



NARROW GAUGE NEWS

PUBLISHED BY

The Narrow Gauge Railway Society

EDITOR: P. G. BRENNAND, 37 NORWICH AVENUE, LEEDS, 10.

Number 17.

March 1963.

AREA NOTES & NEWS:

Leeds Area: Area Secretary:- R.W.Redman, 11, Outwood Walk, Horsforth, Nr. LEEDS.
Meetings are held at Headingley Hill Church Rooms, Headingley Lane, LEEDS.6. (The entrance is in Cumberland Road) at 7.45 p.m. for 8.00 p.m. start.

Friday, March 1st. "Going Back a Bit", by Ken Hartley. Recollections of almost 30 years of travel and photography on the narrow gauge in the British Isles.

Friday, April 5th. "The Lynton & Barnstaple Railway", by Henry Holdsworth. The construction, development, and history of one of Britains most interesting narrow gauge lines.

Friday, May 3rd. "Members evening". You are invited to bring along your slides and photographs - projection equipment will be available.

Report of Meeting.

On February 1st Vic Nutton, aided and abetted by Geoff Lumb, took the floor to give us one of the most interesting evenings we have enjoyed for some time. A fine collection of slides covering the decline of the Irish narrow gauge from 1959 to 1962 was displayed, and described in great detail by Vic, who livened the description by many amusing anecdotes of their travels. The West Clare and County Donegal Railways were particularly well covered, and it was unusual to see so many views of track - lifting and stock lying about awaiting disposal - subjects so often neglected. The industrial systems of Bord na Mona and Guinness were also featured, and the whole evening superbly rounded off by views of the excellent collection in Belfast Transport Museum, and the superbly restored West Clare 0-6-2T on its plinth at Ennis.

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London & Southern Area: Area Secretary:- J. W. Langley, 14, Kynaston Road, THORNTON
HEATH, Surrey.

Meetings are held at Keen House, Calshot Street, LONDON .N.1., at 6.30 p.m. for 7.00.p.m.

Wednesday, March 27th. Area Annual General Meeting.

Wednesday, April 24th. To be arranged.

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SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

The Society Annual General Meeting will be held this year in BIRMINGHAM, our hosts being the Birmingham & Midlands Area, on Saturday May 4th or May 11th. The business meeting will commence at 2.00 p.m., until 5.00 p.m, when there will be a break for tea, and will be followed in the evening by a film show of narrow gauge interest from 6.00 p.m. until 8.00 p.m. We hope that all members will make a special effort to attend this meeting, and have the opportunity to meet the Society Committee, and members from other parts of the country. Final details of the days programme, agenda, and evening show will be enclosed with the April issue of Narrow Gauge News. Items for discussion on the Agenda must be submitted to the Hon. Secretary in writing to arrive not later than March 31st.

I. D. O. FREW, 52, Broomfield Ave., Newton Mearns, GLASGOW.)
J. W. MIDDLEMASS, 10, Highlands Avenue, LEATHERHEAD, Surrey.)
A. PRATT, 18, St.James Road, Edgbaston, BIRMINGHAM. 15.)
M. BUSSEL, Naish House, Clapton-in-Gordana, Somerset.)
T. DODGESEON, 11, Ferrers Close, SHEFFIELD. 9.)

Changes of address.

NOMINATIONS FOR COMMITTEE.

Nominations are invited for the following Committee posts:

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| | Hon. Secretary. |
| | Hon. Treasurer. |
| | (Hon. Librarian. |
| | (Hon. Preservation Secretary. |
| | (Hon. Magazine Editor. |
| | (Hon. News Editor. |
| | (Hon. Publications Officer. |
| Five Ordinary Members to fill the following posts: | |

Nominations should be submitted in writing, duly proposed and seconded, and sent to the Hon. Secretary, 13, Quarry Close, Brockholes, HUDDERSFIELD, Yorks, to arrive not later than March 31st.

Nominations are also requested for two Hon. Auditors, to be submitted as above.

DRAWING LIST.

In view of the number of drawings held by the various members of the Society, it was decided last year to ask all members to search their records, and advise R.N.Redman of what drawings they have, with details of approx. size, scale, and whether they would be willing to allow them out on loan for a short period for copying. In this way we can build up a considerable collection of drawings, copies of which can be placed in the Library and made available to members for modelling and research purposes. A list of some 50 drawings has already been compiled, and members who were unable to answer the previous appeal are asked to check now, and advise Ron accordingly.

NOTES AND NEWS.Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway.

from Keith Stretch.

For the first time for many years (over 30), a winter service is being operated. One train is operated in each direction daily, leaving Dalegarth at 7.45 a.m., and returning from Ravenglass at 4.40 p.m. Note that the service begins and ends at the upper terminus of the line - Dalegarth - and that the times are "liable to alteration". From April 17th an additional train runs on Wednesdays and Fridays only, leaving Ravenglass at 2.40 p.m., and returning from Dalegarth at 3.35 p.m. We shall be interested to learn how this service has fared in the extreme weather conditions during the winter.

The summer service runs from Good Friday to Easter Monday inclusive, and again starting May 16th (this may be a misprint for May 18th as the winter service is shown as running until Wednesday, May 17th). The full service is as follows:

| | | | | | | | | |
|------------|------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|
| | | S | | | | | | |
| Ravenglass | dep: | 9.05. | 11.20. | 12.55. | 2.40 | 4.30. | 6.25. |) |
| | | S | | | | | |) WEEKDAYS. |
| Dalegarth | dep: | 7.45. | 9.50. | 12.10. | 1.45. | 3.35. | 5.25. |) |
| | | A | | | | | | |
| Ravenglass | dep: | 11.20. | 2.40. | 4.30. | 6.10. |) | | |
| | | X | A | | | | |) SUNDAYS. |
| Dalegarth | dep: | 9.45 | 12.10 | 3.35. | 5.25. |) | | |

S - Saturdays only.

X - Liable to alteration.

A - "The Rambler". July 7th to September 15th only.

The journey time varies between 35 and 45 minutes. Eskdale Green is a request stop for most trains, and Beckfoot has reverted to 'set down only' on Ravenglass - Dalegarth trains, and 'Pick up only' on Dalegarth - Ravenglass trains. The 5.25 from Dalegarth is the only train which stops at Lancaster Mill, to set down passengers for the bus to Whitehaven. The summer service continues until September 28th, after which there is a fortnight gap before the winter service starts on October 14th.

ANOTHER NEW NARROW GAUGE LINE TO OPEN.

On Saturday, April 6th, the Bicton Woodlands Railway will open for traffic. The line is being operated by the Clinton Devon Estates in Bicton Gardens, some 2½ miles north of Budleigh Salterton, on the A376 road from Exmouth to Newton Poppleford.

The line is 18" gauge, and was laid last year. The stock come from the Royal Arsenal Railway, at Woolwich, and will therefore afford the opportunity of seeing the equipment of this seldom visited line. Motive power is STEAM being provided by an 0-4-0T WOOLWICH, Avonside 1748/16, one of a batch of sixteen supplied in that year. It was last survivor of the once huge stock of steam loco which operated at Woolwich, and was obtained by Messrs. E.L.Pitt and Co.Ltd., of Brackley, the well known dealers of locos and railway equipment, who incidentally, still have the Pockett 0-6-OST MESOZOIC from R.P.C.M. Southam in their yard. WOOLWICH has been overhauled for service at Bicton, and being a huge engine for any standards, let alone 18", should look most impressive in operation. A booklet on the line is in preparation, and we hope to give further details of this and the line in later issues.

In view of the above it is interesting to reflect on the revival of narrow gauge passenger lines during the last twenty years. At the end of the War only the Tallyllyn struggled on until it was joined by the Vale of Rheidol. Then, in 1955 came the reopening of the Festiniog Railway, and in 1960 the first new line to be opened since the Ashover Light came on the scene - the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway. Now in 1963 these four will be joined by the Welshpool and Llanfair Light, and the Bicton Woddlands Railway!

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PADARN RAILWAY.

Messrs. Pittrail Ltd., have recently completed the track lifting of the 4'0" gauge line from the Dinorwic Quarries at Llanberis to Port Dinorwic, and are offering the two Hunslet Locos. from the line for sale for preservation. The locos in question are DINORWIC and AMALTHEA, and for anyone interested weigh about 21½ tons.

NORTH BRITISH CARVE-UP.

The liquidator of the North British Locomotive Co.Ltd., who it will recalled went out of business last year, has announced the sale of half the Company's Queens Park Works, in Glasgow to the Board of Trade. The Queens Park Plant was formerly occupied by Sharp Stewart & Co.Ltd.

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MORE NOTES ON RUSSIA. (See also N.G.N. No. 11 and 12)

by Keith Stretch.

According to "Russian Steam Locomotives by Le Fleming and Price, the Narrow gauge lines of Estonia and Lithuania are of 75 cm. (2'5½") gauge. Latvia has both 60 cm. (1'11½") and 75 cm. gauges, and a small mileage of metre gauge. The South Western Railway system around Vinnitsa is metre gauge, and so are the Tumskaya-Ryazan,Khanino-Tula lines, and the narrow gauge branch of the Caucasian railway. The West Siberian branch from Bulayevo is believed to be 75 cm. The isolated Dudinka - Norilsk line in north Siberia, (not included in the timetables) has been converted from 75 cm. to 5'0" gauge. (The book "Berius Gardens" has some details of this line.) The State Railways are believed to have some 600 to 800 narrow gauge steam locos, including post war 0-8-0 tender locos, as well as pre war 0-10-0, 2-8-0, 2-6-2, and 2-6-0 locos in the Baltic States. The majority of these are also tender locos. New bogie diesel locos are now being built in the USSR and Czechoslovakia for service in the Baltic States. There are believed to be about 2,000 75 cm. gauge locos on forestry lines, and building of these continued in East Germany after all steam construction for the USSR State Railways ceased. The standard loco is the familiar 0-8-0 tender loco which also operates on many of the 'Pioneer Railways'. 584 were built in Finland in 1946 - 51, and others by Mavag of Hungary, and East German builders. The Soviet Government wished to place an order for several hundred of this type with the North British Locomotive Co. in 1948, but difficulties over the 'balance of payments' unfortunately caused the diversion of the order to Hungary. The 75 cm. system around Kaliningrad (formerly Königsberg in East Prussia) has been dismantled, but the loco stock probably survives on forestry railways. There are known to be quite a few other narrow gauge industrial lines, one known being of 3'0"(914 mm) gauge.

The book also mentions the railway from Kagan to Bukhara, formerly the Emir's private railway. It appears that this has been closed, for although it is shown on the 1961 timetable map, it does not appear in the tables.

HUNGARY

The current (May 1962 - May 1963) Hungarian Timetable shows 1197 km. (745 mls.) of narrow gauge line ("Köskönynyonkeztü Vasut") with passenger services, divided among three different owners, although it is not stated what gauge these lines are, it can be safely assumed that the majority is of the 76 cm. gauge virtually universal in the former Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Magyar Államvasutak. (Hungarian State Railways). Have 1025 km.(642 mls.) of narrow gauge, of which 471 km. (295 mls.) are classified as 'light railway'. This total is made up of 28 separate sections scattered all over the country. 18 of these are isolated lines without branches, and the biggest connected network - 228 km.(142 mls) of which 95 km.(59 mls.) are light railway, is in the south east of the country round Lökősháza and Orosháza. Another large network is in the north east around Sárospatak and Nyíregyháza, but is split into two portions of 92 km.(58 mls.) and 115 km.(72 mls.) by the River Tisza at Balsa. This network is the only one on which railcars are used, (Apart from the 12 km.(7½ mls.) Childrens Pioneer Railway at Szechenyi-hegy on the outskirts of Budapest, and railcars work all passenger services except for one. The shortest line is the 9 km.(5½ mls.) Ercsi(Marx Square) - Ercsi (Station) - Ráckeresztúr, which would appear to be a steam tramway, with an average of ten trains daily. One line, Kápuvár - Osló, and branch (29 km - 12½ mls.) is odd in that it is completely separated from the rest of the MAV, as its standard gauge connection is with the only railway to run on both sides of the Iron Curtain - the Győr-Sopron-Ebenfurt railway. Services on that narrow gauge are generally frequent but slow, the average speed being about 12 m.p.h., although a few lines achieve 20 m.p.h. On a few lines there is a wide seasonal variation in services, while one particular 11 km.(6¾ mls.) line with a service only on Tuesdays and Fridays, and a 3 km.(2 mls.) branch with a service only on "Summer Sundays, School Holidays", and a long list of particular dates! The light railways are curious in the fact that they seem to have far more stations, and far less halts than the other railways, and several would appear to have non-passenger branches, for a lot of stations have the word *elágazás* (junction) in their name. Some of these stations are merely numbered e.g. 18 és 25 *elágazás*.

ALLAMI ERDEI VASUTAK(State Forest Railways). It can be presumed that besides the 14 lines scattered over the country with passenger services (163 km.-102 mls.) there are others for freight only. Four lines have branches, only connects with an MAV narrow gauge line, but the rest are isolated. Most have one or two trains on weekdays only, with extra trains on certain days in summer. The Mestongyő-Felsőkkak line has trains on Tuesday and Friday only; the Pálháza-Kőkapu line daily in summer and Tuesdays and Fridays only in winter; Felsőtárkány-Stimeczház trains 3 days weekly in summer; while the Miskolc-Garadna line has trains 3 days weekly in winter, daily trains in summer, except on some Summer Sundays when it is served by six trains! The two lines from Gyöngyös (to Lajosháza, 12 km (7½ mls) and Mitrafürdő, 7km.(4½ mls.), although a 'Pioneer Railway' has a 3 days a week service on the former, and daily service on the latter. Haricavölgyi Iparvasút has one 9km.(5½ mls.) line from Sajószentpéter to Haricavölgy, in the north, with six trains daily, plus some short workings and 'certain days only' trains. Journeytime in 45 minutes.

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BOOK REVIEW: 'The Glyn Valley Tramway', by D.Ll.Davies. 60 pp., 21 photos, Map. 7 plans.

This is a most interesting and well written book. Mr. Davies has obviously carried out a great deal of painstaking and accurate research. Of special interest is the account of the early events which led to the construction. Both the factual history and financial background to the events is very well covered, and full details of the locos and rolling stock is included. The illustrations are more than adequate, and many have not appeared before. One slip is the transposition of pages 45 and 46 in the text, but the context is still easy to follow. To have collected together such a history of a line so long gone is quite an achievement, and Mr. Davies deserves our congratulations and thanks. RPL.

This book is available from the Society Publication Officer - D.S.Pitkin, 34 Durham Road, Luton, Beds. at 12/6 post free, who will also supply "The County Donegal Railways", by E.M. Patterson, at 30/- post free.

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We give a hearty welcome to the following New Members:

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| R.C.ORMISTON-CHANT, | 17, Rosaleigh Ave., Burnage, MANCHESTER.19. |
| T.A.STEVENSON, | 15, West Hill Road, LEICESTER. |
| R. CROOK, | 1, Cambridge Terrace, FOLKESTONE, Kent. |
| L. S. BROWN, | Putney, Vermont, U.S.A. |
| D.J.WROTTESELEY, | 48, Warrington Cres., Paddington, LONDON. W.9. |
| E. S. TONKS. | 87, Sunnymead Road, South Yardley, BIRMINGHAM. 26. |
| F. E. STAMFORD, | 9, McGregor Street, Caterbury, E 7, Victoria, Australia. |
| Major R. J. WADE, R.E. | "Rotherfield", Copley Way, TADWORTH, Surrey. |
| H. JEFFRIES, | 92, Cedar Drive, CHICHESTER, Sussex. |
| B. K. EWLES, | 14, Aldryche Road, NORWICH, NOR.06.R. Norfolk. |
| P.de VRIES, | Slotermeerlaan 151 ^I , AMSTERDAM, W.2, Netherlands. |
| J. M. BAPT, | 74, St.James Road, BRIDLINGTON, Yorks. |
| M. SAUNDERS, | 4, Westhill Crescent, PAIGTON, Devon. |
| P. SHOESMITH, | 60, Station Road, Kings Norton, BIRMINGHAM. 30. |
| T. GIBSON, | "Tumblers", Shamley Green, GUILDFORD, Surrey. |
| R. TATHAM, | Beehive School, 68, Wellington Road, TAUNTON, Somerset.) Juniors. |