Bay Railway, Scarborough (20in): Yorks 01723 368791, www.nbr.org.uk, Daily services
- Rhyl Miniature Railway (15in): Clwyd 01352 759109, www.rhylminiaturerailway.co.uk Open at weekends
- South Downs Light Railway (10.25in): Sussex 07518 753784, www.south-downs-railway.com Open at weekends

What's On

	Sun 1st	Mon 2nd	Tue 3rd	Wed 4th	Thu 5th	Fri 6th	Sat 7th	Sun 8th	Mon 9th	Tue 10th	Wed 11th	Thu 12th	Fri 13th	Sat 14th	Sun 15th	Mon 16th	Tue 17th	Wed 18th	Thu 19th	Fri 20th	Sat 21st	Sun 22nd	Mon 23rd	Tue 24th	Wed 25th	Thu 26th	Fri 27th	Sat 28th	Sun 29th	Mon 30th
Alford Valley Community Railway: www.avcr.org.uk																														
Amberley Museum: 01798 831370 www.amberleymuseum.co.uk																														
Amerton Railway: 01785 850965 www.amertonrailway.co.uk																														
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Bala Lake Railway: 01678 540666 www.bala-lake-railway.co.uk																														
Brecon Mountain Rly: 01685 722988 www.bmr.wales																														
Bressingham: 01379 686900 www.bressingham.co.uk																														
Bure Valley Railway: 01263 733858 www.bvrw.co.uk																														
Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway 01472 604657 www.cclr.co.uk																														
Corris Railway: 01654 761303, www.corris.co.uk																														
Evesham Light Rly: 01386 422282 www.valleyrailwayadventure.co.uk																														
Exbury Gardens Railway: 023 80891203 www.exbury.co.uk																														
Fairbourne Railway: 01341 250362 www.fairbournerrailway.com																														
Ffestiniog Railway: 01766 516000 www.festrail.co.uk																														
Great Laxey Mine Railway: 01624 624007 www.laxeyminerrailway.im/																														
Golden Valley Light Railway: 01773 747674 www.gvlr.org.uk/																														
Great Whipsnade Rly: 0844 225 1826 www.zsl.org/zsl-whipsnade-zoo																														
Groudle Glen Railway: 01624 670453 www.ggr.org.uk																														
Hampton Kempn Rly: 07583 560167 www.hamptonkempnorrailway.org.uk																														
Hayling Light Railway: 07902 446340 haylinglightrailway.wixsite.com/ehlr																														
Heatherslaw Light Rly: 01890 820317 www.heatherslawlightrailway.co.uk																														
Isle of Man Steam Rly: 01624 663366 www.iombusandrail.im/heritage/																														
Kirklees Light Rly: 01484 865727 www.whistlestopvalley.co.uk																														
Launceston Stm Rly: 01566 775 665 www.launcestonsr.co.uk																														
Leadhills & Wanlockhead Railway www.leadhillsrailway.co.uk																														
Leek & Rudyard Railway: 01538 306704 www.rlsr.org																														
Leighton Buzzard Railway 01525 373888 www.buzzrail.uk																														
Llanberis Lake Rly: 01286 870549 www.lake-railway.co.uk																														
Lynton & Barnstaple Railway: 01598 763487 www.lynton-rail.co.uk																														
North Gloucestershire Railway: www.toddington-narrow-gauge.co.uk																														
Old Kiln Light Rly: 01252 795571 www.oldkilnightrailway.co.uk																														
Perrygrove Railway: 01594 834991 www.perrygrove.co.uk																														
Ravenglass & Eskdale Rly: 01229 717171 www.ravenglass-railway.co.uk																														
Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Rly 01797 362353, www.rhdr.org.uk																														
Ruislip Lido Railway: 01895 622595 www.ruislidlidorailway.org																														
Sittingbourne & Kemsley Railway: 01795 424899, www.sklr.net																														
Snowdon Mountain Rly: 0870 450 0033 www.snowdonrailway.co.uk																														
South Tynedale Rly: 01434 381696 www.south-tynedale-railway.org.uk																														
Steeple Grange Lt Rly: 01629 55123 www.steeplegrange.co.uk																														
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Vale of Rheidol Rly: 01970 625819 www.rheidolrailway.co.uk																														
Waterworks Railway: 020 8568 4757 www.waterandsteam.org.uk																														
Wells Walsingham Rly: 01328 711630 www.wwlr.co.uk																														
Welsh Highland Railway 01766 516000, www.festrail.co.uk																														
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

Lost and found



Keith Chester discovers some missing slides that evoke memories of watching a strange manoeuvre in Greece.

In September 1972 I took the Paris – Athens ‘express’ from Venice to Athens. It was a journey memorable for its 36-hour duration, two sleepless nights and blocked toilets. Having satisfied myself with the sights of Athens (the Acropolis and St John’s MPD), I then returned north to see what remained of the metre gauge lines of the old Thessaly Railway.

I was reminded of all of this when I recently came across an old box of slides from this trip. I had not seen them since, well, September 1972. Unbeknownst to me my camera had not been functioning properly and most of the slides were at least two stops overexposed. They were immediately put to one side when I got them back from processing.

Looking at them again after half a century, not only were they badly exposed but the colour dyes had also deteriorated and many were badly affected by mould. Nevertheless, I wondered if some of them could be rescued with the miracle of Photoshop. Most proved too far gone

but one or two could be resuscitated. And with them came back the narrow gauge memories.

Greece acquired the province of Thessaly in 1881 and began building two metre gauge lines inland from the port of Volos, one 61km-long route to Larisa opened in 1884 and the other, two years later, which ran 143km to Kalambaka, famous for the monasteries atop the Meteora rocks. This was followed by a standard gauge railway opened in stages between 1905 in 1909 from Athens to Papapouli, 45km north of Larisa and then the border with Turkey.

Faced with a dilemma

Of all this I knew very little in 1972. I travelled overnight from Athens and at some ungodly hour changed at Palaiofarsalos onto a Breda railcar for the journey to Kalambaka. In the station there was one of the line’s six Jung 2-6-2Ts with a rake of four-wheel carriages and some wagons.

We set off and about 40 minutes later rolled into Trikala. While the

2-6-2T was shunting wagons, the railcar arrived and I was faced with a dilemma: to ride all the way to Volos behind steam or to take the railcar and photograph this classic mixed train en route. I opted for the latter.

I got off at Palaiofarsalos, the junction station. In the dark the night before I had not seen there was a large triangle just northwest of the main line station. One corner was the line coming in from Kalambaka, another the small terminus interchange and the third dived under the north – south standard gauge main line to head off east to Volos.

I was not quite sure of the reason for this until the mixed working eventually turned up. To my surprise, it first took the curve towards Volos and then reversed its entire train backwards into the terminus. Its business done there, it set off for Volos, still chimney first.

Such a manoeuvre with a complete train I had never seen before or since: no doubt, however, *NGW* readers will know of others. **NGW**

Above: 2-6-2T no 44 (Jung 11455/1951) negotiates the triangle on the approach to Palaiofarsalos.

Below: Having left the interchange station at Palaiofarsalos, no 44 runs under the standard gauge main line running from Athens to Thessaloniki.

Photos by Keith Chester, 15th September 1972



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