****** NARROW GAUGE NEWS ******

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NUMBER 98 DECEMBER 1975

********** SEASONS GREETINGS TO ALL MEMBERS FROM THE NEWS TEAM **********

FROM YOUR EDITOR

I regret the delays which have beset NGN since the June issue, delays with distribution/administrational problems badly effected the August issue and it was decided to mail it with the October issue to save postage, however a dispute within the 3 man distribution team led to this being reduced to one man, the printer, who has stated that he can no longer continue to handle the distribution side alone without assistance. To allow time to establish a new team this issue has been produced and distributed from the Yorkshire area hence the lack of a proper heading. We hope that things will return to normal in the New Year and thank members for their continued support and interest during this difficult period.

The troubles mentioned above have also effected the receipt of news items and we apologise for the lack of miniature items in this issue and trust that members will understand.

In conclusion I respectfully draw members attention to the message reproduced below entitled "Your Society & You" and trust that you will give it your best attention and consideration. Thank You!

PRESS DATE:- for NGN 99 is January 1st 1976

** ALL MEMBERS PLEASE READ **

YOUR SOCIETY AND YOU

At the AGM in May it was agreed that for this Society year there would only be three issues of 'The Narrow Gauge' at the same time the membership indicated that when fixing next years subscription rate we should determine a figure such that we could return to the normal rate of four magazines per year. The Committee met in October to discuss the current situation and review future policy. This proved to be rather difficult in view of that inescapable fact of life - inflation. The latest example affecting us being the September Postal increases which mean, in terms of hard cash, that publication mailing costs alone will this year account for 65p out of your last £2.00 subscription, this does not leave much for the publications themselves.

Whilst bearing in mind the comments at the AGM your Committee feel that many members would be unhappy, under present financial conditions, at an increase of 100% or more on the existing subscription rate. Such an amount would actually be necessary to enable us to give you an absolute guarantee on ten publications per year, and this assumes continuation of existing membership plus a further growth rate.

The subscription rate for next year due for payment on 1st April 1976 was therefore fixed at £3.50 (USA $8.00) and whilst your Committee will do everything possible to ensure a return to the normal rate of publications you will understand that with continued rising costs it will be necessary to review this question later next year.

I trust that I can rely on all of you to give your continued support to the Society over this difficult period.

Ralph Martin
Acting Secretary

SOCIETY TIDINGS

LONDON & SOUTHERN AREA: Hon. Secretary - Peter Lemmey.

September Meeting The 1975/76 season of meetings in London started on September 20th with our annual opportunity for audience participation, the Members' Slides evening. Contributions were even more varied than on previous occasions, and included a short talk on mineral tramways in North Wales, ten-coupled narrow gauge tanks in Bulgaria, the Ffestiniog's continued progress towards Blaenau, vintage Sharp Stewart 2-4-Os in Indonesia, and cine film of 76cms-gauge steam in Austria. Our thanks to those who brought their slides along to the meeting.

October Meeting On 15th October we were treated to a slide show by David Brewer entitled 'Narrow Gauge Miscellany', which covered the recent history of the Welsh preserved lines. We saw first the progress made over recent years on the Tal-y-llyn, the rebuilding of No. 1, and the Nant Gwernol extension. Slides of scenes on the Ffestiniog, Vale of Rheidol, and Welshpool lines followed, including a shot or two of the WLLR's new Hunslet from West Africa. A first-rate show, Dave. Many thanks.

FUTURE MEETINGS - At Caxton Hall, Caxton Street, Westminster, London SW 1. (Nearest tube: St. James's Park). All members and friends very welcome.

Wednesday 17th December at 7.30 p.m. 'Memories of the Lynton & Barnstaple and Leek & Manifold lines' - an illustrated talk by John Wrottesley, who travelled on and photographed both these railways which are probably two of England's best remembered narrow gauge branches.

Saturday 17th January at 7.00 p.m. 'Steam in Switzerland' by Maurice Billington and Rod Weaver. Cine films and slides portraying the Return to Steam which has taken place in recent Summers on so many of the Swiss narrow gauge lines, together with the remaining steam-worked industrial spurs.

Wednesday 18th February at 7.30 p.m. A talk by lady-enthusiast Audrey Peattie on her various trips to travel on and photograph the narrow gauge, illustrated with slides.
More details of this and future meetings in the next issue of NGN.

YORKSHIRE AREA: Hon. Secretary - Ron Redman, 14a Oliver Hill, Horsforth, Nr. Leeds LS18 4JF.

October Meeting On Friday 3rd October the 1975/76 season began with a 'Members Evening' with slides presented by Messrs. Stephenson, Ockendon, Halton, Green, Redman and Neale, and projecting diverse subjects ranging from the last steamy years at a well known local BR shed and 10 years of British N/G "griceing", through shots of new Hudswell locos and the sugar beet trains of Pithiviers to steam in the USA this year, and shots of the area trip to Llechwedd & Bala for good measure. The show concluded with a little industrial archeology amid the Blaneau slate tips.

'Members Night' is a new venture in Yorkshire and we look forward to seeing more members slides next year.

FUTURE MEETINGS -

Friday 5th December 'East German Narrow Gauge 75' a slide show by "Commisar" Andrew Neale.

Friday 9th January 1976 Area A.G.M. To be followed by a slide show.
Please note altered date of Area A.G.M.

Other dates for your 1976 diary are as follows:- February 6th, March 5th, April 2nd and May 7th.

Please come along and support your local meetings. All Yorkshire Area meetings are held at Benjamin Gott School, Ridge Road, Armley, Leeds 12 at 7.45 for 8 p.m. start.

Area Secretarys are advised

NEW FILM - 'LAND OF THE LITTLE TRAINS'

The joint Marketing Panel of the Welsh Narrow Gauge Railways are pleased to announce the release of a new publicity film entitled 'Land of the Little Trains'. The film is 16mm optical sound, is in colour and runs for approximately 15 minutes.

As well as showing scenes on the Talyllyn, Welshpool & Llanfair, Vale of Rheidol, Festiniog, Fairbourne, Snowdon, Bala Lake and Llanberis Lake Railways the film also covers the Great Orme Tramway, Llechwedd Slate Caverns and the Cambrian Coast Line of British Rail. The film was produced on behalf of the Panel by Mr. Alan Willmott.

Copies of the film may be hired from the Transport and Travel Film Library, Melbury House, Melbury Terrace, London NW1 6LP, from whom further information may be obtained.

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NARROW GAUGE TOURIST TICKET

The Joint Marketing Panel of the Welsh Narrow Gauge Railways of Wales are pleased to announce the introduction of a Seven Day Tourist Ticket as from 16th April 1976. The ticket will be valid on all of the Welsh Narrow Gauge Railways with the exception of the Snowdon Mountain Railway.

Each ticket will give unlimited travel on the Talyllyn (Tywyn), Vale of Rheidol (Aberystwyth), Fairbourne, Welshpool & Llanfair (Llanfair Caereinion), Bala Lake (Llanuychllyn), Festiniog (Porthmadog) and Llanberis Lake (Llanberis) railways during a seven day period. They will cost £4.50 for adults and £3.00 for children (three to thirteen inclusive), and will be issued from April 16th to September 26th, 1976.

Tickets will be obtainable from offices of the participating Railways and from Tourist Information Centres, British Rail stations and Enquiry Offices of Crosville Motor Services in North and Mid Wales.

CAN - U - HELP

The National Centre for Alternative Technology, Llwyngwern Quarry, Pantperthog, Machynlleth, Powys, wish to obtain "a few tons of 20lb F.B. rail" and would be grateful to any NGRS member who might be able to assist in locating some.

Offers of help to Mr. Des Rees at the above address.

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THE OLD COMPANIES

Festiniog Railway — Gauge 1' 11½"

The Gelliwiog shuttle loco and coach spent most of June in the works, returning to service at the beginning of July in a considerably improved and more reliable condition. After various experiments it was found expedient for the loco and coach to travel to Dduallt in the formation of the first train up, and to return to Boston Lodge under its own power at about 17.30 from Dduallt. The shuttle service has proved reasonably successful, carrying over 10,000 people up to August Bank Holiday, but support varies from day to day.

On Friday 25th July, Her Royal Highness Princess Margaret, Lord Linley and Lady Sarah Armstrong-Jones visited the railway. The party joined the Royal train ("Blanche", coaches 14, 105 and 100) at Minffordd at 10.25; the train ran, with stops at Rhiw Goch, to pass a down service train, and at Tan-y-Bwlch, to Tunnel Cutting South, to which point the permanent head of steel had been extended especially for the occasion. Following an examination of the works in hand the party returned on the train to Dduallt, where the three coaches were attached to the rear of the 12.17 down service train. The Royal Party left the train at Tan-y-Bwlch.

The boring of the new tunnel has started on schedule. The first blow took place on Saturday morning, 30th August, in the presence of a camera team from B.B.C. Television's "Blue Peter". The drilling was a little above floor level and was highly successful in that it shattered rock without doing anything to lengthen the cutting! Since then progress has been quite rapid, over 30 metres being completed in the first month. A battery mines locomotive (details are:- Wingrove 5537) has been provided for the tunnel works by Alan Keef; a shed and charging point are provided at Tan-y-Bwlch.

Tan-y-Grisiau to Glan-y-Pwll Section

The old track between Barlwyd bridge and Dolrhedyn gap has been lifted completely. New track and sleepers, but no ballast, have been laid for all but the last 100 yards to Dolrhedyn.

Ten Isle of Man Railway coach underframes arrived at Minffordd early in the year; it is intended that in time these should form the basis for the back-to Blaenau sets. One of these underframes has now been laid out at Boston Lodge for design assessment and removal of superficial corrosion.

LOCO NEWS

The four working locomotives kept the peak train service going well, urged on by a fuel of which about 32% is now waste lubricating oil. This represents a big cash saving, as the cost of recovery from the highly selective sources used is only 25% of the cost of new oil.

Princess

This locomotive has been removed from Blaenau Ffestiniog. It was reported as going to Shildon for the Railway Celebrations. According to the Cambrian News, its disappearance has caused keen disappointment. It may not return as the noise of children playing on the locomotive has disturbed the neighbouring hotel.

Mountaineer

The new boiler ordered from Dodman & Co., of Kings Lynn has had to be cancelled due to the firm going out of business. Further sources of supply including Boston Lodge manufacture are being investigated and it was hoped that subject to successful boiler inspection during autumn the present boiler would last the 1976 season.

(Roy Cunningham, for FRS, Piers)
(Morgan & FR Mag)

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