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As this editorial is written the weather is unseasonably warm and dry; this trend may be unwelcome because of the threat of global warming, but it has enabled many railways to get well ahead in their maintenance and preparation for the new season.

And the new season will soon be upon us. Most railways will begin their season in the last two weeks of March and then it will be full steam ahead until September or even later. That is a rich hunting ground for those of us who enjoy the lure of the narrow gauge. Make a (late) New Year’s resolution to take your camera and, maybe, a note book so that you can send reports of every visit you make this year to the appropriate NGRS editor.

I have been editing NGN for over fifty issues and I do not remember a March edition which has been as full as this, number 351. Amidst all the reading you have ahead of you, however, you will notice that our faithful section editors have been using sources other than members for some of the material. In many cases, one member has been responsible for more than one report. If you are not represented in this issue, please try to send something in for May, July or September. In that way we will be able to widen the scope of our reporting and cover news that would otherwise be missed.

If you plan to go overseas this year, even if your visit is not primarily a railway-based one, do try to see if there are narrow gauge gems in the area you visit. Even a sentence or two might serve to record something that would otherwise go unnoticed.

Who would have thought that there would be narrow gauge track in Nando’s in Bath? But see page 7! Even when you are having a cup of coffee or a bite to eat there could an opportunity to share a railway moment.

Let’s make the 2019 season one that is better recorded than any previous one.

A friendly welcome is extended to new editor Jonathan James whose first Miniature Gauges section begins on page 34.
MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Total nett membership (i.e. excluding Associate, Visits and Complimentary members) at 1st February was 1,398, the second highest figure at this date since 2012. Existing members could help us break through the 1,400 barrier by recruiting a friend or relative!

Loco Headboards

A member has suggested a novel use for the recently-introduced Society lapel badges – as a headboard for larger-scale model trains! Anyone modelling in O-scale or larger can now operate a Society Special! Available from the writer at £5 including postage, the discreetly-sized badges (only 25mm x 20mm) would look well adorning your locomotive smokebox.

Lawson Little

Statfold Barn 2019 – Enthusiast Days

The Society will not be obtaining Statfold tickets on members’ behalf in 2019. Online purchase of tickets is now available. Please see Statfold’s website. Postal application for tickets is available for members without internet access. Forms may be obtained from the Visits Officer, please include a SAE. Forms for the March opening will be available at home from early March to early April & will be unable to answer any Royal Mail correspondence, but may be able to respond to Emails.

EVENTS

Apedale: 20-22 April Easter Egg Hunt; 17 May Vintage Car Rally
Ashmanhaugh LR, Norwich: 4 May Open Day
Bala Lake Railway: 6 April Race the Train.
Fairbourne Railway
The Fairbourne Railway Steam Gala will be held over the weekend Saturday 25 to Monday 27 May 2019. An intensive service on the 12½” gauge will operate with all available locomotives. The gala marks the return of the eighth former Fairbourne engine since the inauguration of the dual gauge track, when the original Heywood Katie will visit from Ravenglass. It was built in 1896 and will be in steam at Fairbourne for the first time since 1926! More visitors will be announced in due course. The 5” and 7¼” gauge track at Barmouth Ferry will also operate giving an opportunity to ride on four different gauges. The marquee at the Ferry will host model railway layouts in different scales and there will be an opportunity to see the latest addition to the museum, the model of the Cambrian Railway’s Barmouth viaduct which was the centrepiece of the 150th bridge anniversary celebration exhibition.

Hampton & Kempton Railway: 16/17 March Open Days; 21 April Easter Egg Hunt
Statfold: 23/24 March Enthusiasts Weekend
Talyllyn Railway: 21 April Easter Bunny Trail
Friends of Thorpe Light Railway 2019 Open Days

This private 15” gauge line near Barnard Castle, Co. Durham, DL12 8XF (formerly the Whorlton Lido Railway - n.b. the lido is permanently closed) will be open between 12-4pm on the following Sundays: April 28th, May 19th, June 16th, July 14th, August 18th, September 8th. Further details on website.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED


Rheidol Review: Vale of Rheidol Railway Newsletter, No 35. This edition is filled with updates on projects and with articles on the mines in the Rheidol Valley. There is a 2018 Round Up and an article about a few influential people from the VOR’s history. A very interesting new publication.

Stars of Sandstone 2019 - Newsletter Number 11. This newsletter, packed with information and events from this South African organisation is available online. Visit www.starsofsandstone.com There are some lovely videos there too. Newsbrief No 64, January 2019. Newsletter of the Metropolitan Water Board Railway Society. Once again, full of lively information.

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Lokomotivbau “Karl Marx”: Die Lokschmiede der DDR in Babelsberg
By Udo Kandler

Though the cover of this book features standard gauge locomotives, especially the V180 diesel hydraulic class for which LKM was well known, this factory also built a lot of steam and diesel narrow gauge engines, and these are well represented. This photo-based album starts at the end of WW2, when the former O&K Drewitz works near Potsdam, a suburb of Berlin, lay in ruins. The factory was seized by the Soviet Military Administration and later handed over to the new East German government (who renamed it the Lokomotivbau Karl Marx). Heavy locomotive building ended in 1970 though the factory continued to build small diesels until 1976. Curiously the ‘factory’ then became a film studio.

The splendid clear images on quality paper (to EK-Verlag’s usual high standard) of the resurrection of the works, and various locomotives in construction and at delivery, are fascinating. But the thing that stands out for me is the social and human history and comment that runs through the ‘narrative’. In the early years LKM supplied large numbers of 750mm gauge 0-8-0 ‘Stalin Loks’ to the USSR as reparations. There is a series of photos of these tough little machines under construction, culminating in a shot of a ceremony in July 1952 celebrating the completion of this ‘order’ under the Five Year Plan set out at the Party Conference in July 1947. There’s a band and an interesting looking model of a ‘Stalin Lok’ on the stage, but a bizarre touch is added by two stern looking rifle carrying young ‘Aktivists’ standing in front of the podium symbolising the commitment of the workers to fight Western Imperialism!

There’s a wry photo of a young apprentice (‘lehrling’ – literally ‘little learner’) banging away with a hammer beside an elderly welder fabricating an ash-pan for a narrow gauge loco (by the look of it). The caption mentions ‘not much peace for the workers’ – the expression on the welder’s face says it all. And what about the young lad perched in a temporary seat on the front platform of a ‘Stalin’ type 0-8-0 on test on the 750mm Freital-Kipsdorf line near Dresden, holding a meter piped into the smokebox? H&S these days would have apoplexy on the spot (certainly in the UK) – but he looks happy enough. I hope he was strapped on. The last photo in the book, from 1953, is a lovely study of 750mm gauge 2-10-2T No 99 783 lined out in works grey – the sister of several locomotives now active on the Rugenbahn.

Though full of quality photos of locomotives, the factory, the workers and some reproduced sales material, in some ways I found the social history content to be the most interesting part of the book, much to my surprise. A fascinating story and well worth buying.

Dr Michael Gray
Published by EK-Verlag, Freiburg, 2018.
www.eisenbahn-kurier.de
Hardcover A4 Landscape, with 128pp and approx 188 B&W and colour illustrations and photos. German text. Obtainable from the publisher (£35 + p&p) or Amazon (£28.99).

The Croesor Tramway: A history of the tramways and quarries of Cwm Croesor
By Dave Southern with Adrian Barrell

Nadir of the tramways and accessible areas of the quarries may be explored today by well equipped and sure footed walkers, making the book of interest both to casual readers of social and industrial history as well as those wanting more information on what can be seen.

Would that every part of our industrial past were as well researched and documented as the Croesor Tramway. Dave Southern is to be congratulated on a definitive and comprehensive study. This volume is a must for all who are interested in the narrow gauge railways of North Wales.

Paul Bennett
Published by the Welsh Highland Heritage Group
120 pages of text illustrated with maps and photographs in colour and black and white. Sales c/o, The Pound, Stresham, Brackley, Northants. NN13 5HG
£18.00 post paid
sales@welshhighlandheritage.co.uk
ISBN 978-0-9930821-6-0

SOCIETY SHIRTS
We have reintroduced the Society shirts which were very popular a few years ago. Two styles are available – Sweat Shirts at £14 and Polo Shirts at £13, both prices include U.K. postage (Overseas postage on request).
Made to order in Forest Green or Royal Blue with embroidered logo to match the Society Cap (still available) they come in the following chest sizes : 38” (S), 40” (M), 42”- 44” (L), 46” (XL), 48” (2XL) and 50”- 52” (3XL). Also available to special order in Royal Blue at the same prices (n.b. £1 surcharge on sizes 2XL and above).
If interested please state your chosen shirt (or both) and size, and you will be registered for the next delivery. Do NOT send money until notified.
The above are available from Lawson Little, 1 Archers Drive, Old Bilsthorpe, Newark, NG22 8SD. (littlerail@talktalk.net)
They Shall Not Grow Old

I thought I’d send the attached screenshots (above) to make you aware. They are screenshots from a trailer for a film called They Shall not Grow Old. As you may already know, footage from WW1 has been completely restored and using latest technology has been transformed by bringing it to life with colour. Slowing the old footage down to the correct speed, and using lip readers, voices have been added. Lord of the Rings Director Peter Jackson and his team have put the footage together to produce a film which was to open in cinemas from 17th December 2018. As you will see from the screenshots, at least two scenes show a narrow gauge railway so perhaps there will be further coverage!

Graham Lelliott

Request for information

In The Age of Steam (Thomas Crump, Robinson, 2007), page 273, discussing the introduction of railways to Japan, it reads:

’[Commodore Matthew] Perry [US Navy], on his second visit [1854], brought a variety of gifts, among which was a quarter-size model railway [15” gauge or thereabouts?], complete with locomotive, tender [contemporary 4-4-0?] and a carriage, with several miles of rails. The American visitors having laid a circular track - about a mile long - behind the reception hall at Yokohama, proceeded to show the assembled dignitaries what a railway could do. They were overwhelmed… Travelling at 20 m.p.h. was far beyond anything conceived possible in what was still a feudal state.’

Does anyone have any more information about this very early miniature railway?

Sydney A. Leleux

Loco for Sale

Daily Mail - 25 January 2019. Headline: The train now standing at the auction house ... will set you back £200,000. About half the page is photographs, 3/4 front of the loco and tender, cab side, cab interior, motion. The item for sale by Dreweatts, of Newbury, on 12 March, is a one eighth scale model of LMS 4-6-2 Duchess Of Buccleuch, built from official drawings by a Mr Powell, believed completed around 1970. It belonged to model maker Ted Martin who died aged 88 in 2010. The pre-sale estimate is £150,000.

Sydney Leleux

NGRS: AREA GROUP DIARY

London and Southern Area

2018-2019 Season
Meetings are held on Monday evenings at The Model Railway Club, Keen House, Calshot Street, London N1 9DA and are run jointly with the Welshpool and Llanfair Railway. The venue is a few minutes walk from King’s Cross and St Pancras stations. Refreshments are on sale from the bar, and there is a bookstall. All members and friends are most welcome. Programmes begin at 7.00pm and finish by 9.30 pm with an interval of half an hour.

8 April Members’ Miscellany. A varied showcase of home and overseas narrow gauge railways presented by four members. It will be both slide and digital pictures.

More details about the evening’s programme will be published shortly.

The April meeting will be the last in the current series. The next meetings season will begin in October 2019.

Peter Lemmey
(peterlemmey@waitrose.com)

Lincolnshire Area

Meetings are now held in the ‘Function Room’ at the ‘Golden Eagle’, 21 High Street, Lincoln, LN5 8BD commencing at 7.30pm (room available from 7.00pm) and finishing by 10.00pm. Non-members are welcome. Further details from Tim Hudson – ngrs@photrek.co.uk – 01522 524672

Yorkshire Area

5 April: Sun, Steam & Sugar. Cuba in the 1990s by Nigel Ponsford

3 May: Two Foot Tracks to the Front - a look at the Light Railways of WW1. by Bob Schofield.

Meetings are held on Thursday evenings, starting at 7.30 pm in the Epicentre at the Meanwood Valley Urban Farm, Sugarwell Road, Meanwood, Leeds LS7 2QG (tel: 0113 262 9759). The building is open at 7.00 pm.

Please note new rate for donation of £3 to cover expenses. Light refreshments are available at 50p.
Visit 12/02/19. Eagle-eyed members may be able to spot a short length of long-disused narrow gauge track in concrete running from an arched doorway below the up platform at Bath Spa station. This is a remnant of the 50cm gauge handworked system which once served Bath’s first power station. Coal from a short standard gauge siding was dropped down chutes to the vauls below, to be taken on the railway to the boilers, with waste ash transported to barges on the river along the track that can be seen.

The railway became disused in 1925 and the remains lay forgotten for almost 80 years, until a Railtrack inspection under the station reported the presence of some track and a wagon. The whole area has been subsequently redeveloped, but fortunately sections of the track, including the position of a wagon turntable, have been incorporated into the floor of Nando’s restaurant in Brunel Square, whilst the wagon – a rare wooden dropside wagon built by Orenstein & Koppel in Berlin around 1890 - has been restored and can be seen in the Museum of Bath at Work in the city centre.

Graham & Lesley Feldwick

Imber village, Salisbury Plain, Wiltshire
Visit 18/08/18. Imberbus is held annually, and many visitors are attracted to ride on a Routemaster bus across Salisbury Plain to the uninhabited village of Imber and beyond on MoD land. On this occasion 22 Routemaster buses took part (leading to the comment ‘typical, you wait a year for a bus, and then 22 turn up together.’)

Just east of Imber village the road crosses a girder bridge, and the end section of this is rail-mounted, on double track of a very narrow gauge. This is presumably for army practices though there seems little recent evidence of use.

If anyone fancies a ride on a Routemaster this year, Imberbus will be on the 17th August, with buses running from Warminster station.

Ian Harden, via A&H editor

Imber village: (Above) rail-mounted bridge section. (Below) close-up of the tracks.
Photos: Ian Harden

River Medway, Kent – anyone identify these please? Photos: Clive Fitzjohn

Rhosllanerchrugog, Clwyd
Visit 08/01/19. In the centre of the village of Rhosllanerchrugog, near Wrexham, is a plinthed wagon at a road junction. The wagon of approximately 2’ gauge is loaded with bricks. The wagon was donated by the North Wales Miners Association Trust Ltd. The bricks bear the names of local brickworks and the purpose of the installation is to commemorate the brick and tile workers of the locality. The accompanying information board records some history of these brickworks. The Copi Brickworks opened in 1872, closing in 1963, the Ponkey Brickworks worked from 1866 but was closed by 1900, the Rhos Brickworks dates from around 1860 and lasted until the end of the 19th century, while the Pant Brickworks opened in 1879 and finally closed in 1974. The famous Dennis Ruabon bricks were made by the Ruabon Coal Company from 1863, but after experiencing financial difficulties the brick-
making enterprise was bought by Henry Dennis who built a new bigger works which opened in 1890 and continued until 1970 when the company concentrated on tile production. At Llwyenion there were three sites between the 18th century and final closure in 1957. These were connected by a GWR standard gauge line.

Graham Billington

Twyford Waterworks Railway, Twyford Waterworks, Twyford, Hampshire (various gauges)

Report 15/02/19. In addition to a number of ex-industrial locomotives, the railway collection here includes over 30 wagons, many of which are neither in use or on display. During the winter months volunteers have been working behind the lime kilns to clear and level an area formerly overgrown with brambles, and reroute the visitor access path around this. This will form a new wagon display area to help tell the story of the use of narrow gauge in industry, with four different gauges. It is planned to link the central 2’0” gauge line to the running tracks at a later stage and points are being sourced for this. The area is now basically completed, and initially it is planned to display a 1’0” gauge flat wagon from a Dorset watercress bed, a 1’4” gauge end-tipping wagon from Knowle Hill Brickworks in Berkshire, a 1’8” gauge V skip built by Koppel in Pittsburgh USA from a brickworks in Essex, a small wagon used at the limeworks at Cocking in West Sussex, and a set of 2’0” gauge U skips which were used in the construction of the railway to Stansted airport. More wagons will be added as the site develops. Twyford Waterworks Railway is looking for further wagons to join the collection, either by purchase or on loan, unrestored or restored.

Plans include a new shed for housing the operational wagons, and site preparation work for this will commence shortly.

Graham, Lesley & Matthew Feldwick

Rhosllanerchrugog - narrow gauge wagon displaying bricks from the local area

Photo: Graham Billington

Narrow Gauge Association

The Association is delighted to be celebrating its Fortieth Anniversary in 2019 with some key events:
- Commemorative souvenir for members with February 2019 Narrow Lines;
- A commemorative supplement to June 2019 Narrow Lines, containing reprints of articles from past issues;
- A 40th Exhibition at Burton-on-Trent Town Hall, Staffordshire, on 8th June 2019 with the usual AGM re-scheduled to allow more exhibition spaces;
- An Anniversary Issue of the Association’s magazine Narrow Lines, in December 2019 - A digital copy of all 40 years’ back issues of Narrow Lines up to December 2019 for every member, (with December 2019 Narrow Lines).
- Development of an Instagram account to highlight and publicize the work of our members

Club members benefit from an active, enthusiastic and hard-working team who support the members’ sales activity for both second-hand and new items specifically to help the narrow gauge modeller, as well as our popular own-brand publications."

The Association was formed in 1979 to “... promote and foster interest in narrow gauge modelling in 7mm/ft (1:43) and similar scales and encourage the development and advancement thereof.” It has approximately 1000 members, in the UK, Europe, the USA and worldwide. It publishes a magazine Narrow Lines (Peter Jackson, editor@7mmnga.org.uk) six times a year, along with information (area groups, trade news, second-hand sales, and; shows) for members, in Narrow News.

Website URL: www.7mmnga.org.uk
Instagram: #7mmnarrowgaugeassociation
highlights the best modelling of members.
Apedale Valley Light Railway, Loomer Road, Chesterton, Staffordshire ST5 7LB (2’ gauge)

Centenarian makes it - just! Moseley Railway Trust (MRT) fleet number 61 is Motor Rail 1320 which was new from the Bedford factory on 10th September 1918. This loco began life as a “protected” type 40HP petrol-engined loco, but it has been heavily modified by industrial owners over the years. The loco worked at the Moor Hill Pits, Colney Street, near London, which is now pretty much beneath the M25 and London Colney shopping centre. It has been at Amberley Museum and Cadeby before coming to Apedale.

We have now completed a PRISM grant-funded overhaul of the loco. Although previously operational, the loco was pretty poorly. The wheels had been likened to pizza cutters, and the engine (a Dorman diesel) was four-cylinder in name only. One cylinder was a very reluctant participant, and the fourth was really having nothing to do with the whole thing.

The overhaul has been extremely challenging, largely due to some nasties emerging from the engine overhaul process. However, with some very clever engine people, and with PRISM’s understanding, we have finally managed to get the loco fully up and running. It is an important link in the MRT’s collection, since it shows how former World War One equipment was re-used and modified in industry after the conflict. It also provides a fascinating contrast to the MRT’s collection of other World War One equipment, including an original-condition 40HP Simplex.

The Moseley Railway Trust would like to offer its particular thanks to the Amberley Museum for allowing us to re-fit an original plate from the loco. The Trust has been working doggedly to complete this overhaul, and to ensure the loco makes its public debut during its centenary year. To mark this, we operated our last passenger train of 2018 using Motor Rail 1320; the 16:00 departure on Saturday 29th December at Cadeby before coming to Apedale. The other trains on that day - the "Duxford" coaches has been converted to electric start. The first of the two “Oxford” coaches has been stripped for complete overhaul, and new trackwork is being laid on the “main line”. Please see also the Derbyshire Dales NGR report (p.16).

Lawson Little
Bala Lake Railway, Llanuwchllyn, Gwynedd LL23 7DD (2’ gauge)

Boilers are in the news again, with that of 0-4-0ST Holy War (Hunslet 702/1902) due to receive some extra remedial attention. Holy War’s boiler has been removed for its 10-year inspection, during which it was noticed that one area would need some special repairs, not serious but necessary. A new section will need to be welded into place which will cure the problem, after which further tests will be carried out. The front tube-plate has been removed, a process which involved drilling out countless rivets.

The other boiler news is that a brand new boiler for Alice (Hunslet 780/1902) has been completed and arrived in Llanuwchllyn just before Christmas. Constructed by the Severn Valley Railway, it has been built to an original design which will safeguard Alice’s future for many years to come and which will also keep its appearance as authentic as when it was working in Dinorwic Quarry.

The current boiler has performed really well over many years. Alice will run throughout the 2019 season, after which it will be withdrawn for her 10-year overhaul. The old boiler has plenty of life left and after some minor repairs, will be offered for sale. In the meantime, our engineering team will sort out all the fittings and ancillaries so that when Alice is withdrawn at season’s end, her overhaul will be completed more rapidly, a consequence of inspired forethought and planning.

Our R&H diesel, Chilmark (194771/1939), has been benefiting from a lot of attention from our engineering team in recent weeks. The ‘stitched’ original block is performing very well, a testament to engineering ingenuity and skill. Recent successes have been the acquisition of new brake blocks as the old ones were distinctly tired.

Our intrepid teams have been beaving away at not only cropping trees and keeping the foliage at bay, but also the laborious task of major carriage refurbishment. One carriage in particular has been stripped to the bare chassis and has had a thorough rebuild. This includes a new floor, all new side and end panelling, new roof panels and two new doors inserted on what is currently the non-platform side (in readiness for extending services to Bala Town). To finish off, the seats have been re-trimmed and the whole carriage repainted. Not bad going in just five weeks!

Progress is being made on the Penrhyd Coach with the seating and the armrests the next items to be delivered. In the meantime, the subject of door handles has been addressed and this is another area where accuracy is essential. The latest news is that four more interior panels have been collected by the upholsterer, leaving only two left to be done.

The Santa Specials were, as always, a resounding success. The trains, in true BLR tradition, were top ‘n tailed by Maid Marian (Hunslet 822/1903) and Alice which delighted everyone. All the trains were fully booked, which meant that the figures for the month were the same as last year and those for the whole year produced a 6% increase on 2017. In doing so, we broke the 29,000 visitors threshold which made 2018 our best year on record!

On 21st November, two signal posts and a bracket signal arrived at the Bala Town station site. Previously used at Craven Arms, in Shropshire, these items were not only donated by Network Rail but they were delivered free of charge too, a greatly appreciated gesture. The arms and other small pieces are expected soon.

In addition, another private individual, from the Nantwich and Market Drayton Railway Society who visited the railway in the summer, has donated to us a signal box lever frame. This was a standard GWR frame and was previously installed at Silverdale Junction where the Old Knotty line joined the GWR’s route between Nantwich and Wellington. This and the signals will be used in our expansion plans, not only for the Bala Town terminus but also at Llanuwchllyn.

During the Working Weekend / Week which started on 19th January, 39 lengths of rail were re-laid and realigned with the lineside (continued on page 12 (lower)
Giant’s Causeway and Bushmills Railway, (3’ gauge)

Visit 24/11/18. This should have been one of the few operating days in November with the first train out from the depot at the Causeway end of the line at 12.00 and there were plenty of visitors around. However, on arrival at the station we were greeted with the news that the diesel powered tram had a flat battery and that the first train could be at 13.00.

On returning, after a walk along the spectacular coastline, we were told that the battery still had not charged enough to start the engine and the train might run at 14.00. Unfortunately a lack of time and the temptation of a visit to the Bushmills Distillery prevented waiting to see if the train did in fact run then. However, the station staff gave a conducted tour of the sheds to see the three locomotives (formerly used at the Shane’s Castle Railway), the diesel powered trams and the other rolling stock. The three locomotives are: Barclay 0-4-0WT Shane (2265/1949) which was built for the Bord na Móna – their number being 3/LM45, Peckett 0-4-0T Tyrone (1026/1904 - see photo right) which was built for British Aluminium, Larne – their number being 1 and Motor Rail Simplex T class diesel Rory (102T016/1976).

Some of the four wheel carriages from the former Shane’s Castle Railway are still on site but now in poor condition.

Foyle Valley Railway Museum, Derry (3’ gauge) – see also separate report above

Visit 24/11/18 This Museum has now been closed for some time. However, on walking past the site on the Craigavon Bridge it was noticed that a shed door was open and some people were present washing a car. A friendly welcome was received and we were shown round the exhibits inside which are well cared for. The exhibits are rather cramped and photography is difficult. The inside walls have a very good exhibition of the development of railways in County Donegal.

The railway artefacts comprise Nasmyth Wilson 2-6-4T Columbkille (1907) which is clean and cosmetically restored, railcar number 12 (built by the GNR 1934) which seems to be in good condition and a Motor Rail Simplex (1956) diesel locomotive. Rolling stock on site comprises two County Donegal bogie carriages, a four wheeled van and a four wheeled hand crane. The largely restored body of a Lough Swilly carriage without running gear is also in the museum along with various station signs and signals.

The museum is to be retained and form the core part of a new community project to support people with autism.

Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, Cultra (various gauges)

Visit 25/11/18. This is one of the best museum locations in the British Isles. The only negative aspect is the lack of a guidebook for the collections. The site includes a very comprehensive transport collection with a number of halls housing railway, road transport, shipping and air transport exhibits. The railway hall has an exhibition which although smaller than the NRM at York is every bit as well presented. This hall contains some excellent wall displays on passenger carrying and industrial narrow gauge railways in Ireland and a large number of narrow gauge exhibits. These are as follows:

1’ 10” gauge.
- Spence 0-4-0T number 20, a Planet 4w diesel locomotive and a 4w ‘knifeboard’ carriage from Guinness Brewery, Dublin.

2’ gauge.
- World War One vintage Motor Rail Simplex number 246 (see photo left). After the War this worked in several industrial sites in Northern Ireland ending up at Collin Glen Brickworks in Belfast.
- Motor Rail Simplex number 9202. This worked at the Northern Sand and Brick Co at Toome before moving to other industrial sites.
- Hudson Hunslet 3127 (see photo above). This was built for the Admiralty, for a strategic naval base built during World War 2 at Lisahally on Lough Foyle. The locomotive is preserved with a four wheeled van from this system.
3' gauge:
- County Donegal: Nasmyth Wilson 2-6-4T Blanche. This is preserved just as it came out of service.
- Cavan & Leitrim Railway: Robert Stevenson & Hawthorns 4-4-0T Kathleen (see photo right).
- County Donegal: Atkinson & Walker 4wheel diesel Phoenix (see photo below in background).
- County Donegal: Railcar 1.
- County Donegal and Clogher Valley: Railcar 10.
- Portstewart steam tramway locomotive: Kitson 0-4-0T, number 2 (see also photo below)
- Carriages from the County Donegal, Cavan & Leitrim and Castlederg & Victoria Bridge Tramway and various wagons, signs and signals.

- British Aluminium Co, Larne: Peckett 0-4-0T, number 2 (see photo below).

3’ gauge:
- Bessbrook & Newry Tramway number 2, built by Mather and Platt and Ashbury Railway Carriage and Iron Co.
- Giant’s Causeway Tramway power car number 2 and toast rack trailer.

Titanic Building, Belfast.
Visit 26/11/18. The new Titanic building is stunning architecturally and houses a fantastic museum. On the northern side of the building are the two, parallel slipways on which the White Star liners Titanic and Olympic were built. Both slipways have two sets of double-track narrow gauge railway lines set within them (see photo below). The tracks seemed to have run the full length of both slipways and contain pointwork in tramway type rail in the form of crossovers part way along the slipways. The gauge of the tracks was measured as 1’ 10½”.

5’ 3” gauge:
- Londonderry Port and Harbour Commissioners: Robert Stephenson and Hawthorns 0-6-0ST. This locomotive worked on the mixed gauge tramways linking the various quays and railway stations in the city and has couplings for both standard gauge and narrow gauge wagons.

The adjacent road transport hall includes tramways and here are to be found very worthy exhibits from Northern Ireland’s pioneer, narrow gauge, electric tramways:
Guinness Brewery, St. James’s Gate, Dublin (1’10” gauge)

Visit 27/11/18. Many of the cobbled streets around the brewery still have narrow gauge tracks set within them (see photo right).

The excellent ‘Storehouse’ museum tells the story of Guinness and includes a section on transport. This comprises Spence 0-4-0T number 17 (1902 - see photo below), 0-4-0DM Planet number 47 (see below right) and tipping wagon number 307.

Additionally there is some interesting film showing the railways in use and other railway exhibits on display such as signs.

vegetation cut back to improve views across the lake.

The Bala Lake Railway Trust/Extension Project has always had the wise policy of announcing what has happened rather than what might. There is continued activity behind the scenes but the whole Red Dragon Project is an involved effort, so no news is good news. As a side aspect of the Trust’s activities, the first item of modified rolling stock has been completed, a carriage with doors on both sides (see earlier).

“Volunteer Day” is approaching. Continuing on the great success of previous years, this year’s date is Sunday, 28th April. The day will give you the opportunity to spend time with train crews in their working environment (and have a go yourself under supervision), get the taste of what our maintenance teams get up to outside and in the engine shed, and experience our friendly atmosphere which makes the BLR not only special but unique. If this is something you are interested in, you can find some role profiles and an online booking form at: https://bala-lake-railway.co.uk/volunteering/

Beamish Museum, Beamish, County Durham DH9 0RG. (Various gauges)

Visit 26/01/2019. Even at a quieter time of year there is evidence of some changes to the narrow gauge items, particularly the wagons in the Pit Village area. On the west side, the two parallel inset tracks laid five years ago outside the stables now have an extra wagon. On the line nearest the building, the braked “trolley” (or flatbed tub as the museum also describes it) already there with Hudson wheelsets and outward leaning ends has been joined by a two-plank standard ‘Durham’ pit 2-plank wooden-bodied wagon. On the latter one set of

Beamish Museum: (Left) The two-plank wagon now secured next to the braked wagon outside the stables. The ex-colliery farm hay wagons are against the wall. (Right) The blacksmiths’ area with a 2-plank wagon now joined by a 4-plank wagon. Photos: Philip Champion
wheels is curly spoke, the other has straight spokes. The "trolley" is to move hay and feed. Remaining by the wall untouched are the three wagons with wheelsets set 21" apart. All four came from a Victorian colliery farm in east Co. Durham. The three wagons were originally used to move hay and dung there.

The Mahogany Drift Mine near the Pit Village centre now has five 'Durham' 3-plank wagons instead of six on the incline. Three similar wagons are at right angles to the track at ground level and contain safety helmets for mine tours. Before the start of the incline stand two 4 wheel bolsters. Nearby are several wagons holding coal (believed to be used by traction engines at special events). Two are 'Durham' wagons in varying states of repair, while another has a low rectangular tank, the lid of which is not secured and shows coal inside. That wagon is slewed between the tracks and wheelsets are estimated to be 21" wide. A long 4w 2-plank wagon contains a piece of timber.

Further over by the standard gauge line, a 4 wheeled metal bodied mine tub with wooden solebars has rusted-away patches on all four lower sides. At the east side of the village 'protected' Motor Rail LR3098 stands at the head of a siding in the triangular-shaped narrow demonstration system. Next to it is a pile of upturned jubilee track.

Opposite in front of the near shed are two wagons, one of which carries two barrels for loco water. Where a spur takes the line up a sharp curve under the headstocks was new-build 0-4-0 Samson in its shed but minus tender (the shed is just long enough for the locomotive.) To the right by the end of the track is a blacksmiths area. When it was set up several years back a 2-plank 'Durham' wagon with angled handles on the ends was placed there. Now it has been joined by a 4-plank wooden with vertical metal corner bracing plus vertical handles on the ends and holding various tools. In all, there is quite a variety of narrow gauge wagons if you take a few minutes to look.

Philip Champion

Breedgar and Wormshill Railway: (Above) Following the end of season Gala on 28th October 2018, a photo charter was held using two former Welsh quarry locomotives; Hunslet No. 3 Lady Joan and Orenstein & Koppel No. 6 Eigiau. Here Eigiau is seen passing a Field Marshall tractor with a mixed goods train while 0-4-0 saddle tank Lady Joan waits in the siding with a short rake of side tipper wagons in glorious autumn light. (Below) Following the main photo charter, both locomotives took part in a night shoot at Stony Shaw station. Photos: Stuart Chapman
It is intended, however, to re-locate it to another site not too far distant and for it to reopen in spring next year (2020). The new layout will be a little different and about 50% longer but will still feature significant gradients and other features of interest.

All the existing rolling stock will be transferred to the new location; further details will be revealed in due course.

*Adrian Shooter*

**Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway**, Bredgar, Kent, ME9 8AT. (2’ gauge)

Another loco to receive a ten year overhaul at Bredgar during 2018 was No. 7 *Victory*. It did not need much work to the boiler work but the fittings were different. *Victory* is a 0-4-2T built by Decauville (246/1897) at Petit Bourg near Paris. It was shipped to Queensland for use in the developing sugar industry. It was named and first worked at Invicta mill near Bundaberg later working at two other mills before being retired in 1940. *Victory* came to Bredgar in 1996 where it underwent an extensive rebuild including a new boiler before returning to use in 2006.

It is getting small amount of work done over the winter but should be ready for the start of the new season (the next open day is Sunday, 21st April, Easter Sunday).

*Facebook*

**Cavan and Leitrim Railway**, Dromod, Co. Leitrim, Ireland (3’ gauge)

0-6-0T *Nancy* (Avonside 1547/1908) is currently in the final stages of restoration at Alan Keef’s works in Herefordshire pending return to the line.

*Nancy* was delivered new to Eastwell Iron Ore Quarries in Leicestershire and spent its working life in the ironstone industry until 1961 when it was bought for preservation. In 1972 it was acquired by Lord O’Neill for his Shane’s Castle Railway in County Antrim.

*Nancy* was stripped and assessed for restoration at Shane’s Castle and languished there for some time. When Lord O’Neill sold the entirety of the Shane’s Castle Railway, *Nancy* was bought by the Cavan & Leitrim Railway in 1997 and taken to Dromod in pieces. The opportunity to send the loco away for restoration came when the remains of *Nancy* were placed on the low loader that Alan Keef had used to deliver a replica balcony carriage in Cavan & Leitrim style for the railway.

The loco has been at the workshops of Alan Keef Ltd in Ross-on-Wye since 1999, where the restoration has been steadily progressed as funds permitted. The restoration was put on the back burner from 2007 until 2016 because of the recession in Ireland. *Nancy* was not forgotten though, and with the prospect of Brexit being voted through a move was made to secure the locomotive back to Ireland. Brexit had been a major influence as the Cavan & Leitrim feared should a hard border be imposed, then VAT would be added to the cost of the return.

To date the Cavan & Leitrim Railway has invested over £160,000 into *Nancy*. Since 1999 the wheelsets have been re-profiled and returned to the frames, and the cylinders, motion and valve gear are also now complete. Much of the upper structure has required complete renewal, including the boiler, footplates, tanks, cab and bunker. A hydraulic test has been successfully carried out, with the boiler now being fitted for the final time by Keef’s. At the time of writing, *Nancy* is being prepared for its first steam test in mid-February.

Through the dedication of a number of Irish narrow gauge enthusiasts, a support group known as the Avonside *Nancy* Restoration Group was established in 2016 to oversee the project’s conclusion and return the loco back to a steamable condition and back to Ireland.

The first major step when the restoration group was founded was the completion of the new boiler, with the group successfully raising £9,000 (£10,200) within 5 months to pay off the final amount owed. The group has continued to progress the outstanding components required; a new smokebox and ashpan were the last items paid for.

*Nancy* was re-assembled for the Alan Keef open day in September 2018 with a strong delegation heading over from Ireland. This event was the first time many members had seen it, and were they impressed!

We now have the prospect of having *Nancy* in steam, and in service at Dromod. We can only achieve this with support from members of the public. Thanks go to several members of the Avonside *Nancy* Restoration Group particularly Michael Kennedy, Philip Bedford and all at Dromod, Martin Ball for his generosity, Darragh Connolly for all the updates and co-ordination of the Social Media campaign, Thomas Fogarty and others at the Stradbally Woodland Railway for their hard work and donations, and to all others who have contributed. If you would like to contact Michael for further info please email: dromodrailway@gmail.com

For details on how to donate, visit cavanandleitrim.com or look at the Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/cavanandleitrimrailway

*Cavan and Leitrim and Alan Keef: (Two photos at top) views of the new boiler. (Below) The team from the Cavan and Leitrim arrived in force for Alan Keef Ltd’s Open day in September 2018. Photos: C&LR*
Corris Railway, Station Yard, Corris, Mid Wales. SY20 9SH (2’ 3” gauge)

The Corris Railway completed the 2018 operating season with its best ever, in terms of numbers of passengers carried, Santa Trains operation. Over the two days, December 8th and 9th, 308 visitors enjoyed their train journey along the Dulas Valley and visit to Santa in the carriage shed grotto at Maespoeth Junction. Unfortunately Corris 0-4-2ST No. 7 failed with a valve gear problem on the Saturday and its place was taken by Orenstein & Koppel 0-4-0DH No. 11 (25721/1957).

Progress on the new steam locomotive, “Falcon” No. 10, continues at the workshops of Alan Keef Ltd at Hay-on-Wye. Following the plan to employ the remaining original cab components from Corris No. 3 as patterns for the construction of the cab for the new engine, this process was indirectly taken forward with the delivery of driving wheel axlebox springs to Keef’s. Once these are fitted, final calculations as to the height of the cab can be made.

As part of the improvements to the Museum at Corris station, new display cabinets are being constructed by a volunteer and as regards the building of the new Corris station it is hoped that the existing wall between the station and adjacent footpath will be removed in the Spring and replaced by fencing. Stone from the wall will be used elsewhere on the railway. The point required for the new track layout at the station will be ordered and designs are being considered for the traverser which will allow locomotives to run round their trains after arrival at Corris.

On the carriage building front, interior fitting out of No. 23 continues with progress on vestibule panels and seating plus the fitting of the wheelchair access door. Four bogies, two for 23 and the other pair for clerestory No. 24, whose internal skeleton is nearly complete, are being worked on. Covered accommodation for the railway’s wagons, including those used for the demonstration gravity train which runs on the first Sunday of each month and during Gala events, is in hand at Maespoeth Junction.

The 2019 Corris Railway operating season begins at Easter.

Press Release

Derbyshire Dales Narrow Gauge Railway, Peak Rail, Rowsley, Derbys. DE4 2HX. (2’ gauge)

This line ceased to operate around 2016 following the illness and subsequent death of NGRS member Henry Frampton-Jones (see NGN 338/16, 339/9). Henry’s family subsequently agreed to sell the trackwork to Peak Rail on behalf of the Ashover Light Railway (ALR), which has a maintenance base connected to the DDNGR.

For reasons unknown, the sale was then cancelled and Peak Rail’s cheque returned, and in mid-November a gang of scrapmen arrived and “after some unpleasantness” removed most of the track, leaving the ALR section isolated. The ALR will therefore have to start from scratch with its own line, which will at least have the benefit of being to its own requirements. See also the ALR report on page 10.

Lawson Little

Douglas Bay Horse Tramway, Douglas, Isle of Man. (3’ gauge)

Report 14/01/19. The horse tram tracks are being taken up as part of the redevelopment of Douglas promenades. They have been removed starting from the northern end of the seafront.

But the tracks immediately in front of the Strathallan terminus have not been taken up as they are not being replaced. As part of the promenade’s redevelopment, the tramway is to remain as a twin track in the centre of the road between Summerhill and Broadway. It will then switch to a single track on the seaward side of the road to the Sea Terminal.

Under the multi-million redevelopment project, the gardens in front of the Sefton Hotel have already been removed. Underground service ducting work has also been taking place in sections across the northern end of the promenade. Meanwhile, the Strathallan tram depot site has been cleared to make way for a replacement facility.

IOM Today via MERS website

The Douglas Bay Horse Tramway was presented with the award for an Outstanding Visitor Attraction (Small Groups) at the 2019 Heritage Railway Association Awards dinner held on 9th February at the Burlington Hotel, Birmingham. This is awarded to a group from the smaller categories of membership, which provides an outstanding visitor experience.

HRA Website

Ffestinog & Welsh Highland Railways, Porthmadog, Gwynedd (1’11½” gauge)

Work is progressing well on the new Pullman Carriage for the Welsh Highland. This carriage will be very similar to Glaslyn but will have the low lines of the 1st Class Carriages of the FR, nos. 150 and 152.

On 12th December 2018, the brand new boiler for Garratt 130 arrived at Dinas from Northern Steam Engineering in Stockton-On-Tees. It was immediately lowered into the frames. Work can now continue on the locomotive.

Inside Motion

Following on from our hugely successful “Hunslet 125” event in June 2018, when examples of Hunslet locomotives came to North Wales from across the United Kingdom to star alongside our resident fleet, we are once again aiming to make June a special month in the 2019 calendar. From June 21st-23rd we will stage “Welsh Highland Railway – Past, Present and Future”.

This will be a very special weekend celebrating the rich heritage of the Welsh Highland Railway - formed in 1922 and which (in 1923) completed the two-foot gauge rail link between the Ffestinog Railway in Porthmadog and the former North Wales Narrow Gauge Railway line between Dinas and Rhyd Ddu. The weekend will feature a varied timetable of historic trains, including locomotives and carriages that worked on the railway prior to its closure in 1937 - most notably, Hunslet 2-6-2T Russell, the sole surviving locomotive built for the original line. We’re happy to be working closely with our friends at the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway to make this dream a reality.

We are also excited to welcome 4-6-0T Hunslet 303 by kind permission of the War Office Locomotive Trust. One hundred and fifty-five Locomotives were built by Hunslet for the war effort in a period of just over three years making them one of the most numerous narrow gauge types. After the war they saw further service all over the world. A few of the locomotives were used in the UK, none of which survived. Following the repatriation of locomotive No. 1215 from Australia, the War Office Locomotive Trust team have painstakingly rebuilt the locomotive including building a new boiler.

Ian Hughes of the War Office Locomotive Trust commented: “We are delighted to be invited to take part in the event, and even better that 303 can run alongside its close relative Russell. A visit to Porthmadog completes some unfinished business from last year when delays in the final stages of 303’s restoration meant we missed the “Hunslet 125” event.”

We can now also confirm that Baldwin 1058 (WDLR 608) will attend the gala – its first public appearance following a meticulous restoration. This locomotive was built in 1917, one of a total of 495 built to the order of the UK Ministry of Munitions, and saw service in France prior to being shipped to
India where it initially worked on British Army supply lines. It was then transferred to the North Western Railway of India (where it ran as NWR 45) and finally provided traction at Daurala and Ryam sugar factories.

After repatriation back to the UK, the locomotive was eventually moved to a private workshop in Lancashire where the restoration work took place. We are indebted to Graham Fairhurst for making the loco available to us for this event. The weekend will feature a varied timetable of historic trains, including locomotives and carriages that worked on the railway prior to its closure in 1937 - most notably, Hunslet 2-6-2T Russell, the sole surviving locomotive built for the original line. Hunslet 1215 (WDLR 303) will also be utilised in the intensive timetable.

Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways General Manager, Paul Lewin, commented: "This will be the narrow gauge event of the year. 2019 is looking like being an epic year for the Welsh Highland Railway, twenty-one years on from the first trains running out of Caernarfon. Not only will we see the opening of two new stations, we will also enjoy visiting locos that will go a long way toward recreating so many Welsh Highland heritage scenes of years gone by - and some fascinating additional visitors too."

Planning for the event is still at an early stage, but it is intended that heritage trains will be running in the section of line between Minffordd, Porthmadog and Beddgelert, during the intervals between our regular passenger trains - providing an opportunity to experience the development of narrow-gauge railways over the past century.

Tickets will be available online early in the New Year, and further details (including additional visiting locomotives) will be published as soon as they are finalised.

**Website**

This year at King's Cross we will focus on our heritage, showing two locomotives: an 0-4-0ST ‘Quarry Hunslet’ locomotive from the Victorian era - Velinheli (Hunslet 409/1886), and 0-4-OVT Chaloner – built in 1877 by de Winton of Caernarfon, whose factory was a stone’s throw away from our brand new purpose-built terminus station. Both of these diminutive but deceptively powerful steam engines were used to transport slate around the local quarries. They have now been lovingly restored to working order, keeping heritage alive to educate the younger generations. We are very grateful to our friends at the Leighton Buzzard Railway for allowing us to display Chaloner.

(See back cover pictures)

The locomotives were rolled into King’s Cross Station at 01.00 on Saturday 16th February, and were on display in the ticket hall until Sunday 24th February. For the duration of the visit, our staff and volunteers were on hand to talk to the public and answer questions.

The new £2.2m station in Caernarfon forms a key part of the £16m Waterfront Development Project, led by Gwynedd County Council, to give a major boost to this historic area. Opening to the public at the end of March 2019, the futuristic new building will offer much improved facilities for visitors arriving by road or by rail from Porthmadog, where a major station improvement project was completed in 2014.

**Website**

Hunslet 0-4-0ST Hugh Napier (855/1904) is owned by the National Trust and has been seen out and about on the Ffestiniog Railway. It is a favourite on Victorian Weekends with footplate rides. We are happy to report that the contract with National Trust has been extended for a further 10 years. Hugh Napier has a year on its boiler ticket and we have agreed to see it through its next boiler overhaul.

**Inside Motion January 2019**

**Foyle Valley Railway Museum, Derry, Northern Ireland (3’ gauge)**

Tributes were paid to the expertise of the RPSI and its engineering subsidiary Heritage Engineering Ireland at an event held in Londonderry on 30th January to officially welcome home the newly refurbished County Donegal Joint Railways Committee locomotive No. 4 Meenglas. The locomotive was transported by low-loader on 28th January from Whitehead to Foyle Valley Railway Museum in Derry, where it has been installed on a plinth outside the gallery.

The locomotive underwent a 14-month "cosmetic overhaul" at Whitehead during which the side tanks, cab and bunker were re-plated, a new smokebox and dome were fabricated, a replica chimney fitted and a complete re-paint job carried out.

Officiating at the Welcome Home was Councillor John Boyle, the Mayor of Derry and Strabane District Council. He voiced thanks to the RPSI for the work that had been carried out at Whitehead on the restoration of the locomotive. Mr Boyle also expressed thanks to Heritage Lottery Fund, which had provided a £39,000 grant for the Meenglas project. As well as the refurbishment of the engine, the funding covered a project involving two local schools – St Joseph’s and St Mary’s – whose pupils had visited Whitehead.

To mark the occasion, a special reminiscence video about the history of the five railways which once operated in Derry was unveiled. The content includes footage of the visit by pupils of St Joseph’s to Whitehead Railway Museum, where they saw work in progress on the overhaul. The pupils interviewed a number of former railway workers from Derry as well as local people with fond memories of the railways – the Co Donegal Railway, the Londonderry & Lough Swilly Railway, the Great Northern Railway (Ireland), the Ulster Transport Authority and, of course, the Londonderry Port & Harbour Commissioners Railway.

Dermot O’Hara of Destined, the charity which now owns the museum, said: "The successful culmination of this project could not have been realised without the inordinate restoration work on Meenglas undertaken by Peter Scott and his..."
colleagues from the RPSI at Whitehead."

Mr O’Hara said that while Meenglas would need more work before it could ever steam again, this idea was not being ruled out. He said their vision was to see the resumption of train rides on the narrow gauge line along the banks of the Foyle, and a connection with a river launch which would offer trips to Strabane. Destined’s primary role is to empower people with learning disabilities and to promote social inclusion. Mr O’Hara said they hoped that some of the Destined participants would be able to act as guides for the railway museum once it started opening regularly for the public.

The RPSI was represented at the function by John McKegney, the chairman, who said he was delighted that Whitehead had been able to play a part in the project. He wished Foyle Valley Railway Museum well in developing its plans and said the RPSI would be available to offer advice and support.

Roisin Doherty, curator with Derry and Strabane Council, told guests that the council had been keen to see Meenglas being restored. She said the impact of the project went beyond the facelift for the engine – it was helping to raise awareness throughout the area of its valuable railway heritage.

As part of the ceremony, three pupils from St Joseph’s read poems they had composed to mark the return of Meenglas. Jim McGreevy, who represented the HLF, said: “This project has used the rich railway heritage to provide a wide range of opportunities for the young people to explore their heritage. They have researched the history, interviewed people and investigated the heritage and have learned many interesting facts which they did not know about. It has also helped them to develop self-confidence.”

No. 4 Meenglas was one of five 2-6-4T locomotives built by Nasmyth Wilson in Manchester in 1907 for the Co. Donegal Railway. Originally named Donegal, it was renamed Meenglas in 1937 to replace a locomotive which had been scrapped.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the closure of the County Donegal Railway, whose services ceased on 31st December 1959. The Foyle Valley Railway intends to link with Donegal Railway Restoration in Donegal Town to organise a year of special events.

Robin Morton

Golden Valley Light Railway, Butterley Station, Ripley, Derbyshire DE53QZ (2’ gauge)

The reconditioned boiler for 0-6-0T O&K (7529/1914) may be back in the running shed by May 2019 and the locomotive could be in steam by the end of the year. Progress on the O&K is more noticeable now as metal work is added above chassis platform level. Recent work has focussed on rebuilding the chassis, valve gear and braking system.

Work on ex Ffestiniog Railway coach 118 continues as external parts of the hand brake system are assembled at the coach’s west end. The team have been connecting up brake linkages and are now working on the handbrake. Some shortcomings have been identified on the handbrake linkage of ex Ffestiniog Railway coach 119, and changes are being made. The system still requires a screw, a chain drive and a long pull rod, but downstream of that the interface to the brake shaft is different. Once proven on ex FR 118, 119 will receive the same or a similar design. The electrics on coach 119 are almost complete and a new battery is being bought.

The Outside Working Group has completed a couple of what might be termed relatively small projects, firstly the platform extension at Butterley Park Station and then the bridge improvement over the bottom culvert down at Newlands. Butterley Park station is now just long enough to accommodate three bogie coaches.

Work on renewing Brands level crossing started on 19th November. The project started with the creation of an adjacent temporary crossing made of standard gauge sleepers to allow vehicle access over both narrow and standard gauge tracks so as to maintain access for emergency vehicles and any other essential traffic.

The level crossing carries our running line and also the standard gauge siding access to the diesel shed. The present geography and geometry is such that the siding into the most northerly of the tracks into the diesel shed has a very tight radius such that only small standard gauge shunters and Bo-Bo locomotives can use it. The 2’ gauge wooden sleepers under the crossing have long shown signs of rotting away and the infill has been sagging for years, making life difficult for pedestrians with pushchairs or wheelchairs to get across.

Two Foot Topics

Hampshire Narrow Gauge Railway Trust, Burlesdon Brickworks, Hampshire SO31 7HB (2’ gauge)

Bagnall 0-40ST Wendy (2091/1919) left the Hampton and Kempton Railway on 19th December after a 6 month loan period. It has now gone to the Amberley Museum Railway for a period to deputise for Bagnall 0-4-0ST, Peter (2067/1918) now subject to a 10 year rebuild. Wendy is now being prepared for service during the 2019 season and is also celebrating its centenary and the Trust hopes to be able to fit in a few ‘birthday’ visits during the year, subject to agreement with Amberley. Press releases will be issued by the Amberley Museum Rail Group during the year. Hunset 0-4-0ST Cloister (542/1891) may be visiting North Wales in 2019; details will be announced soon.

Les Munckton

Hampton & Kempton Waterworks Railway, Kempton Park Waterworks, Snakey Lane, Middlesex. TW13 6XH (2’ gauge)

Wendy departed on 19th December and we have no expected return date for 0-4-0ST Darent (AB 394/1903) so our trains will be diesel hauled for a while after we reopen in March.

Darent’s boiler should be ready in June, but then it has to be fitted. In the meantime work continues on the frames and running gear. After a final paint touch up and greasing of all unprotected parts, the chassis will be rolled out into the yard and covered with a well secured tarpaulin while we start work on the saddle tank, injector pipework, ash box, blast pipe and panel work.

4WDH Spelthorne (Hunset 9357) will have its cab roof and windscreen by the time trains start running again. This will protect the driver while operating passenger trains.

A phase 1 habitat survey for the extension has been completed but further surveys are probably needed. Ground clearance of the route between the flyover and the aqueduct has started. Sidings for the yet to be approved coach shed are being laid so that they can be used for storage of rolling stock which is presently under the flyover. This will give us more room under cover.

Newsbrief 64

Hythe Pier Railway, Hythe, Southampton SO45 6AU (2’ gauge)

Report 06/02/2019. Plans to restore and redevelop the Victorian pier on Southampton Water have taken a step forward, with the structure donated to a community group.

The 640m (2,000ft) Hythe Pier is the base for a passenger ferry service to Southampton. Operator Blue Funnel has gifted the pier to Hythe Pier Heritage Association which plans to raise £3m to restore it. Association Chairman Peter King said the pier had a "new future". Television historian Dan Snow is among those who have supported the campaign to save the
pier, describing it as a "national treasure".
The pier opened in 1871 and two locomotives, built in 1917, still run on a narrow gauge railway along its length.

Blue Funnel bought the pier and ferry in 2016 after more than 9,000 people signed a petition to save them when previous owners warned the ferry's future was in doubt due to falling passenger numbers and high costs. The community group is to take over the running of the pier which has proved costly for ferry operators.

Mr. King said the group had a "viable plan to create a sustainable future" for the pier. "Our vision is to create a vibrant community facility to allow the ferry service to prosper and for the community to reconnect with something which has stood at its heart for more than a century."

BBC Hampshire and Isle of White website

Isle of Man Steam Railway, Douglas, Isle of Man (3' gauge)

Continuing work on Beyer Peacock 2-4-0T No.1 Sutherland has seen some painting and the chimney being refitted with the eventual intention of placing the locomotive on display in the railway museum adjacent to Port Erin Station.

Facebook

Knott End Light Railway, Preesall, Lancashire (2' gauge)

A small band of railway enthusiasts is aiming to re-open a section of the standard gauge Garstang and Knott End Light Railway as a narrow gauge line. This would be a heritage/tourist line, bringing both trade and tourism to the area.

The original standard gauge line ran from a junction station at Garstang & Caterall on the Lancaster & Preston Junction Railway to Knott End, a distance of 11½ miles. It opened in 1870 and closed to passengers in March 1930. The line continued to be used for goods traffic. The Knott End to Pilling stretch was closed on 13th November 1950, Pilling to Garstang Town closed on 31st July 1963, while the short section to Garstang Town survived until 16th August 1965.

Our group started in September 2015. After gaining support of Wyre Council, we have been developing plans to build a narrow gauge line along the track bed from Fordstone Bridge (Preesall) to Hackensall Wood (Knott End), a distance of just over a mile. This would also incorporate a public footpath with benches and picnic tables where walkers would be able to sit and watch the trains roll by while enjoying a snack and the scenery.

The local Squire has also shown interest in the project and has ideas for a spur up to the manor where it is proposed there would be a Visitor Centre with a train to take visitors to see the Hall. The section from Whinny Lane to Hackensall Wood is owned by the Squire. Recently surveys have been taking place and we await the Council to indicate which trees we can take down although one of our big hurdles will be reinstating Dodgy Bridge (that actually is its name!). We aim to put in a culvert so the public can share the bridge.

To date we have had interest from a few other railways and would sincerely like to offer our thanks to the West Lancashire Railway and to the Apedale Railway for their support with advice and help. May we also offer our thanks to the local businesses that share our aims and to the staff of Dawn’s Tearooms for their support in selling some of our souvenirs in order to raise much needed funds.

On 17th January 2019 we got the go ahead from NPL Estates (the landowner) to start clearing the track bed at Preesall.

Membership is only £10.00 and everyone is welcome. Our web page is under construction although we can be found on Google or on our Facebook group - Knott End Light Railway (2’ Over the Wyre).

We are always on the lookout for sponsors or any other kind of donations such as tools etc., and storage. Anybody wishing to join our small band can contact me at: flangfordoo3@gmail.com

Raymond Langford

Knott End LR: (Above) This is an overall view of the line from Fordstone Bridge looking towards Whinny Lane. The trees mark the location of the proposed combined shed and station. (Below) Looking towards Preesall from Whinny Lane. The large clump of trees in the distance is in the grounds of Parroxx Hall.

Photos: Ray Langford
Leighton Buzzard Light Railway: An evening photo session was held around the Stonehenge yard of the Leighton Buzzard Narrow Gauge Railway on 12th December 2018. Two locos were in steam: 1877-vintage De Winton 0-4-0VBT *Chaloner* and the unique Baguley Cars loco, *Rishra* (2007/1921). Despite their diminutive sizes these locos made a spectacular sight as they shunted in the cold December night air.

(Top left) *Rishra* and *Chaloner*.

(Top right) *Chaloner*.

(Below left) *Rishra*

(Below right) *Chaloner*

Photos: Steve Sedgwick
Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway, Skegness Water Leisure Park, Lincolnshire PE25 1JF (2’ gauge)

The successful restoration of 0-6-0T Jurassic, (Peckett 1008/1903) the elegant and historic steam locomotive on the railway, in the Skegness Water Leisure Park, is a runner-up in a major category in the 2019 Heritage Railway Association Awards.

The work by the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway Historic Vehicles Trust, carried out by its volunteers and their contractors, with the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund, was entered as “Jurassic in the Park” in the HRA’s Annual Awards. The results were announced at the Awards Dinner, held in the Burlington Hotel, Birmingham on 9th February 2019.

The restoration of Jurassic was a runner-up in the category for locomotive engineering projects for “The Coiley Locomotive Engineering Award” presented in memory of the first Keeper of the National Railway Museum, Dr. John Coiley. It is awarded annually to an HRA member organisation which has completed an outstanding engineering project in the field of locomotive overhaul, restoration, or preservation.

Railway spokesman John Chappell said: “This is a wonderful, much appreciated recognition of the hard work and dedication which has gone into Jurassic’s restoration. Finance from the Heritage Lottery Fund and from the railway’s donors and supporters covered the cost. The skill, patience and determination of everyone made it a reality and now the public can enjoy travelling behind this beautiful machine and learn why it has made such a significant contribution to the economy and development of rural England.”

Full details on the Jurassic story and the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway can be found on www.lclr.co.uk

Press Release

Lynton & Barnstaple Railway, Woody Bay, North Devon (2’ gauge)

The Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust’s Kerr Stuart 0-6-0T Axe (2451/1915) has served the railway extremely well for the past ten years and has frequently been seen in action in recent months. Having operated on the line since 2009, however, it is due for a general overhaul and will have to be taken out of service at the end of May. The Spring Gala will provide an opportunity, therefore, to celebrate its contribution to the railway’s revival and mark a fitting conclusion to the events commemorating the centenary of the end of World War One.

2-4-2T No. 762 Lyn will be off on its travels again in March and working on the Welsh Highland hauling the ‘Snowdonian’ with 2-6-2T Lyd. The total cost of the Manning Wardle Project has been projected as £1.1 million. The new Exe will be built at Boston Lodge on the Ffestiniog while the new Yeo will be constructed in the workshop in Derbyshire where last year volunteers finished restoring War Office Hunslet 4-6-0T No 303 (works number 1215) which was built for service on the Western Front in 1916. We hope to see No 303 at the Spring Gala on 11-12 May. It is hoped that Axe and War Office No 303 will be joined at the Gala by a third locomotive from the Great War.

The fifth original L&B carriage being rebuilt by volunteers in Essex - appropriately Coach 5 (Southern Railway No 6364) - is now taking shape and we hope to have it delivered to Woody Bay in April and running at the Spring Gala. The underframe and bogies have arrived and been placed underneath the body ready for bolting together. The upholstery for the two first-class compartments is on order and the glazing is ready to be installed. A composite vehicle, it will add to the first-class accommodation at present provided only by Coach 17 as well as increasing the number of third-class seats available.

Van No. 23 is now being carefully dismantled prior to a complete rebuild to running order for use in passenger trains. This will involve a new steel underframe with wooden cladding to represent the original all-wood construction which is no longer usable. We estimate the overall cost to be about £45,000.

Over the November Working Weekend some forty volunteers from all over the country restored the fencing alongside the half-mile of trackbed recently acquired by the Trust high above Dean Steep. The work was a harbinger of the railway’s intention to return to Lynton once the line has been extended to Blackmoor and Wistlandpound.

L&BR Magazine 117 / Newsletter 65

Manx Electric Railway, Douglas, Isle of Man (3’ gauge)

The Manx Electric Railway has dominated proceedings at the British Trams Online Tram of the Year awards 2018, taking three out of the four top prizes.

The MER won accolades for the traditional tram of the year, tramway of the year and event of the year. Almost 82% of voters chose the MER as the tramway of the year.
in a landslide result, with the 125th birthday celebrations winning event of the year with more than a 77% backing.

The top prize for a traditional tram went to Ratchet Car 14, which only returned to service in September after a three-and-a-half-year painstaking restoration process, victorious by “one of the largest winning margins since the contest began” after more than two thirds of voters supported it.  

MERS Website

Old Kiln Light Railway, Rural Life Centre, Farnham, Surrey GU10 2DL (2’ gauge)

Report 27/01/2019. The Old Kiln Light Railway is delighted to announce that the boiler of 0-4-0T Emmet (Haylock 2005) has returned from the Moors Valley Railway so rebuilding can now commence.

Facebook

Seaton Tramway, Harbour Road Seaton Devon EX12 2NQ (2’ 9” gauge)

The Morgan Award for Outstanding Achievement, which is awarded to an HRA member organisation for an outstanding achievement, was presented to the Seaton Tramway for their new Seaton Tram Station at the 2019 Heritage Railway Association Awards dinner held on 9th February at the Burlington Hotel, Birmingham.

HRA Website

Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway, Sittingbourne, Kent. ME10 2DZ (2’ 6” gauge)

Steam locomotive Alpha 0-6-2T (Bagnall 2472/1932) was delivered to Kemsley Paper Mill in 1932 and has remained at the railway ever since. Alpha was used to move raw materials and finished goods between Sittingbourne paper mill and Ridham Dock via Kemsley paper mill. The railway operated 24 hours per day, 365 days a year. All the locomotives had three drivers per day for 8 hour shifts. This was until 1969 when the Locomotive Club of Great Britain took over the main line section of railway from Bowaters who owned both paper mills and Ridham Dock as they converted to road transportation.

Alpha was taken out of service in 1969 due to some faults but was never repaired so it became a static display. In 1977, Alpha was painted silver to celebrate Her Majesty the Queen’s Silver Jubilee while in a siding at Sittingbourne Viaduct station. Alpha later returned to Kemsley Down and put into a siding on display. In 2004 some volunteers had carried out some minor repairs and a repaint to make Alpha presentable and to make sure that nothing else would rust away.

2014 saw Alpha being put into the loco shed at Kemsley Down and the cosmetic restoration began. The bottom half of the cab back was replaced and the back of the cab was painted in undercoat. The top coat will be painted later this year. The driver’s side of the cab is been prepared to be repainted just like the cab back. The fireman’s side of the cab had some metalwork taken out due to it not being suitable for repair and is awaiting replacement. The boiler is waiting to be lifted out to be repaired for another steam locomotive so we can then inspect Alpha’s frames. We can then see what other work will need to be done before we can consider going a stage further to get it back into steam once again.

A small team of volunteers, most of whom are young members, are carrying out the work on Alpha. To keep up with any work being carried out, please visit Alpha’s Facebook page, https://facebook.com/alpharestorationproject, and please “Like” and “Share” its page to your friends and family as well.

If anyone has any memories of Alpha in service or on display, please share them with the railway as we approach the Railway’s 50th anniversaries. For more information visit http://www.sklr.net/50th

Daniel Shaw

This year is the 50th anniversary of the handover of the Bowaters Light Railway to the Locomotive Club of Great Britain with next year being the anniversary of the start of public trains. We would like to have 0-4-2ST Premier (Kerr Stuart 886/1905) back in service for the anniversary - it would be a massive achievement!

Premier was the very first steam locomotive to work on the paper mill network in 1905. Lloyd’s Paper Mills purchased Premier from the Kerr, Stuart & Co. catalogue to replace horses working the mill tramway system. The ‘Brazil’ class 0-4-2ST locomotives were so called because the first one was designed for use in Brazil. Leader (926/1905) arrived a few weeks later and Excelsior (1049/1908) three years later. A fourth member of the class was purchased in 1924 – Melior (4219/1924).

Over the years a number of modifications have been carried out – improvements and tweaks – that have changed the appearance of the engine since it was first delivered. Leader was the other loco of the original pair and is operational at the railway now but Premier has been out of service for at least a decade. More recently, work has been carried out on Premier and many parts removed, some for reuse, some for measuring and replacement and others for scrap because this locomotive is going to be restored to ‘as built’ condition.

It is hoped that we will be able to operate trains with Premier, Leader and Melior next year. Excelsior is now based at the Great Whipsnade Railway.

This year is an expensive year for the railway with the Milton Regis Viaduct regular maintenance due to cost £20,000 in March so we have launched a fundraiser to pay for Premier’s parts to enable the locomotive to be finished and returned to service.

Newsletter 30

Southend Pier Railway, Marine Parade, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS1 2EL (3’ gauge)

Report 10/01/2019. Council bosses have set out plans to spend £3,250,000 over the next two years on replacing Southend Pier’s outdated trains. The trains (two 6 car DMUs built by Severn Lamb) were introduced in 1986 with a planned 20-year lifespan. As a result of their age, replacement parts have now become impossible to source and a replacement system is required.

In documents which went before senior councillors yesterday, it stated: “The improvement to the system with replacement trains will enhance the visitor offer and will support growth in overall visitor numbers and satisfaction levels. The trains form part of the evacuation procedure for the pier and are important in providing access to facilities for people with disabilities.”

It is likely to take about 19 months for a deal to be struck to deliver the new trains
and their infrastructure. Construction is due to begin during the 2020/21 financial year. The documents indicate the project will be funded by borrowing.

Southend Echo

Southwold Railway Trust, Steamworks, Blyth Road, Southwold, Suffolk. IP18 6AZ (3’ gauge)

A very welcome return for the 3’ gauge Manx coach, which was originally down at Duncans Yard in 2012 but has now returned to Southwold where we can restore it, starting with the glass. It is a lovely piece of work, including the famous Cleminson articulation system, a feature of fourteen of the early Manx coaches. One of the hefty main timber sills is in poor condition but can be replaced. Any volunteers with woodworking skills would be very welcome to help us tackle this. Work days are on Wednesdays and Saturdays, starting at 10am.

Work continues on the boiler for Blyth, the replica Sharp Stewart 2-4-2T locomotive the Trust has commissioned. The boiler is being constructed by North Bay Engineering in their Darlington workshop. The SRT board has just given the go-ahead for the next stage of the project.

On 13th February a short length of track was put down alongside the new platform but it has not yet been fixed in place.

Website

Statfold Narrow Gauge Railway Trust, Tamworth, Staffs B79 0BU (Various gauges)

The Statfold Narrow Gauge Railway Trust was presented with the Mortons Media (Heritage Railway) Interpretation Award for an outstanding museum of international narrow gauge railways and a repository of information and artefacts relating to the Hunset Engine Company at the 2019 Heritage Railway Association Awards dinner held on 9th February at the Burlington Hotel, Birmingham.

HRA Website

Statfold Engineering, Tamworth, Staffs. B79 0BU

The restoration of Mallet 0-4-4-0TT No. 5 Tjepper (Jung 2279/1914) was completed at Statfold Engineering in late January. Following a successful steam test, it departed shortly afterwards to its new home on the new 750mm gauge line at St. Nicholas Abbey Great House Plantation and Distillery in Barbados.

Facebook / Steam Railway 489

Stradbally Woodland Railway, Stradbally Hall, Stradbally, Co. Laois, Ireland (3’ gauge)

Report 20/01/2019. Steam locomotive 0-4-0WT No. 2 / LM44 (Andrew Barclay 2264/1949) is around half way through its current 10 year overhaul. It is expected back in traffic later this year.

Facebook

Talyllyn Railway, Tywyn, Gwynedd. LL36 9EY (2’ 3” gauge)

The boiler of steam locomotive 0-4-2T No.7 Tom Rolt has been stripped for a 10 year internal inspection. Some corrosion was found on the bottom of the boiler barrel.

A new barrel section has been rolled to the correct shape and riveted onto the boiler. This repair is in accordance with how the boiler was originally designed and should last many years. The front section of the boiler barrel extends to the front of the engine and forms the smoke box. This means that the smoke box section is also new and the corrosion evident in this is also repaired. The tube plate was removed for access. Whilst this component does have some life left in it, the decision was made to fit a new one whilst we had the opportunity.

Whilst we have the enthusiasm and skills at Pendre to tackle this kind of job, we had to reluctantly decide that due to the available space, man hours and lack of riveting equipment that this job would be done off-site. We would like to compliment “Roadsteam”, D & M Goddard Ltd, (www.roadsteam.co.uk) on their quality workmanship and thank them for the rapid progress.

Facebook

The Talyllyn Railway has enjoyed its best year for passenger numbers in over a decade with some 93,822 journeys, representing 48,857 passengers, being made on the line during the year, the highest number since 2007. Passenger numbers having increased by 7.1% over last year. In addition the railway has achieved an all-time record for income with an increase of some 13% over 2017, with the cafés achieving a 16% increase in revenue.

The railway’s General Manager, Stuart Williams, says: “The performance this year has been very pleasing both in terms of passenger numbers and revenue. The combination of offering a unique journey to our customers, special events and creative marketing have seen strong performance all round. We have also engaged with our local community which has benefited the café sales in particular. The extra revenue has allowed us to purchase new equipment for the engineering works, take on our first two apprentices and invest in solar energy to help offset increasing energy costs.”

The railway is building on its 2018 success with a similar running schedule in 2019, operating on 251 days and running several special events throughout the year.

Press Release

The Talyllyn Railway has completed the purchase of a major piece of property adjacent to the railway. This includes the area known as ‘The Orchard’ which consists of 0.6 acres of overgrown land adjoining the yard at Tywyn Pendre. The sale also meant the acquisition of two cottages; one with two bedrooms and the other with four.

The principal reason for the purchase was to protect the railway from any residential development that might have taken place there. However, it comes at an opportune time for the line as plans are being made for the expansion and improvement of its engineering facilities, and the new land may allow further options to be explored.

In addition the cottages may offer possibilities for additional volunteer accommodation which the railway has also been looking to address. The current Llechfan accommodation is designed as ‘bunk house’ accommodation and refurbishment of the cottages may offer more flexible accommodation for couples and families, although no firm decisions have been made at this time.

Press Release

The Talyllyn Railway’s former Chief Engineer, John Bate, was honoured in the recent Heritage Railway Association awards ceremony when he was given the ‘Railway Magazine Annual Award for Services to Railway Preservation’. John volunteered during the first running season of the Talyllyn Railway when it was saved from closure by the Talyllyn Railway Preservation Society in 1951, becoming the world’s first preserved railway, giving up some of his summer holiday to help with tracklaying. That started an involvement with the line which has continued ever since.

John moved to Tywyn to become the Railway’s Chief Engineer in 1963, remaining in post until his retirement in 1994, but since then he has continued to offer his expertise and experience as a volunteer. Thus he is probably the world’s longest serving heritage railway volunteer.

Among John’s achievements during his time on the Railway was the repair and reinstatement of the line following a major landslip in 1957 which threatened the railway’s future. He was also heavily
involved in the extension of the railway’s passenger services on the former mineral line between Aberynolwyn and Nant Gwernol.

As well as overseeing the major overhauls of the railway’s locomotives, he also designed a new locomotive for the railway, No.7 Tom Rolt, which entered service in 1991. In addition other heritage railways have sought his advice over the years, including one in Australia. Even today as he approaches his tenth decade, John’s knowledge and precise memory of many details amazes many.

Sadly John was not able to attend the awards ceremony in Birmingham, but instead a special ceremony took place on a platform at Twyford on that occasion. Please contact Graham Feldwick (details on page 3) for further information.

Graham Feldwick

Vale of Rheidol Railway, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion. SY23 1PG (1’ 11 ¾” gauge)

Work has been progressing at a rapid pace on the £2.2 million project to develop our Aberystwyth site so that the new platform would be ready for our first trains of the season on 16th February.

Work has included the erection of the framework for the toilet block and its roof, the filling of the area that will become the platform and the start of the slabs that will form the edging of the platform. The recreated GWR spear fencing that will surround our platform has also begun to be placed. Our permanent way team have also made a start on the trackwork modifications required for the new platform too. For more information on the project see: https://www.facebook.com/VoRWalestotheWorld

Work has begun on preparing Garratt No.60 for service. So far work has included the

move chalk from a quarry to the lime kilns above the site, and parts of these systems survive. The Waterworks is still an important water pumping station, but a large part is in the care of the Twyford Waterworks Trust. The industrial railway, which is owned by the Feldwick family, has been developed over the past 15 years and is unusual in not giving rides, with an emphasis on demonstrating the use of narrow gauge in industry. The Industrial Railway Gala on 2nd June will see 6 ½" locomotives in operation, and it is hoped to have a visiting loco that is still in industrial use. Details of Twyford Open Days can be found at www.twyfordwaterworks.co.uk

Winter work on the railway has concentrated on a new wagon display area (see the Archaeology & History section for details) and the restoration of the ‘homemade’ remote controlled battery loco from Redland Bricks at Funton Brickworks in Kent. This was acquired in 2009 from Swanage Brickworks and was briefly demonstrated at open days at that time, before joining the queue for restoration, now in progress. Basically mechanically sound, the loco is getting a complete rewire and a replacement set of batteries, followed by a repaint to its distinctive bright yellow livery and ‘go-faster’ red stripes.

It is planned to hold a ‘homemade Industrial Locomotive Gala’ for the 7th June Open Day in 2020, and anyone with a small locomotive built locally originally for an industrial site will be welcome to bring it to Twyford on that occasion. Please contact Graham Feldwick (details on page 3) for further information.

Graham Feldwick

Talyllyn Railway: John Bate (left) is presented with the ‘ Railway Magazine Annual Award for Services to Railway Preservation’ by the editor of Railway Magazine, Chris Milner (right), at a ceremony held in front of locomotive No.2 Dolgoch at Tywyn Pendre. Photo: Barbara Fuller
separation of the frames and power units, removing the boiler from the frames and stripping the small tubes from the boiler. The boiler has received its cold exam from our boiler inspector. Now the task of repair and reassembly can begin.

The completion and entry to service of carriage 14 has enabled progress to be made on the rebuild of carriage 11, which will be the first of our observation carriages to be modified for wheelchair accessibility and to have its first class facility upgraded.

So far work has included stripping of the carriage interior and dismantling the internal walls that separated the compartments, removal of the windows and doors for safe keeping ready for later reuse, and taking off all exterior panelling. This has allowed access to the carriage’s framework, so it can be modified as part of the rebuild.

Welsh Highland Heritage Railway, Porthmadog, Gwynedd LL49 9DY (2’ gauge) - See also Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway

Some news about the progress on Baldwin 4-6-0PT 794 from our friends at the Vale of Rheidol Railway: “Work is progressing on assembling the new large components for the Baldwin 4-6-0T we are restoring on behalf of the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway. We have test assembled the new water tanks, temporarily bolting the parts together prior to fitting of tank furniture and then riveting.”

Report 12/02/19. Here at the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway, the reign of British Rail blue (NGN 345/29) is over. The ex-Vale of Rheidol Railway guard’s van 135 is in the paint shop and is being rubbed down and made ready to be repainted. The new colour will be revealed at a later date.

Welshpool and Llanfair Light Railway, Llanfair Caereinion, Powys. SY21 0SF (2’ 6” gauge)

A small piece of Wales made a big impression in the Far East on 8th December, when the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway (W&LLR) signed a ‘Sister Railway’ co-operation agreement with the Taiwan Sugar Corporation (TSC). The signing ceremony was held in the city of Chiayi as part of the launch of TSC’s annual Sugar Festival, which for 2018 is taking a theme of ‘Taiwan and British Railway Culture Exchange.’

Star of the Festival was the mid-Wales heritage railway’s 0-4-0T tank engine Dougal. The Andrew Barclay locomotive, built in 1946 for a gasworks in Glasgow and resident on the Welsh line since 1967, was specially shipped to Taiwan for the event by TSC.

First connections between the W&LLR and TSC were made in 2004 when the Welsh line purchased a 1979-built Diema diesel locomotive from the corporation. Then after the W&LLR signed a sister railway agreement in 2017 with the Alishan Forest Railway, another major line in Taiwan, TSC suggested similar co-operation. TSC once owned more than 40 sugar mills around Taiwan, but as sugar production has declined the corporation has diversified into other areas, and now operates five short heritage railways at former mills that it owns.

Under the agreement the W&LLR is making its knowledge and experience gained in more than 50 years of tourist railway operation available to TSC, while the return benefits include technical assistance, particularly in the maintenance of the W&LLR’s Diema, and cross-level tourist promotion – the UK and Wales are now becoming increasingly attractive destinations for travellers from the Far East.

TSC suggested the visit of Dougal to the sugar festival, and this proved a very popular move – this year’s first festival weekend attracted large crowds of visitors. The presence of Dougal and the signing ceremony, between W&LLR company secretary Michael Reilly and TSC chairman Charles Huang, was covered extensively in the Taiwan media, including several reports on national TV news.

“..."
“The railway’s profile has certainly been raised in this increasingly important market, as has that of Wales as a nation and a tourist destination for Far-East travellers,” Andrew added. “We have already had meaningful discussions with TSC as to how both parties can see further significant benefits from our co-operation.”

W&LLR chairman Steve Clews was disappointed to be unable to attend the ceremony due to a prior commitment, but he recorded a video message of welcome that was played at the event. “We are very pleased to be entering into this relationship with our friends from TSC and we look forward to a long and mutually beneficial relationship,” Steve said.

Dougal is expected to remain in Taiwan for at least six months. Further events involving the locomotive to benefit both TSC and the W&LLR are currently under discussion.

Website

Charging points for electric vehicles will top a wide range of improvements to be carried out on the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway, thanks to an £89,000 grant made to the line by the Welsh Government.

The funding has been awarded to the railway by the Tourism Amenity Investment Support (TAIS) scheme, part of the Rural Development Programme 2014–2020 funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Welsh Government. The improvements at the popular tourist attraction meet a variety of needs, but a common theme will be better access and attractions for visitors.

At the Llanfair Caereinion terminus two electric vehicle charging points will be made available for visitors who will be almost exactly halfway between central Shropshire and the Welsh Coast. The installation of these points illustrates the growing use of more environmentally-friendly electric vehicles and the need to provide recharging facilities for them. The charging points will complement a recently completed environmental programme at the railway, which has included the installation of solar panels, setting up full recycling facilities, the elimination of single-use plastics in the tearoom, LED light conversion and composting.

Also benefiting from TAIS funding will be Cyfronydd Station, just off the A458 road, where the railway will reinstate a siding to allow the stabling of special trains or heritage goods trains, and reconstruct a cattle dock that once stood on the site, as a marker of the original function of a rural light railway. A historic grounded brake van from the London & North Western Railway will also be restored as a shelter.

Funding will also improve Sylfaen Halt, one of the most visible intermediate points on the W&LLR located alongside one of the few laybys along the A458 to the Welsh coast. Already a popular spot for motorists to pause their journey and watch the trains pass, the halt will see the installation of a new track loop allowing trains to pass each other, an improved passenger shelter and information boards.

At its Welshpool terminus, the W&LLR has already commissioned shed extensions that will double the covered space available to protect historic carriages, wagons and other large artefacts. Funding provided by the grant will make the sheds suitable for public access, provide lighting and security for the exhibits and support interpretative material to explain their role in operating the original railway. It will also enable the sheds to provide undercover facilities to host special events such as exhibitions.

The Welsh language will be prominent across the improvement programme, with all new signage provided in bilingual form to emphasise the railway’s roots in the community.

“Our mandate as a charity is to preserve and to operate our 116-year-old railway as a demonstration of how it supported the local agricultural community which opened it in 1903”, says W&LLR general manager Charles Spencer. “The volunteers who will be working on all these projects and contributing some of their own funds are very excited about the benefits the TAIS grant will bring, as we welcome more visitors each year.”

The Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway operates on more than 150 days of the year, between Easter and the end of October, during the February school half-term holiday and popular ‘Santa Special’ trains in December.

The railway has recently earned much praise for a programme to improve access to its trains for passengers using wheelchairs or having other mobility issues. A £42,500 grant from the UK Government allowed the purchase of wheelchair lifts for the two terminus stations and refurbishment of two bogie carriages, allowing them to take larger modern wheelchairs.

Website

West Lancashire Light Railway, Hesketh Bank, Lancashire PR4 6SP (2’ gauge)

The West Lancashire Light Railway is a short 2’ gauge line at a former brickworks site at Hesketh Bank, between Southport and Preston. It was started 50 years ago by a group of schoolboys, wanting to preserve some of the fast-disappearing industrial railways in the area. We now have four locomotives in steam, all restored at the railway, with several others in the pipeline, and more than twenty small diesel, petrol and electric engines.

Recently the railway’s landlord gave notice that they were leaving their site, part of which would become new housing. After protracted negotiations we reached agreement with them to buy the land on which the railway sits, for £250,000. At the time of writing we have raised a good proportion of the finance, largely from loans and donations, and the legal processes are in hand. This has been a worrying time for the members, as for a while the survival of the railway was in doubt. However we now see a way forward
in which we will have control over our own
destiny, and be able to develop the railway
to improve both the heritage aspect of its
operations and the attractions we can offer
the public.

The loans of course will need to be repaid,
and we will shortly be launching an appeal
for funds. Our website westlancsrailway.org
gives details of how our members, friends
and supporters can help. In the meantime
we are pressing ahead to develop plans for

new buildings, a replacement carriage shed
and toilets being top of the list. All that and
getting ready for the new season, which
starts on March 31st. We run every Sunday
and Bank Holiday until the end of October,
plus special events and galas. Our Santa
Specials are a sell-out, despite adding an
extra day in 2018, and we are very grateful
for the support of local residents in the
village and from further afield.

Derek Pratt

West of Fife Munitions
Railway, Lethalmond Railway
Museum, M90 Commerce
Park, Dunfermline KY12 OS
(2’ gauge)

Since initial track laying over
the past two years, which
currently comprises around
350m in length to the south of
the Gask Burn, attention over
the winter has focussed on
completion of the new
covered loco shed which is
nearing completion. Adding a
second skin and insulation to
the roof to prevent
condensation being the most recent task,
along with the fitting of a purpose made set
of wooden shed doors. This at last allows us
to keep the main items of stock safe from
the elements.

Attention has also turned to the next phase
of the railway extension, which will require
the bridging of the Gask Burn itself in order
to reach and follow the route of the old
Gask Branch railway within the overall
Scottish Vintage Bus Museum site. As I
write, an exploratory dig has taken place to
check out ground conditions before design
work can be finalised. Once this structure is
built we look forward to proceeding with
track laying from a junction already in place
at the west end of the current line. We
intend to seek grant assistance for this,
which we will publish information on soon.

Our first running day on both the narrow
and standard gauge lines will be Easter
Sunday, 21st April, Other running days are
listed on our web page:
https://www.shed47.org/wofmr and
Facebook page.

Grant Robertson

West of Fife Munitions Railway: (Below left) The new loco shed. (Below right) Safe from the weather. (Above) The test dig at Gask Burn.
Photos: Grant Robertson
Austria: Zillertalbahn. Loco D14 at Jenbach. Photo: Irvine Cresswell

AUSTRIA

Zillertalbahn, Jenbach (760mm gauge)

A visit on December 12 found loco No. 4 (83-076) in steam, reported as for steam heat tests. A five-train service was operating, two of which were loco-hauled.

Irvine Cresswell

Achenseebahn, Jenbach (metre gauge)

(NGN 350/29). A charter train was cancelled on December 12, possibly due to lack of maintenance, but also reported as due to major financial troubles - some locals thought the line may not reopen. There were several items of electric rolling stock on site from the Appenzellerbahn in Switzerland, but no electric infrastructure to run it.

Irvine Cresswell

Internationalen Rheinregulierung Railway (750mm gauge)

This International Rhine Regulation railway was built as a joint venture between Austria and Switzerland following serious flooding of the Rhine. It runs along and across the border between the two countries and helped with maintenance and the extraction of sand. At its maximum it ran for approximately 33 km of which some 22km was electrified at 750v DC with overhead wires similar to a tramway.

Irvine Cresswell

Bregenzwaldbahn Museumbahn (760mm gauge)

This railway is the preserved remnant of the Bregenzwaldbahn which from 1902 to 1983 linked Bregenz on Lake Constance with Bezau in the Bregenz Forest on a 35.33 kilometre long line. Today only a 5.01 kilometre long section is still worked as a heritage railway. The remaining line has been closed and largely lifted. The headquarters is at Bezau where a new workshop/shed has been built. The locomotive fleet comprises three steam locos: U25 and Uh102 in working order and U2 which is need of major overhaul; four ex OBB diesel locos 2091.04, 2091.08, 2092.01 & 2095.13 and an ex industrial diesel. There are 7 4w coaches and 6 bogie coaches with a few wagons.

Irvine Cresswell

(See photos on next page)
CZECH REPUBLIC

Olympia Park Railway, Brno (127mm (5") and 184mm (7¼") gauges)

This railway was laid out in 2009-11 and opened to the public in June 2012. The park is part of a shopping and entertainment centre developed by ARGO spol s r.o. who, in conjunction with NC Olympia Brno, funded the entire cost of the railway. The facilities include a station building in traditional style, an island platform with awning, carriage sheds and a large roundhouse with about 24 tracks served by a turntable. The single track is 1.5 km long, and runs through landscaped and wooded grounds giving a 12 minute run.

The railway is operated by Spolecnost Moravskych Parkovych Drah (Moravian Park Railway Society), a small group with just 27 active members, and runs on weekends and public holidays from May to October. Single fare is 50 CZK (£1.75). 184mm gauge locos are owned by the park and comprise two Class TU47 BoBoPE based on the 762mm gauge prototype, a Gmeinder 4wPH and a similar WDEF 4wPH.

The 127mm gauge locos are owned by members and include 14 steam ranging from a Rocket 0-2-2 to Gromit, a 2-6-2ST, and 5 battery locos based on standard gauge 4wBE and 4wDH prototypes. There are 12 open and closed passenger cars for 184mm gauge and 16 for 127mm gauge, and a number of bogie open wagons and tank cars on both gauges. An International Meeting is arranged on the first weekend of June, which attracts visitors from other countries to operate on this impressive system.

Mike Swift

Tremesna – Osoblaha (760mm gauge)

The 2019 schedule shows five round trips on weekdays and in summer steam on the Saturdays and Sundays at 10.45 from Tremesna and 15.10 from Osoblaha. The steam trains connect with mainline trains to and from Ostrava, Krnov and Olomouc. An English-speaking day will be held on May 8, 2019 when English-speaking guides will be available. For details and how to get to Tremesna contact busmuseum@hotmail.com.

Special rates are available at the Clarion Hotel in Olomouc, a 4 star hotel opposite the railway station and special connections available to Tremesna on the day.

Dr. Michael Grimes

GERMANY

Weisseritztalbahn, Freital-Hainsberg – Kurort Kipsdorf (750 mm gauge)

Visit 21/01/19. Dippoldiswalde to Kipsdorf will be closed again this year, from 17th July to 3rd November, for bridge reconstruction at Obercarsdorf.

The line, which runs from the south-west suburbs of Dresden up into the Erzgebirge mountains, was severely damaged by floods in 2002. Following expensive reconstruction, the northern section to Dippoldiswalde was re-opened a few years ago, and the upper, southern section on to Kipsdorf in 2017. However, train operation is funded by local authority subsidy, which is only enough for one locomotive in steam for most of the year; it was not increased when the line was fully reopened, with the result that the service now is sparse, with out and back workings from Freital-Hainsberg to Kipsdorf twice a day, and a middle-day short working to Dippoldiswalde. The up-side of the public subsidy is that trains run daily throughout the year.

Kipsdorf station was rebuilt between the wars to handle growing winter sports traffic, and is unusually big by narrow-gauge
standards. The station building has a beautifully preserved period interior. On the day of the visit, 2-10-2 tank 99-1762-6 was in steam. There were few passengers on the morning train.

Andrew Nock

Rügensche BäderBahn, Putbus – Göhren (750 mm gauge)

Visit 23/01/19. Like most other former Deutsche Reichsbahn narrow-gauge railways, this line has a daily train service throughout the year. It is operated by the Eisenbahn-Bau- und Betriebsgesellschaft Pressnitztalbahn (PRESS), which has its origins on the preserved portion of the old Wolkenstein narrow-gauge line in Saxony, and also operates the standard-gauge connecting branch line from Bergen-auf-Rügen to Putbus and on to Lauterbach Mole. The winter timetable employs two train sets to provide 6 trains in each direction, running at 2-hourly intervals and crossing at Binz. In steam on the day of the visit were 99-4802-7 (2-8-0T, built by Henschel in 1938) and 99-4632-8 (0-8-0T, built by Vulcan in 1914). There was a surprisingly large number of winter tourists travelling, particularly between Binz and Göhren.

PRESS faces an unusual problem; it was rebuilding the listed station building at Baabe, but when it found that it was literally built on sand had to demolish three walls, whereupon the local authority forced the work to stop. Arguments continue.

Andrew Nock

ExxonMobil Production Gaz de France (EMPG), Klein Heseper Moor near Meppen, Emsland. (900 mm gauge)

Crude oil reserves in this area are much more extensive than thought until now and drilling new oil wells has started. This means frequent trains for construction work and maintenance of existing oil wells.

Toon Steenmeyer

Klasmann – Deilmann, Gross Hesepe, near Meppen, Emsland. (900 mm gauge)

Thursday February 14 was a day of derailed locomotives and four wheel and bogie peat wagons. To re-rail one of the heavy Diema locos, a big agricultural tractor with a front loader was used and made light work of it.

Toon Steenmeyer

Jan Kwade & Sohn, Rühlerfeld near Meppen, Emsland. (900 mm gauge)

For all sorts of work in the maintenance of crude oil pumps, you don’t always need a complete works train; a single locomotive will suffice to convey the mechanic and his toolbox.

Toon Steenmeyer

(See photos on next page)
The battery is about a 20 minute walk passing this site is via the cable car from which the battery is about a 20 minute walk passing many of the Rock’s apes.

The tunnels.

There is a huge length of tunnels within the Rock. These have been excavated over a long period of time and some of this work has used narrow gauge railways. There was a lot of tunnelling activity in World War 2 to enable a garrison of 16,000 to be catered for in siege conditions. Much of the World War 2 spoil from the tunnels was used to reclaim land and build the runway of the airfield. An exhibition in these tunnels shows the excavation work which seems to have been done with road transport rather than narrow gauge railways.

Graham Fairhurst

ITALY

Ferrovia Genova – Casella (metre gauge)

The 24km Genova–Casella railway in Liguria connects the port city of Genoa to Casella, a village in the mountains behind the city. It operates nine trains per day and it is used (Continued on page 32)

O’Hara’s Battery.

At the close of the 19th century fourteen 9.2 inch breech-loading guns were installed, most of these on the ridge on the top of the Rock. O’Hara’s Battery was one of these and is located virtually at the highest point on the Rock. These guns were able to fire right across the Straits of Gibraltar and were progressively upgraded, especially during World War 2. O’Hara’s Battery is intact and open to the public along with its engine.

GIBRALTAR

Dockyard.

The preserved van and workshop bogie are still to be found in good condition by the Ragged Staff Gates. The van has acquired a nameplate: Betsy.

Most of the Dockyard is now privatised and undertaking commercial work. In addition to the tracks visible from outside the Dockyard fence in the nearby workshop area, tracks can also be seen around the dry docks further south.

The 100 ton gun or the Napier of Magdela Battery.

This gun battery was erected in 1882 in Rosia Bay and is open to visitors. The battery is intact, well conserved and well interpreted. The battery is in a location facing west which enables the gun to cover the whole of the entrance to the Mediterranean Sea. The gun was one of the last muzzle loaders to be made and is the largest example of this type of weapon.

Muzzle loading requires a complex battery layout to enable it to operate. The battery is on several levels with the shells and explosives formerly kept on the lowest level which was served by a hand worked narrow gauge railway. The only part of this that can be viewed is the lift which raised shells to the barrel. The lift is only viewable looking down the shaft and has a wagon turntable on its platform. The gauge appears to be 2’0”.

Literature states that the battery was served by a narrow gauge line from the Dockyard area but, if so, it is not clear where this ran or whether it was a permanent line or one for the construction period. An identical gun still exists at Fort Rinella in Malta. It would be interesting to know if this one also has a narrow gauge railway.

Unlike many places in Britain, Gibraltar has good bus services. This site and the southern end of the dry docks are easy to get to.

O’Hara’s Battery.

Italy: Ferrovia Genova - Casella. This loco is at Genova Piazza Manin, has no visible number but according to Platform 5 Italian Railways Handbook is D1 (MAK/Gmeinder1964) previously Deutsche Bahn 252-902. Photo: Colin Brazier
Italy: (Above) Ferrovia Genova - Casella. A general view of Piazza Manin station taken from the road outside. As you can see it’s not very big! There is a café and ticket office in the pink building behind the trains. Photo: Colin Brazier

Three pictures taken late last year add to the report and historic picture of The Rittnerbahn (NGN 350/35). This railway was also known as the Ferrovia del Renon in this dual-language part of Italy that used to be part of the Austro-Hungarian empire until 1918. Place names differ between the two languages.

The photographs show (Right) car 2 at Maria Assunta (Maria Himmelfahrt in German);
(Below left) unit 24 approaching Maria Assunta and
(Below right) cars 12 and 105 at Collalbo (Klobenstein in German ).
Three photos: Irvine Cresswell.
both for commuting and tourist purposes; it crosses three valleys and was opened in 1929.

Genoa Piazza Manin railway station is a bit tucked out of the way. There is a frequent bus from the City Centre to Piazza Manin then you have to walk round the corner and go up some steps, but the ride is well worth it, as it is very scenic.

A return ticket was just 9 Euros. Although it is run by AMT (the city public transport operator), their day tickets are not valid. Unfortunately, the last part of the line was closed when I visited (presumably for track work but that was not obvious) and a bus replaced the train from Busaletta to the terminus. The winter service has just two single railcars in operation.

Colin Brazier

NETHERLANDS

Industrieel Smalspoor Museum, Erica, NL (600, 700, 900 mm gauges)

On February 7 the last foundation piles were driven into the ground for two new sheds, so building work can now start. Trackwork continued and our mobile powerplant had to work throughout on all workdays.

Toon Steenmeyer

NEW ZEALAND

Kingston Flyer (3’ 6” gauge)

Plans are on track to relaunch the historic Kingston Flyer steam train on the South Island which has been closed since 2013. Blenheim-based Pounamu Tourism Group is leasing the train from investors, who bought the train and associated land and buildings last year. Last summer, the Tourism Group successfully launched The Marlborough Flyer steam train, between Picton and Blenheim – also on the South Island.

Owner Paul Jackson said the investors were excited about restoring the Flyer, which first ran in the late 1800s, to its former glory. The train, two 1920s Pacific locomotives and seven wooden carriages dating from 1898 to the early 1900s, was revived by the late David Bryce in 2011. He mothballed it after only two summers.

Mr Jackson said, all being well, the Kingston Flyer would be operating again on the 14km Kingston to Fairlight line by November. Plans include a fast-ferry connection across Lake Wakatipu from the tourist centre of Queenstown to Kingston. The ferry would also act as a commuter option for the bottom-of-the-lake township, which is about to accommodate a large residential subdivision. This service would hark back to the days when lake steamers used to connect with the Flyer.

He said the initial focus would be on the charter and tour group markets. There will be at least one weekly scheduled service, probably at the weekend. “As it grows, we’ll put on more scheduled services. We’ve got to make it sustainable but we’ll also look to have special days for locals.”

Otago Daily Times via Malcolm Midgley

Coastal Pacific (3’ 6” gauge)

The Coastal Pacific passenger train made its first journey from Picton to Christchurch in December. The service was cancelled in November 2016 after the major earthquake at Kaikoura. NZ$40 million has been allocated to upgrade the service which will operate year-round, with improved station facilities and two new carriages.

The TranzAlpine from Christchurch to Greymouth will also receive new carriages and upgraded station facilities.

New Zealand Railway Observer

ROMANIA

Sibiu – Agnita Railway, (2’6” gauge)

This preservation scheme has benefitted from an unexpected gift from Switzerland. The Basel Public Transport Authority, in possession of former assets of the narrow-gauge Waldenburgerbahn, found there was no prospect of using them in its own operations. So two quite modern passenger coaches, some open cars, and an antique (1881) saloon coach have been donated to the SAR.

Eastern Star

Spain: Huelva. The Rio Tinto Pier at Huelva. Photos: Gerry Balding

SPAIN

Rio Tinto Company, Huelva

Following Steve Sedgwick’s report in NGN 350/38-39 concerning the Tharsis Railway here, Gerry Balding sends pictures and comments covering the Rio Tinto pier at Huelva mentioned in the last paragraph of Steve’s report. They relate to a 2016 visit.

O&K 25956/1960, an MVOA. Photo Toon Steenmeyer

Photo: Gerry Balding
He says, “Things have progressed. On earlier trips to Huelva, the loading dock was standing but in derelict condition. The section over the main road had been removed leaving the loading dock in two sections: the jetty portion out into the river and the ramp section descending to the RENFE broad gauge station. Things had changed by the time of my last visit. The whole riverside/waterfront area had been transformed from a derelict wasteland to a pleasant, vibrant and broad waterfront promenade with landscaping, cafes and bars. The jetty has been restored and is now fully accessible to the public. The boarding has been laid in such a style that a different colour wood has been used in places to show where the rails (and points!) had been located. They are roughly spaced at the 3’6” gauge used by the Rio Tinto Company.”

**Mallorcan Railway (metre gauge)**

Electrification of the final section of Mallorcan railways was completed on 8th January when the route from Enllaç to Manacor (32 km) was opened by the president of the regional government, Francina Armengol. This was the completion of a 40 million Euro project begun in 2015, which will bring annual savings of more than 1 million Euros, reduce diesel emissions, cut journey times by 10 minutes and eliminate the inconvenience of passengers having to change trains at Enllaç. Electric services on the branch from Enllaç to Sa Pobla (14 km) were introduced on 29th October 2018 so this latest move means the entire 124 km system is now operated by electric units. Members of the Associació d’Amics del Ferrocarril de les Illes Balears made a nostalgic final trip on a series 61 diesel railcar to Manacor on 7th January. These twin units, built by CAF in 1995-2005, will have a new lease of life, most being sold to Kenya Railways.

*Mallorcadiario* and Carlos Olmo Ribas per Mike Swift

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Introduction
Thank you to those who have submitted updates and photographs for this issue. It would be great to see some reports from the more obscure railways in the coming months, so if you have a railway near you that hasn’t featured for a while then please pay a visit and send in a report. It would also be good to feature some private lines (with information redacted as appropriate), along with details of any open days.

Jonathan James (MG editor)

Ashmanhaugh Light Railway, North Norfolk (7¾” gauge)

2019 open days: Sunday 5th May, Sunday 2nd June, Sunday 7th July, Sunday 4th August, Sunday 1st September and Sunday 6th October from 14:00 to 17:00. The railway can be found at East View Farm, Stone Lane, Ashmanhaugh, Norwich. NR12 8YW (close to Wroxham Barns). (www.ashmanhaughlightrailway.co.uk)

Brian Mason, Secretary ALR

Bankside Miniature Railway, Brambridge Garden Centre, Kiln Lane, Brambridge. SO50 6HT (8¼, 7¼ and 4¾” gauges)

The railway’s principal motive power and mainstay of its 8¼˝ gauge passenger operations, the 1924 built 2-6-2T Carolyn, is undergoing a fairly extensive overhaul which has included a new smoke box door and ring, a partial re-tube of its boiler, re-bored cylinders and finally new piston heads and rings.

Whilst work on Carolyn occupies most of the workshop space, the construction of the new build 8¼” gauge Mogul, and the restoration of the 4¾” gauge 4-4-2 Atlantic, have been put on hold.

It is anticipated that Bankside Miniature Railway will begin its 2019 operating season during the Easter Bank Holiday when the usual alternate Sunday openings of the railway will take place that do not incur garden entrance fees.

John Downes

Beamish Museum, Beamish, Co. Durham. (15” gauge)

Visit 10/02/19. Since my last visit a fortnight earlier a start has been made on the short 15” gauge line in the Pit Village. It is set between the rails of the southern of the two SG colliery lines. At the time of writing it starts at the SG buffer stops at the west end of the Pit Village (next to the slope from the tram depot/Home Farm stop) and extends about 80-100 yards eastwards. A pile of light section rails is nearby. The intention is to continue between the SG rails curving right and behind the Francis St. pit cottages. A wagon will be used to empty ash from them. The museum’s transport blog says it will also be handy for any visiting 15” gauge locos!

Philip Champion

Belhus Woods Country Park, East London / Essex (5” / 7¼” gauges)

The Belhus Woods Country Park Miniature Railway, operated by the Dockland and East London Model Engineers has been closed.

Jonathan James

Brookside Miniature Railway, Poynton, Cheshire. (7¾” gauge)

The popular miniature railway has now reopened following a change of ownership.

Jonathan James

Bure Valley Railway, Norfolk. (15” gauge)

Visits 19/12/18 and 20/12/18. A two train “Steam Trains to Santa” service was in operation. One train was hauled by 2-6-4T No. 9 Mark Timothy and the other was double-headed by ZB 2-6-2 No.7 Spitfire and 2-6-4T Wroxham Broad. At Aylsham, 2-6-2T No.8 John of Gaunt provided the motive power for Santa’s sleigh while ZB 2-6-2 No.6 Blickling Hall was on static display in the workshop. While the railway did brisk business during the Christmas open day at Barnards Farm so there will be the garden entrance fee to pay as well as train fares. Subsequently, it is expected that the usual alternate Sunday openings of the railway will take place that do not incur garden entrance fees.

Belhus Woods Country Park: 01/05/16: DS603 Hartland at Belhus Woods in happier times. Photo: Jonathan James

Lionel Kay

Barnards Miniature Railway, West Hornden, Essex (7¾” gauge)

As a consequence of the ongoing track work in connection with doubling the first section of the BMR from Burton Shaw to Belvedere, the railway will not be opening to the public until Sunday 30th June 2019.

This will allow the volunteers time to concentrate on these works without the additional burden of running public trains. Sunday 30th June is also a major garden

Miniature Gauges - edited by Jonathan James

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period, overall passenger numbers were slightly down on 2017 due to other competing attractions in the locality.

New tamper

In late November BVR’s new rail mounted tamping machine named Jupiter arrived. This was built in Vienna by a company named Teemo Gmbh which is the trading subsidiary of the Vienna Park Eisenbahn.

The manufacture/designer of Jupiter, Ronald Durstmüller, came over from Austria with a colleague in early December to provide instruction in the use of both the tamper and the laser alignment equipment named Ganymede which came with it. The laser attachment detects the level and shows how much it needs to be lifted on displays in front of the operator.

Just before Christmas, the new tamping machine was out so that operators could practice using it before attempting to level the entire line over the coming months. On trials, it was possible to successfully tamp both the old shingle and new granite ballast which proved to be a lot less labour intensive and physically demanding than tamping by hand.

This is a fairly unique piece of kit, the only one on the 15” gauge railways in the UK at present. There is another one, the prototype built in 2016 which resides back in Vienna. This has been used very successfully. There have been some modifications to the prototype as a result of usage. Both machines are diesel powered.

Gerry Balding

Fairbourne Railway, Fairbourne, Gwynedd (12¼” and 15” gauges)

Visits 17/12/18 and 26/01/19. The Santa Specials ran over the weekend of 27 and 28 December. The high winds on the Saturday meant that services were run over a shortened distance but the contingency plan swung into action and the Santa experience moved from Barmouth Ferry to Fairbourne, which meant that the passengers all left happy and a good time was had by all.

Sunday saw better weather and Santa moved to his intended location but again, the hard work of the staff ensured that the visitors had a good time, without seeing any sign of the effort required behind the scenes.

Over the weekend of 26/27 January a working party was held to work on coach cleaning, dismantling the Christmas decorations and tidying of the indoor garden model railway. Cue wind and rain, but the dedicated band of volunteers from the FRPS worked hard to complete their tasks.

Beddgelert has been dismantled for boiler
inspection and a thorough survey of the work needed for an eventual return to steam, a good way to start the year that marks the loco’s 40th anniversary. Russell’s boiler is still at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway but will be back in time for the season.

The Heywood Katie will be the visiting engine at the Summer Steam Gala, the first time back at Fairbourne since 1972 and the first time back in steam at Fairbourne since 1926.

Graham Billington

Grosvenor Park Miniature Railway, Chester, Cheshire (7¼" gauge)

Visit 27/01/19. On a cold windy January Sunday, the railway was open for business. On duty was the newest addition to the roster, Mighty Max, the 4w-4wPH built by Greatrex in 2000 and bought from the Brookside Miniature Railway. In the shed were 6602, the 4-4wPH built by R. Greatrex in 2004 and the 6-6wPH Class 47, built in 2001 by B. Lomas and formerly known as no. 1, Robin Butterell. The latter is still for sale.

Graham Billington

Hastings Miniature Railway, Hastings. (10¼" gauge)

Visit 05/01/19. This railway is located on the seafront at Hastings, a seaside resort, town, and ancient Cinque Port, in East Sussex. Opened in 1948, it is approximately half a mile in length and remains a popular tourist attraction. The line was re-opened in the summer of 2011 after a period of reconstruction and restoration, which coincided with a forced closure of the eastern part of the line, to facilitate building work on a new art gallery adjacent to the railway. The railway provides transport between local attractions and museums as well as being a historic pleasure railway. The locomotive in operation today was No. 6 Cornish Pixie which was built by RVM Engineering in 2016 as a 0-6-2 Diesel hydraulic and is loosely based on Sir Haydn at the Talyllyn Railway. This is one of the most complicated of locomotives built by RVM Engineering as it is fitted with Walschaerts Valve Gear. The locomotive has been built for one of the drivers and is so named because of his love of Cornwall.

Graham Lelliott

High Legh Garden Centre, Near Knutsford, Cheshire. (7¼" gauge)

The railway closed in August 2018. The garden centre website says that the line is currently closed due to essential maintenance work. However the railway’s own website states that the railway is closed and is for sale and includes the following statement “Dear Passengers, it is with much regret and sadness that Vee Limited, the owner and operator of High Legh Railway has taken the decision to suspend all passenger services due to circumstances beyond our control relating to ongoing unresolved disputes with the Klondyke Group, the Garden Centres leaseholder” and goes on to say “We sincerely thank all those volunteers and passengers who have supported us since October 2009 and we thank the people for the support whilst we have been closed since August 2018. We will strive to find a new operator of the railway with the aim of them providing railway services in the future”

Donald Brooks
Hotham Park Miniature Railway, Bognor Regis, West Sussex (12¼” gauge)

Visit 27/01/19. The railway is located within Hotham Park, a beautiful 9 hectare area of parkland off the High Street of Bognor Regis and is ideal for games, picnics, recreation, nature walks, wildlife and bird watching. A cafe, play park and crazy golf can also be found.

The loco in operation today was Boris who gets its name from some of the letters within Bognor Regis. A nine year old girl won the competition to name the locomotive with this innovative entry. Built in 2007 by Alan Keef Ltd in Ross on Wye, Boris is a steam outline locomotive powered by a Perkins Diesel which drives a hydraulic pump which in turn powers the rear axle via a chain. The rear wheels are connected to the other two axles with side rods to give the locomotive traction on all six wheels.

Carriages in use today were Pickle and Bumble Around and were also built in 2007 by Alan Keef Ltd. They each run on 2 four wheeled bogies, are fitted with a piped air brake system and have seating for twelve passengers each. We had a trip on the last brake system and have seating for twelve passengers each. We had a trip on the last

Hotham Park MR: Boris shortly after passing the sheds at Hotham Park. Photo: Graham Lelliott

Graham Lelliott

Lakeshore Railroad, South Marine Park, South Shields (9½” gauge)

Visit 26/12/18. With festive red and yellow tinsel along the boiler, 4-6-2 3440 Mountaineer was working a five-coach train with a steady flow of passengers. The railway ran daily during the school holidays from 22 December 2018 to 6 January 2019 (except Christmas Day).

Visitor 4-6-2 Muizenburg Flyer returned to a private light railway in November 2018 via the Downs Light Railway, after 10 months at South Shields, where it ran in 2017. It was taken to the offsite workshop for work including a boiler test. It went into service on the 31st December hauling three carriages. It can handle up to four coaches, but as the five-coach train had been kept busy, Mountaineer was steamed up to take over when needed. With Nelly on frequent, often full trains, by late morning Mountaineer alternated (there were also several circuits ECS of the five-wagon P-way train and two carriages, by the time I left at 12.30) Staff said that Nelly was a popular engine when here in 2017, particularly with children. It steamed around the circuit very steadily with its three coaches, giving a narrow gauge look to the line.

Philip Champion

Paradise Park Miniature Railway, Avis Road Newhaven, Sussex (7¼” gauge)

Visit: 02/02/19. This attraction consists of a large children’s play area (both inside and outside), amusements, animatronic dinosaurs, model village, lakes and gardens, as well as a large garden centre.

It also has a miniature railway known as the Paradise Park Miniature Railway, but is also often referred to as the Newhaven Miniature Railway. It is of 7¼” gauge, is 300 yards long, and first opened in 1989. During that time it’s had several locos, no more than one at any time, and all by Mardyke Miniature Railways Ltd. The track and stock all appears to be well looked after and is predominately a circuit with steel rail, wooden sleepers, with very small gravel and pea shingle as ballast which does surprise me, however it obviously does the job.

The maroon Class 35 “Hymek” loco is a 4w-4wPH built and delivered new in 2011. The

Lakeshore Railroad: (Left) Nelly passing over the fourth LC out of about half a dozen. (Right) Mountaineer on an ECS train, 31 December 2018. Photos: Philip Champion

Graham Lelliott

Lakeshore Railroad: (Left) Nelly passing over the fourth LC out of about half a dozen. (Right) Mountaineer on an ECS train, 31 December 2018. Photos: Philip Champion
four Mardyke Pullman brown and cream carriages I believe are older, but thought not to originate from when the railway opened in 1989.

Graham Lelliott

Royal Victoria Railway, Netley, Hampshire (10¼” gauge)

Visit 16/02/19. The Royal Victoria Railway can be found in the grounds of the Royal Victoria Country Park. The circuit is quite extensive with two impressive gradients and has a journey time of approximately seven minutes in length. Operating on 16 February 2019 was D1011 Western Thunderer. The RVR website states that the Co-Co loco is a Petrol Mechanical and was built by David Curwen for the Audley End Railway in 1964. It was driven by Stirling Moss the racing driver to open their railway.

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Swanley New Barn Railway, Swanley, Kent (7¼” gauge)

Visit 01/01/19. Four trains were in service for the annual Charity Running Day, which takes place on New Year’s Day each year. This year the railway was raising money for the Alzheimer’s Society and over £2000 was collected.

The ‘all steam’ event featured three resident steam locomotives: 0-4-4T Single Fairlie Aneirin, 2-4-0T Prince Sheian and 0-4-2 Mrs Darling which was completed in 2017.

Also in service was 2-6-2 Medea visiting from the Moors Valley Railway and 0-6-0 Sally Anne visiting from the Barnards Miniature Railway, although unfortunately Sally Anne failed after a couple of trips and had to be taken out of service.

Jonathan James
The modelling section in this issue definitely has a 16mm scale feel about it. First, the National Garden Railway Show is on Saturday 6 April at the Peterborough Arena, East of England Showground, PE2 6XE. There will be a shuttle bus service from Peterborough train station - 45 mins to the showground (£5 return), entrance is £10 but advanced tickets are available on-line for £8.50. See www.nationalgardenrailwayshow.org.uk. There are 14 layouts (most in 16mm scale) and around 100 traders.

Secondly, a little bit of history from David Pinniger: Lynbridge - the unique creation of Henry Holdsworth.
The late Henry Holdsworth was one of the early members of the NGRS and in the 1960s was our modelling secretary with a regular feature in Narrow Gauge News. His first layouts were 7mm scale on 16.5mm gauge track with a strong Lynton & Barnstaple influence. He moved up in scale to 16mm foot on 32mm track to build the first Lynbridge indoors and electrically powered. I was fortunate to visit Henry in 2000 and see what I believe to be the second Lynbridge in operation at first hand. It was truly a wonderful creation and an example of superb modelling skills coupled with a vision and an eye for what looked right. Lynbridge was not just beautiful locomotives and rolling stock, but also the buildings, bridges and two boats, a paddle steamer and a coaster, Henry built two Manning Wardles Yeo and Lew, but baulked at building another, so he had Exe built for him, together with a very nice Lyn.
Henry also built a South African NG11 Garratt and a WD Hunslet 4-6-0T and when I visited he was building a 16mm scale WW1 layout complete with a Baldwin and a Pechot Bourdon, but that is another story.

The Poppleton Nursery Railway will be featured in the NGRS AGM next May, so Bob Brook has sent a couple of photos of their “model railways within a railway” as miniature versions of their line – one in 16mm, the other in “G” scale.