

ISSUE No. 5.

NARROW GAUGE NEWS

SEPT/OCT. 1959

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News Editor & Publicity Agent,

P.G.Brennand, 37, Norwich Avenue, Hunslet Carr,

LEEDS 10.

EDITORIAL

Well, for once in a while my little 'mutter and moans department', viz:- The Editorial, pays off, this time with what we are all hoping to be a handsome dividend;

You will no doubt recall that in the last Newsheet the Editorial was based on the members who seem to get the least out of the Society.

This came at a most appropriate time; we now welcome yet another Area to the three already well established ones, this time in Lancashire. To be named the North-Western Area, headed by acting-agent, Mr. R. C. Ormiston-Chant. (We hope that the 'acting' part will be removed when the Society has its next committee meeting); this will enable members in an area well filled with Narrow-Gaugers to form a nucleus which may well draw more to the fold of the N.G.R.S.

We on the Committee hope that every member will join us in wishing this new Area every success in the future, and are hoping to see it go from strength to strength.

Ed.

AREA NOTES

LEEDS AREA

A full house, or nearly so, was present at the last meeting, held Friday, June 26th, to witness a slide show given by Mr. Eric Blakey of the Huddersfield Railway Circle, ably assisted by Mike Swift on a selection of some of this Country's outstanding model railways. The show lasted around two hours and interest was so strong that Eric Blakey was almost pressed into giving a number of encores.

Next Meeting: Friday, Sept. 26th - 7.30. Start: Illustrated talk on Lynton & Barnstaple Railway, by Henry Holdsworth.

Further Meeting: Friday, Oct., 30th - 7.30. Start: Illustrated talk on Narrow Gauge in Spain, report on recent visit to Spain by our old friend Mike Swift.

Next Visit: Sunday, Oct., 4th - 10 a.m. Departure from LEEDS.

Visit to HORWICH LOCO WORKS. This visit arranged by Area Agent, Ron Redman should prove to be of an interesting nature, and therefore the number of persons which can be accommodated has had to be fixed at a maximum of 36.

Any person interested in taking part on this visit should contact: Leeds Area Agent, R. M. Redman, 11 Outwood Walk, Horsforth, Leeds. Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope for copy of the itinerary.

LONDON & S.E.
AREA

This Area continues to make progress in its wide and varied aspects of Narrow Gauge Railroading, not to mention the modelling angle too.

Next Meeting: Sat. 5th Sept. 6.30 for 7.00 start. Venue being, as usual, Railway Tavern, Liverpool St., E.C.2. This will be a 'Members' Evening', and both an Episcopa and a slide projector will be available for the showing of members' slides etc., Anyone having photographs which they are wanting screened, would they please contact their Area Agent: Clifford John at 23, Crossway, West Ealing, W.13.

The following meeting is on Sat. 24th Oct., "Large Scale Modelling", by G. R. Hatherill, at same time and place.

BIRMINGHAM &
MIDLANDS AREA.

Activities in the 'Brum' area are also continuing apace and in a recent letter from the Agent, Ron Heaton, it was stated that there was an attendance of 16 members at each of the last two meetings held there. On April 7th Richard Green spoke very entertainingly on the Vale of Rheidol Railway, and on the 12th May, the indomitable Eric Tonks gave a really interesting talk on the Ironstone Quarry Lines in the West Midlands. Both these meetings were illustrated with photographs.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, 22nd Sept. 7-00 start, at the Exchange Restaurant, Stephenson Place, and will be a members get-together, all are welcome, whether members or non-members.

Facilities for projecting slides and photographs will be available, and members are asked to bring along their latest shots for viewing. Further meetings will take place at approximately 6-weekly intervals.

NORTH-WESTERN
AREA.

The Acting-Agent for this new Area is Mr.R.C.Ormiston-Chant, 17 Roseleigh Avenue, Burnage, MANCHESTER 19, and he has arranged for the inaugural meeting to be held in the DISTRICT OPERATING SUPERINTENDANT'S CONFERENCE ROOM, PLATFORM 6, PRESTON STATION, (LMR) SUNDAY, SEPT.13th, 2.30 p.m., when future Area arrangements will be made. It is hoped that there will be a really good gathering present to mark the launching of the new Area, so make a point, you Lancashire chaps, of making tracks for Preston on September 13th, to give Mr.Ormiston-Chant the support he requires to make this another narrow gauge centre.

ISLE OF MAN
AIR VISIT

Owing to the fact that our Travel Agent has been absolutely unable to obtain an aircraft on the required day, this visit to the Isle of Man has unavoidably been postponed. We should like to take this opportunity of extending our thanks to all those who have shown interest in our venture, and to offer our sincere apologies for disappointing you at this late date.

The trip, however, is only postponed, and our Travel Agent is even now making arrangements for the booking of an aircraft for the first Saturday of the 1960 Summer Service. As the local Air-Line has almost completed its arrangements for next summer we shall have no difficulty in booking a plane. The date the visit will take place will be Saturday, June 1960.

If you should still be interested in participating on this trip will you please let the Leeds Area Agent have your name and address, then when arrangements have been completed you will then be circularised, which

will also be confirmation of the certainty of the visit taking place. A fully detailed itinerary will also be forwarded.

Leeds Area Agent: R.N.Redman, 11 Outwood Walk, Horsforth,
Leeds.

HANDBOOKS.

Handbook No.1 - Pike, Fayle & Co. Ltd., is now sold out and completely out of print.

Salzkammergutlokalbahn. 2nd Impression now available at
3/- Post Free.

Handbook No. 2 - Parish's Loam Quarries, Erith, Kent.
Available to Members at 3/- Post Free.
Non-members, 3/6d Post Free.

All the above books are obtainable from the Hon. Sec. C. H. John, 23 Crossway,
West Ealing,
London, W.13.

SMALL ADS.

WANTED - URGENTLY! Colour transparencies of the section of Festiniog Railway from Blaenau Ffestiniog to Moelwyn Tunnel. Must have been taken prior to the section to Tan-y-Grisiau being dismantled.

These are required for lecturing purposes, and if any member has such for disposal, would they contact, giving the fullest possible details of subject, date etc., to:

D. J. McGeoch,
Histons Hill, Oaken,
Nr. Wolverhampton, Staffs.

FESTINIOG NOTES. (By kind permission of the Festiniog Railway Society per their Official Journal)

During the past winter, work has gone on apace, Taliesin, in a slightly modified livery was out of the erecting shop in time for the Easter working. The domes, cab fronts and boiler barrels are now green instead of black. Merddin Emrys is partially stripped down, in preparation are new tanks, chimneys and smokeboxes. Re-tubing is in progress and the hope is that it will be in service before the season closes.

Welsh Highland coach, No.26, is nearing completion, the bogies from No.21 to be used under 26 have been overhauled and repainted.

Coaches Nos.17 and 23 have also been given the 'treatment' this past winter. Long stretches of the permanent way over the Cob and above Cei Mawr have been relayed.

Traffic since Easter has shown a marked increase over the corresponding period last year.

Much interesting light has been thrown on a subject concerning the early locomotive design on the Festiniog. This stems from a bundle of letters found during the first week of April 1957, together with drawings and photographs. Unfortunately, the subject requires far too much space to include in a Newsheet of this size, suffice to say, the earliest design of locomotive for the F.R. was to have been of 0-4-0 wheel arrangement, have a vertical boiler, a wheelbase of 4'-6", 2'-9" diam. driving wheels, cylinders of 8" dia., by 12" stroke length over buffers of 13"-2", height from rail to top of chimney 8'-10" and weight limit, as specified by C.E.Spooner of 5 Tons. The designer was Charles M. Holland.

FRENCH NARROW GAUGE NOTES ... by E. K. Stretch.

First of all, during the course of the article by Mr. Stretch on the French Metre gauge lines in the May/June issue, a number of typing errors inadvertently crept in as follows:

Compagnie des Chemin de Fer Économiques should read ... Chemins de Fer ... The same applies to Chemin de Fer de Cabresis; Chemins de Fer Compagnie d'Exploitationes should be Exploitations. St. Just ex Chaussee should be... en Chaussee. Froisay and Froisey should be Froissy.

Appendices to the last article (In May/June issue)

CAMBRESIS: The lines Awoingt-Caudry-Catillon, and Caudry-St. Quentin which for some years had only seen occasional traffic, have been dismantled during the last two or three years, leaving only Denaij-Caudry in existence.

SOMME: This system recently inherited the diesel locos from the Pas de Calais system of the E.F.R. Company, abandoned in 1955. As a result there are now no regular steam workings. The train shown in the timetable as a steam train is no more than a locomotive-hauled diesel train, as opposed to a railcar.

E.F.R. Mr. J. H. Price of Cbok's Continental Timeyable tells our correspondent that the line from Persan-Beaumont to Ercuis has just been closed. Unless the Noyon-Ham line is open, for the sugar beet harvest, this means that the E.F.R. Company's system is now reduced to the 35 km. between St.-Just and Crevecoeur. At its maximum, this company, (then the V.F.I.L.) owned 420 km. of metre gauge line in six or seven completely separated systems; even five years ago, most of this was still working, and passenger services were still operating over about two thirds of it. The Company's standard Gauge lines have also suffered an equally drastic decline, and only one passenger service remains of these. Several bus services have also been withdrawn. The company's activities have always been confined to North-East France.

NEWS ITEMS from E. K. Stretch.

FRANCE. The last line of the metre gauge electrified light railways of the Camargue closed on the 31st August 1958.

Persan-Beaumont to Ercuis (Near Paris) was closed completely in January of this year.

The French Government has proposed the total abandonment of the following metre gauge system:

Vivarais, Provence, Correze, Brittany and Corsica.

There have been very strong local protests particularly concerning the comparatively prosperous Provence (Digne-Nice) and Breton systems.

Traffic on these two systems has been very heavy by French standards. No final decision has yet been made however, except in the case of the Correze system, which is to close on December 31st next.

IRELAND.

The C.I.E. summer timetable reveals that an additional halt has been opened at Hanrhan's Bridge, between Lahinch and Miltown Malbay. There is already one halt, opened when diesel cars were introduced between these two stations at Rineen.

CAVAN & LEITRIM.

It is interesting to note, that the bus service provided as replacement of this railway, while undoubtedly faster, is actually much less frequent. Between Dromod and Ballinamore, there were three trains daily, and there are still three buses daily; but between Ballinamore and Arigna, and Ballinamore and Belturbet the bus runs only THREE TIMES A WEEK !!! where the train was once daily. Admittedly, the section between Ballinamore and Arigna is also served by bus, the once daily between Cavan and Sligo, but this was running for years before the trains were withdrawn.

OVERSEAS NOTES (Snippets from various sources.)NEW ZEALAND

On November 8th 1958, the 50th anniversary of railway service between Wellington and Auckland was celebrated by a special train hauled by the same loco which hauled the Parliamentary Special back in 1908 after the Silver Spike had been driven.

This engine, WF class, 2-6-4T No. 386, was built in 1905 by the Addington Workshops of N.Z.G.R. at Christchurch (South Island).

The Mayor of the main line town of Taumarunui, announced that he had purchased the locomotive, and had presented it to the town to be preserved and placed on permanent display.

U.S.A. (Extracts from Trains Magazine) Photo of ex-Ely-Thomas Lumber 36" gauge Shay No. 6. This engine is used on summer Sundays over the Pine Creek R.R. a 1/4 mile line 4 miles north of Freehold N.J.

Trains Mag. Aug./59.

The 49 mile 24" gauge Chicago Tunnel Company, which at one time owned 100 locomotives, now owns 2, and handled freight also linked up ground level freight depots, stations etc., has applied for court permission to abandon.

Photo of E.A.R. Royal Train in Kenya during Royal Visit in Feb. /59 hauled by two 60 class 4-8-2+2-8-4-Beyer-Garratts.

Photo and letter of 36" gauge Godchaux Sugars 2-6-0 No.6 which has been purchased by Pleasure Island, a Disneyland style amusement park. Originally built 1907 as 0-4-4 Forney type rebuilt 1947

W.H.Jones.