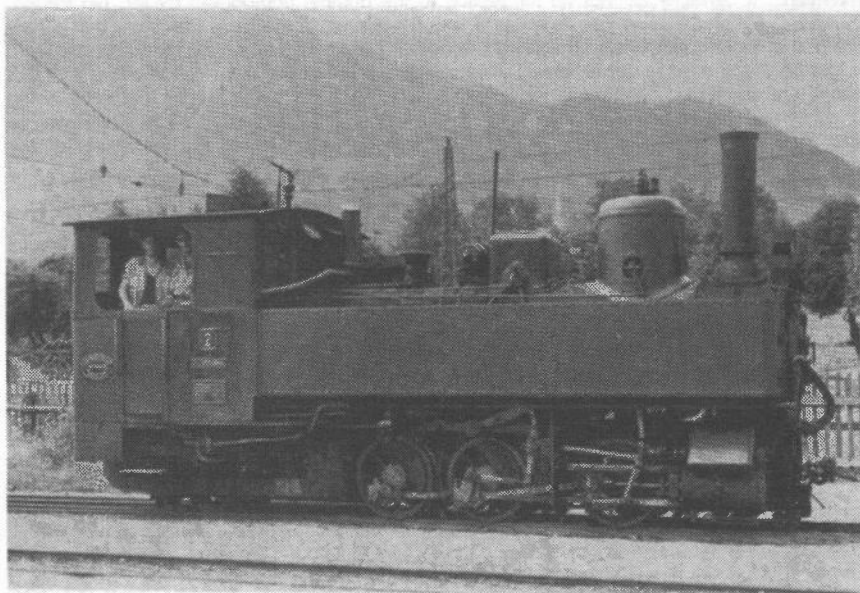


THE NARROW GAUGE



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THE NARROW GAUGE RAILWAY SOCIETY

No. 17 1956 / 2

THE NARROW GAUGE

Issued by the Narrow Gauge Railway Society, Leeds, Yorkshire, England.
(Editor : T.H.Spink)

No. 1956/2 *

[* No.17 in numerical sequence]

Editorial

We have been very pleased to receive a number of comments about our last issue from various members. Most of the remarks have been more or less complimentary, and we hope that those who offered constructive criticism will note that we have done our best to act upon their suggestions in this issue.

We were not entirely satisfied with the front cover reproduction which was produced by the Electronic Stencil method; we feel that it was not up to the standard which we wish to maintain. It certainly did not do full justice to the original photograph by Mr. Ivo Peters. However, during a casual conversation it was mentioned to the Hon. Secretary that a new method of block manufacture involving the use of plastic instead of the usual copper face, might be the answer to our problem. Accordingly we are giving this method a trial with this issue, and hope that it will prove to be satisfactory. The Electronic Stencil method is being used for the centre pages as the cost of other methods is at present prohibitive, and we are still endeavouring to give you the best magazine possible within the limitations of our finances.

Cover Photograph this month shows Locomotivfabrik-Krauss (Linz a/d) 0-6-2T No. 4506 of 1900, loco No. 2 of the Zillertalbahnhof in Austria (Jenbach - Mayrofen) and is reproduced by courtesy of Eisenbahntechnisches Bildarchiv, Wien (Vienna). The Zillertalbahnhof is one of the lines to be visited during the NGRS trip to Austria.

The Bregenzwaldbahn (Austria)

Ken Hartley

A holiday in Austria last August (1955) enabled me to sample the delights of the narrow-gauge railway which runs from the attractive resort of Bregenz on Lake Constance, up through the valley of the Bregenz river and forest of the same name, to the mountain village of Bezau, a distance of 35 kilometres. The line has a gauge of 780mm. and is noteworthy for being operated, not by electricity, but by diesel-electric locomotives. It is substantially built, with heavy FB rail fastened with three coach screws to wooden sleepers, well ballasted with stone, and follows almost every twist and turn of the swirling mountain river, with the result that there are very few stretches of straight track.

The scenery is very beautiful [being] heavily wooded on the lower portions of the line, where the rails frequently almost overhang the raging waters, and many bridges and several short tunnels are encountered. At about half-way to Bezau, the line - still climbing steadily - runs into more open, higher, country, studded with typically charming villages. Near Egg the train traverses almost a three-quarter circle loop; near here also is a lofty stone viaduct, faintly reminiscent of Dolgoch, but larger. Further on the line runs by the roadside on a raised track, very similar to that of the late GVT near Chirk. The final few kilometres to the terminus are on a falling gradient. The journey occupies almost two hours, in either direction, as the curves, gradients and frequent stops preclude any fast running. It is certainly a trip worth making either from a railfan's point of view, or for the sake of the scenery;

I arrived at Bregenz Station with ample time to spare and was thus able to study the layout (the narrow-gauge shares the standard-gauge station, and is accommodated alongside the station buildings) and examine and sketch various items of rolling-stock to my heart's content. A point of interest in the goods yard was a short concrete ramp, fitted with rails, possibly for goods transfer, or maybe for placing the narrow-gauge stock on standard-gauge wagons for shipment to repair shops.

At length the train, composed of eight four-wheel coaches propelled by a massive 1-Bo-1 'Diesellok', backed into the terminal bay and coupled on to a mail and luggage van already shunted in by hand. The whole set-up was rather reminiscent of an American 'pike' - diesel loco, chime whistle, and caboose-like van, whilst the driver affected the bib-and-brace overall and peaked cap peculiar to U.S. loco men. A few minutes later we were off on our 35km. run, with hardly a change in the note of the big 8-cyl. diesel unit. For the first few kilometres the narrow and standard-gauge tracks are interlaced, but at Vorkloster - the narrow-gauge depot - the standard gauge turns off to the right. Here too, a second 1-Bo-1 loco was attached.

Soon after this the climbing started as we twisted and turned in the narrow valley of the 'Bregenz an Ache', and there were frequent signs of recently-cleared falls of earth and rock on the metals. This lower portion of the line reminds me strongly of the WHR in the Aberglaslyn Pass, only on a far grander scale.

So far as I could ascertain there are four diesel-electric locos (OBB Class 2091) working on the line. They are eight-wheelers, the end pairs of wheels being carried on pony trucks very similar to the Isle of Man 2-4-0T's. Vacuum brakes and steam heating (supplied by a diesel-fired vertical boiler at the rear of the large centrally-located cab) are fitted, and either-side control is used. These locos were built c1936 at Semmering, Austria, and have electrical gear by Siemens-Schubert Werke. The weight 22.6 tonnes, and are approximately 30ft. over buffer beams, with a fixed wheelbase of 7'6" and total wheelbase of 20'. Engine noted were 2091-04, 2091-05, 2091-07 and 2091-08. The livery is the standard dark green, with black for everything below the footplate level, and vermilion-painted handrails. A fifth, much smaller, loco, No. 2092-102 was found on a p.w. train at Bezau. This was an 0-6-0 diesel-mechanical, with outside frames and red coupling rods to enliven the rather sombre dark green, and was similar to the usual narrow-gauge industrial loco. It works only on p.w. trains, and has a wheelbase of 5'6" - 6'0" approximately.

The majority (ten) of the passenger coaches are four-wheelers with open end platforms, and most of them are quite modern-looking steel vehicles; older ones are of vertical match-boarding. Both types are approximately 22ft over headstocks, with a 12ft. wheelbase. In addition there are four steel-built bogie coaches, again with end platforms, and around 35-38ft. long. Livery is the usual OBB dark green, with yellow lettering. The goods stock of about fifty wagons includes a fair number of wooden-bodied four-wheel vans, length about 18ft. and wheelbase 12ft. Most have a short platform at one end. Also observed were open and low-sided four-wheel steel wagons, several bogie open wagons and vans (said to be ex-Russia) with wooden bodies length 24ft., width 6ft., bogie centres 12ft., and bogie wheelbase 3ft. approx.; also a solitary six-wheel steel open wagon of modern appearance.

The mail & luggage vans have a length over headstocks of 21'6" and a ten-foot wheelbase; livery is as passenger coaches. The usual colour scheme for goods vehicles is dark red oxide, although some of the bogie stock is grey. Unlike the rest of the goods stock, all of which is vacuum-braked, the vehicles believed to be ex-Russian are not so equipped, and possibly for this reason most are out of use. Centre buffer-couplings are used throughout, with extra side chains on the locos and some of the rolling-stock.

The stations are, as may be expected, usually simple affairs, built largely of timber. Some have two run-round loops and a siding (or two) together with a small goods shed. In addition there are a number of halts, and some of these consist of only a simple shelter and nameboard. The loco shed is situated at Vorkloster, and the main portion is a somewhat unusual building with two roads; there is a smaller extension shed on one side. It is attractively finished in cream, with about three feet at the bottom in light grey, and the roof is covered in dark red-brown tiles.

Whilst the Bregenzerwaldbahn is now diesel operated, it was formerly worked by steam locomotives of at least three varieties. Two of these appear to have been six-coupled side tank locos with separate tenders of unusual design; the third type was a typical old-style continental 0-6-0 or 0-6-2 tank loco. Photographs of these engines were sent to me by the driver of 1-Bo-1 No. 2091-04, but it is unfortunately impossible to decide on the exact wheel arrangement from these.

It is hoped that these notes will convey a fair, if brief, impression of an Austrian 'schmalspurbahn' which is, perhaps, a little out of the ordinary, and certainly well worth a visit.

Should anyone want photographs of the line, they are available from Mr. Hartley at 43 Doncaster Road, Selby. They are :-

172. Goods Platform, ramp and post van, Bregenz.
173. Open bogie wagon, believed ex-Russia, Bregenz.
174. Passenger train of four-wheelers backing into station.
175. 1-Bo-1 No. 2091-05 on train, Bregenz.
176. Old and new-type four-wheel coaches.
177. No. 2091-04 backing onto No. 2091-05 at Vorkloster.
178. View of train from leading loco, en-route.
179. Trains passing at Langenegg Krumbach Station.
180. Double-headed train at Langanegg Krumbach Station.
181. 0-6-0 diesel-mechanical loco No. 2092-102 on p.w. train.
182. Four wheeled guards/luggage/mail van and coach.
183. 1-Bo-1 No. 2091-05 and four-wheel goods van, Bezau.
184. 1-Bo-1 No. 2091-04 and drivers, at Bezau.
185. Part of Bezau Station looking towards dead-end.

All photos are 2 ¼ x 3 ¼ .

SPECIAL NOTICE - Vale of Rheidol Railway

Members will no doubt be pleased to know that as a result of representations by your Hon. Secretary after the recent televising of the Welshpool & Llanfair Railway train, the BBC has arranged with BR (WR) to televise the VoR. for the BBC Television Newsreel Service, and they hope to travel on the train on June 11th. No doubt if all goes well, the railway will appear on TV screens round about that date; so, keep your eyes on the BBC TV Newsreel during the first week of operation!

Apologies

We have several apologies to make with this issue. First, as we wished to bring to the notice of members the VoR news, we decided to attempt production one month earlier than

was planned. This has resulted in some 'scrappiness' on certain pages, as part of the magazine had already been set up.

Last issue we had to come out with a blank space on the 'visits' page; this was due to a trip being cancelled too late to alter page set-up.

Some members have complained of a lack of 'newsiness' in our magazine. Well, unless YOU send new to us, we cannot print it. So, if you have any news items at all, please send them to the Editor, T.H.Spink, 37 Leeds Road, Wakefield, Yorks. Please be as brief as possible and write on one side of the paper only. Lastly, if you want a reply, please enclose an s.a.e. - my pocket is not bottomless! Ed.

Some recent items of Narrow-Gauge Interest

Model Railway News, Mar. : Festiniog Railway - letter re stub point at Portmadoc

Apr. : Letter re mixed gauges by Mr. R.W.Kidner

Model Railway Constructor, Apr. : Welshpool & Llanfair, letter

May : Lynton & Barnstaple, letter and photograph

Locomotive Review, Apr. : The Cote du Nord Light Railway (metre gauge) - article
and photo

Model Railroader, Apr. : Godehouse Sugar Co. 3ft-gauge plantation 0-6-0, drawing
and photo

The Locomotive, Mar. : Natal Estates Railway, loco drawing and description

Apr. : Sierra Leone Gov. Rwy. Beyer-Garratt locos, article and
photos.

Railway World, May : Corris Railway, article and photo

Modern Tramway, Mar./Apr. : Manx Electric Railway, article and numerous photos

Welshpool & Llanfair Railway

One of our members visited the line in May and found "The Earl" in use after being re-tubed at Oswestry (where "Countess" is at present). "The Earl" was in a very clean condition but a little shy at steaming on the day of our correspondent's visit; however, this did not prevent seven loaded wagons and the brake van arriving at Llanfair within the hour.

On the return journey five empty wagons and two empty vans provided the make up of the train. The p.w. trolley was passed at Heniarth in the down direction and just short of Llanfair in the up direction.

The White Pass & Yukon Railway

P.C.Halton

This interesting 3ft-gauge railway was built during the years 1898-1900 to give access to and from the Klondyke gold area. Although beset by many difficulties, not the least of which was 'the call of the gold', the line not only managed to complete the 110 miles between Skagway and Whitehorse, but also to pay the cost of the construction!

The line starts in the main street of the seaport of Skagway, and climbing rapidly for 20.4 miles up gradients as steep as 1 in 25, and with an *average* of 1 in 31, rises to 2,885 feet above sea level over "The Summit" at White Pass where is situated the Customs Station between Alaska and Canada. One of the two helper locos of the daily mixed train is usually detached here during the formalities of crossing an International Frontier. The second helper comes off at Frazer (32.7 miles) after which the run becomes much easier; the next

important station is Carcross (68 miles) from where the line covers another 42 miles to the terminus at Whitehorse, which is an important river port.

Service on the line falls into two categories, [firstly] freight and local passenger, and secondly tourist traffic. These can best be considered separately.

Freight and local passenger : this service of mixed trains runs all the year round, daily in summer but only two or three times a week in winter (this may drop to as 'as required' service). During USATC operation when hauling materials for the Alaska Highway, it did keep going daily throughout the winter - a terrific achievement. As there are no roads, the railway is the only means of exit from Skagway other than by sea. Freight is hauled to Carcross and Whitehorse for transfer to Company boats on Lake Tagish and the Yukon River.

Tourists : this is a summer-only service, and passengers may take their choice of three different trips. The first is a journey from Skagway to Carcross and back, and takes one day. The second is a round trip which takes two days, and includes a steamer journey from Carcross down the length of Tagish Lake and back. The third is a three-day trip which follows the route of the previous journey and in addition takes the tourist to Whitehorse and back before returning to Skagway. If desired, the third trip can be further extended by a seven-day river trip from Whitehorse.

In winter between twenty and thirty feet of snow falls on White Pass and rotary ploughs are continually at work. The snow problem is so great that the ploughs cannot be turned on triangles (wyes over there) but have to be run round specially constructed circles! The mixed train has to follow within visual distance behind the plough train as a safety precaution. Should the latter find it impossible to proceed alone, the two trains are coupled together to try and blast their way through. Strangely enough, the snow is only light beyond the pass, and offers no extraordinary difficulties to operation.

At the moment the line is worked by four 2-8-2 locos, together with two 0-6-6-0 diesel-electrics. Two further 2-8-2's are held in reserve.

Much more could be written about this railway but unfortunately space does not permit. Instead I would like to add that articles on the line can be found in "Trains" for January 1951, "Railroad Magazine" for April 1955 and "Model Railroader" for March 1953, all of which are very good, and some of the contents of this article are acknowledged to these sources. The photographs were sent by the President of the Company. I have a full list of locos, and if anyone is interested I will gladly supply what I have on request.

Finally, to any critics who may have something to say about including American lines in our magazine, I would like to point out that the WP&Y is BRITISH owned, and may well be the only one in both Canada and the United States. (Can anyone confirm this? Ed.)

Romney Hythe & Dymchurch Railway

Arthur G. Wells, M.P.S.

The 1956 season started for the RH&DR on Good Friday, 30th March. A special timetable of nine trains each way between New Romney and Hythe, with five extended to Dungeness, was run. From 3rd April to 9th May, only six trains are advertised each way between New Romney and Hythe, and the Dungeness line is served on Fridays only by two trains each way. This timetable can be operated by only two engines, but for the Easter weekend three were required - No's 2, 5 and 7.

Of the remaining engines, No. 1 was in works being fitted with a new superheated boiler. No. 8 is also to be fitted with a new boiler, which was on a trolley outside the works, with the engine stored in the carriage shed at New Romney - a particularly interesting sight, as the [inside] cylinder, not now used, was clearly to be seen. Also in the shed was No. 6, which had received an extensive overhaul during 1955, and was not due to run during Easter. The Simplex was also there; the "Austin" was at Dymchurch, and the 4-4-0 with Ford V8 petrol engine and the small scooter were at New Romney. A second Simplex has been acquired and is to be cannibalised to provide spares.

Summer Service proper starts on 10th May, and from 12th July to 12th September a very intensive service is advertised. The named train this year will be called "The Marshlander"; this will run from 10th May to the end of the season, which is advertised as 30th September.

Southwold Railway

We are pleased to welcome Mr. A.R. Taylor of 21 Mere Street, Diss, Norfolk, to the Society; he is particularly interested in the former Southwold Railway and would welcome letters from other members who may have a similar interest.

Vale of Rheidol Railway (BR/W)

The news that the three locos on the VoR are to be named, reached us too late for inclusion in the last issue. Details are as follows :-

No. 7 "Owain Glyndwr"

No. 8 "Llewellyn"

No. 9 "Prince of Wales" We understand that no official naming ceremony is envisaged.

The summer timetable is as under :

	WEEKDAYS			SUNDAYS	
	a.m.	p.m. (SX)	p.m.	p.m.(B)	(D)
Aberystwyth	10.15	1.45	2.30	5.45	2.15
Llanbadarn	10.22	1.52	2.37	5.52	2.22
Capel Bangor	10.35	2.05	2.50	6.05	2.35
Aberffrd	10.50	2.20	3.05	6.20	2.50
Devil's Bridge	11.15	2.45	3.30	6.45	3.15
Devil's Bridge	11.45	4.15	5.50	8.00	4.30
Aberffrd	12.12	4.42	6.18	8.27	4.57
Capel Bangor	12.36	4.56	6.32	8.40	5.11
Llanbadarn	12.39	5.09	6.45	8.55	5.24
Aberystwyth arr.	12.45	5.15	6.50	9.00	5.30

SX - Saturdays Excepted

(B) - Tues, Wed., Thurs., only, Runs 17th July to 6th September inclusive.

(D) - Runs 15th July to 2nd September inclusive.

Trains call additionally at Glanrafon Halt, Nantyrnon Halt, Rheidol Falls Halt and Phiwfron Halt by request. Passengers wishing to alight must notify the guard at the previous stopping station; passengers wishing to board must give hand signal to driver.

The service commences on 11th June. Cheap Day Return tickets issued from Aberystwyth or Llanbadarn to Devil's Bridge 2/9d Second Class. Cheap Evening Return tickets (17th July to 6th September inclusive) 2/-d. Second Class.

Once again, members are asked to bring the existence of the Vale of Rheidol Railway to the notice of anyone who is contemplating a holiday at Aberystwyth. See also notice on p.6 of this magazine.

Proposed Visits

- 1) Nocton Estates Light Railway, near Lincoln. Sunday 3rd June. Meet at the main installation which adjoins former Nocton & Dunston Station, B.R.(E) at 2.0 - 2.30 p.m.
- 2) John Knowles & Co. (Wooden Box) Ltd, Woodville, near Burton-on-Trent. Sunday 15th July. Meet at the firm's main office building, 2.30 p.m.
- 3) Austria Trip. The response from members to this trip is disappointing, and as we go to press only ONE NGRS member has registered, although it is pretty certain now that the trip will take place, good support having been received from outside the Society. Closing date for registration is 20th June.
- 4) Irish Trip. The response to this trip has been equally disappointing, and as only one member has made any enquiries we have decided to cancel it.
- 5) Manchester Waterworks. It is hoped to arrange a visit to this 3ft-gauge line near Glossop one Saturday afternoon during September, and we hope to announce details in the next issue.