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NARROW GAUGE NEWS

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News Editor & Publicity Agent :

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EDITORIAL

We often come across members of our Society 'Having a moan' that they don't get enough out of the Society.

This I suppose happens in other Societies with a membership as far-flung as the N.G.R.S. Since the beginning of 1959 THREE Areas have been in operation individually holding meetings and visits periodically with the view in mind that members living within reasonably easy access to these Areas can get together monthly or bi-monthly as the case may be, thereby increasing membership, meeting the 'other' fellow', gaining knowledge etc., etc.,

The three Areas, as most of you will no doubt know, are LEEDS, LONDON and BIRMINGHAM.

Membership has definitely increased in these Areas recently, and are really well established, so if YOU think that it is about time you got more for your money, take a trip along to your nearest Area meeting place, if you are too far away from any of them, well, why not have a go at forming another Area in your locality.

That's all,

Ed.

COMMITTEE

There were no changes in the Committee again at the A.G.M. The only thing happening of note was the resignation, due to tremendous pressure of business, of Mr. H. Holdsworth. For full details please see A.G.M. Minutes enclosed with this issue.

AREA NOTES

LEEDS AREA Around fifteen members assembled on Friday evening of the 29th May to enjoy a talk given by Peter Halton on his beloved Colorado, and Mid-Western 36" gauge lines. An epidiascope had been hired - at an exorbitant fee - for this evening and with the able assistance of Ron Redman and Henry Holdsworth about 200 photos of every conceivable item of these wonderful 'roads' were illustrated.

A very pleasant evening which ended all too soon, and was thoroughly appreciated by all present.

NEXT MEETING: Friday, 26th June, 7.30 start.

Slide show by Eric Blakey of the Huddersfield Railway Circle.

Future meetings to be arranged at this next meeting.

LONDON AREA.

Our members have staffed stands at both the Orpington and Northolt M.R. Clubs' Exhibitions and have given the Society good publicity.

The next meeting is on Saturday 5th September and will be a "Member's Evening". Would Members please let Mr. John know in advance if they are able to show photographs etc., on the episcopa. This is at 6.30 p.m. for 7 p.m. at The Railway Tavern, Liverpool Street, E.C.2.

PUBLICATIONS

Would members please note that only correspondence with regard to the subject matter of our Newsheet, the Narrow Gauge and other Publications should be made direct to the Editors, whilst all queries with regard to non-delivery, change of address and requests for publications etc., should be sent direct to the Hon. Secretary at 23 Crossway, West Ealing, W.13., as ALL publications are dispatched by him.

Late Dispatch of this Issue.

We regret that this issue is a little late due to illness in the Editor's family. We are pleased to say that his children are now well again. The Magazine may also be unavoidably delayed due to the Printing Dispute. Your Committee are doing all they can to minimise the delay.

ISLE OF MAN VISIT

There are still a few seats left for the air trip from Yeoman Airport, Leeds, to the Isle of Man to be held on Saturday, September 5th 1959.

The Air/Coach Fare will be in the region of £4, and those members wishing to be included on this trip should contact the Leeds Area Agent: R.N.Redman, 11 Outwood Walk, Horsforth, Leeds, as soon as possible.

NARROW GAUGE RAILWAYS REGISTER

An attempt is being made with the objective in mind of compiling a complete list of narrow gauge lines which are either in operation, or defunct which are operating or have operated in the British Isles.

Information required will be in the statistical category initially, e.g., Gauge, location, track length, motive power, number, rolling stock, when abandoned, etc.

Mr. Sydney A. Leleux, of 7 Langham Place, Northampton, has agreed to receive information regarding the Southern half of the country, that is all lines south of the Southern borders of the following Counties: Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire and Cheshire.

The Editor will be pleased to handle the Northern Area, including Scotland, and a start has been made with this in view.

Eventually booklets will be published as complete as possible, and there will be available supplements published periodically.

These will be made available to members in due course, and details will be settled as the work proceeds.

WELSHPOOL & LLANFAIR

From Mr. S. C. Haynes of Brentwood, Essex,  
Being an account of details observed during a visit  
in August of last year.

A list was made of all the N.G. wagons at Welshpool, and is as far as known, correct. Most of the stock seemed in a usable condition, except for one of the bolsters, which was lying wrecked.

The Brake Van was notable for the number of broken windows it had and it appears that souvenir hunters had been busy, judging by the number of axlebox covers missing.

Track was in fair condition between Welshpool and Castle Caernion, where the traction engine still reposes in the station.

WAGONS IN WELSHPOOL YARD:

OPENS: 34143/54/7/61/66/4710., 71545/51/1610/55/68/80/93/4/7  
71702/28/30/8343/9.  
VANS. 100664-6  
CATTLE VANS 38088/9  
BRAKE VANS 8755/9  
OPEN SHEEP WAGONS 7.6.9/84160/3  
FLAT WAGONS 71611/7174  
BOLSTERS Two unidentifiable.  
PLATELAYERS(?) TROLLEY. (Off track near shed.)

Mr. Haynes has a number of photographs available for sale to members who may be interested, which were taken during his visit; for further information and details contact Mr. S. C. Haynes, Otmay House, Brentwood, Essex.

VALE OF RHEIDOL RAILWAY

Mr. A.E.Rimmer of Petts Wood, Kent, has supplied us with a few notes on this line; along with a 1959 official timetable are the following details: This year's timetable has been cut slightly, the 10 a.m. train does not start until July 13th., and the evening train runs on Wednesdays ONLY, as against Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday of last year. Also the evening fare has been discontinued and the day fares increased to 3/6.

The official Paddington figures for passengers carried last year was 27,413; they could do with a little publicity if this line is to survive.

Copy of British Railways official timetable,  
May 16th to September 12th 1959

	A	A	B	A	C	D
	a.m.	a.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.
ABERYSTWYTH dep.	10 0	1SX45	2 0	2 30	5 45	2 15
LLANBADARN dep.	10 7	1SX52	2 7	2 37	5 52	2 22
DEVIL'S BRIDGE arr.	11 0	2SX45	3 0	3 30	6 45	3 15

	A	A	B	A	C	D
	a.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.
DEVIL'S BRIDGE dep.	11 45	4SX0	4 0	5 50	8 0	4 30
LLANBADARN arr.	12 39	4SX54	4 54	6 45	8 55	5 24
ABERYSTWYTH arr.	12 45	5SX0	5 0	6 50	9 0	5 30

Departure from platform adjacent to main station.

A - Commences July 13th. B - Runs May 16th to July 11th incl.

C - Wednesdays only July 15th to August 26th incl.

D - Runs May 17th and July 19th to September 6th.

SX- Saturdays excepted.

NOTE: A copy of the above timetable was sent recently, by the Publicity Department of British Railways (W.R.) plus publicity material to the Leeds Area.

SOCIETY STAND AT THE M.R.C. EXHIBITION.

By F. J. McMillan.

The Society was given a 9ft by 5 ft. Stand at the recent Model Railway Club Exhibition. Our own display was adjacent to the Tal-y-llyn, Ffestiniog, and the M.R.C's own Narrow Gauge section.

Ranged across the stand were five tiers of narrow gauge models, starting at the top with a complete 16 mm scale Vale of Rheidol train.

Other notable items were a 4 mm scale F & B train mounted upon a timber bridge, a D & R.G.WQ 2-8-2, W.H.R. 'RUSSELL' a double-headed Tal-y-llyn train, and a selection of typical rolling stock of the quarry type.

Curious items from the G.V.T., L.&B.R., and the Croesr were shown together with suitable posters taken (With permission) from live N.G. systems. The second N.G.R.S. Handbook was on sale, together with a selection of post-cards. A wide choice of N.G. transparencies were also on view, very kindly loaned by Mr. John Davies.

Although from the financial angle, the show was not as successful as we would have hoped for, there were a large number of enquiries by people interested in joining the Society. Our thanks are due to those who kindly loaned exhibits, and to the helpers on the stand, and last, but not least, our hosts, The Model Railway Club.

BACK NUMBERS OF 'NARROW GAUGE'

All back numbers of the 'NARROW GAUGE' have now been sold, but due to members' interest, it is proposed to produce a 'Supplement' containing all the interesting articles from earlier issues; if there is the demand for it.

Certain articles which have appeared also in the London & S.E. Area Newsheet would also be included. Price would be approximately 3/6 per copy. So would anyone interested in purchasing a copy of such a supplement please contact the Hon. Publications Officer; by postcard as soon as possible. Address: W.J.K.Davies, Merton Court, Sidcup, Kent.

NARROW GAUGE IN AMERICA

By Edgar T. Mead, Member, N.G.R.S. New York, U.S.A.

Victims of highway transportation, are the once far-flung network of Narrow Gauge Railroads of North America.

In the United States, only a bare 300 miles of 36" gauge remain of the once mighty Denver & Rio Grande Western narrow gauge Empire.

The Southern Pacific maintains a gaunt 70 miles of 36" line not far from Death Valley, California. But, the very pinnacle of American narrow gauge railroading still remains open for summer tourist traffic namely, the Animas Gorge line of the D.&R.G.W. between Durango and Silverton, Colorado. Southern Pacific has lamentably applied to Washington for permission to free itself of its remaining slim gauge commitments, and almost any spring snow, or rock slide could wipe out the Animas Gorge route.

Meanwhile, some 20 large 2-8-2's rumble over the D.&R.G.W., and a 45 ton diesel shares company with a small 4-6-0 on the S.P.'s Keeler Branch.

Elsewhere, a handful of industrial narrow gauge railroads are operated, most of which are now converted to diesel operation. Steel mills in Pittsburgh, copper refineries in New Jersey, clay pits in Indiana and gypsum beds in California, all have maintained narrow gauge systems of surprising complexity and inspiring mileage in gauges ranging from 24", 30" to 36" and wider. Coal mines along the Appalachians utilised a variety of gauges, although a clear majority were four-coupled steam, diesel and electric mine mules. The last of the narrow gauge logging 'roads' is still operated in the afforested Sierras in California, where the Pickering Lumber Co. harbours a half-dozen powerful Shay-gearred locos. The narrow gauge Argent Lumber Co. in South Carolina, last of a hundred such lines in the South, curtailed services a year or so back for its quaint handful of 2-6-0 and 2-8-0 locomotives.

In the coming realm of privately owned and operated narrow gauge railroads a considerably happier story can be told. Steam operated lines owned by individuals, hobby clubs, and modern amusement parks are now thriving in California, South Dakota, Massachusetts, Louisiana and New Jersey, with other new ones rapidly joining the trend.

To a great extent, it is a race against time, since the remaining narrow gauge engines are being steadily eliminated by deterioration and scrapping.

The famous Disneyland in California, and the Edaville in Massachusetts have tended to set the highest standard. Around the country little 'narrow gauge cells' are gradually being organised, a recent example being a group operating with five engines in three gauges near New Orleans, Louisiana.

Canada avoided the development of a narrow gauge complex, except in rather specific instances. The narrow gauge lines on Prince Edward Island were standard gauged a generation ago, although the 3'6" gauge Canadian National operated lines in Newfoundland continue to prosper.

In Ontario the Huntsville and Lake of Bays serves a satisfying volume of tourists during the summertime, and the spectacular White Pass and Yukon couples splendid parlour-observation cars to its mountain goat mixed trains.

South of the Rio Grande, narrow gauge railroads exist in three basic areas; (1) The former Interoceanico lines between Mexico City and Puebla, (2) The extensive network of the Yucatan Railways, and (3) The Coahuila & Zatecoas Railway in the mining district near Saltillo. Outside frame 2-8-0 oil-burners form the backbone of the Interoceanico and British-controlled Coahuila lines, whereas a great welter of 4-4-0, 2-6-0 and 4-6-0 engines power the remote routes in the Yucatan. Several short narrow gauge mining railroads exist to connect mines with smelters, and the majority of these utilise both steam and diesel motive power, dependant on the volume of mining activity.

Each of the two newest states; Alaska and Hawaii, possess narrow gauge railroads, in each case representing vestiges of former operations. The narrow gauge Seward Peninsula R.R. in Alaska once employed geared steam locos, to serve the gold camps, but the 'road is now operated by the State Highways Department and anyone owning a railbus is free to travel the full length of the line.

Once upon a time the Oahu Railway all but encircled the capital island with a relatively modern 36" gauge system serving the sugar and pineapple plantations. The system has shrunk to a mere wharf and warehouse facility, and one of the engines was shipped, along with a few cars, to California last year. These were for use on a museum line operated by the City of Los Angeles.

#### HANDBOOKS:

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

Salzkammergutlokbahn 2nd Impression is now available at 3s-0d post free.

Handbook No.2 Parish's Loam Quarries, Erith, Kent, although half the first edition has now been sold, further copies can be obtained at 3s-0d post free to members and 3s-6d post free to non-members.

All are obtainable from the Hon. Secretary:

C. H. John,  
23, Crossway,  
West Ealing,  
W.13.