

Narrow Gauge News



No 360

September

2020



The news journal of the Narrow Gauge Railway Society
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*(Above) Two shots in R&ER Beckfoot Quarry in 1954, showing a single bladed point and a 3-way point with rake of stone wagons.
(Below left) a 1966 shot at Ravenglass where I strongly suspect that the 3-way point had found a new use in the carriage sidings.
(Below right) R&ER Sankey Barrow card purchased early 1950s River lrt on mixed gauge south west of Murthwaite*

Sydney A Leleux



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Please send news, photographs
and videos to the correct
address.

Narrow



Gauge

No 360

News

September**2020**

After one of the strangest periods that it is possible to imagine, the news is once again beginning to come in. Some of it is bad news; as you will see, certain railways are closed for the whole year and one or two have had to stop operating altogether. Our sympathies go out to any who have worked to develop a railway only to see it disappear before their eyes.

But there is good news aplenty as well. Many lines are again entertaining the public and providing interest and work for their volunteers. If you can, give them some support at this difficult time.

You will see that the news pages have been put together carefully to include re-opening details of as many railways as possible and we make no apology for that. If it seems occasionally repetitive then at least we shall all know what is available for us to visit.

The July edition of *Narrow Gauge News* largely made up of retrospective material which members sent in as a result of our appeal in the previous magazine. It has been received with much enthusiasm; in fact we have had more favourable comments about that edition than almost any other!

Perhaps that indicates that we all hanker a little for the idyllic past.

Nevertheless, this is a news publication and the issuing of news must be our priority. Of course, there can be some old news amongst the current and, for a while at least, there will have to be, because we now have a lot of unpublished retro material which is too good to throw away.

For the time being, as well as the regular news sections, *NGN* will include some retro material which will be placed after the news pages. Please do not send more in at present, though, for there is enough and to spare!

If the retro feature proves to be of lasting interest we may consider including some on a more permanent basis, but please bear in mind that the proper place for historic material is *The Narrow Gauge*; Alan Burgess will be delighted to receive articles at any time.

Meanwhile, sit back and enjoy, at least vicariously, all the narrow gauge treats that are in store. And keep the news coming in when you do make a visit.

Front cover:

Tallylyn Railway: *Dolgoch* at the head of the first train since lockdown - on 1st August.
Photo: Glenn Cannon / TR

Back cover:

Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway: *Melior* at Sittingbourne Viaduct.
Photo: Jonathan James

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All members are sent a direct link to the latest *NGN* via Membership email, so please double-check that your address is correct by logging in and checking your details. Anyone having difficulties with access via the link should contact Mick Morgan at mick@ngrs.org



The Narrow Gauge Railway Society

Serving the Narrow Gauge World since 1951

Committee News

Those of you who have looked at the Committee contacts information in this magazine will have noticed that there have been some changes.

Jill Everitt and Simon Guppy have been appointed as Directors.

The Directors of the Society had been concerned due to the reduced number of Directors, which had followed wastage of a number of executive roles. Jill and Simon took up their duties on 25th July 2020 having accepted Invitation from their fellow Directors.

Iain McCall elected Director for the Membership.

As predicted in the July issue of Narrow Gauge News, Iain McCall was elected as Director for the Membership, and is responsible for representing the Membership of the Society and scrutinising the actions of the Directors. Should you have any issues regarding the Society you should contact Iain in the first instance.

There are now 10 Directors of the Society. They are Alan Burgess, Chris Roberts, Iain McCall, Jill Everitt, Jonathan James, Mick Morgan, Paul Bennett, Robert Watson, Simon Guppy and Steve Barber. Note: the Company Articles limit the Maximum number of Directors to 12.

If you wish to contact any Society Officer, please refer to the Contact information in this Narrow Gauge News or the Society Website for the current information.

The next Committee Meeting will be held in early October, if you have any matters you wish to raise please contact Steve Barber or Iain McCall at the addresses elsewhere in this magazine.

Electronic Presence sub-Committee.

The Directors have authorised a sub-Committee to review and make recommendations in respect of the electronic presence of the Society. The terms of reference of this sub-Committee covers all IT matters, current or envisaged, to ensure that there is Redundancy, Security and preservation of all types of data generated or acquired.

The sub-Committee comprises: Simon Guppy (Chairman), Stephen Barber (Secretary), Robert Watson, Mick Morgan, Iain McCall, Ken Matticks, Dan Holbrook, Jill Everitt and Peter Wilson.

The sub-Committee can co-opt others, if you feel you have specialist IT knowledge and can assist the sub-Committee, please contact Steve Barber if you wish to volunteer or discuss further.

Virtual AGM

Thanks to all of you who returned a proxy voting form, the Accounts motion and the election of Directors has been carried. A copy of the Minutes of the Virtual AGM is available on the Society website.

I hope that matters in respect of the lockdown will have eased by next year and we will be able to enjoy a normal AGM weekend. It is my intention that this year's cancelled arrangements can be carried out next year (2021). The date and locations will be confirmed once the railways have a stable physical presence again.

Steve Barber, NGRS Co. Secretary

Society Visits

With an element of easing of the COVID-19 restrictions, we were finally able to arrange a small number of visits during the late summer / early autumn, some of which will have already taken place by the time you read this. Unfortunately, quite a lot of planned visits have had to be cancelled this year, and I am hopeful of being able to rearrange at least some of these in 2021.

During the last couple of months, the Society's online system for Visit Bookings has gone live. The system seems to have been well received by members; in the first three weeks after launch, over 70 bookings have been made using this system. Although the facility to book visits via the post will still be available in the future, I am hopeful that at least 80% of visit bookings will be made online.

As this year's somewhat truncated visits season comes to an end, my thoughts are already turning to planning for 2021. In addition to attempting to rearrange some of this year's cancelled visits for 2021, I am also hoping to include some different locations on next year's agenda. If there are any members out there who either own, or are involved with, a narrow-gauge railway, and would like to host a visit in the future, I would be pleased to hear from you.

Simon Guppy

Membership Matters

Since our last mailing we have ten new members. Welcome to Roland Bude, Roland Bude jnr, Kris Douglas, Howard Harrison, John Jenkins, Mark Dancer, Frank Lewis, Peter Haward, David Meanwell and Kevin Pantling. Sadly we have five members who have passed away - A W Gibson from Gosport, W M Feather from Sheffield, Davis Sharpe from Cramlington, David Jeffcoat from Haselmemer and Rowland Pittard from Bridgend. Currently we have 1369 members. Why not allow a friend to have a peep at your magazines and encourage them to join us?

Jill Everitt

The library

With the gradual lifting of Covid19 restrictions some return to normal Library life has begun to take place. Apedale, our host, reopened for visitors on 1st August and the Library team - Martin, Iain, Peter, and new volunteer recruits Rik Bennett and Stephen Teather (welcome, gentlemen) have been making good progress with scanning photographs and indexing.

We also have received several generous bequests: from the family of Dave Billmore, and from David Jones (who also kindly left a £300 bequest to the Library), and also further generous gifts of books from Keith Turner; we really appreciate member's generosity in this which helps make the Library an exceptional collection. A problem we have is real pressure on space to accommodate this wealth of material and we are looking at both short and long term ways to resolve this - but it is a nice problem to have!

During lockdown, and since, we have successfully handled a number of member queries by email (one especially challenging approach which required much detailed delving was on the early history of the Brockham, later Amberley, Museum with which the NGRS was closely involved in its earlier days). On-line communication is likely to be the preferred future for researchers and enquirers, especially as digitalisation advances. Many queries can be turned around quite quickly but some do require delving into our archives, which is becoming easier as Library access eases for regular working visits for the Library team post lockdown.

At the moment the Library remains effectively closed to general visitors because of social distancing requirements (and the congestion of new material and incoming stock - another nice problem to have) which restricts our ability to meet Government restrictions. Any researcher who really does need access though, please get in touch and we will try to make arrangements for you to have access by appointment, preferably Wednesdays or perhaps Sundays. That will have to be subject to short notice local lockdown impositions, of course, and proper process and record keeping.

Next year we hope to be able to return to normality and once again run occasional open days and welcome visitors more frequently.

Peter Wilson, Librarian

NGRS London and Southern Area

The Society's London and Southern Area is in abeyance. Peter Lemmey has resigned as area secretary and as yet no-one has come forward to replace him. There are no area activities planned.

However NGRS members will be welcome in due course at meetings of the Welshpool & Llanfair LR London

Area, and information will be provided as and when the WLLR meetings resume next year.

Peter Lemmey
peterlemmey@waitrose.com

Events

Twyford Waterworks, Hazeley Road, Twyford, Winchester, Hampshire, SO21 1QA

Sunday 4th October: Open Day. This will be the only opportunity in 2020 to visit Twyford Waterworks. The waterworks and grounds will be fully open and the industrial lime kiln railway will be in operation, with as many locomotives as possible on display. Please note that we do not give rides.

We will be open from 11am to 4pm and full details, including advance online ticketing, can be found at www.twyfordwaterworks.co.uk.

Amberley Museum Welcomes Visitors Safely Back

After 129 days of having to close its doors during the Covid crisis, the much loved Amberley Museum has opened its doors to families and visitors once again. The 36 acre site in the heart of the South Downs National Park was open to members only on Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th July and then to the general public from Wednesday 29th July. The museum has implemented a range of new measures to maximise the safety of all visitors

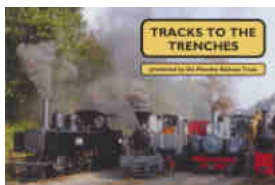
and adhere to Government guidelines. Anyone wishing to have a lovely day out at Amberley must book in advance online on the Amberley Museum website for the specific day and time slot that they wish to visit. There are three time slots for arrivals and once on site visitors can stay as long as they like until closing time at 4.30pm. The Amberley Museum website provides detail on all the measures that have been put in place to make sure everyone has a safe and happy visit.

Publications Received

Raretrack: no.90 from the Steeple Grange Light Railway
Llanuchllyn Express no 166 from the Bala Lake Railway Society

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Tracks to the Trenches

presented by the Moseley Railway Trust

The Moseley Railway Trust staged three Tracks to the Trenches events at the Apedale Valley Light Railway in 2014, 2016 and 2018 with each being to a different theme. These were very well received, and rightly so. This photographic album covers the unique and special character of these events along with a few photos taken at similar events on other railways at which the MRT displayed WW1 locos and rolling stock.

Most of the motive power (steam, battery, internal combustion and horse) which attended those three events is illustrated along with examples of rolling stock. Many of the pictures include the locomotive crew in WW1 uniform, giving a real feel for both the event and operations during the 1914-1918 period. There are also several posed shots from photo charters. Overall, the book gives a good impression of the railway operations, and an overview of range of the equipment gathered together for each of the events.

The photos are reproduced in full colour (apart from one B&W image) one to a page in a clear and large format which reveals plenty of detail. The captions are detailed and provide plenty of information about the subject and their history. I would go so far as saying that the captions are surprisingly better than one would usually find in a pictorial album of this type.

I really enjoyed the book and can thoroughly recommend it as an excellent overview of the events. It is also a good reference book for those interested in the narrow gauge railways of WW1 or in modelling them.

The book was produced as a rapid response project between the MRT and Iain McCall who are to be commended for this approach. For every copy sold, a significant donation will be made to the MRT's appeal to support it through the Covid-19 pandemic and also to support future development projects.

Published by Mainline & Maritime

ISBN978-1900340694 78 pages (plus covers), landscape format measuring 234mm x 155mm (9.25" x 6.125") softback. Price £10.95

Available from the Moseley Railway Trust <https://avlr.org.uk/books> or Mainline & Maritime <https://mainline-maritime.myshopify.com/>

Gerry Balding



Llanuwchllyn Express: Special Edition Summer 2020

Not a book, but a special one-off issue of *Llanuwchllyn Express*, the quarterly magazine of the Bala Lake Railway Society. This has been produced to raise funds to support the Bala Lake Railway during the Covid-19 pandemic.

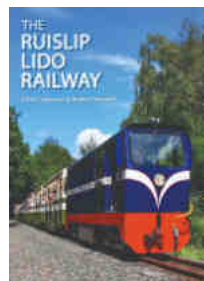
The content is all new and covers a range of subjects including the early days of the BLR, memories of the Welsh narrow gauge, modelling garden railways and personal reminiscences of BLRS members. In addition, the articles are illustrated with historical colour and black & white photos. A number of these have never been published before.

This was a very enjoyable read and gives a great background to the railway. Recommended especially given the reasonable price.

Available from the Bala Lake Railway's online shop: <https://shop.bala-lake-railway.co.uk/>

32 pages. Price £5 (postage included)

Gerry Balding



The Ruislip Lido Railway

By Chris Ladyman and Robert Shemilt. Published by Ruislip Lido Railway Society

Despite being one of the most notable miniature railways in the South East, this is the first time a detailed account of the Ruislip Lido Railway has been published.

Starting off in 1945 as a dog-bone circuit to the unusual gauge of 12 inches built by the Grand Union Canal Company as an attraction at their recently converted reservoir as a lido. Upon the nationalisation of the canal company in 1948 control passed to the local council until 1978 when an accident forced closure. Unable to fund the necessary improvements suggested by the Railway Inspectorate, the council approached local model engineering societies with a view of them taking responsibility for

the railway. This led to a voluntary society being formed to take over operations the following year. Over the 40 years since then the railway has developed beyond recognition with the track being extended to double the original length, new larger rolling stock, four large diesel locomotives and a steam locomotive *Mad Bess*, based on the Penrhyn and Festiniog locomotive *Blanche*, built on site.

The book starts with a brief history of the reservoir/lido itself, before turning to the railway. Personal reminiscences by David Wadley, the local council official who supported the society in its early years, Jim Armstrong, a founding member, and Jennifer Collins, daughter of Colonel Graham Alexander of the TA and the last commanding officer of the Longmoor Military Railway, who spent his retirement as a valuable member of the RLRS extension study group and whom one of the locomotives is named.

Detailed history of each of the locomotives is given, including extracts from the Model Engineer on the original locomotive 4-4-2 *Prince Edward* built by George Flocks of Watford in 1936. Plus, an account of the trials of *Lady of the Lakes* on the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway in November 1985. Similar chapters cover the rolling stock, the radio signalling and token operation used on the railway and a description of the route.

There are excellent photographs throughout, many unseen before including ones from the early days along with diagrams and works drawings of each locomotive. All in all, a good book and an informative read.

ISBN 978-1-8380654-0-9 £14.99 296 pages

David Collins

Jonathan James adds: This A5 size book runs to 296 pages and details the history of the railway, which has been operating for 75 years. The book has several hundred photographs, with chapters covering the history, route, locomotives and rolling stock, signalling and train control and infrastructure. There are plenty of behind the scenes views as well as some reminiscences from people involved with the railway over the years.

The final page provides an insight into the future plans for the railway. The book costs £14.99 and is published by the Ruislip Lido Railway Society, and is available through usual retail outlets. I would thoroughly recommend the book, which provides an interesting and comprehensive history of the railway



The Story of The Scamp

By Colin Edmondson

This A4 size book describes the development of the popular 7¼" gauge Scamp locomotive. The book commences with Colin Edmondson describing his life-long interest in railways, before moving on to David Malton telling the story of his *Goliath* locomotive, which provided the inspiration for the first Scamp locomotive. Chris Stockdale then describes his involvement in the project.

The following chapters cover the design and construction of the Scamp locomotive, which includes a fair bit of technical information, including details of the manufacturer CMD Engineering. The final section includes photographs of various Scamp locomotives, of which nearly a hundred have now been built; they work on various railways around the country and further afield. The book finishes with plans for the future.

There is a nice selection of photographs and just the right amount of technical information. The book has 42 pages and over a hundred photos. It is published by Colin Edmondson and costs £5.95 (ISBN 978-1-83853-396-0). It is available direct from the Author at: colin@colinedmondson.co.

Ian Samson / Graham Plews

The earlier picture (left) shows my first visit to Wales and my beloved Tal-y-llyn, on Good Friday 1969, just short of my 15th birthday. Loco 3, Sir Hadyn had returned to Towyn after some 10 years overhaul and rebuild, so was newly into service. Having devoured "Railway Adventure" several times (even by then – many more times now!) I had an affection for No 3, and shared the disappointment that its potential was not realised in 1951 due to indifferent track, and narrow wheel flanges. So I was delighted that my first experience was of this loco. The photo is from my collection, by the late David Brewer.



A Short History of the Railway in Strathaven Park

Glasgow Road, Strathaven, ML10 6LZ (5" and 7¼" gauge)

The Strathaven Miniature Railway celebrated their 70th anniversary last year and have produced a booklet entitled "A Short History of the Railway in Strathaven Park". The Railway is operated by Strathaven Model Society and is open to the public at weekends between Easter and the end of September weather permitting. The ground level line is 2270 feet long, whilst the elevated 2½", 3½" and 5" gauge track is 408 feet long. The railway website is www.strathavenminiaturerailway.org.

The booklet has 30 pages and provides a short history of the railway, including around twenty photographs. I would recommend purchasing a copy before the stock runs out.

Copies of the booklet can be ordered from the society at £3.00 each, including postage, using the following two methods:-

1. email the club via their website (www.strathavenminiaturerailway.org) requesting a booklet. The society will then take bank details and a reference number to make a BACs payment.
2. write to the railway, enclosing a cheque for £3.00 (payable to 'Strathaven Model Society Ltd'), at the following address:-
Strathaven Model Society Ltd
Attention Ian Samson
2 Dunlop Street
Strathaven ML10 6LA

Ian Samson / Graham Plews

Fast forward to June 18th 2018, and the TR was holding their "Anything Goes" weekend. This was the first opportunity for some time to see all six steam locos (plus working IC locos) in service at the same time; Tallyllyn had its boiler certificate extended by a few weeks especially for the event, and once again, Sir Hadyn had just returned to service after (a slightly shorter) overhaul at the Vale of Rheidol. The similarity struck me, and I could not resist setting up a repeat of the 1969 photo, this time taken by my son, Christopher, who accompanied me.



Christmas Card



This card has been produced by the Fairbourne Railway.

It is available from the online Fairbourne Railway shop or from the railway. The card measures 148mm x 148mm and depicts *Beddgelert* in a winter landscape. It carries the message "Merry Christmas" in red on the front and on the inside.

All proceeds go to support the railway; this year, more than ever, every bit of fundraising and publicity is crucial.

Graham Billington

Pictured below:

Same locomotive, same location (within a few yards) same boy/man, but 49 years apart.

The boy/man and the reporter is Tim Sanderson

Meirion Mill Railway

I was delighted to see a reference to the remains of the Meirion Mill Railway in issue 359 of *Narrow Gauge News*. If I may, I have a couple of corrections to Peter Coull's report. First, the internal tramways of the Minlyn slate quarry were 2' 2" gauge, not 2' 0".

The Meirion Mill Railway - which was 2' 0" gauge - opened on July 19th. 1975, and only operated for two seasons, closing after the Easter weekend in 1977 after the Railway Inspectorate objected. The wagons that Peter found are indeed from this railway - there are at least 5 on site, including the rare Du Croo & Brauns wagon. Most of these came from Gartheiniog quarry near Aberangell, but they were purchased from the Forestry Commission who had laid a short line at the old slate mill. They were not, with one possible exception, from the earlier Hendre Ddu Tramway.

I am nearing completion of a major new history of the Hendre Ddu Tramway. If any members have photographs or recollections of this line, I would be most interested to talk to them.

Dan Quine (gwernol@gmail.com)

Slate wagons (NGN359/12)

Congratulations on an extraordinary issue of NGN (359)! Kev Smith's slate wagon photos on page 12 are of great interest. From the style of the wagons and what can be seen of the background, this is the Honister Quarry of the Buttermere & Westmorland Green Slate Co Ltd, on top of Honister Pass in Cumbria at grid reference NY 225135. The quarry is still operating and used to do underground tours, but I believe they stopped using rail transport about a year ago. There was formerly an extensive 2' gauge system here with some spectacular inclines.

Peter Holmes

Royal Scot?

One of my daughters gave me this book for Father's Day, and there is an illustration (below) for which members may be able to supply more detail.



Page 188: This 9½" or 10¼" gauge locomotive looks a bit like an unrebuilt Royal Scot, although it is a Pacific, has no smoke deflectors, and has a bogie tender. What and where is it?

Sydney Leleux

Gauge confusion

Further to Gordon Casely's letter in NGN 358 the distinction between narrow and standard gauge is now about to become even more blurred. The *Railway Gazette* recently reported that the metre gauge Montreux-Oberland Bahn has ordered some twenty dual-gauge (metre and standard) carriages to operate, as four four car sets (plus spares), a through service between Montreux and Zwisimmen on its own line then on to Interlaken Ost on the standard gauge BLS.

AS dual-gauge power bogies are impractical the trains will be powered on the NOB by series 8000 9000v DC locos and on the BLS by class 465 15kv 16.7hz engines attached to an interface car.

Derrick Why

Mystery Photo

I suggest that the mystery photo on p6 of NGN 358 is Povoia de Varzim on the Porto suburban network. There is a picture of it on p28 of *Steam Memories in Colour - Portugal* by Booklaw Publications 2009 and another of it in the background on p78 of *Portuguese Steam from Lineside* by Bradford Barton 1976.

Peter Dale

Terry Stanhope's Locos

In NGN 359 Richard Holden requests info on Terry Stanhope's 15" locos. Terry told our CME Adam Roper that the boiler and frames from his *Katie* replica formed the basis for the Duke of Westminster's loco. The boiler was not quite the right size as it was bought cheaply as a cancelled steam launch boiler order from Israel Newtons at Bradford.

Steve Smith told me that the vertical boiler loco went to Cleethorpes (October 1995) but the boiler was not capable of passing a boiler test, so was used as a stove to heat the workshop for 10 years! The high speed Sissons engine unit was sold separately. The chassis was sold to Austin Moss at Windmill Farm, together with a Lister style cab, which were later sold on to a 15" gauge line in Ireland (which one?) to form the basis of a diesel loco.

Terry's blue diesel loco (see photo at top of page) went to a private 15" line near Grimsby (the IRS book says Cleethorpes, October 1995) and later to Brian Gent in Hampshire. He sold it to Jeremy Martin, but Jeremy decided to go for 2' (Richmond Light Railway) rather than 15", so sold it to us, here in Ripon, where it is slowly being put back together, in memory of our good friend Terry. He told me the running gear came from the Fairbourne loco. *Dingo* - named after the armoured car whose engine had been incorporated. Adam has re-christened the loco *Ferret*, as the *Ferret* armoured car



replaced the *Dingo*. The Bord na Mona railway expert, Ted McAvoy, has cast us a pair of *Ferret* nameplates at Leander Works. Does anyone have photos of Terry's other blue loco. - the 10¼" 4wP which ran in Roundhay Park, Leeds? Terry was proud of the *Reliant* engine and gearbox which powered it - bought for a fiver! Unfortunately this loco. was destroyed when its shed was set alight by vandals.

John Peers & Neill Clayton

Rolling Chassis (NGN358/14)

The photo of the rolling chassis of a loco in a large workshop alleged to be No 23 the *Falcon* built steam tram dating from 1892 is erroneous.

As far as I know there is no steam tram under construction in the UK at present. Indeed steam tram locos are a very rare breed in the UK. There are only four such locos extant in the UK. All four of them are on static display: *Portstewart* No 1 on display in the Streetlife Museum in Hull; *Portstewart* No 2 is displayed in the Ulster Transport Museum; New South Wales Government Railways No 47 *John Bull* at Crich Tramway Village and Manchester, Bury, Rochdale and Oldham No 84 is in store at Clay Cross.

The rolling chassis depicted in the photo is therefore not a steam tram loco chassis. It is however the rolling chassis of *Corris* Railway No 10 (a new build of the *Corris* Henry Hughes, *Falcon* Works, Loughborough locos 1-3 of 1848). The photo was taken in Alan Keef's workshop at Lea Lane, Ross on Wye, Glos. The report on the *Corris* Railway beneath the said photo gives the correct information.

Clearly there was an editorial mistake in that edition of NGN unfortunately.

A S R Parsons

Ed: a number of people have commented on this including Tim Long and Ken Scanes. Mr Parsons's informative letter (above) puts the facts as fully as possible, including the fact that there has been an editorial error. We can only apologise.



As mentioned in the last *NGN* my latest project is an 18" gauge 0-4-0 loco used on the Woolwich Arsenal Railway (see photo above). Called *Lachesis* (that's a Greek religious word – had to Google that one!) it was the second internal combustion engine in the UK, and only the third in the world. Built in 1896 it used a Hornsby-Ackroyd 91/2hp single cylinder oil engine and was the first of four though the others were 2-4-0 wheel arrangement. They were somewhat underpowered all being scrapped by 1920. There is not a lot of information on them, I borrowed the book on the Woolwich Railway from the NGRS Library, and also came across a couple of photos of *Lachesis* and drawings of one of the 2-4-0's.

There is a bit of guesswork and artistic licence especially over the gearing and "cab" detail. There is a rod from levers in the cab along the side of the loco to a clutch system to disengage the drive, while another lever operates a strange vertical bevel gear to reverse direction - that's the contraption on top of the gears. Construction of the model is in styrene in my usual 16mm scale (1/19). The suspension is at an angle because of the fore-and-back movement that the slow revving, large flywheel, single cylinder drive would produce. It would probably be like being on a ship in a

rough sea! If the springs were in the usual position the movement would produce considerable stresses in the metal and possibly shear any vertical supports. The wheels (24mm dia 3D printed ones from the bits box) almost hidden as the lower part of the frames are just 2 or 3" above the rail. What looks like a vertical boiler at the front is in fact the cooling system, water pumped (from an eccentric drive off the flywheel) through a spiral of tubes. The small pipe is the cooling water and large pipe is the exhaust. The gears for the model came as an assorted pack of plastic ones ordered from China (£4.60 inc. postage!).

Product News:

Talyllyn, a new 16mm scale steam loco by David Pinniger

Bowande is a name that may be new to many narrow gauge modellers but is much better known in Gauge 1 circles. "*Talyllyn*" is their first venture into the world of narrow gauge, designed and developed in collaboration with the Train Department in the USA and built by Bowande in China.

The engine that I was loaned for review was in the *Talyllyn* 150 red scheme and although not to everybody's liking, it

does look very attractive with the black and white lining and decorated wheels. A check with the drawing in James Boyd's "*Talyllyn Railway*" showed that all the key dimensions were pretty accurate and there is also a multitude of fine detail when you look closer at the loco. The reversing lever is in the front of the cab on the RHS and operates full Stephenson valve gear and it is worthwhile having a good look underneath between the frames to look at the clever miniature engineering. I was very impressed with the performance of the engine when I ran it on my AVR, although I did find that on my ground level line, the gas control valve and reverser were tricky to operate as the cab is small without a lifting roof. *Talyllyn* ran well with a number of different trains including a heavy train of four FR/NWNGR coaches weighing in at 8 ¾ lbs [4kg]. With a bit more regulator, the loco pulled this train with ease, even self-starting on the bank. I also had the opportunity to also try out one of the production engines "straight out of the box". This *Talyllyn* looked splendid with a shiny brass dome and resplendent in the classic green livery edged with yellow and black.

Talyllyn is a beautiful looking small scale steam engine with an exemplary performance for such a small loco.

Websites for information:

Livesteam:

www.bowandelivesteamuk.com

The Train Department;

www.thetraindepartment.com

Roundhouse Engineering have new 16mm scale live steam locos out or available to pre-order.

Available now is a redesigned and updated FR 0-4-4T *Taliesin* (the 1999 built one)

Coming later this year - a Davenport 0-4-0 saddle tank loco, ideal for industrial or short branch lines..

Next year a reproduction of the Small England FR locos during the 1910s to 20s. This means the loco can be ran as Prince, Princess and Palmerston (original and current preservation). Orders taken from the 1st January 2021.

The Darjeeling C Class Pacific will arrive in 2022. Orders will be taken from the 1st January 2022.

Red *Talyllyn* on the Ambledown Valley Railway test train. Photo Dave Pinniger



The Roundhouse *Taliesin*.



Chester Moor,
A167, Co. Durham

Report 03/08/20. I first noticed these two mine tubs to the left of the northbound dual carriageway in mid July; they were not there a fortnight earlier. It is likely they are the two I saw on the roundabout about 100 yards west in 2011 (NGN 306). The middle of that roundabout has been remodelled with shrubs etc. The wagons stand on rails (angle iron?) within a wooden border filled with stones. Track gauge is exactly 55cm. Back to back wheel measurements are 20½"/52cm.

Before and beyond them are two wooden borders filled with flowers. The wagons' black paintwork is clearly fresh. The left one (if looking from the road verge) has '165' in weld on its upper ends while the other has '958' in weld on a small rectangular tag on the upper ends. While '165' has curved bodywork recesses near the body top and bottom '958' just has the upper recess with the lower section having metal plating added all the way round.

Both wagons have curly-spoke wheels. If they are the same as the ones I saw in 2011 their wooden chassis/solebars have been replaced by metal which looks very new. The bodywork on both though shows several dents indicating they are not recent reproductions. Both have a pair of angled handles at each end. They are coupled together by 3 link couplings and have 3 link couplings on the other ends. Each wagon is chained to the track. They are piled high with coal.

Just to show that such tubs aren't identical, dimensions are ('165'/'958'): body Height 28¾"/29"; Width 37"/38"; Length 40"/38".

These wagons stand almost opposite the Chester Moor Inn across the dual carriageway. Many years ago that was called the Colliery Inn. Presumably the wagons commemorate Chester Moor Colliery (1889-1967). Their relocation means more people will see them even if just a glimpse driving on the A167.

Philip Champion

Chester Moor - mine tubs '958' and '165' with the 'Chester Moor Inn' (former 'Colliery Inn') opposite. Photo: Philip Champion



Colwall Model Farm/Piggery, Colwall,
Herefordshire (2' 0" gauge)

Visit 20/07/20. The vinegar works in Colwall was built by the Ballard family in 1894 and connected by a 2' 0" gauge handworked tramway to a model farm/piggery some quarter of a mile away. Waste from the vinegar making process (presumably using local apples) was conveyed down the tramway to feed the pigs and manure was removed by the same tramway to a tipping dock for use on the fields. The actual vinegar works and the top part of the tramway have been lost due to housing development but the track at the piggery remained in use until around the mid-1980s at least. Circa 1975 M. Christensen visited and recorded the line in Industrial Railway Record 66 (IRS) and then in *Railways in Worcestershire* (<http://www.miac.org.uk/hills.html>) and I can remember the line still in use in 1980 as the then occupant donated some rail to our nascent 'Ledbury Light Railway'. Surprisingly, although the piggery is now defunct, much still remains and indeed there is talk of a preservation order being placed on the surviving buildings and their surroundings.

Mike Tebbett

Colwall: photos from the top:

1. The large piggery building - the track ran through the centre of this shed but the floor has since been raised by a layer of concrete. Note the layout with pig bays either side of the track. The line from the Vinegar Works formerly ran down to the rear of this building.
2. The lower, smaller piggery building, built to the same layout. Note the V skip and wagon remains in the foreground, with track still present here.
3. Remains of a Hudson V skip in the grass, used in the later operation
4. Remains of an inside frame wagon, which may have been original stock
5. Track still *in situ* running out of the small piggery

All photos: Mike Tebbett



though a general information board on the track down from Standish refers to Standish Hall Drift, active in the 1950s and 1960s, without confirming that this was the origin of the wagons. There were several other small collieries in the immediate area including John Pit, Giant's Hall and Taylor.

Donald Brooks

Glyn Valley Tramway Trust, Hand Lane, Chirk, Wrexham (2' 4½" gauge)

Visit 06/08/20. The site of the former GVT station at Hand Lane, Chirk is cleared, including the bridge under the road. The site of the platform is now clearly visible. A sign on the site proudly proclaims that the Glyn Valley Tramway will be coming here soon.

Graham Billington

Medomsley, B6310, County Durham

Report 03/08/20. A brief mention in a recent IRS Bulletin alerted me to this



Elnup Wood: (above) the two tubs displayed to commemorate coal mining in the area
(Below) detail of the two tubs
Photos: Donald Brooks



but a helpful local couple directed me to 'Colin's house'. Near the junction with the B6309 and on a raised front lawn of a large house stand 4 wagons. Three are black tubs lettered (left to right) 'Medomsley Busty Pit 1839-1961 Colliery', 'Medomsley Elm Park Drift 1961-1973 Colliery' and 'Medomsley Derwent Hunter Pit 1856-1964 Colliery'. They have metal bodies with metal strapping around the top and wooden solebars except the middle one's which are metal. The middle one also has a metal brake stick protruding from one wheel. The



Glyn Valley Tramway: (left) the cleared site at Chirk (Right) restoration notice at Chirk
Photos: Graham Billington

flat wagon is longer and has wooden solebars 5"-6" high and two upright stanchions. All four have curly spoke wheels. Between the wagons are 3 cable rollers between the rails.

The householder came to mow the lawn and was happy to answer my questions. He said people often ask him about the wagons. The flat wagon was used for taking timber into the pit. It came to him just as a pair of 9" wheels and stanchions from the former South Medomsley Pit. A friend built the solebars. The three tubs came from a lead mine in the Alston, Cumbria area connected with the Shepherd family. He has had this display some years. He was happy for me to measure them: L 32", W 28½" (top)/23" (bottom), body H 21½". Gauge was 19" on light section rail about 20'-25' long. The flat wagon was on light 2' 0" gauge rail adjoining it. He also has a set of 12" wheels from South Medomsley pit on which he will make a wooden pit wagon based on an old book with drawings of mining equipment which he showed me. He will ask his friend to make some castings and he will build the 2-plank wooden body himself.

Further into the village on the B6309 at the north end of the junior school grounds is a small fenced, locked wooded area visible from the pavement. Inside is a metal rectangular-bodied wagon with dumb buffers. Some plating on the end has rusted through. Track seems to be light section approx. 2' 0" gauge.

Philip Champion

Medomsley – three tubs and a flat wagon displayed in a garden
Photo: Philip Champion



Railways of Orkney

I came across this web site which shows some narrow gauge railways on Orkney which may be of interest.

<https://rogerfarnworth.com/2019/05/18/the-railways-of-orkney-part-3/>

Graham Plews

(A&H Editor: Roger Farnworth's website contains some interesting information and has certainly drawn everything together, and Part 1 and 2 can also be found there. Reference has been made to 'The Railways of Orkney' by the late Wilf Simms, who was an authority on these railways.)

Springfield Park, Coppull, Chorley, Lancashire PR7 5EG (60cm gauge)

Visit 15/06/20. Springfield Road is a turning by the side of the library off the B5251 Spendmore Lane, the main road through the centre of Coppull village. The park is located just after the leisure centre on the right-hand side of Springfield Road and the wagon is not visible from the road.

In the middle of a series of flower beds is a plant-filled replica four-wheel colliery wagon. The body, with a low-relief graphic roundel on one side only, and the wheels all appear to be new. The frame is much more rusted and may just be from some sort of rail vehicle, particularly as the gauge is precisely 60cm. There are no indications of manufacture on any of the components.

The wagon is clearly intended as a

memorial to the coal mining industry in Coppull, one of the most northerly outposts of the Wigan coalfield. The last colliery in the area, Chisnall Hall, closed in 1967. No information is provided on site about either the provenance of the wagon or of the history of mining in the area.

Donald Brooks

Thurns Head Quarry, Whitworth, Lancashire (2' 6" gauge – reputedly)

Visit 24/07/20. The remains of many industrial railways, mines and quarries survive on the moors around Rossendale and offer good opportunities for exploration, especially now that more populous sites are largely closed.

This quarry, operated by Robert Jackson & Sons, was well established by the 1840s, producing building stone from the Halsingden Flags. The tramway opened around 1880 with horse and loco working but surprisingly is not mentioned in two books on the area – *Railways & Mineral Tramways of*



Springfield Park, Coppull: the replica coal tub. Photo: Donald Brooks

Rossendale, by Bernard Roberts (Oakwood 1974) and *North West Railway Walks*, by Robin H Martin (Sigma 1990), and though the identity of the loco is unknown its shed is evident. The route is virtually unchanged since it closed around 1903-08, and runs ¾ mile from Fold Head staith to the quarry and a further mile to Ab Top quarry.

The site is open access and a marked trail follows tramway routes in the quarry. Stone was loaded onto wagons with removable bodies, carrying 4 tons, which were worked by gravity to the staith, where they were lifted by crane onto carts to be taken down a steep and narrow lane to Broadley station. A loco then hauled the empty wagons back to the quarry, reputedly one at a time because of the steep gradient. The line followed the sunken High Barn Lane, crossing it partway on a stone and timber bridge.

After the quarry closed, the staith was used from about 1908 to load coal brought by a 300yd inclined tramway from a drift mine, Hall Royd Colliery. This was operated by the Watson family for a few years, and some earthworks remain of the pithead and incline. The incline was probably a



Thurns Head Quarry: (above left) The stone abutment of this bridge carrying the track over High Barn Lane incorporates a sheep creep. The staith was beyond the house at top right.

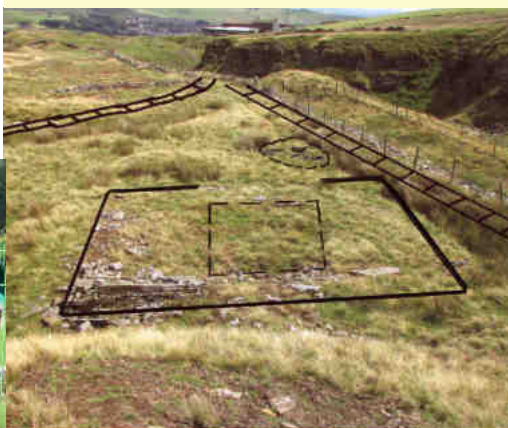
(Above right) The trackbed climbs away from High Barn Lane towards the quarry.

(Below left) Remains of the loco shed and pit, beyond which are the ash and clinker pile, dug over by rabbits, route into the quarry on the right and to Ab Top quarry to the left.

(Below right) Colliery tramway bridge abutment at Fold Head.

(Map) Colliery tramway in 1908. The quarry tramway route to the same staith is shown on the right.

Photos: Mike Swift



plateway with chain haulage, an almost universal system in this area.

Mike Swift

5T at Dingle, County Kerry, Ireland.

Report 27/07/20. A new sign to commemorate the Tralee and Dingle Railway has been erected by the main road into Dingle. It has been laser-cut from steel using the drawing of Hunslet 2-6-2T 5T from "The Dingle Train" by David Rowlands et al. The photo (below), kindly taken by Tom Fox, shows what a magnificent job they have made of it. Although the Plateway book has been long out of print, hopefully there should soon be a new book on the Tralee and Dingle by



Michael Whitehouse. Sadly, the real 5T is still languishing in pieces in Blennerville, but this sign is fitting tribute to a wonderful railway that most non-enthusiasts have never heard of.

David Pinniger



OBITUARY

Andrew Wilson

30th October, 1937 to 19th July, 2020

It is with deep regret that we have to announce the death of Andrew Wilson, an active member of the Society for very many years.

Andrew was a professional civil engineer who after early training in his home town of Nottingham and a period in London then spent a lot of his working life in the Middle East. This included 20 years with the consulting engineers Binnie & Partners on the Cairo Waste Water Project and a further period in Kuwait where as a result of Saddam Hussein's invasion in 1990 he spent nine months in a Kuwaiti Prison.

His active involvement with the narrow gauge began when he joined the Festiniog Society in its earliest days but by 1957 he had transferred to the Talylyn. He remained an active TR member to the end of his life. His contributions there were many and varied, although inevitably primarily on the civil engineering side, notably the restoration of the weigh bridge area at Towyn Wharf. He also put his vast knowledge of the industrial narrow gauge scene to good effect by actively negotiating for and acquiring sundry useful items of rolling stock and trackwork for the TR.

I first met Andrew at the 1966 annual Brockham Museum Dinner and we became immediate friends making numerous industrial railway visits together in the early years. After his work took him overseas we lost touch for a while but after his retirement and move to Leeds he became an active member of the Yorkshire Area and a frequent visitor to my home. We spent much time working together on research matters of mutual interest, particularly early internal combustion locomotives and his deep research into Irish industrial railways.

In recent years he visited all parts of Ireland frequently, usually in the company of his friend Andrew Waldron, as they worked on producing two comprehensive handbooks for the Industrial Railway Society covering the Republic and Northern Ireland respectively. Sadly neither volume had been completed at the time of Andrew's death but hopefully both will be completed and in print before too long.

Andrew was a quiet, very reserved person who shunned the limelight so that few enthusiasts will be aware of how large his contribution to our hobby was. One little known fact is that during the late 1960's he several times repaid in a practical way the hospitality shown by companies to visiting industrial railway enthusiasts. Hearing on a visit that they needed additional locomotives he would later put them in touch with another company with redundant locomotives for sale, resulting in at least three such locomotive moves to my knowledge and there may have been more. Most notable was the brick makers Flettons Ltd near Peterborough who had a large fleet of Simplex locomotives all in poor condition. Andrew informed them of eight ex Army Motor Rail diesels in near new condition at a dealer in London. They immediately bought the lot and several years later when the rail system closed they in return allowed Andrew and a group of us to strip the scrap locomotives of any useful parts entirely free of charge.

I will greatly miss Andrew's friendship, practical help and advice as I am sure will his many friends at Towyn. The Society extends our deepest sympathy to his brother Edmund on his very sad loss.

Andrew Neale



Andrew Wilson (right) is smiling as he rides the C&LR group's replica C&LR track cycle at Dromod, Ireland in 2016. Photo: Andrew Waldron

John Peers & Neill Clayton add: It was with great sadness that we heard of Andrew Wilson's passing on the 19th July.

Our picture (below) shows him at Ripon in August 2018 trying out *Wasp*.

Andrew and Pete Nicholson visited Bolton Fell peat works in 1969. They "spotted" all the locos and then heard a noise like a wasp out on the moss. It was the fireman returning to the works on a speeder he had built using a lawnmower engine, motorcycle gearbox and an iron bed frame, on wheels from scrap wagons.

Andrew bought it for £10 there and then and has since taken it to many railways, including the Bala Lake, Brecon Mountain, Eclipse Peat in Somerset, Oldberrow Lt Rly, Ayle Colliery and, more recently, to Quirks and Curiosities.





MR 11001 with train at Amberley. Photo: Hugh Smith



Apedale: (above) Lindow Moss in 1987.
(Below) The locomotives after arrival at Apedale.
Photos: Simon Lomax / MRT

Amberley Narrow Gauge and Industrial Railway Collection, Amberley Museum and Heritage Centre, New Barn Road, Amberley. BN18 9LT (various gauges)

Report 08/08/20. I visited Amberley yesterday. At present you have to book online and select your arrival time slot: 10:00 to 11:30, 11:30 to 13:00 or 13:00 to 14:30. Having arrived you can stay all day if you wish; the museum closes at 16:30. Adult admission is £13.60.

The 2' gauge railway was running from Amberley to Brockham only, every 20 minutes until 16:00 with a break between 12:30 and 13:30. Motive power was MR 11001/1956 with ex-Lydd coach 384 and ex-Fauld coach 275. The Lydd coach had been fitted with removable partitions between the compartments so as to permit social distancing between groups; this being achieved in the Fauld coach by having two groups at opposite ends of the vehicle. Ex-Lydd coach 382 had also been fitted with partitions but was not in use on the day of my visit.

In Betchworth Hall were the 3' 2" gauge locomotives *Townsend Hook* (FJ 172L/1880) and *Monty* (O&K 7269/1936). *Redland* (O&K 6193/1937) was just inside the nearby tunnel (aka 'Lucky Strike Mine'). 1' 10" gauge Guinness 23 (Wm. Spence 1920) was in the annexe to the main exhibition hall with its transporter wagon outside.

In the exhibition hall were: 0-4-0 WT *Barbouilleur* (Decauville 1126/1947), EEDK 808/1931 ex-Post Office Railway, *Peldon* (Fowler 21295/1936), Hunslet 45913, MR 872/1918 (reb. as 3720), MR 10161/1950, an unidentified MR presumed to be 5863/1934, Wickham 3161 complete with tank target and Wickham 3403.

Because the Brockham to Cragside section of the railway was not in use, I was unable to see what was in the running shed.

Hugh Smith

Apedale Valley Light Railway, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs. (2' gauge)

The Moseley Railway Trust has recovered all of the remaining

locomotives, wagons and track from Great Britain's last peat works railway. The railway served workings on Lindow Moss, near Wilmslow. The works used a 2'0" gauge line ran from the peat fields to the works, where the peat was tipped from the wooden wagons, processed, and then taken from site to be used for (amongst other uses) mushroom cultivation. At one time, such railways were used on many sites where peat was dug, but increasing environmental concerns have effected a cessation of such activities.

Phil Robinson, Chairman of the Moseley Railway Trust, said: "I would like to thank Croghan Peat for their support with this project, and also the Trust members who negotiated and planned this operation. I would also like to recognise all the Trust members who turned out, in baking heat, to recover the equipment from Lindow Moss".

Press Release

Following an agreement with the site owners, Croghan Peat, Moseley Railway Trust (MRT) members recovered on June 24th and 25th all the surviving railway equipment and track from the former peat railway on Lindow Moss, near Wilmslow, Cheshire. Lindow Moss made national news in 1984 when the well preserved remains of an Iron Age man (known as Lindow Man) were discovered there. These are now an exhibit in the British Museum. The Wilmslow peat system was the last surviving peat bog railway in Great Britain and had been closed and mostly dismantled for some years.

In view of current Covid-19 restrictions the recovery operation had to be very carefully planned with those involved being restricted to a small number of the younger MRT members working over two days. In total the team



recovered three locomotives, four wagon under frames, two points and a few track panels. Of the two Lister four wheel diesel locomotives, the last working one, Lister 50888/1960, had been rebuilt some years ago with a large three cylinder Lister engine and hydraulic transmission. Its companion, Lister 52528/1962, had been heavily cannibalised to keep the other running and all that survives is the frame, incomplete non original engine, three ballast weights, one coupler block, some brake parts and a non-original canopy. In view of the obituary to our late member Andrew Wilson elsewhere in this issue it is worth noting that this locomotive came here in 1968 from the closed Smithbrook Brickworks at Cranleigh, Surrey through the good offices of Andrew.

The Alan Keef locomotive, works number 4, was one of his earliest K12 machines built new for Wilmslow in November 1979 and the first to be fitted with full bodywork and cab. It was started up and given a last run along the remaining track before being moved to Apedale. The two Lister locomotives were moved to Apedale the previous day and both the working one and the Alan Keef machine have been successfully test run since arrival. The Wilmslow wagons were of an unusual design with plain wooden sides and it is planned to restore the four survivors to original condition.

Andrew Neale

The Moseley Railway Trust has launched a public appeal for funds to assist with the construction of a new building to protect the Trust's collection of narrow gauge railway rolling stock.

One of the first actions which the Moseley Railway Trust undertook when it came onto the Apedale site was the construction of a large storage building. This was completed in 2008. Since then the collection has grown significantly. We have seen not only new items arrive onto the site, but also the restoration of items which we now wish to keep protected from the weather. In particular, the Trust has a notable collection of World War One wagons, many of which are wooden-bodied.

It has therefore been decided that a second large storage shed will be built on the site. The shed will have four tracks within, and will measure approximately 30 feet by 85 feet. Tracks will be provided for 2'0", 2'6" and 3'0" gauge vehicles. Full planning permission for the development has been granted, and the Trust is now close to placing a contract with a preferred supplier for the work.

The images give an idea of the appearance of the building. Note that the location on the Apedale site has changed, as have the dimensions, since they were created.

The building will cost approximately £85,000, and there are also associated costs, such as groundworks and track work to reach the shed. The Trust is therefore seeking public donations to assist with this cost. All donations can be made through the Trust's website at www.avlr.org.uk.

Press Release

A date for the enthusiast diary is 3rd & 4th October, when we will have our Diesel Event. We are hoping we will have an extremely special loco on site for the diesel event - an ex-British Rail diesel loco which, we feel confident, very few have got "crossed off". Keep watching for an announcement on this one. Full timetable details etc. are available at www.avlr.org.uk
Press Release

Bala Lake Railway, Llanuwchllyn, Gwynedd. (1' 11 5/8" gauge)

Initial services after lockdown commenced on Thursday 9th July following the latest Visit Wales announcements. As it turned out, we were the first railway in Wales to re-open after the lock-down. After a tentative start on the 9th July, passenger numbers for the first operational month have proved to be distinctly healthy and, in effect, by the last week not far off those of July five years ago.

The first train post-lockdown departed on the 9th July, and was applauded away by a company director with the 'Ivo Peters' Bentley in attendance, to

add a certain gravitas and sophistication to the occasion as it was the first heritage departure in Wales. As General Manager David Jones commented: "We wanted to have a 'soft' opening ahead of the summer holidays. We are all in such uncharted territory and it is important not only to exercise safe practice but also to ensure that everyone feels confident with the new safety measures and procedures". David also added that the BLR was particularly grateful to the Welsh Government for 'life-saving' support during the crisis. The BLR was among several heritage lines to benefit greatly from a grant by the National Lottery, in this case £40,000.

In the meantime, our locomotive fleet of Hunslets is running with three, and we currently alternate between *George B* (680/1898) and *Maid Marian* (822/1903). While *Winifred* (364/1885) is entirely serviceable, it is currently having a well-earned rest in the Heritage Centre which has been painted and cleaned, ready for new visitors. Even our reserve diesel, *Chilmark* (RH 194771/1939), has found a new home there for the time being.

Of the other two steam locos, *Alice* (780/1902) is awaiting the fitment of its new boiler which is part of its ten-year strip down so it will be quite a while before it graces the rails again. *Holy War* (779/1902) is in the middle of its ten-year overhaul and is down to its bare chassis in the workshop. *Holy War's* overhaul still has a way to go. The loco's boiler remains at the Severn Valley Railway.

4wDM Hunslet (2024/1940) is back on its wheels and the cab sides have been repaired and painted in Ashford Olive. New dumb buffers have been fitted; these being fashioned from a lineside tree that was felled a couple of years ago.

The BLR Trust is working away on the big extension project lest it fall out of focus because of the pandemic. However, behind the scenes, work has continued apace on the lengthy preparation of the planning application for the extension into Bala town and it is hoped that this will be ready for submission by late autumn. Being a new railway formation and being built in such an environmentally sensitive area, this application is incredibly

detailed and involved, and the current cost is standing at £140,000. All the signs coming back from the consultant engineers who are working on this are that, providing we jump through all the hoops and tick all the boxes, then permission should be forthcoming.

With the new main station situated just off the High Street and visitors starting their journey from there, the railway draws itself, the town and the lake much closer together and by doing this, Bala becomes a place of destination rather than a town just to pass through".

July 2020 Update website – August 2020

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

Due to the ongoing uncertainty surrounding the Covid 19 epidemic we have continued to carry out detailed reviews for future events at the railway during 2020. Although we had been hoping to re-open in August with our Classic Car Day, we very much regret that the decision has been taken to cancel this and all other open days for the remainder of 2020.

Our primary concern is for the safety of visitors, volunteers and staff and we feel that, despite the slight easing of lockdown, the risks are just too great.

As a result of the limitations and restrictions that would be necessary, we feel visitors would not benefit from the full facilities we would normally have available. We hope that everyone will understand the dilemma we face and appreciate that to close for the remainder of the year was not an easy decision to make

Website

Cavan & Leitrim Railway, Dromod, Co. Leitrim, Republic of Ireland (3' gauge)

Avonside loco *Nancy* (1547/1908) was in steam on the Cavan and Leitrim Railway on 3rd August. This marks the first such steaming of a non-miniature railway in Ireland since the Covid-19 pandemic. Railway manager Micheal Kennedy explained: "We are required to do annual checks on all our locos and rolling stock, so we took the opportunity to steam *Nancy* and do some refreshers for our volunteers". Social distancing was observed at all times and the site is currently closed to members of the public.

The railway is currently closed to protect our volunteers. This has meant there is no revenue from museum

Cavan & Leitrim Railway: *Nancy* on test at Dromod on 3rd August. Photo: Nigel Billett



visits. Darragh Connolly outlined that: "We need approximately €10,500 per year for fixed bills such as insurance and maintenance costs, we are so close to hitting our target, please give what you can". The railway has successfully fundraised over €7,500 and there is less than €3,000 to go. Those that wish to donate any amount can do so here: <https://cavanandleitrim.wixsite.com/home/covid> or they can email dromdorailway@gmail.com for further information.

Press Release

Now that *Nancy* has been restored to steam, we at the Cavan and Leitrim Railway now move to our next appeal!

Instead of just a loco or carriage, why not both? We aim to restore our Kerr Stuart 0-4-2T *Dromad* (a Brazil class loco built as works number 3024 in 1916) and former Tralee and Dingle Light Railway 3rd class carriage 7T (built by the Bristol Wagon and Carriage Co. in 1890).

This group was originally conceived with a Tralee and Dingle theme, so this is very appropriate. Also *Dromad* was rebuilt in the style of Tralee and Dingle Light Railway number 4 (which was a double ended 0-4-2T) complete with T&D style cab and cowcatchers. The consist would be reminiscent of the Castlegregory branch train.

Those who wish to support this appeal can find out more information here: <https://cavanandleitrim.wixsite.com/home/vintage-train>

It is hoped subject to funding that we could potentially have both *Nancy* and *Dromad* in steam together. This would represent the first time two narrow gauge engines would be in steam together in the Republic of Ireland, since the closure of the Cavan and Leitrim.

Dromad is in the UK and work is about to progress on its restoration to steam, while 7T is currently at assessment stage. This will be the next major narrow gauge restoration to take place on the C&L if not Ireland.

Facebook

Corris Railway, Station Yard, Corris, Mid Wales. SY20 9SH (2' 3" gauge)

Construction work on the new steam locomotive for the Corris Railway "Falcon" number 10 has taken some significant steps forward as the "bottom half" at Alan Keef Ltd near Ross-on-Wye continues, with work on the valve and running gear ongoing.

During May the stainless steel smokebox was formed at Barnshaws' Plate and Section Rollers in Bilston with a section cut from its front which will act as the baffle plate behind the smokebox door in due course.

The smokebox door "dish" was produced in June by Purdie Dished

Ends of Bradford. This extended the links between the West Yorkshire city and the Corris as the boiler for number 10 was built by Israel Newton at an early stage of the new locomotive project. This was prior to the relocation of Newton's to the Peak District.

The smokebox and door have cost over £1,400 to produce but the construction of the smokebox will allow the boiler to be moved with it to Keef's workshop when the work currently in progress there is completed. Without the smokebox the boiler could not be erected in the frames.

In another part of the project work on CAD drawings for the saddle tank and cab has been progressing. The cab's appearance will resemble that of the originals carried by the 1878 built "Falcon" trio of engines of the Corris but will stand higher to accommodate 21st Century footplate crews.

Press Release

Having completed the wall of stone filled gabion baskets during the long spell of dry weather in May and early June, the return of wetter conditions had left the Corris Railway looking for another sunny period in order to further advance work on the embankment south of Maespoeth Junction.

The embankment will be made up of stone, slate, earth and some geotextile material and when complete will be 170 metres long and up to 6 metres high in places. It will have steep sides to meet flood amelioration requirements in the Dulas Valley. Construction therefore will have to be by professional contractors using heavy plant and machinery. This will use the estimated 12,000 – 15,000 tonnes of material obtained from Dolgellau but will still leave some work to be done. There is a risk that if the construction is not able to advance the Corris may lose the material, which will be frustrating as if work resumes this phase of the job can be done in around one working week.

There has been some optimistic talk among enthusiasts of having the embankment complete and the running line extended along its top by the end of 2020 but the Corris is keen to point out that whilst this is not impossible (although potentially further complicated by Covid-19 and possible consequent limitations for volunteer workers), it will certainly not happen without enough money being available. Even with all the earthworks in place ballast, sleepers and track fixings have to be purchased. A complete 10 metre length of the new track will cost £795, so that work will absorb around £13,500. The railway has a supply of rail in secure storage.

However current donors can be assured that all money received during this stage of the Southern Extension Project will go into materials and construction. The Corris wants to be running its trains over a longer distance

in the Dulas Valley as soon as possible. And track has already been laid, and used, on the northern part of embankment that has previously been constructed.

Press Release

The Corris Railway has reluctantly had to join the list of lines that will not be re-opening for normal passenger trains in 2020 due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. However with the easing of restrictions in Wales, the volunteer workforce has been able to progress various projects on the line to further improve the Railway ahead of 2021.

The problems with reopening are threefold. The recreation of the bogie coach carriages from the Corris' first incarnation has led to an internal layout of open saloons accessed by a shared entrance in the centre of the vehicle. Possibilities of social distancing are further reduced by the tight loading gauge.

Social distancing is also a consideration with the talk and sheds tour which is offered to passengers arriving at Maespoeth Junction, and for passengers in the shop and refreshment area at Corris. During wet weather, not exactly unknown in the Dulas Valley, passengers tend to use this as a waiting area until the train arrives.

However the volunteer workforce has pressed ahead with various projects. Construction of the new shelter for the heritage waggon shelter at Maespoeth Jnc. is underway and once the waggons are in their new home more space in the carriage shed will be available. Carriage number 23 is approaching completion and should be available for traffic in 2021, assuming no new restrictions on work inside the shed are imposed. Clerestory roofed carriage number 24, which will eventually bring 1st Class travel to the Corris for the first time since 1930, is also progressing on both metal and wood working fronts.

Between Corris and Maespoeth work has also been carried out with vegetation clearance and track maintenance being undertaken.

Donations towards the Corris General Fund, which will assist with the continuing costs during the suspension of operations and their eventual resumption, and also for the works on the ongoing Southern Extension can be made via Paypal at www.corris.co.uk

Press Release

Following some co-operation over low-loader movements the boiler and smokebox for the new Corris Railway steam engine "Falcon" number 10 have left storage and display in the carriage shed at Maespoeth Junction for the workshops of Alan Keef Ltd near Ross-on-Wye.

It was intended that this phase of the

new build project would take place once the construction of the “bottom half” of the locomotive was complete and with this point now approaching it was fortuitous that there was a lorry movement looking for a return load due in Mid Wales on August 12th and 13th. The lorry was bringing Talylyn carriage number 17, one of two survivors of the original Corris fleet (the other is an exhibit in the Railway Museum at Corris), back from overhaul at Haltwhistle to Tywyn.

Andy Cooper of the Corris Railway Society was contacted about any item that might require movement and it was quickly agreed that the displayed components should make the move, with Corris volunteers acting quickly to shunt them from the carriage shed to the collection point ready for their onward journey to Herefordshire.

As always the date of the entry of number 10 into traffic in the Dulas Valley and on the extended section of running line depends on the rate of fund raising. Online donations can be made via www.corris.co.uk or cheques payable to Corris Railway can be sent to Peter Guest, 38 Underwood Close, Callow Hill, Redditch, Worcestershire, B97 5YS.

Press Release

Crowle Peatland Railway, Crowle, North Lincolnshire (3' gauge)

Report 17/06/20. Our 5 ton 4WDM Simplex is now a wheeled and braked chassis. These jobs never quite go as expected, but we got there.

Facebook

Donegal Railway Heritage Centre, The Old Station House, Tyrconnell Street, Donegal, Republic of Ireland (3' gauge)

It has just been announced by Donegal Railway Heritage Centre that it has been able to secure the return of Donegal's most famous steam engine, 2-6-4T *Drumboe* (Nasmyth, Wilson & Co. 829/1907) to Donegal Town. Early in 2019 a campaign was launched to raise the funding to take it back, and after receiving donations from across the island of Ireland and further afield, including from Graham Forbes (grandson of CDR Manager Henry Forbes), The North West of Ireland Railway Society and many others, it was Donegal Local Development CLG who came in with the main part of the €100k project with a grant of €65k, leaving now only a small amount remaining to raise.

Mark McDaid, Chair of Donegal Railway Heritage Centre stated: “We are delighted to secure the funding for the bulk of this project to deliver this milestone heritage and tourism project for Donegal. As well as returning *Drumboe* to presentation state, and transporting it back to Donegal Town, the funding will also be spent on restructuring the site at the front, building a new platform, building a



Donegal Railway Heritage Centre: (above left) Donegal Railway Heritage Centre *Drumboe* in County Donegal Joint Railway Committee days.

(Above right) *Drumboe* in current condition.

(Below) Launch of the *Drumboe* appeal on 23rd July 2020. Laura Martin (LEADER Project Officer - Donegal Local Development CLG), Molly Reynolds (DRHC), Danny McNamee (DRHC), Mark McDaid (Chair - DRHC), Richard McCarthy (Architect - McMullan Assoc.), Jim McBride (DRHC) & Niall McCaughan (Manager - DRHC). Photos: Donegal Railway Heritage Centre



canopy over the engine and other stock, lighting it as well as work to the front of the station. We would like to thank Donegal Local Development CLG and all of our benefactors who have made this ambitious, but much needed project, possible. *Drumboe* will become the centrepiece of Donegal's railway museum in Donegal Town, making it a landmark tourism project drawing locals and visitors alike to the region, thus making it more sustainable.”

The landmark project will take up to 12 months to complete. The museum will continue to operate during this time. If members of the public wish to contribute towards the remaining small shortfall to cover some additional work on the project, they can do so by simply clicking the button below or through the website [at http://donegalrailway.com/donate/](http://donegalrailway.com/donate/) or by contacting the museum directly. For more information, contact Donegal Railway Heritage Centre at Tel: (074) 9722655, email info@donegalrailway.com or check out our Facebook page.

Press Release

Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways, Porthmadog, Gwynedd (1'11½" gauge)

The “Large England” class 0-4-0 *Welsh Pony* (George England 1867) returned to steam for the first time in 80 years on Saturday, 27th June 2020. Due to the restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, the launch was broadcast on a live stream via the

Ffestiniog Railway's Facebook page.

There were three separate broadcasts during the day: 10.00hrs – The lighting-up; 13.00hrs – The first whistle and 16.00hrs – *Welsh Pony* moving under its own steam.

Welsh Pony subsequently joined the locomotive fleet working the Ffestiniog's post-lockdown services to Tan y Bwlch with the heritage compartment coaches.

Gerry Balding via Inside Motion

On 20th July we welcomed visitors back to the railway, for the first time since March, as we launch the Ffestiniog Railway's reopening service from Porthmadog to Tan-y-Bwlch.

While we are rolling back the mists, we are also rolling back the years on our new services, our heritage carriages are once again coming to the fore, running to Tan-y-Bwlch much like they did in the 1960s.

Our reopening service will only operate on the Ffestiniog Railway, from Porthmadog to Tan-y-Bwlch. This new service will run daily, with six round-trips per day.

Website

Report 12/08/20. Thanks to the incredible work and continuous support of our staff, volunteers and supporters, we are delighted to announce that the Welsh Highland Railway soon joined the Ffestiniog Railway in steaming once again!

On the 18th August we welcomed visitors back to the Welsh Highland Railway as we launch our new service from Caernarfon to Beddgelert.

This is another significant development in the reopening of our railway and we would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their phenomenal support during these difficult times. Since the Ffestiniog Railway reopened, generous donations, offers of voluntary service and well-wishing messages have remained a constant theme. This unwavering support has played a crucial role in the reopening of the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways.

Inside Motion

Fintown Railway, Fintown Co. Donegal, Republic of Ireland
F94 FR90 (3' gauge)

Report 17/06/20. It is with great regret that we announce that the Fintown Railway will remain closed for the 2020 season due to the situation surrounding Covid-19.

We promise that we will be back in 2021 and we look forward to seeing you all then. Until we meet again, stay safe and look after yourselves and your families.

Facebook

Great Bush Railway, Tinkers Park, Hadlow Down, East Sussex TN22 4HS (2' gauge)

Report 03/08/20. I went to the Trains Plus event yesterday which included the bus rally. There was a good crowd and the railway was running a passenger service using one coach topped & tailed by *Wolf* (MR 7469/40) and *RJ Brown* (RH 382820/1955). 0-6-0WT *Sao Domingos* (O&K 11784/1928) was not in steam.

Irvine Cresswell

Halesworth to Southwold Narrow Gauge Railway Society, Halesworth, Suffolk (3' gauge)

For several years the co-Chairmen have been looking for a battery electric locomotive, which would be entirely environmentally friendly, thus scotching the objections to so-called "dirty and noisy" coal-fired steam and diesel. Research found a three-foot-gauge quarry loco in Buckinghamshire, and contact was made with the owner just in case he was interested in parting with it. Amazingly, he was, and after seeing it, and driving it, the co-Chairmen have bought it. It is a Greenwood and Batley 4WBE loco, complete and running, apart from not having traction batteries (it runs currently with 4 12-volt car batteries in series, being 48-volt), and it was

Great Bush Railway: (from top right)

1. *Aminal* (MR 5361/1933).
 2. *Sao Domingos*.
 3. *Wolf* on the passenger train.
 4. *RJ Brown* on the passenger train.
- (Below) 2' gauge tram car from the former electric tramway at Eastbourne.
Photos: Irvine Cresswell





The Greenwood & Batley 4wBE locomotive being unloaded at Halesworth.
Photo: Halesworth to Southwold Narrow Gauge Railway Society

delivered to our workshop on 20th June (with distancing, and avoiding the house, as per agreement).

We also have some spares and extras. It is not of course a replacement for our RFS loco, which is a true passenger loco with air brakes and lots of power; this is a shunter, and can work on very lightweight track with sharp curves (about 5½ yards radius) but it will certainly be very useful as we move towards a working railway, silent and emission-free.

If it's possible to arrange a trailer for it (it weighs 2 tonnes without batteries), then we may be able to take it to various sites and run it on the new track as we lengthen this, although access to many sections will still be hard.

It worked in Northamptonshire – quite possibly alongside our own Wagon 1, and the Southwold Railway Trust's Peckett 0-6-0ST *Scaldwell*. It's also very nice to drive! We couldn't get it onto Siding 1, as there wasn't room for the trailer, so it'll have to be moved at some stage either by lifting, or by driving over curved track panels – an exercise in geometry.

Halesworth's Happening, June 2020

Hayling Seaside Railway, Eastoke Corner, Hayling Island PO11 9HL (2' gauge)

Report 18/06/20. Our volunteers have got stuck into their next project on the track: finishing off the trackwork in the yard at Beachlands station. It has taken several steps of changing the layout at Beachlands, as part of moving the shed to Eastoke.

Two of the old points have been taken out, to be replaced with one spare from Eastoke with the opportunity taken at the same time to re-align the run round loop taken. The siding will be re-laid, connecting up with what's left of the old shed lane 3. While the new point was being spiked down, rails and sleepers were laid down where the old points were.

At the end of a long working day, things were already starting to look better.

Facebook

Report 24/06/20. Work has continued on the run round loop at Beachlands, finishing off the work on the loop started last week. As well as making a start on reconnecting the siding, the run round loop is now complete and ready for trains to start running again soon. While the siding is the next job to finish off at Beachlands.

With the last set of rails cut to length and fitted, the rails were jacked up to the right level and the sleepers packed with ballast. On the new point, the blades were freed up and the point lever connected up. Rails for the siding have been set up, to work out the alignment of the siding. The old lane 3/4 points were dug out and the point slewed to the new alignment. These are being left in place, as a spare for future use.

Facebook

Hollycombe Quarry Railway, Hollycombe Steam in The Country, Liphook, Hampshire, GU30 7LP (2' gauge)

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Trustees have decided that it is not possible to open Hollycombe to the public this year. We plan to reopen for Easter 2021 for our 50th Anniversary year.

Website

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

Report 25/07/20. A carriage which once ran on the Manx Northern Railway has returned to Douglas.

MNR coach number 6, which became Isle of Man Railway coach number 45, was craned onto the tracks this week. Held in private ownership, the carriage's arrival was a surprise for railway enthusiasts. The carriage, which has been stored in the north of the island along with a locomotive that is also privately owned, has been restored to its current condition.

Railway volunteer Mike Buttell told the Manx Independent the history of the carriage which was delivered new to the island in 1879. It is a third-class carriage with guards/brake compartment that was built by Swansea Carriage and Wagon Company, which supplied all of the original MNR carriages for the opening of the line. Restored privately to varnished teak finish as supplied new, this finish was quickly abandoned by the MNR for painted purple lake and off white as this was easier to keep presentable.

He added: 'One of only a handful of survivors, another coach body remains on island at Douglas Station while one is at the Southwold Railway and two more are part of the Rampton Trust Collection in the UK. The unusual six-wheel arrangement known as the "Cleminson" system, used three sets of independent trucks for the wheels. Passenger accommodation would

have originally been bare wooden seats, lit in the evenings by oil lamps placed into holders through the roof.'

It is believed the carriage may be heading to the railway museum in Port Erin, although nothing has yet been confirmed.

Manx Independent

Report 05/08/20. Details have today been released of proposed bridges which will reconnect sections of the former steam railway line between St John's and Kirk Michael.

The exciting project follows the recent successful completion of improvements to the Heritage Trail, linking the Island's east and west coasts between Peel and Douglas, and will extend the route a further 7 miles north from St John's. Construction on the capital scheme is expected to get under way later this year, and is forecast to cost £1.3m.

Bridges will be reinstated at Glen Wyllin, Glen Mooar and across the A1 near Ballaleece, St John's, and will provide accessibility for walkers, runners, disabled users, cyclists and horse riders.

In addition to the replacement bridges, the surface of the trail will be upgraded, making it available all year round and stimulating long-term health benefits by encouraging people to become more active on a regular basis.

IoM Government website

Leadhills & Wanlockhead Railway, Leadhills, South Lanarkshire ML12 6XS (2' gauge)

Report 01/07/20. Regretfully due to the current ongoing situation with the Covid-19 Virus threat and all the knock-on effects, we have taken the decision to protect our volunteers and visitors so with immediate effect we are closed until at least Easter 2021. We will provide further updates when we are able to. Sorry for any inconvenience this may cause.

We are very sorry, but there will also be no Santa Event weekend in 2020.

Facebook

Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway, Skegness Water Leisure Park, Lincolnshire PE25 1JF (2' gauge)

The Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway announces, with regret, that it will not resume services for the summer 2020 operating season because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Updates will be posted on www.lclr.co.uk

Press Release

Six droplights have had a first fit in Ashover coach 1 on the 'easy' side where most of the runners still exist. The frames need to be stored to

prevent warping; being held in the original guides is the best place. Work on the west side has started. Some 1960s material has to be cut away at the top of each window, not an easy task, but it keeps all the frames the same size. Surprisingly three of the twelve side runners still exist, so not every support was removed when the coach was turned into a pavilion.

Having decided not to run a service this year, attention was drawn to some bad woodworm infestation in the 'new' seat runners, feet and brackets in Ashover coach 2. The immediate decision was to remove the infected parts out of the vehicle and dispose of them. The dilemma is what to do now. A study of the seats in Ashover coach 4 at the Golden Valley Light Railway (Butterley) has revealed nothing too difficult to remake; the 4mm plywood can be laser cut to the pattern. We do not have to change them all at once, but we will have to replace the affected parts with something for next year.

The floor of the Nocton coach has been removed at one end to investigate the state of the frame and bottom of the woodwork.

Smokebox July 2020

Manx Electric Railway, Onchan, Isle of Man (3' gauge)

Winter permanent way renewals took place at Baldromma Crossing, Groudle Viaduct and to the landside track at Port Jack. The summer work currently (May 2020) consists of re-railing at Half-Way and a return to the Groudle to Eskadale section, to extend the renewals that were completed prior to the start of the season. The Garey crossing at Glen Mona is to be replaced due to serious ride quality issues and wear.

Works were suspended for a time, but restarted as soon as the lockdown restrictions on construction work were eased. The teams operate closely observing strict Covid-19 distancing and control protocols. The track in the vicinity of Ballagorry is scheduled to be replaced in the short term.

In addition to the renewal of 3km of overhead line, pole painting and refurbishment, Belle Vue substation has been upgraded with the replacement of the automatic switchgear which was supplied in the 1960s by Bertram Thomas Ltd. of Hulme, Manchester. The final substation to receive replacement equipment will be Ballagorry, which will bring the rolling programme to an end.

Manx Transport Review 98

Report 10/08/20. The Minister for the Department of Infrastructure was interviewed on Manx Radio news on Friday 07/08/20 and seemed to suggest, (although without figures to justify this) that for reasons of cost the Snaefell Mountain Railway cannot run this year.

The Committee of the Manx Electric Railway Society has this morning unanimously voted to transfer £9,000 to the Railways to permit them to operate the Snaefell Mountain Railway for three weeks for the 125th Anniversary Celebrations. We believe that £9,000 will be more than enough cover the costs of 4 weeks operation starting on the 125 Anniversary (21.08.20). It would be 15 days operation for 4 men if the forecast is bad and 6 men if the forecast is good. With 6 staff in every day that's just 50 passengers to break even, a tram full. The weather is improving and there is good reason to believe that this will work.

The £9000 will be a backstop. If the trams run and do not cost the Government money then it can be used to restore a tramcar which is presently out of use and accordingly the gift will be consistent with our objectives as a charity.

Manx Electric Railway Society press release

North Ings Farm Museum, Dorrington, Lincolnshire LN4 3QB (2' gauge)

Report 25/07/20. Delighted to report that after many years, the yard point is finally connected to the signal box. The box was erected in 1990, and two of the points transferred from hand levers to the box. The yard point remained on a throw-over lever, which always seemed to get in the way of road vehicle movements. Relaying the yard has allowed us to run the point rod under the main line to make the connection. Just need to remember to go to the box to change the point! Elsewhere, painting of the second carriage is underway, with another coat of brown for the metalwork.

The track gang completed re-ballasting the newly sleepers section and have removed the rails and are working on the second length

Facebook

Report 11/08/20. Having reviewed the current situation and the requirements for opening the museum, we have decided to remain closed for the remainder of the year. Our outdoor working parties will continue, and we will provide our regular updates on progress.

Hopefully, the situation will improve, allowing us to reopen in April 2021.

Facebook

Richmond Light Railway, Headcorn, Kent (2' gauge)

Report 29/07/20. With the lockdown easing and things beginning to open up the once weekly work-evenings have restarted for the small dedicated group of volunteers, with more progress being made in various areas.

Painting of the major bodywork of 0-4-

OST *Elin* (Hunslet 705/1899) continues off site, with the final stages being completed prior to fitment and lining out. Prep work has also begun on the saddle tank back in the workshop ahead of the painting procedure. Work on the new firebox is coming to a head so work to weld up the smoke box has begun in readiness of the boiler being completed for a steam test in the next 8 weeks.

The other focus is currently still on re-wheeling the chassis, the pins and bushes for the small motion have been replaced due to heavy wear and new pair of expansion links with die blocks have been made. The slide bar assembly is still being worked on while the mechanical lubricator has found a new home between the frames.

0-4-0T *Chuquitanta* (Couillet 810/1885) has been undergoing a deep clean and check-over over the pit, cleaning up of the valve-gear is now half way through. Slow and steady progress will see it have a full 'autumn clean' in time for the completion of the tender.

0-4-0VBT *Leary* (Fould/Collins 2010)'s drive chain assembly has had its modification finalised, with a trail run booked-in to check everything is satisfactory.

0-4-0WT *Jenny* (Jung 3175/1921) has been washed-out with the intention to forgo steaming it this year due to the cancellation of the railways major events.

No. 1 4wDH NG49 (BD 3701/1973) has been the only usable internal combustion engine over the lock down period so was treated to some basic servicing; it tends to dramatically seek attention if ignored or taken for granted!

The Lister Type 'R' rail truck has ended up requiring a complete strip down and rebuild. Amongst other work the frames have been stripped back and repainted, along with the engine and gearbox. Various new brake components have been manufactured and it shouldn't be long until it can start going back together.

Relaying of the main curve between the shed road and branch line was completed over the lockdown period with a day scheduled in to complete the final alignment, ballasting and tamping.

A new project has started on adding to and extending the wood yard area. An impressively tight right-hand turn-out acquired from the Hayling Seaside Railway has been spliced into the current siding formation to allow more storage for the small wagons. The long term plan is to increase the capacity of the covered storage in this area.

The tub wagon project has been completed! Two of the slate wagons are heading away to be restored off site.

Facebook

Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway, Sittingbourne, Kent. ME10 2DZ (2' 6" gauge)

Report 29/06/20: Work continues on the replacement boiler and firebox for 0-6-2T *Superb* (Bagnall 2624/1940). The tube ends in the firebox have been ground off. The smoke box was cut off as it is badly rusted and the door is more filler than plate. The internal motion has been removed for cleaning, rubbing down and repainting.

Facebook

Visit: 09/08/20. I popped into the Sittingbourne and Kemsley Light Railway today to see the last train of the day arrive at Sittingbourne Viaduct.

Trains were operating a special Covid timetable, with departures from Sittingbourne at 11:30, 13:15 and 15:00, returning from Kemsley Down at 12:30, 14:15 and 16:00. Services were operated by 0-4-2ST *Melior* (Kerr Stuart 4219/1924).

Jonathan James

Snowdon Mountain Railway, Llanberis Gwynedd LL55 4TT (2' 7 1/2")

Report 08/07/20. Snowdon Mountain Railway began welcoming visitors back this week as the mountain and the railway opens to the public following the three-month lockdown. With the Snowdonia National Park now fully open, trains started running again on

Friday 10th July with significant new Covid-19 measures in place.

The 2020 season sees the world's first rack and pinion hybrid locomotives joining the existing fleet. The railway took delivery of two new hybrid locomotives in June and commissioned them ready to enter service in July as replacements for two of the existing Hunslet diesel locomotives. The new locomotives have been given numbers 14 and 15 following on in order of the existing fleet (with the cautious absence of a number 13 locomotive). Both locomotives have already been named and the railway is holding a competition to see who can guess either names before they are revealed later in the month.

The new £1.1 million 'greener' locomotives, developed by Clayton Equipment Ltd, are driven by maintenance free electric motors which are powered by a traction battery and a diesel generator. Heritage Great Britain PLC, who operate the landmark destination, say the investment in the new technology follows a commitment to reduce its carbon footprint and improve the sustainability of the experience at the stunning Snowdonia National Park.

The locomotives are already exceeding the railway's expectations when compared to the design requirements. Shore power battery charging has

been added to the site's infrastructure to accommodate the overnight charging of the locomotives. New operating skills are needed for the drivers when compared with the existing locomotive fleet. 21st century operation and controls require a completely different driver skillset. Full commissioning and driver training is now underway. Not only are the new locomotives quieter with an improved driving environment and ergonomics, they'll also improve passenger comfort with a smoother journey.

The SMR Senior Engineering Manager Mike Robertshaw said; "I am extremely pleased with the project outcome, SMR showed considerable faith in Clayton's when placing the order and I have to say they have exceeded all my expectations so far, feedback from the staff involved in commissioning has been excellent. Clayton Equipment continued the build of the locomotives through the worst of the pandemic and although they suffered delays and staff shortages, the locomotives were delivered and the relationship with Claytons has been very good. I believe that these locomotives will ensure the future of SMR and enable future generations to enjoy the beauty of Snowdon."

At the end of the month new passenger pods will be delivered which will sit on the locomotive framework. This will allow up to 12 additional passengers to travel per trip with the



Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway: (Left) The railway is well known for much of its urban landscape, particularly the concrete Milton Regis viaduct which *Leader* (KS 926/1905) is seen crossing on 12th August. Photo: Chris Kennedy (Left below) *Leader* is seen here running towards the foot crossing in Milton Creek Country Park on 12th August. Photo: Chris Kennedy (Below) *Melior* at Sittingbourne Viaduct. Photo: Jonathan James





Snowdon Mountain Railway: One of the new hybrid locomotives built by Clayton Equipment Ltd on test. Photo: Snowdon Mountain Railway

added excitement of travelling on the locomotive.

For more information on Snowdon Mountain Railway visit www.snowdonrailway.co.uk or find us @SnowdonMR on Facebook and Twitter and snowdonmountainrailway on Instagram.

Press Release

We have also made the decision not to operate our heritage steam service for 2020 and we will instead focus on our traditional diesel service throughout the season. We have made significant internal adjustments to our carriages which enables safe segregation between compartments and reduced passenger numbers.

The destination for the remaining 2020 season will be Clogwyn Station, which is ¾ distance to the summit of Snowdon. The journey time to Clogwyn is approximately 45 minutes and passengers have a 30-minute stop-over at this unsheltered station. Please be aware that there are no facilities at Clogwyn, or on-board the trains.

Website

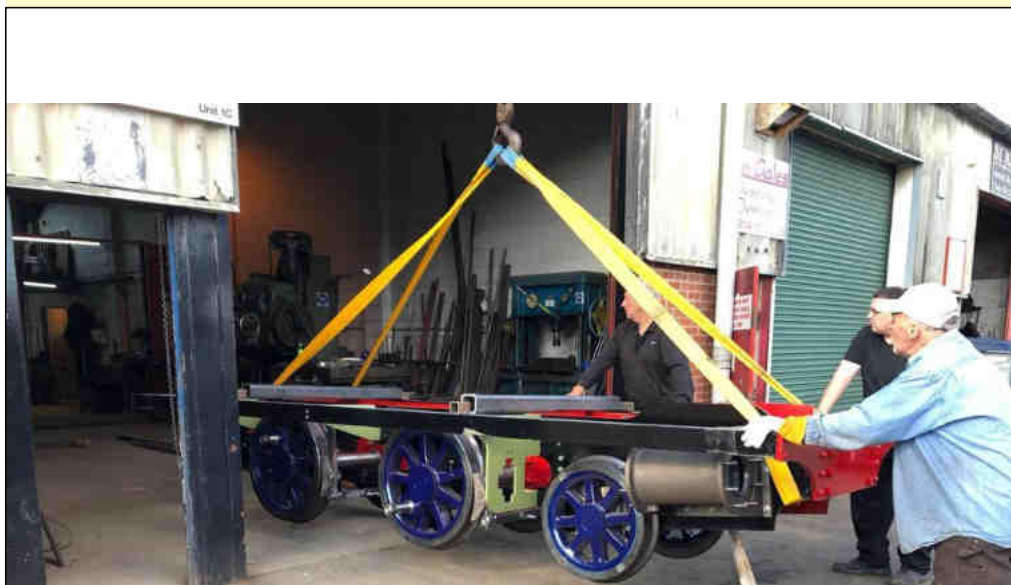
Southend Pier Railway, Western Esplanade, Southend, Essex SS1 1EE (3' gauge)

The final design for brand new trains for Southend's world famous pier has been revealed - with a green and cream colouring. Production of the new trains is already underway, and they are due to be in operation from next summer. The pier previously had green and cream trains which carried passengers along the landmark from 1949 to 1978. These were replaced by two diesel trains built by Severn Lamb that have been in operation since 1986. It was announced earlier this year that Severn Lamb had won the contract to design, build and install the new pier trains.

The new trains will be powered by lithium battery, and will feature state of the art audio visual equipment to enhance visitors' experience. Other key features of the new trains will include: increased capacity from 180 to 244 passengers, increased wheelchair capacity (a minimum of six spaces per train) with every carriage being wheelchair accessible, speakers and display monitors, on-board Wi-Fi, USB charging points, GPS triggered audio announcements, on-board CCTV, hearing loop system and braille driver alert.

Kevin Robinson, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council cabinet member for business, culture and tourism, said: "There was an incredible response to our call-out for views earlier this year, with nearly 3,500 comments made. A heritage green and cream livery and the modern nose cone proved the favourite and has therefore been selected. Southend-on-Sea is the longest pleasure pier in the world and one of the last to still include a railway, so it is great that the heritage and history of our beloved pier will be reflected in the new designs. I am delighted that we are now taking this

Southwold Railway Trust: The chassis of *Blyth* is turned the right way up at the workshop of North Bay Engineering Services on 21st July. Photo: North Bay Engineering Services / Southwold Railway Trust



design forward into production and cannot wait to see these new trains gracing the Pier in 2021. I hope they will instil a sense of pride and joy in local people and visitors too."

Southend Echo 31/07/20

Southwold Railway, Steamworks, Blyth Road, Southwold, Suffolk (3' gauge)

The trustees have decided not to open the Steamworks site to visitors until Easter 2021 as it would be hard to comply with social distancing regulations without a lot of safety upgrades.

Work continues on the Manx Northern carriage to give it a cosmetic makeover and to make it accessible for visitors.

Southwold Railway Trust Newsletter 105, August 2020

Some parts from the inside motion of 0-6-0ST *Scaldwell* (Peckett 1316/1913) are being painted. Technically it's not necessary to paint and finish these yet, as it'll be some time before they'll be needed again, but it's good for the soul to see an increasing pile of finished parts, and good for the public to be able to see the progress being made. By the time we can open properly again, we should have a healthy quantity of finished motion parts to display, and hopefully inspire interest in the project. It's fairly low-level at the moment, but work is ongoing, and as we cross some of the more pressing items off the list, we hope to devote more time to *Scaldwell*.

Progress continues on the replica 0-4-2T *Blyth* at North Bay Engineering Services as the photograph (below) shows.

A start has been made on insulating and lining out the new workshop in the engine shed extension. This will be for metalworking and engineering use, and will represent a major boon to the work on *Scaldwell*, for which conditions have been less than perfect thus far.

Website

News from Statfold Narrow Gauge Museum Trust & Railway, Tamworth, Staffs B79 0BU (2' gauge, 18" gauge, 3' gauges)

John Moore visited on 9th August

The Statfold Barn Railway successfully re-opened on 5th July 2020 with 'Cars in Strawberry Park'. Another 'Cars in Strawberry Park' was held on 26th July with the railway operating a one train service departing from the new station Strawberry Park. These trains were pulled by 0-4-0ST No. 19 *CSR Lautoka Co Ltd* (Hudswell Clarke 1056/1914) and 0-6-0PT *Alpha* (Hudswell Clarke 1172/1922) with the locomotive being changed at Statfold Junction.

As mentioned earlier a new station and loop has been built next to the event field Strawberry Park. This will mean on certain events like 'Road and Rail Festival' and the 'Giant Miniature Weekend' trains will be stop at Strawberry Park and not Oak Tree Halt with access to the museum being through the newly constructed tunnel entrance which leads directly into the Roundhouse.

In the Trust's Jack Lane Works, the 10-year overhaul of 0-4-2T *Saccharine* (Fowler 13355/1912) has commenced, with work also starting on 0-6-0 *Fiji* (Hudswell Clarke 1056/1914) with both boilers having been lifted from the frames. The 18-inch gauge 0-4-0T *Woolwich* (Avonside 1748/1916) has also been moved into the workshop with work now being carried out on the restoration of this locomotive.

The delayed March Enthusiast Day went ahead in August but over two days instead of the one to help with social distancing and to increase the comfort of the visitors on site. There were 13 engines in steam on the Saturday and 12 on the Sunday. The Burton & Light Railways Tram operated on both days, and there was a loco line-up at the end of each day. Also, on display was saloon coach 'Carrabasset' which was in the loop of 'Strawberry Park' Station. The highlight of the weekend for many was the return to steam of pioneer Garratt 'K1' which was due to make its first public

appearance in steam on the March Enthusiast Day.

The next open day is the Road & Rail Festival on 12th and 13th September, this will feature passenger trains, goods trains and the Burton & Ashby Light Railways Tram will also be running.

Press Release

Report 09/08/20. Visit for the Back to Basics Enthusiast's Day. What a pleasure after so much lockdown and closures to have a typical Statfold enthusiast's day. By which I mean, of course, loads of steam from 12 working locos, tram rides, non-stop action and new things to see.

New things to see included another intermediate station, Strawberry Park, a covered wooden 'tunnel' to house wagons and the Beyer Peacock K1 and *Wendy* (the latter donated from Hampshire Narrow Gauge Railway Society) in action at their new home. Also new, to me at least, were some of the shops outside the museum area and some exhibits in the museum.

The Saturday event (08/08/20) had the same twelve locos working plus *Sragi* No1, which had then failed and so was standing on show in the shed area on Sunday.)

Needless to say the whole event was well organised with all the necessary current precautions and supervised by friendly, helpful staff.

Locomotives in operation were: 0-4-0ST *Sybil Mary* (Hunslet 921/1906); 0-4-0ST *Cloister* (Hunslet 542/1891); 0-4-0+0-4-0 No. K1; No. 19 *CSR Lautoka Co Ltd.*; 4-4-0T *Isibutu* (Bagnall 2820/1945); 0-4-0ST *Wendy* (Bagnall 2091/1919); 0-4-0ST *Statfold* (Hunslet built Statfold 3903/2005); 0-4-0ST *Jack Lane* (Hunslet built Statfold 3904/2005); 0-4-2ST *Howard* No. 2 (Hunslet 1842/1936); 0-6-0PT *Alpha*; 0-4-2ST *Trangkil* No. 4 (Hunslet 3902/1971) and working on the Garden Railway was 0-4-0ST ISC Ltd No. 2 *Roger* (Kerr Stuart 3128/1918).

John Moore



(Above) No K1
(Left) *Isibutu* on a goods working.
(Below left) *Wendy* and *Jack Lane*.
(Below) Arn Jung No 3698 of 1925; a display of restoration.
Photos: John Moore



(From top left):

- 1. CSR No. 19 and Statfold.
- 2. Jack 0-4-0ST 18" gauge (Hunslet No 684/1898) in the Tram Shed.
- 3. Alpha on a goods train.
- 4. Howard approaching Oak Tree Halt.
- Photos: John Moore
- 5. Jack Lane and the K1 outside the locomotive shed.
- Photo: ©Joey Evans
- 6. K1 and train. Photo: ©Joey Evans
- 7. Locomotive line-up at the Back to Basics Enthusiast's Event led by Wendy. Photo: ©Joey Evans

Steeple Grange Light Railway, Porter Lane, Wirksworth, Matlock DE4 4GE (18" gauge)

On the first day of March a project began to build a low wall on the south side of the embanked section of trackbed on the climb up to Middleton to aid ballast retention, and a week later several sleepers were renewed in the area around Recreation Ground Bridge. The engineers meanwhile were getting on with examinations of carriages and locomotives prior to the start of the season. *Greenbat's* inspection was completed on 12th March with the fitting of newly-relined brake shoes, and then ZM32 took its place in the workshop.

A new stop sign was erected at Dark Lane on 8th March to replace the old one, whose post was rotting. The points from Steeplehouse Quarry are intended to be positioned here, allowing a headshunt to be run out downhill alongside the main line. This will permit shunting to take place at the C & W without impinging on the main line.

On 22nd March a final working session was held. Then, with lockdown starting on the following day, conventional working parties were discontinued.

Subsequently a small rota of four local members, has carried out regular safety and security checks, loco battery charging, and other jobs which can be carried out without breaking the social distancing rules. On 21st April all four caretaker staff assembled to carry out various jobs including grass mowing, weed spraying, more fishplate greasing, and the oiling of moving parts on the pointwork all along the line.

Anticipating that a return to normality will be a while coming, it has been agreed that no public operations will take place for the rest of the 2020 summer season; thus the railway's income from passengers has been reduced to zero. Fortunately however at the beginning of May we received £10,000 from the Government's Small Business Grant Fund for businesses affected by the coronavirus pandemic, so from a financial point of view we have been cushioned from this loss.

Raretrack 90, July 2020

Tallyllyn Railway, Tywyn, Gwynedd. LL36 9EY (2' 3" gauge)

After 20 weeks of lockdown, the Tallyllyn Railway was finally able to re-start its steam hauled services on Saturday, 1st August with carefully designed social distancing arrangements for travel. The first public train since February was waved off by local MP, Liz Saville-Roberts, who came to Wharf Station to give the green flag at 10.30. Fittingly, the re-opening train was hauled by Locomotive No.2, *Dolgoch*, which has been in service on the Railway since 1866 and was used for the first ever



Tallyllyn Railway: Liz Saville-Roberts flags away *Dolgoch* with the first train since lockdown on 1st August. Photo: Glenn Cannon / TR

train in railway preservation in 1951.

David Ventry, Chairman of the Tallyllyn Board and Safety Director explained that during the week before the re-opening, the railway had run four days of 'Shakedown' trains in order to test out all of the risk assessments and the briefings that had been drawn up for staff and volunteers. These 'test' trains had enabled some amendments and adjustments to be made and David said that he was now able to express his full confidence that the Railway was ready and safe to run. Introducing Liz Saville-Roberts, General Manager Stuart Williams commented that it was a particular delight that our local MP was able to join with the Tallyllyn Railway to see the first train off, noting that she had the distinction of being the Member of Parliament who had the greatest number of heritage railways in her constituency.

Normally the railway would close at the end of October, but this year the daily running will extend until the end of November, and passengers can enjoy the heated carriages.

TRPS Chairman Jonathan Mann said: "It is wonderful to see trains running again today, and I would like to thank Liz Saville-Roberts very much for giving her time to come and re-open our railway. Seventy years ago, the Tallyllyn Railway was just a handful of weeks away from closure for good, until being rescued by the Tallyllyn Railway Preservation Society, and thus starting the world-wide heritage railway movement. Without the Society, the railway would not be here today, and without the tremendous support both from the Society and from the general public during this crisis, we would not have been able to re-open as we have."

The Tallyllyn Railway will continue operating every day for the rest of this season but pre-booking is now essential before travelling. For full information please refer to the railway's website www.tallyllyn.co.uk

Press Release

Teifi Valley Railway, Henllan, Ceredigion SA44 5TD (2' gauge)

Report 31/07/20. The Teifi Valley Railway are pleased to announce that they have now re-laid track to Pontprenshitw platform.

We believe that it was in August 1985 that the Teifi Valley Railway first ran trains to Pont. This is another milestone in the rebuilding of the railway. We have now enough track to get three carriages alongside the platform. Work is continuing on the platform fence and the platform edging.

There will then be approximately 80 metres for us to re-lay and connect up to the damaged line that runs to Riverside. Work is already underway on replacing the broken fence posts and rails down to the waterfall and leat.

The Teifi Valley Railway would like to offer their thanks to the many people who have helped us to achieve this sizeable step forward in the rebuilding of the railway, both with financial help and encouraging words of support.

Facebook

Twyford Waterworks Railway, Twyford, Hampshire SO21 1QA (2'0" gauge)

The opportunity has been taken during the closure of the Waterworks Museum to fast-track the restoration and rebuilding of one of the Railway's smallest exhibits. A small wagon chassis, with a wheelbase of just 18", was rescued from a brickworks in Essex some years ago, and became next in line to be returned to use. Now fitted with appropriate Hudson wheelsets and axleboxes, taken from the remains of a ½yd skip wagon chassis beyond repair, the vehicle has been completed as a flat wagon.

Matthew Feldwick

Within its collection, the railway has several Hudson U skips wagons which were constructed around 1990. Three of these, which together would make



Twyford Waterworks Railway: (left) the restored wagon outside the workshop on 16th August. (Right) two of the Hudson U skips with modified bodies which are for sale. Photos: Graham Feldwick

two complete wagons, are now for sale to make room for more exhibits. At a later stage in their commercial lives the bodies were used for filtration purposes and have short pipes let into the sides but are otherwise sound and would be easily restorable.

The Waterworks will be open on just one occasion this year, on Sunday 4th October, and the railway will be in operation.

Graham Feldwick

Vale of Rheidol Railway, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion. SY23 1PG (1' 11 3/4" gauge)

The Vale of Rheidol Railway will not be reopening this summer. This difficult decision has been made in order to protect our visitors, our staff, and those who live locally. We thank all our supporters and look forward to seeing you in 2021.

Website

Volks Electric Railway Association, Brighton, West Sussex (2' 8 1/2" gauge)

On July 25th trains returned to the rails on the seafront line after a much delayed start to the season due to the Corona Virus pandemic.

There are special anti-viral precautions in place. Trains are running between Aquarium and Black Rock from 11am to 5pm (subject to the normal weather conditions) Wednesday to Sunday inclusive. Trains may not be joined or left at Half Way.

Website

Welsh Highland Heritage Railway, Porthmadog LL49 9DY (2' gauge)

Report 27/06/20. Work restarted on a small number of projects last month at Boston Lodge. This included the replica Pickering brake coach.

The internal cladding has been completed to the extent that at the beginning of June the coach was ready for electrical work and moved onto a pit. This involved taking it out into the yard on temporary bogies. Some further design work has been carried

out on the bogies in anticipation of work starting on them.

Facebook

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

Report 14/08/20. The 'Keep *The Earl* on Track' appeal has now raised close to £80,000 moving towards our £95,000 objective and having raised over £50,000 for 'Tracks to Recovery' before that. None of these figures include the £25,200 we received from the Heritage Lottery Fund so we are, as you can imagine, gratified and pleased with the support.

The 'Keep *The Earl* on Track' appeal aims to ensure that one of the original 1902-built locomotives, *The Earl*, is able to haul trains again in 2021. In mid 2019 the locomotive was sent for its mandatory 10-year overhaul at the Vale of Rheidol Railway in Aberystwyth, allowing the W&LLR's own workshop team to tackle other pressing maintenance and restoration work.

Overhaul of *The Earl* was planned to be funded out of existing revenue and donations, including a large legacy of uncommitted funds. However the closure of more than four months resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic means that the railway will face much greater demands on its existing funds over the coming winter.

Donations to the Keep *The Earl* on Track' fundraising appeal continue to be very welcome online at <https://>

cafdonate.cafonline.org/9557#!/DonationDetails .

We reopened on 1st August and have run daily since then, running only to Castle Caereinion in order to cater for more customers and allow our track gang to resume work on the section to Welshpool. Take-up has been encouraging though obviously producing nothing like normal August earnings.

"Because social distancing measures will greatly reduce the capacity of each train, we are running more trains over a shorter distance initially to ensure we can offer rides to as many visitors as possible," W&LLR spokesman Andrew Charman said.

"We are determined to return to running services over the full line as soon as we can. In the meantime the Llanfair-Castle section has lovely views along the Banwy River and a steady climb through fields and woodlands to Castle, which visitors can enjoy from the large windows in our carriages and on the open-air balconies."

The initial timetable consists of four trains per day at 10.30am, 12.10pm, 1.50pm and 3.30pm. Intending travellers must pre-book tickets through the railway's website at www.wllr.org.uk – train capacity will be severely limited and tightly controlled to maintain social distancing, and pre-booking online will be the only way to guarantee being able to travel.

Andrew Charman

Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway: *The Earl* departed for a major overhaul at the Vale of Rheidol Railway in June 2019. But the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic have left the railway appealing for funds to finish the work. Photo: Phil Ellis, W&LLR



West of Fife Munitions Railway,
Lathalmond Railway Museum, M90
Commerce Park, Dunfermline KY12
OSJ
(2' gauge)

While Lathalmond Railway Museum has unfortunately had to cancel the entire 2020 season, the easing of lockdown rules allowed outdoor work to resume first and the decision was taken to focus on progressing the extension of the narrow gauge West of Fife Munitions Railway as pretty much all materials were already on site, and it would make good use of the summer weather to make progress and have a big impact on visitors when we reopen in April 2021.

The existing 230 metre running line has, since the end of the 2019 season, been supplemented by a second line accessed via a headshunt at the western end of the site. This line branches northwards and across the Gask Burn before turning to head generally eastwards, skirting the site boundary then following but at a lower level to the old standard gauge railway embankment that used to connect Lathalmond Royal Naval Stores Depot to the outside world.

The new extension, which stretches for a further 300 metres, has earthworks pretty much complete, and track in place for 250m of this distance. If all goes to plan, this will give a round trip of over 1km for our visitors next year, in addition to the standard gauge railway and also a new display area.

Grant Robertson

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

Various activities have been underway at the railway whilst preparing for restart of services. Upgrades to the platform and toilet infrastructure, which will be screened and faced to match the station shop, have taken place along with building repairs and painting.

0-6-0WT *Joffre* (Kerr-Stuart 2405/1915), 0-4-0ST *Irish Mail* (Hunslet and 0-4-0WT *Utrillas* (O&K 2378/1907) were steamed for their annual examination by the independent boiler inspector, who gave them all a clean bill of health. Progress on the restoration of 0-4-0ST *Sybil* (Bagnall 1706/1906) is continuing. The new boiler has been shotblasted, sanded and painted.

The boiler of 0-4-0WT *Montalban* (O&K 6641/1913) is back! After major repairs at Johnson's of Banks, the boiler was shotblasted and painted ready for re-installation in the loco frames. The couplings have been fitted on our new access coach, while on the surface the next task is building the wood-slat seating.

West Lancs Newsletter No.12 July 2020

Westonzoyland Pumping Station Museum, Hoopers Lane,
Westonzoyland, Somerset, TA7 0LS (2' gauge)

Report 10/08/20. We have started stripping the brake assembly of the Simplex locomotive. After years of use, the various pins and linkages of the brake system have worn and require bushing to bring them back to original size. It has been given a good clean off with the pressure washer also highlighting the need for a good repaint.

Facebook

Report 14/08/20. The Trust has been awarded a £10,000 grant from the Garfield Weston Foundation covering 50% of the new locomotive & rolling stock shed for the 2' gauge railway. This means along with all the fantastic donations and grants from our visitors, members, Hampshire Narrow Gauge Trust & Sedgemoor District Council we have reached our goal of £20,000. We will now be able to order the steel building kit and proceed to install the 72sqm concrete slab with integral track panels.

Being our 40th Anniversary as a charity this year, our lack of opening to the public due to Covid-19 has been a great disappointment. This will be a huge boost to the moral of the Trust, its volunteers and members. We will look forward to showing the new building off in 2021 on completion and will help us to develop our narrow gauge railway. Thank you to all those individuals and organisations that have made this possible.

Facebook

Wicksteed Park, Kettering,
Northamptonshire NN15 6NJ
(2' gauge)

Report 17/06/20. A 99-year-old theme park has gone into administration due to "months of uncertainty and difficulty" from the coronavirus pandemic.

Wicksteed Park in Kettering, Northamptonshire, was opened by Charles Wicksteed in 1921. It is owned by Wicksteed Charitable Trust, which has backed the formation of a new smaller company with the aim of raising funds to re-open the park.

BBC website

Report 28/07/20. Wicksteed Park's famous railway gets ready for passengers once again – after Network Rail track specialists volunteered to do essential track repair and maintenance work.

Network Rail via Facebook

Yaxham Light Railway, Yaxham
Station, Norfolk NR19 1RE (2' gauge)

Report 07/07/20. With lockdown easing and with all the necessary social distancing measures etc. in

place, happily we are now able to visit the Yaxham Light Railway once again. Therefore, a start has been made on the outstanding maintenance jobs which have built up during the weeks of lock down. Some areas of the site and track work had become quite overgrown, particularly around Whinburgh Road station.

However, before any clearance work could commence, there was the slight problem of a seized wheel on the grey flat wagon; the wagon was blocking the principal storage siding. The wagon was lifted, the axle removed, the axle boxes removed, bearings de-rusted, cleaned and packed with fresh grease, the axle boxes cleaned and painted, everything re-assembled and the wagon put back into service. The problem was caused by a missing greaser on one axle box which had allowed rainwater to penetrate and solved with a carefully shaped cork pending sourcing a replacement greaser.

A happy hour or two was then spent hand weeding the hay crop in the track at Whinburgh Road station. Further finishing jobs were also completed on the Möes loco. The following Saturday found a tree fallen across the track on the section adjoining the Mid Norfolk Railway. Much of the day was committed to clearing this and grass cutting and generally cutting back. To continue running in the engine and gearbox the Möes loco has seen regular use. It now starts readily with little exhaust smoke once warm and the gearbox runs smoother with each use. It's also a very useful log carrier!

Facebook

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

Canal & River Trust, Toddbrook
Reservoir, High Peak, Derbyshire

As reported in NGN 358/23 a hand-worked narrow gauge railway (assumed 2ft 0in gauge) was installed by sub-contractor Joseph Gallagher Ltd to assist in rebuilding work along the top of the dam wall.

The Canal & River Trust website reported in July that work so far has included enhancing the crest wall at the top of the dam and the temporary repairs are almost complete. The Canal and River Trust have stated that footpaths around the reservoir will open in August until the spring, when permanent repairs will start. The permanent reconstruction project is due to be finished in 2023 and set to cost more than £10m.

The railway was laid to assist with the temporary repairs, so it is expected to be removed at the end of the work. It is not yet clear what form the permanent works will take, which contractors will be involved and whether a narrow gauge railway might be employed again.

Mike Jackson / Graham Feldwick via Canal & River Trust website



Australia /Zig Zag railway: First loco run for eight years from Bottom Points to Clarence.

AUSTRALIA

Zig Zag Railway, NSW (3'6" gauge).

The first locomotive for eight years ran over the 7 km from Bottom Points to Clarence on 24 July using an ex Emu Bay (Tasmania) diesel. After the devastating fire of 2013 and further damage in fires last December this is a major achievement. 2000 sleepers and 500 tonnes of ballast have been laid but work is still required on signalling,

stock and getting official running approval.

Les Tindall

BELGIUM

Dorinne-Durnal

Two recent pictures show the remains of a 600 mm quarry line that can still be seen at the station of Dorinne-Durnal. This standard gauge line is now

preserved and operated between Ciney and Bauche (<https://www.cfboqc.be/index.php/en/>).

In 1905, a local quarry owner obtained permission to construct a narrow gauge railway between Dorinne-Durnal and his quarry, about 2 km away. Little is known about this line and it closed in the early 1960's - the standard gauge spur to the loading dock was lifted in 1965.

Today, the quarry is used to practice rock-climbing and the trackbed of the narrow gauge line is used to access the site. However, about 60 m of track still exists in the pavement before the station. In the past, this short stretch was often used to place a narrow gauge locomotive during gala weekends.

The present owner of the station is a member of the preservation society and after restoring the station to its former glory, he has turned his attention to the former narrow gauge. He has laid several track panels in his garden (the former freight yard) and he intends to expand. However, it is highly unlikely that the line will extend on the former trackbed because it is needed as access for the climbers. Please note that the station and former goods yard are private property.

During galas however, the owner often opens the gates to visitors. The old track in the pavement is on a public road.

Wim De Ridder

Belgium, Dorinne: 600mm gauge trackbed at Dorinne Dornal station. Photo: Wim de Ridder



GERMANY

Museumsbahn-Schoenheide, Erzgebirge, Sachsen (750mm gauge)

Public narrow gauge railways in Germany have operated throughout the pandemic and some preservation operations have returned with a limited service. This short line in the mountains south of Zwickau, running 4 km from Schoenheide Mitte to Stützensgrün is a remnant of the former 41km Wilkau-Haßlau to Carlsfeld line, closed in April 1977, but reconstructed in 1990 by a preservation group.

The group own three class IV K Sachsen-Meyer 0-4-4-0Ts, 99 582, 99 585 and 99 516, and one class V10C 0-6-0DM, 199 051 (LKM 250218/1960). In September 2019 this was taken to the RVE railway workshops in Marienberg for a full inspection which was completed on 29 July ready for trials and return to the railway. To cover planned operations the railway received HF130C 0-6-0DM Köf 6001 (Gmeinder 4233/1946) on loan from Interessenverband der Schmalspurbahnen e.V., based at Bertsdorf near Zittau, in September 2019, and this was working trains on 28 June.

Mike Swift

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

At the end of July there were no Klasmann peat trains running to the works, but the summer holidays were used to do some tracklaying into the pits where peat extraction will start after this summer. In this part of the Klein Heseper Moor peat extraction will have to stop in 2023, so if you want to see it, don't wait too long.



Germany: (Above) In one of the pits which will be worked until well in 2023, track is being laid to enable the peat to be transported to the mill. 23rd July 2020.
(Below) Deep in the Klein Heseper Moor a train with loco 31 with two tankers has been stopped by a small lorry which is trying to pass it in the distance. In the foreground loco 30 is waiting to let the train go past and follow it to its next job, where it will act as shunting loco. Photos: Toon Steenmeyer.



Germany/Schoenheide: (Top) Köf 6001 beside the rustic loco shed at Schoenheide Mitte.
(Above) Köf 6001 with the two-coach train at Schoenheide Mitte.
(Below) Sachsen-Meyer 0-4-4-0T 99 582 waits for its next operating day inside the shed.
Photos: Karl-Heinz Oelsner



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

Despite summer holidays maintenance on oil wells has to continue, albeit with less trains. However it can never stop completely and finding a train under these circumstances is more a case of being lucky and knowing your way about.

Toon Steenmeyer



India: Pictures of the Pagla Jhora landslip. Photos: DHR Society

INDIA

Darjeeling Himalayan Railway

As part of India's national lockdown against the Covid 19 pandemic, all DHR services were suspended on 22 March. By mid-May a third of DHR staff was back on duty doing essential maintenance work, and locomotives and rolling stock were being repaired/overhauled at Tindharia. Following road subsidence after heavy monsoon rains on 29 June, the DHR route was temporarily closed near Pagla Jhora. Fortunately, we understand that repairs should be completed in a very few months.

With the impact of the pandemic still increasing in the region, and with Darjeeling closed to tourists, there is no indication yet as to when DHR services will resume.

The DHRS has provided urgently needed funds for local Covid 19 relief efforts.

Peter Jordan, Darjeeling Himalayan Railway Society

JAPAN

Svend Korsgaard, chief treasurer of the Danish Railway Society. (www.djk.com) writes that he enjoyed the article in the modelling notes on page 11 of NGN 359 as he recognized the Thai/Japanese C 56 locomotive. He writes "In 1998 I visited the Oigawa Railway about 200 km southwest of Tokyo. Among other steam locomotives they were testing C 56 44 outside the workshops in Shin Kanaya. Due to obstructions, I could only get a good photo of the cab with the driver. C 56 44 is mentioned in the article by Kevin Smith, and it is at the Oigawa Railway in steam in 1998. The gauge in Japan is 1067 mm, and in Thailand 1000 mm, so the locomotive has been regauged twice, from 1067 mm to 1000 mm to work on the River Kwai Bridge line and back again to 1067 mm

when returned to Japan. It was built by Mitsubishi in 1936 and sent to Thailand during WWII and returned to Japan in 1979.

The Oigawa Railway consists of two parts. The lower line from Kanaya to Senzu 40 km is electrified 1067 mm gauge. The 20km upper line from Senzu to Ikawa is 782mm and diesel. Due to a big power dam construction, part of the line got submerged. But rather than abandon the line, a diversion was built over 5 km at a gradient of 9%. This is too steep for the diesel adhesion locomotives so three rather large electric locomotives built under Swiss licence using the Abt rack system by Hitachi were acquired in 1989. They push the diesel train, locomotives and coaches up the steep part over some impressive bridges.

via *Les Tindall*

NETHERLANDS

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

At last our full hydraulic track maintenance machine has been able to find space in our workshop for a number of heavy repairs and some much needed maintenance after it developed some faults a couple of years ago. This machine makes track work much lighter for the gang and makes it go a lot faster. It can lift the track on which stands and can change sleepers in the process, shift the track from left to right and with the rail bender on board it can tackle any piece of rail.

Toon Steenmeyer

NEW ZEALAND

Dunedin Railways Ltd (DRL) (3' 6" gauge)

This has closed for the foreseeable future with the likely loss of 51 jobs.

The company operated tourist trains from Dunedin including the Taieri Gorge Railway tour and Pacific Coastal railway lines, which are popular with visiting cruise ship passengers and international tourists.

Chairman Kevin Winders said the track and equipment would be mothballed as the effects of Covid-19 on tourism compounded the company's existing financial challenges. It was not being closed permanently but trains would be parked up indefinitely, effectively going into hibernation, he said.

Founded and partly owned by the Otago Excursion Train Trust, the company is now majority owned by city council company Dunedin City Holdings. Dunedin City Council voted 14-1 to mothball the railway at a meeting behind closed doors.

The Taieri Gorge Railway is a half-day train trip from Dunedin's grand Edwardian Railway Station: out of the city, through farming and horse-racing country, and following the Taieri River along its impressive gorge, over viaducts and through tunnels, to either Pukerangi or Middlemarch. It is New Zealand's longest tourist railway and stretches along the former Otago Central Railway from the 4km peg on the Taieri Branch, 18km west of Dunedin, to Middlemarch, a distance of some 60 kilometres. Between Dunedin and the start of the line its trains operate on KiwiRail's Main South Line via a running rights agreement.

The train operated daily to Pukerangi and on summer Fridays and Sundays to Middlemarch.

Local sources

Kingston Flyer.

Plans to re-open as a commercial operation are on track despite Covid 19 related delays. There is confidence that there is enough interest from New Zealanders to justify re-opening. A test

run took place before the loco has a boiler survey during winter.

The Pounamo Tourism Group,

This group, facing the loss of up to 10,000 cruise ship passengers, is shifting focus to heritage rail journeys for New Zealanders and intends to operate a steam train throughout the South Island including one journey the length of the island. Passengers would normally arrive at Picton by cruise ship and take a steam train ride.

FRONZ Journal via Malcolm Midgley

Budget benefits.

In the 2020 budget the government has invested NZ\$1.2 billion into Kiwirail. This funding includes \$400 million towards replacing the current ferries, \$421 million to continue the locomotive replacement programme, and \$246 million (plus a \$146 million top up of the National Land Transport Fund) towards infrastructure maintenance and upgrading rolling stock.

NZRO

SLOVAKIA

Štrba - Štrbské Pleso (metre gauge)

This rack-and-pinion line between closed for a seven-month modernisation programme on July 5, with both the line and the rolling stock due for renewal.

The line in the High Tatra Mountains runs from Štrba station along the Košice – Žilina corridor to Štrbské Pleso, a winter sports and spa town at an altitude of 1346m. The maximum gradient is 15%, necessitating rack-and-pinion operation. The line is part of the High Tatra narrow gauge Electric Tatra Railways (TEŽ), operated by Slovak national railways (ŽSSK), and is the only line in the network to use rack-and-pinion.

A 4.75km line along the route first opened in 1896, but this was closed in 1932 with the infrastructure removed in the 1940s. Due to a ski championship in 1970 and increasing tourism, the line was rebuilt in 1968 with a short section rerouted from the original line.

Five new class 405 rack-and-pinion trains were ordered from the Swiss Locomotive and Machine Factory (SLM) in Winterthur, Switzerland, for operation on the line. These five trains comprised a fixed composition of a powered coach and driving trailer. The vehicles are similar to trains operating in Switzerland, which were built for the Arth Rigi Railway.

The Swiss-built class 405 trains have now been withdrawn from services and will be replaced by five new rack-and-pinion trains from Stadler.

The trains are new-generation electric low-floor GTW trains, which will be suitable for operation along both the rack-and-pinion line and conventional TEŽ lines. This will allow through services to operate past Štrbské Pleso,

which the class 405 trains were unable to do. The new trains offer 91 seats and have two spaces for wheelchairs as well as a multi-functional space for bicycles and push chairs.

Stadler Rail will also deliver a hybrid diesel-electric locomotive, which will be used for snow ploughing in winter and infrastructure works. The locomotive can be operated through remote control, while the diesel engine meets Euro IIIB emission standards.

Stadler delivered 15 class 425 electric GTW trains to ŽSSK for regular operation on the TEŽ network in 2000.

International Railway Journal via Donald Brooks

USA

East Broad Top Railroad (3' gauge) (NGN357/25)

The 60th Anniversary of the re-opening of the East Broad Top Railroad in Pennsylvania was celebrated on 15th August with a train of open-air cars and two cabooses hauled by diesel M-7 (GE 300hp of 1964, ex Algoma Steel - came to the EBT in 1993). It ran just less than a mile to Enyeart Road Crossing which is the current limit of restored track. There is a lot of work still required to reach Colgate Grove including a bridge damaged last year by a crane or digger on a truck.

Les Tindall



Schynige Platte Bahn, Switzerland. (80cm gauge)

Visit Aug 2006. The SPB route starts at Wilderwil (near Interlaken) and is an overhead electric rack railway which goes up to the Schynige Platte. On the route up, there is a startling vista of the triple peaks of the Jungfrau, Mönch & Eiger. The service is summer only with the overhead lines taken down in the winter. The photo is actually of a Bernese Oberland Bahn (BOB) snowplough. There is a direct connection between the 2 lines and indeed SPB stock sometimes get used on the BOB in winter.

Neville Quick

Les mines de sel de Bex, Switzerland. (Probably 60cm gauge)

Visit Aug 2009. Active salt mine with an underground tourist train route deep into the mountain.

Neville Quick



Introduction

A number of miniature railways have now reopened, although there are some notable exceptions, including Pecorama at Beer and the Echills Wood Railway. In many cases expensive Covid-19 alterations have been made to rolling stock and revised arrangements are in place, which alongside the reduced operating season, have made life difficult for a number of lines. Please support your local railway if you can, although it is probably best to check availability beforehand as many lines require pre-booking. I have visited a few lines in the last couple of weeks and their Covid related arrangements have been very well organised. If you do make it to a railway over the next few months please try and send a report and photographs.

Jonathan James

Amnerfield Miniature Railway, Amners Farm, Amners Farm Road, Burghfield, Near Reading, Berkshire, RG30 3UE (5" and 7¼" gauges)

The following message was placed on the Facebook page:-

Notice to All Members and Friends of Amnerfield Miniature Railway.

The Railway, like many others Groups and Hobbies is currently undergoing difficult times.

After much deliberation the committee has decided that the railway cannot continue as it currently operates. We have seen a lack of enthusiasm in the railway over the last few years. We feel that the only option is to now go back to all the members and friends of the railway and ask for your help to decide the future of our railway. Lambing weekends at least for the next few years are not going to happen and there is no certainty that they will return, this leaves the railway with a massive hole financially that we would have to fill, either with events, public running, more party's or some other source of income.

The farmer would like to see the railway being used more often, and would also like to see the site cared for more by the railway which would

include mowing the steaming bay area and general upkeep around the site. There is always track work to be done to keep the railway at a useable standard, and jobs to do that keep the place running but with few hands this is virtually impossible to keep up with. Many jobs are simple and small so many hands make the upkeep easy.

This is the point at which we need your voice to be heard, if people would like to see the railway continue.

We now need people to commit to the cause and make your intentions known, otherwise there is no other viable option but to disband the railway.

If you would like to complete a form about the next steps of the railway's future please email us at amrofficial@yahoo.com. We don't want to see the railway close but unless we can get some interest in keeping the railway alive then we have very little option. Also, if you wish to become a member of AMR please contact us so we can keep the railway going!

Amnerfield Railway Committee. 5th August 2020

Ashford Miniature Railway, The Limes, Ashford, Kent (7¼" gauge)

The team have been very busy over the Covid-19 period. One of our coaches have been stripped down, lengthened and re-built. *Merlin* and *Petroleum* have been fully tested and are ready to operate the 2020 season. A new build locomotive is under construction and will be a freelance narrow-gauge petrol hydraulic. The site is ready, with a one-way system in place and our coaches have been fitted with screens ready for the planned reopening on the 2 August.

Oliver Stevens

Ashmanhaugh Light Railway, Near Wroxham, Norfolk (7¼" gauge)

The railway has placed the following announcement on their website:-
Sad news: It is with sadness that after 18 great years, the decision has been



One of the carriages at the Ashford Miniature Railway. Photo: Oliver Stevens

made to close the Ashmanhaugh Light Railway. During that time, we have met and made many good friends and we would like to thank all the people who have supported us over that time, we will miss you all.

Clearing of the site is well advanced with the track and some of the stock being moved to a new site in the Cromer area where some of our members are planning to establish a new railway.

Thank you and take care everyone.

Jonathan James

Blyth Valley Light Railway, Steamworks, Blyth Road, Southwold, Suffolk (7¼" gauge)

Work is ongoing at Steamworks, including recommencing work on the driving tender for *Rosie*, the Ken Swann 0-4-0 that was the first loco on the Blyth Valley Light Railway. Once that's done, the loco itself will need to come in for some fettling to iron out the niggles evident during last year's running.

SRT Website

Ashmanhaugh Light Railway: No.2 Shay locomotive, built by Edwin Peck of Norwich, seen on 7 August 2011.
Photo: Jonathan James

Blyth Valley Light Railway: The new shed area. The 'wooden' shed on the right is in fact a timber-clad steel shed originally made from old water tanks! Photo: John Ridgway / Southwold Railway Trust.





Bow Hills Railway:

(Above) *Douglas 0-4-2T Tinkerbell No 2* on shed at the lower station
 (Above right) *Betty Tinkerbell No 1* en route
 (Right) *Oto Caggianiello* entering the far terminal
 Photos: John Moore



Bure Valley Railway: (left) No.6 *Blickling Hall* preparing to depart from Wroxham, with a new Greater Anglia unit 755420 passing alongside.
 (Below) No.9 *Mark Timothy* arriving at Coltishall.
 Photos: Jonathan James

Bow Hills Railway, Worcestershire (7¼" gauge)

Visit 16/08/20. I believe this was only the second opening of this private railway to the public this year and we were lucky with the weather. I drove through a brief monsoon on the way there and heavy rain all the way home, but it stayed dry all afternoon for my visit.

Three locos were in steam and hauling trains almost continuously. They were *Tinkerbell Betty*, SAR type Class 15F *City of Pretoria* and *Oto Caggianiello* a Sandy River type. The usual extremely friendly staff in a lovely location made for a splendid afternoon and they had provided all that was needed for a safe visit including spacing on the trains.

John Moore

Brockwell Park Miniature Railway, Brockwell Park, Herne Hill, London (7¼" gauge)

The miniature railway reopened on 5 July 2020 and will open every Sunday for the remainder of the season. Capacity was reduced to enable passengers will be seated two metres apart, with the train being cleaned and wiped down between each journey.

Facebook

Bure Valley Railway, Wroxham, Norfolk (15" gauge)

Visit 04/08/20. A special Covid timetable was in operation, providing seven return trips per day from Aylsham to Wroxham. I travelled on the 12:15 from Wroxham returning on the 14:00 from Aylsham. My train was hauled by 2-6-2 No.6 *Blickling Hall*. The other services were being operated by No.9 *Mark Timothy* and No.8 *John of Gaunt*. No.32nd *Air Division USAAF* was stabled in the station at Aylsham. Tickets had to be booked in advance, with passengers being provided with their own compartment. The intermediate stations between Aylsham and Wroxham were closed. Everything was very well



organised and felt perfectly safe.

Jonathan James

The 10th July marked the 30th anniversary of the opening of the Bure Valley Railway. Sadly, the Covid-19 restrictions prevented the planned "Step Back in Time" event with the visiting RH&DR locos from going ahead. However, to mark the occasion two special test trains were run from Aylsham to Wroxham and back in advance of the following day's re-opening to the public. Both trains were double-headed by ZB 2-6-2 BVR 6 *Blickling Hall* and 2-6-2T BVR 8 *John of Gaunt*. This was the first time in the BVR's history that these two locomotives had double-headed a train together. The second test train was loaded to 14 coaches and a guard's van.

On 10th July the boiler inspector witnessed the live steam test of 2-6-4T *Wroxham Broad*. This was successful and the locomotive now has a boiler ticket until September 2021. Shortly after that date, the ten-year boiler ticket will be up, so *Wroxham Broad* will then be withdrawn for overhaul.

ZB 2-6-2 BVR 7 *Spitfire* is still under overhaul. The firebox



Bure Valley Railway: *Blickling Hall* approaches Coltishall on 25th July bound for Wroxham. Photo: Gerry Balding

second rake of coaches due to a fantastic effort by volunteers and with additional crews making themselves available, the railway was able to run a two-train service over the weekend of 18th and 19th July.

Again, hard work by volunteers during the following week resulted in a third set of coaches being available. This meant that the railway could operate a three-train service over the weekend of 25th and 26th July.

From 1st August the railway started operating 5 days per week (except Mondays and Fridays). This was an intensive and demanding service with three trains requiring three locomotives to be in steam. The additional trains ensured there was a safe and physically distanced environment for all passengers. Steam departures from Aylsham were hourly from 10.00 until 15.00. The return trains from Wroxham were at 15 minutes past the hour, from 11.15 until 16.15. There was a final round trip by the diesel hydraulic BVR 3 *2nd Air*

Division USAAF each day from Aylsham at 15.30, returning from Wroxham at 16.45.

Gerry Balding

Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway, Cleethorpes, Lincolnshire (15" gauge)

The railway reopening on Saturday 4 July. I took the opportunity to ride from Kingsway to Lakeside and back (the section beyond Kingsway is closed for work on a level crossing). Trains were clearly marked out with tape to ensure social distancing and platforms were also marked out - and seating for the Signal Box Inn (reputedly world's smallest pub) was kept separate.

All in all, it worked very well and I was told everything had gone well at the

stays were ground out and re-welded before the lockdown. The new tubes have arrived and await fitting. Further progress at present has been delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The ten-year boiler ticket for 2-6-4T *Mark Timothy* expires in February 2021. This is the last season to ride behind the locomotive before it is withdrawn for overhaul.

With the encouragement and support from a number of volunteers, the railway decided to operate a limited public service at weekends only in July, operated by volunteers, starting on Saturday 11th July and with a more intensive service five days per week from 1st August.

Due to the success of the first weekend and the availability of a

Cleethorpes Coast LR: (Left) No 15 *Rachel*; (Right) No 5 *Ceawin*

weekend. The weather was a bit wild and windy, so the beach was not too much of a distraction!

Trains were being top-and-tailed by 0-8-2 *Ceawin* from Longleat Railway and resident *Rachel*, but she encountered a problem on our departure and *Ceawin* took the train on her own, ran round at Lakeside and then ex-Bush Mills (Australia) diesel DA1 hooked on at Kingsway.

Chris Bates

The Downs Light Railway, Colwall, Herefordshire (9½" gauge)

Visit 02/06/20. Out on our 'once a day' walk, and from the public footpath, we viewed the new and very proper loading bay cum hopper arrangement for ballast deliveries.... most impressive. Ground works also include the installation of a new siding near to the loading bay. In James Boyd's day the ballast was delivered to the same spot but a siding served the bay, but the running line has now been slewed to become adjacent to the loading bay.

Mike Tebbett

East Herts Miniature Railway, Van Hage Garden Centre, Great Amwell, near Ware, Hertfordshire (7¼" gauge)

The railway was due to reopen on 5 September.

Facebook

Eastleigh Lakeside Railway, Lakeside Country Park, Eastleigh, Hampshire (7¼" and 10¼" gauge)

The railway reopened on 4 July 2020 but initially at weekends only, with trains running non-stop through Monks Brook Halt.

Facebook

The Fairbourne Railway, Beach Road, Fairbourne, Gwynedd, LL38 2EX, Wales (12¼" & 15" gauge)

The railway reopened on 14 July 2020, with trains departing at 11.10, 12.30, 14.00 and 15.30 from Fairbourne. The museum remained closed with payments taken at the café.

Facebook





Fairbourne Railway: (Above) *Yeo* about to depart from Fairbourne. (Below) *Russell* with its train in the 'disinfecting' siding at Fairbourne between services. Photos: Mike Gray



Visit 30/07/20. With Covid-19 restrictions in place this visit was necessarily a bit more circumscribed than usual but at least we could just turn up, pre-booking not required. Also, the membership ride concession was still honoured, although I paid the fare by way of a donation. Social isolation on the trains was achieved by 'blanking' access to intermediate coach compartments so that only end ones were in use, and in the station by a one-way system and screens at the booking counter. In addition, two carriage sets were in alternate use with one being cleaned and disinfected while the other ran the service. Services were being run hourly from Fairbourne between 10:40 and 16:40, with the reversal at Barmouth Ferry being the only stop. Here it was possible to alight for a few minutes for photos and a leg stretch.

Two locomotives in charge on the day, 2-6-2Ts *Russell* and *Yeo*. Despite many visits to this delightful little line I have previously always been behind *Sherpa*, and was pleased to see these locomotives in steam. So, a delightful trip in spite of the constraints. And trains looked as well patronised as seating would allow.

Unfortunately, but understandably, both the museum and the model railway were closed.

Mike Gray

Visit 01/08/20 The Fairbourne Railway is back in action, but with changes to operations to suit the current situation. No booking is required, but passengers are allocated a specific compartment and the coaches now have compartments numbered. Trains are restricted to six-coach sets, with one in service while the second is sanitised in the 15 inches gauge platform. Trains are run non-stop to Barmouth Ferry and returns must be made

in the same compartment. All intermediate halts are closed for the time being. On the first day of August 2-6-4T *Russell* and 2-6-2T *Yeo*, resplendent in a new paint job, with hand lining, were in service on alternate trains. Hunslet *Gwrit* was on hand to shunt coaches. Business was brisk, with passengers following a one-way system on to the platform, through the ticket office and on to the train, with exiting through the far end of the platform. Masks are available from the ticket office. These are made by a member of the FRPS committee who has raised a considerable amount of income for the railway during the period of closure, which is the longest since the Second World War. The masks are also available online.

Graham Billington

Ferry Meadows Railway, Ferry Meadows, Nene Park, Peterborough (10¼" gauge)

The railway re-opened on 4 July, and between 18 July and 30 August operated daily (subject to weather conditions) for the summer holidays. The railway has also started to operate their two new tramcars, both of which are double-deck models but with seating on the lower deck only.

Facebook

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

Visit 02/08/20. The railway resumed operations on Saturday 1st August after the long, enforced closure. *Mighty Max*, the 4w-4wPH built by Greatrex in 2000, which formerly ran at the Brookside Miniature Railway, was the loco in service on the Sunday. Trains appeared to be full, subject to social distancing measures, and there was a queue for tickets. All the passengers appeared to be genuinely pleased to see the railway back in action, which augurs well for the rest of the summer.

Graham Billington

Halton Miniature Railway, Halton, Runcorn, Cheshire (7¼" gauge)

The railway reopened on 26 July, with trains running between 13:00 and 16:00. There was no charge but donations were welcomed.

Facebook

Hastings Miniature Railway, Hastings, East Sussex (10¼" gauge)

The Hastings Miniature Railway reopened on Saturday 4 July. During the lockdown period a turntable was installed at Marine Parade station and all of the carriages were repainted. A new carriage was constructed, replicating one of the original bogie coaches that used to operate on the line. A new locomotive called 'Falcon' has also been constructed.

Facebook

Grosvenor Park MR: *Mighty Max* in action. Photo: Graham Billington





Hastings MR: (above) No.6 *Cornish Pixie* departing from Marine Parade. (Below) Rio Grande Southern No.1993 *Emmett*, on the turntable at Rock-a Nore.



Visit 09/08/20. I made a brief visit to the Hastings Miniature Railway on Sunday 9 August. Trains were being operated by No.6 *Cornish Pixie* and Rio Grande Southern No.1993 *Emmett*.

Jonathan James

Heads of Ayr Railway, Heads of Ayr Farm Park, Ayr, Scotland (10¼" gauge)

A new miniature railway has opened at the Farm Park, with the locomotive provided by Maxittrak.

Facebook

Heatherslaw Light Railway, Ford Forge, Cornhill-on-Tweed, Northumberland (15" gauge)

The railway reopened on 4 July 2020 with social distancing measures in place.

Facebook

Kerr's Miniature Railway, Arbroath, Scotland (10¼" gauge)

Kerr's Miniature Railway has announced that it will be closing at the end of the season, mainly due to falling passenger numbers.

Facebook



Knees Woodland MR: (Left) No 7, an 0-4-0 petrol loco. (Right) the 0-4-0 Lister diesel. Both are seen at the station. Photos: Jonathan James

Kirklees Light Railway, Park Mill Way, Clayton West, HD8 9XJ (15" gauge)

The railway reopened on 11 July 2020, having been closed since 15 March, with social distancing measures in place.

Facebook

Knees Woodland Miniature Railway, Shepherdswell, Kent (7¼" gauge)

Visit 09/08/20. I made a brief visit to the railway on Sunday 9 August. It reopened at the beginning of July, although standard gauge services on the adjacent East Kent Railway commenced later in the month. Trains were being operated by No.7 an 0-4-0 petrol locomotive and an 0-4-0 Lister diesel locomotive. The elevated 5" gauge railway was not in operation.

Jonathan James

Pleasureland (Lakeside) Miniature Railway, Southport, Marine Lake, Southport, Merseyside, PR8 1RX (15" gauge)

Visit 24/07/20. Trains were operating every fifteen minutes, with the two articulated coaches reasonably well-loaded. The locomotive in service was Rio Grande S/O 2-8-0, Severn Lamb 15-2-79 of 1979, which had recently arrived from Windmill Animal Farm. The engine was built for the West Midlands Safari Park, where it worked until about 2014. Pleasureland acquired it from Austin Moss because of an urgent need for a working locomotive this season. In return Pleasureland's non-operational Barlow locomotives and 1971 Severn Lamb Western *Princess Anne* have moved to Burscough. S/O 2-6-2DH *Jenny*, Austin Moss 2006, remains at Southport, though is currently being overhauled.

The new platform noted at Pleasureland in June has now been completed except for the installation of a kiosk at the eastern end. This is expected imminently and the platform approach is

marked by a small fairground carousel. The mobile kiosk by the ride does not sell train tickets, which are still purchased from the driver. Trains are not using the new platform because the points are set for the original Pleasureland station and the new platform is too short. It is currently regarded as a viewing platform, causing some confusion for potential passengers.

Additional track work has been carried out over the winter, including spot re-sleepering. Once the track and loop on the northern and currently disused face of the Pleasureland platform has been renewed, the ambition is to operate a two-train service at busy times. Plans for an extension into the Pleasureland park are now in abeyance. The return fare is £3.00.

Donald Brooks

Newby Hall Miniature Railway, Newby Hall near Ripon, North Yorkshire (7¼" gauge)

Visit 15/08/20. Two seats in each six-seat carriage were taped off for social distancing, but two extra carriages were in use over and above the usual six, so the train was almost at normal capacity, and was busy all afternoon.

Lady Mary Vyner, one of the lines two 'Western' diesels, was in use. The other, *Countess de Grey*, was in the shed, looking very smart. The heavily loaded trains were running a little more slowly than usual, giving a good opportunity to enjoy the line's attractive surroundings, in particular a stretch of riverside track where some modest clearance of bankside vegetation now gives an improved view of the River Ure.

Peter Hollindale

Pleasureland MR: the train in Pleasureland station. Photo: Donald Brooks





North Weald and District MR: *Jenko* travelling round the circuit at Harlow Garden Centre.
Photo: Jonathan James

North Weald and District Miniature Railway, Harlow Garden Centre, Essex (7¼" gauge)

The railway re-opened on Saturday 1 August 2020, followed by an all-night running charity event on 14 and 15 August. The initial circuit (phase 1) has also now been completed.

Facebook

Visit 08/08/20. The nearest railway station is Harlow Mill. The initial circuit has been completed, but work has already started on planning a further extension. The station area is also being expanded to include a second platform and a turntable. Trains were being operated by *Jenko*, a battery locomotive built in 2014 by Phoenix Locomotives of Southport and *Bigfoot*, an American switcher style battery locomotive built by the Scale Locomotive Company in 2018.

A Stafford 0-4-0ST locomotive called *Felicity*, built by Station Road Steam, was on static display at the station. I was offered a quick tour of the shed, where the following locomotives were stabled: No.14 battery locomotive built by Ride on Railways, which previously operated at the Ness Island Railway and the Fenn Bell Miniature Railway in Kent; *Elektra*, a battery locomotive that previously operated on the Saffron

Class 47 D1671 at Pugneys Light Railway.
Photo: Steve Mann



Walden & District Society of Model Engineers line at Audley End; Class 42 Warship locomotive called *Pathfinder*, which also moved here from Audley End.

Jonathan James

Perrygrove Railway, Coleford, Gloucestershire (15" gauge)

The railway reopened on 4 July 2020 with social distancing measures in place. Glass screens were installed in the carriages to separate the bays of seats, with arrangements made to clean door handles between journeys.

Facebook

Ploughman's Garden Centre, West Parley, Ferndown, Dorset (7¼" gauge)

I visited the 'Baskets and Blooms' garden centre on Tuesday 4th August 2020, which occupies the Plowman's Garden Centre site. Plowman still owns the site although his garden centre closed; a couple of other businesses are also still trading here. The West Parley & District Model Engineering Society appears to have lifted track within the shed and most of that outdoors, leaving just this short section as the only reminder of their railway.

Stewart Lanham

Poplar Miniature Railway, Marks Tey, Essex (7¼" gauge)

The railway reopened on 1 August following lockdown.

Facebook

Pugneys Light Railway, Pugneys Park, Wakefield (7¼" gauge)

Visit 11/08/20. The railway reopened on Monday 3rd August with no publicity. Two trains were running, a CP Brutus

and a Class 47 D1671, to enable social distancing with one train out on the line, whilst the other was being cleaned. I also noted that the passing loop has been extended.

Steve Mann

Rhyl Miniature Railway, Marine Lake, Rhyl (15" gauge)

The railway reopened on 18 July 2020 with social distancing measures in place.

Facebook

Riley's Railway, Isfield Station, East Sussex (Lavender Line), (5" Gauge)

Visit 12/07/20. Two of us had a very productive day today up at Riley's Miniature Railway, obviously following current distancing measures. Sadly, the Lavender Line is still closed, but we were able to carry out several maintenance jobs. One of the points at the top end of the line was finally adapted and is now sprung, meaning that we can now travel up on the right-hand side of the passing loop and then return automatically on the left-hand side. The two points were greased which will help reduce wear and help with encouraging the point blades to slide over. Adrian Pettitt brought with him a right-hand point, which he had very kindly made for the railway and this has been cut into one of the sidings at Evelina Junction station. This will give us access into our new carriage shed, which also doubles as the Lavender Line's shelter on Platform 2, a false wall dividing the two. The trackbed to this was dug out and membrane was laid. We have two track panels ready to be connected by fishplates and ballast will be added hopefully in a couple of week's time. Adrian has also fully restored the blue and white Riley's Miniature Railway sign, replacing several pieces of rotten wood and lettering and finally giving it several coats of paint - it certainly looks good and he has done a great job! This has been altered to be removed if need be which will help preserve it as we can take it down and

Riley's Railway: maintenance work in progress in July.
Photo: Graham Lelliott



store it in the dry when we are not there. Richard, Chris and Joe from the Lavender Line side were busy trimming foliage. The weather was lovely if not a little too hot but we certainly had a very productive day and got lots done.

Visit 26/07/20. The new siding into our new shed was finally finished today. The membrane had already been laid but the ready-made track panels needed joining with fishplates and then ballasting. A padlock and hasp was fitted to the new shed, which has now completed this project, giving us more shed space.

The next task was to look at several parts of the track and points which were in need of larger expansion joints. Because our track is aluminium it's incredible how much it expands on a hot day. Lavender Line volunteers continued with the hedge trimming and due to the amount that needed cutting back, a couple of wagons were pulled into the station on the big railway alongside to take it away.

Graham Lelliott

The Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway, New Romney, Kent
(15" gauge)

The railway reopened on Saturday 4 July, with an hourly service between New Romney and Dungeness between 10:30 and 15:30 not calling at Romney Sands. Trains were booked to wait at Dungeness for 20-minutes before returning to New Romney. Passengers were required to book their tickets in advance. From 18 July services resumed over the whole length of the line, but with pre-booking still a requirement.

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Over the last couple of weekends I've had the pleasure of visiting the RH&DR during which time services have gradually been restored over the full length of the line.

Jonathan James

Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway:

(Top right) Services resumed on Saturday 4th July and on this and on the following weekend trains ran between New Romney and Dungeness. This photo, taken on Sunday 12th July, shows No. 9 *Winston Churchill* accelerating away from New Romney and all locomotives were running with special "Steam trains return to Romney Marsh" headboards.

(Right) On these first two weekends, the locomotives uncoupled and ran around the balloon loop at Dungeness before re-joining to take their trains back towards New Romney. This provided some unusual photo opportunities as is the case here, again on Sunday 12th July as No. 2 *Northern Chief* heads light engine away from the station with the unique backdrop of the nuclear power station.

(Bottom) On Saturday 18th July a service was resumed along the full length of the line from Hythe to Dungeness, with No. 9 *Winston Churchill* given the honour of pulling the inaugural train at 10:30am. In this photo *Winston Churchill* runs non-stop through St. Mary's Bay station towards New Romney.

Photos: Chris Kennedy

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

The railway reopened on 4 July and was due to operate daily between 23 July and 3 September.

The current fleet list is: No.1 *Maurice the Major*, built 1995; No. 2 *Basil the Brigadier*, built 1938; No. 3 *Trevithick*, built 1976; D1000 *Western Independence*, built 1964; No. 4 *Isambard Kingdom Brunel*, built 1977; No. 6 *Sammy the Sargent*, built 2018; D1002 *Western Explorer*, built 1967; No. 2006 *The Engineer*, built 1952; No. 111 *The Great Bear*, built 1938; D1011 *Western Thunderer*, built 1964; No. 6100 *Royal Scott*, built 1938.

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Rudyard Lake Steam Railway: (Above left) *Sir Arthur*; (Above right) *Glen Auldyn* and *Frances*; (Below left) *Merlin* under the signal gantry; (Below right) *Merlin* with a goods train. Photos: John Moore



Sherwood Forest Railway: *Pet* and coaches. Photo: Steve Mann

Rudyard Lake Steam Railway, Rudyard, Leek, Staffordshire (10 1/4" gauge)

Visit 26/07/20. The following locos are located at the railway: *Merlin*, 2-4-2T built by the Exmoor Steam Railway in 1998; *King Arthur*, 0-6-2T built by the Exmoor Steam Railway in 2005 (although not working the trains this was *King Arthur's* first day back in steam after a re-tube); *Frances*, Bo-Bo HD built by David Vere in 1999 for the Isle of Mull Railway and rebuilt by him to join the Rudyard Lake Steam Railway in 2014; *Glen Auldyn*, Bo-Bo HD built on Mullin 1986 and rebuilt by David Vere.

John Moore

Sherwood Forest Railway, Edwinstowe, Mansfield (15" gauge)

The Railway reopened on 18th July with social distancing measures in place. Three coaches have been modified with wooden screens to enable separation of passenger groups.

The Railway is not operating a pre-book system, but is running to a timetable, so on arrival passengers when purchasing tickets are allocated a train time to enable

control of numbers / groups on a given train.

Unfortunately, little work has been carried out on the extension, following the wet winter weather affecting ground conditions, getting materials to site and then lockdown, but work is due to start again soon.

Steve Mann

Shibden Railway, Shibden Park, Halifax, West Yorkshire (7 1/4" gauge)

The railway reopened in mid-July and was planning to operate daily during the summer holidays between 12.00 and 16.00.

Facebook

Swanley New Barn Railway, Swanley, Kent (7 1/4" gauge)

The railway reopened on Saturday 25 July and subject to weather conditions, was due to operate daily until Sunday 6 September. Trains were only operating return trips, with Swanley Parkway (for the car park) remaining closed. Every other carriage was left empty, to provide a barrier between coaches, with cleaning taking place after every journey.

Facebook



Thompson Park Railway, Colne Road, Burnley (7¼" gauge)

The railway reopened on 11 July 2020, with fares set at £1, which were collected using a bucket at the station, to avoid the need to provide tickets. Passengers were encouraged to arrive with the exact money.

Facebook

Thorpe Light Railway, near Barnard Castle, Co.Durham (15" gauge)

A small group of volunteers has continued working with social distancing to get the railway back in use in keeping with HRA and ORR advice. Vegetation has been cleared, particularly overhanging branches. A great deal of work has been done on correcting levels and cant in the near loop.

Donations from the railway's Friends allowed the purchase of 5 tons of ballast. This was used to ballast the near loop from the start of the long right curve, past the shed, onto the straight and the left curve into the station. Vehicles used were the two Heywood-style wagons and 4wD *Bessie*. Much of the ballasting was done on 8 August. That same day, with annual inspections of track, locomotive and carriages done, the new covid-compliant operating regime was tried out in practice with some volunteers acting as passengers. The seating bays of the three Severn-Lamb carriages were measured to ensure 2m distance between those to be used. This meant just 4 out of the normal 11 seating bays were available. The 'passengers' were admitted to the platform one at a time and directed to a seating bay. On arrival back each 'passenger' was directed to the platform exit. *Bessie* and the three carriages did two such familiarisation runs. This was in preparation for a running day for the Friends eight days later on Sunday 16 August.

Philip Champion/Friends of Thorpe Light Railway

Thorpe LR: The loan for the day of a 1980 Leyland tractor allowed speedy ballast loading. Here the bucket section in *Bessie* was filled up. Photo: Anthony Coulls/Thorpe Light Railway



Wells and Walsingham: ex-Audley End coaches. Photo: Peter Wilson

Vanstone Woodland Railway, Vanstone Park, Codicote, Hertfordshire (10¼" gauge)

The railway reopened on 4 July after a three-month closure. Trains were operated by *Gonk* and *Borough of Buxton*. On 5 July their *Comet loco Sandham Castle* made an appearance. This locomotive is usually stabled in the shed at the station.

Facebook

Wansford Miniature Railway, Wansford, Nene Valley Railway (5" gauge)

A new miniature railway has opened at Wansford Station, alongside the Nene Valley Railway.

Facebook

Watford Miniature Railway, Cassiobury Park, Watford (10¼" gauge)

The Watford Miniature Railway reopened on 28 July, which was later than expected due to insurance issues. The railway was due to open daily during August.

Facebook

Wells & Walsingham Light Railway, Near Wells, Norfolk (10¼" gauge)

The WWLR reopened on 4th July and has kept busy since then, running seven days a week with seven trains a day. Many trains are heavily loaded - heavily loaded subject to social distancing rules, which on 10 1/4inch is not easy. Effectively our passenger carrying capacity is reduced by around 60% (with knock on effects on income), depending how many family "bubbles" we have on board. Passengers are certainly very glad to find us running and very friendly.

Currently the service is a shuttle to Wighton - about 2miles, giving a more frequent train service so that everybody who turns up at Wells gets a ride. The shuttle is headed south by steam - *Norfolk Heroine* bearing the entire strain at this end, in the absence of *Norfolk Hero* which is being re-tyred and given a full service. Heading back north to Wells, the duties generally fall to *Harvester* but sometimes to the Wisbech replica *Weasel*. We hope to start running through to Walsingham before long, if social distancing rules change and we can carry more passengers.

The WWLR is very grateful to our compatriot in the friendly world of 10¼" rail, the Audley End Railway, who have most generously given us a set of their recently retired articulated coaches, which we hope will form a second passenger carrying set for busy times. Now to lay a loop at Wighton!

Peter Wilson

Wirksworth Miniature Railway, Wirksworth, Derbyshire (7¼" gauge)

The Wirksworth Miniature Railway reopened on Sunday 9 August 2020. The first train, hauled by *Wren*, ran with a headboard saying 'Victory over the Virus'.

Facebook

My First Narrow Gauge Photographs

In August 1971 I was only recently out of short trousers and had received a 35mm East German Bierette camera for my birthday. As it was still the school holidays, I was free to take a day out to the South Coast to visit the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway, a line I had dreamed of seeing for several years.

After an uneventful journey into London Euston, a trip on the Tube, another train from London Victoria and then a bus from (I think) Sandling, I arrived at Hythe RH&DR Station. The general bustle of the place was impressive and really gave the impression of a mainline station. I bought a return to Dungeness that allowed me to break my journey along the way. I boarded the first train heading west and it was from here that I took my first narrow gauge photograph of a train being prepared underneath the Train Shed. (Top right)

Those of us who are of a certain age will remember how expensive photography used to be especially including processing. I had been given a roll of "Boots" colour slide film, but I was being frugal in the number of shots I took. However, I still took a chance on photographing a passing train on the double track section, with both trains running at speed. (Right)

I broke my journey at New Romney and spent a couple of hours there, including a visit to the shop and café. At that time I was an active member at Leighton Buzzard Narrow Gauge Railway and had my membership card with me, I was able to use this to "blag" a trip around the sheds as I was especially interested in the MotorRail they had. There were also several steam locos being serviced/ repaired, including one that had been involved in a level crossing collision, though I forget which one. I took several photos here but unfortunately the lack of a flash and the low light transpired to spoil all of them. I was also shown a number of historic carriages including the Royal Saloon. The weather was a little overcast and misty, which I think is evident from the sky and the background. (Right)

I then headed for Dungeness, where the loco detached and ran round the loop, across Britannia points and then reversed onto the train. I assume that at the time the permanent way on the loop was not good enough for passenger services. It was here I took my penultimate and best photograph, which still pleases me after all these years (right). I then set off for home, with a heavy sea mist rolling in, having had a thoroughly enjoyable day. (Photo bottom right, leaving Dungeness).

The photo at the bottom of the page shows the centre of attention at New Romney on that day!

During the Covid-19 lockdown I took the opportunity to scan these images, they are now nearly 50 years old and show all the shortcomings of an Eastern Bloc camera, soft focus, vignetting, a snatchy shutter and poor low light performance, still, they are now a historical record, and their shortcomings give them a certain charm.

Steve Barber



The Cadeby Light Railway

May 1964: I have been fortunate to visit Teddy Boston's railway to see 0-4-0ST *Pixie* (WB 2090/1919) three times recently and, despite being only 17 years old, I have received a warm welcome each time. The line is quite short and runs through the trees around three sides of the rectory garden. It starts from a small platform behind a large shed containing an extensive 00 gauge model railway, passes a short siding and terminates at a sleeper stop block on the end of a short embankment. As there is not enough space for run-round loops *Pixie* runs cab first pushing a short train of 4-wheel wagons filled with passengers on the outward journey, pulling them on the return journey. Due to the rather uneven permanent way (and the spirited driving technique of the proprietor) derailments are not an infrequent occurrence but are soon dealt with by staff and visitors.

On my first visit I travelled by Barton bus from my home in Long Eaton to Coalville and onwards by the Midland Red Hinckley service as far to Cadeby. The bus takes a rather circuitous route around the local villages so I was pleased to be appointed 'navigator' on my next trip with a group from the Long Eaton Model Railway Society. We travelled in style in a Morris 10 owned by Peter Brooks the club leader. The speedometer was somewhat erratic but you knew when it had passed 50 mph when a small cloud of smoke drifted from under the dashboard!

1980s Footnote: The Leicester Group of the NGRS was a 'spin-off' from the Cadeby Light Railway with meetings normally held on the second Saturday of each winter month, first at Leicester Museum and then at the Richard the Third pub in Highcross Street. In later years when we were all more mobile, group committee meetings sometimes took place at Cadeby. Business generally took only a short time before Audrey (Rev. Teddy Boston's wife) brought in tea, always with the admonishment "Only one biscuit for the rector"! Happy Days!

Alan Bowler



Bressingham, August 2019

Here are some photos from our visit to Bressingham on 10/08/2019 with 0-4-0WT+T *Bevan* (Bressingham 2010) in its new green livery.

(Left) *Bevan* and 0-4-0VBT+T *Fernilee* double heading a passenger train on the Fen Railway.

(Left lower) *Bevan* hauling a demonstration train of empty slate wagons.

(Below) *Bevan* hauling a demonstration train of empty slate wagons past the workshop. On the left is 0-4-0ST *Cloister* (Hunslet 542/1891) which was on loan to Bressingham from the Hampshire Narrow Gauge Railway Trust from May to November 2019. It is now part of the Statfold Narrow Gauge Museum Trust collection.

Adrian Townsend

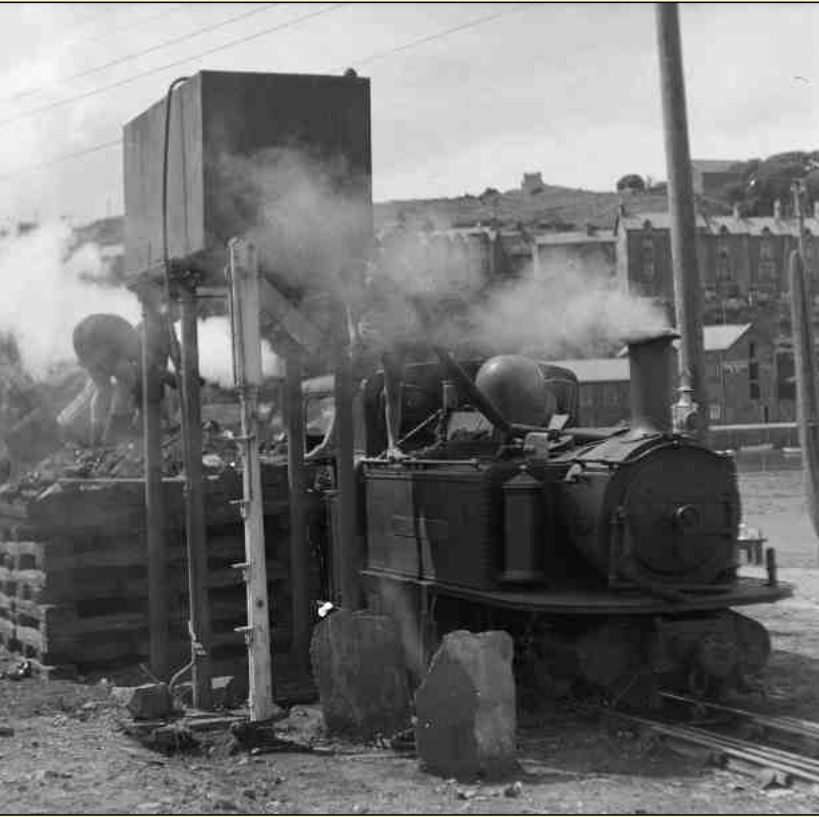


Family Holidays in North Wales

These narrow gauge railway photographs were taken by my father Ken Smith during family holidays in the early 1960s. He was a member of the Railway Photographic Society and shot nearly all his stuff on medium format. Most of our family holidays had a railway element, much to my Mother's disgust!

Kev Smith

This page shows photos of the Festiniog Railway in August 1961.



*(Top right) Double Fairlie Merddin Emrys at Harbour station.
(Above) Double Fairlie Earl of Merioneth (was Taliesin until April 1961 and is now Livingston Thompson – currently in the NRM, York) at the coaling stage, Porthmadog Harbour station.*

(Right) Double Fairlie Merddin Emrys arrives at Porthmadog Harbour station. The loco had only recently re-entered service after a protracted overhaul and is seen here running without a cab and with the side tanks still in red oxide primer.

(Below) Double Fairlies Merddin Emrys (left) and Earl of Merioneth at Porthmadog Harbour station.

(Below right) Double Fairlie Earl of Merioneth departing Porthmadog Harbour station with a heavy train for Tan-y-Bwlch.



On this page we continue the photos sent in by *Kev Smith* with his father's views of the Festiniog in June 1966



Festiniog Railway June 1966

(Above left) England 0-4-0ST+T Prince entering Porthmadog Harbour station.

(Above and left) 0-4-0T+T Blanche (Hunslet 589/1893) at Porthmadog Harbour station.

(Below left) 0-4-0T+T Linda (Hunslet 590/1893) awaiting departure from Porthmadog Harbour station.

(Below) Linda taking on water at Porthmadog Harbour station.



Here are *Kev Smith's* father's views of the Vale of Rheidol Railway in August 1961



Vale of Rheidol Railway August 1961

(Above left) 2-6-2T No. 9 Prince of Wales awaiting departure at Devil's Bridge.

(Above) 2-6-2T No. 7 Owain Glyndwr approaching Devil's Bridge.

(Left) 2-6-2T No. 7 Owain Glyndwr at Devil's Bridge.

(Below left) An unidentified Vale of Rheidol 2-6-2T crosses a road near Aberystwyth.

(Below) 2-6-2T No. 9 Prince of Wales on the approach to Devil's Bridge.



Here are *Kev Smith's* father's views of the Tallyllyn Railway in the 1960s



(Above right) 0-4-2ST No.4 Edward Thomas (Kerr Stuart 4047/1921) stands at the coaling stage at Tywyn Wharf. In the background is metre gauge 0-6-0T No. 5 Cambrai (Corpet-Louvet 493/1888). It was acquired from the Waltham Iron Ore Tramway in 1960 as an exhibit for the Narrow Gauge Railway Museum. It is now on display at the Irchester Narrow Gauge Railway Museum. August 1961

(Above) Tywyn Wharf station as seen from the road bridge. Edward Thomas waits to depart for Abergynolwyn. Our Ford Prefect is visible to the right of the loco with the roof loaded with camping gear and myself stood in front with my leg cocked looking bored! August 1961

(Second right) Edward Thomas with a train for Abergynolwyn in the cutting between Tywyn Wharf and Pendre. August 1961

(Third right) Edward Thomas in the cutting approaching Tywyn Wharf. June 1966

(Below) Seen from the road bridge, Edward Thomas enters Tywyn Wharf station. Notice the differences in the track layout and buildings since 1961. June 1966

(Bottom right) 0-4-0 WT Douglas (Andrew Barclay 1431/1918) at Tywyn Wharf station. June 1966





Holcot Steam Rally (Northants - see photo above) used to have a number of working exhibits including a road-building scene with a 2' gauge railway running on steel-sleepered portable track. The Ruston locomotive and other railway equipment were from Leicester Museums. A sign to that effect was sometimes carried on the side of the locomotive. Some of the hardcore used for the demonstration is visible on the left of the shot. Over the weekend of the show this was crushed and graded using machinery driven by the traction engines, carried in the railway tipper trucks to the road construction area, tipped and raked by hand and finally rolled by the steam rollers to form the road bed. The photo was taken at the 2006 rally. The rally at Holcot has not been held in recent years.

Barry Nixon



Bredonvale Products Defford, Worcs:

(Left and left below) Home-made loco, Tish, which used the engine from a Gwyn car.

(Below) Their other loco. RH 229655, ex. Amalgamated Roadstone, Malvern on the extension of the line which went through a garden.

All photos 7/5/1967.

John Tennant





(Above left) Hunslet on the scrapline at Hatfield Moor. (Above right) Schöma at Fisons. (Bottom left) Loaded wagon returning from the claypit, the Humber Bridge in the background (Bottom right) A loaded wagon about to be hauled up the ramp at Swinefleet.

Hatfield Moor, Swinefleet, Far Ings Tile Works, Scunthorpe Steel works

Gravesend Railway Enthusiasts Society had arranged a visit to Scunthorpe Steelworks on 23 July 1991.

Our first stop was at Fison's peat fields at Stainforth Moor, near Doncaster. There we found an interesting mix of methods in getting peat from the moor to the works for treatment and bagging. The line runs from the factory 2.5 miles to the loading area out on the moor and transport is broken up as follows:

a) At the works end a tractor pulls 30 wagons round the loop and over the points to await collection – the drawback between the wagons and the tractor is a length of chain and we were surprised that the wagons did not follow the sideways pull and derail.

b) At the top of the loop a set of points give out to 1.75 miles of 'straight' track. The tubs are pulled along this by a unit consisting of two locomotives – one with cab, controls and engine and the other a platform only with hydraulic drive for the wheels. They are both 0-4-0 units made in Germany by Schöma. Apparently, no UK manufacturer would produce a 3'0" gauge locomotive. This unit is in many ways similar to BR's class 13 which was two class 08 diesels adapted for heavy shunting.

c) At the top of the straight another set of points and a spur allows the train of tubs to be taken over by two Hunslet locos which have separate drivers and

will not work in parallel. These locos continue along the line to the loading point on the moor. This process is reversed with full train until they reach the unloading point where a Volvo unit with an adapted fork lift picks the truck up and inverts it into the loading hopper – the peat continues into the factory by conveyor belt. There is a 'tippler' unit at this point but it does not work satisfactorily and so it has been replaced by the Volvo fork lift unit. There is a wagon repair shed at the side of the works where tubs were being strengthened by welding new ribs and corners and other repairs were carried out.

We left Hatfield Moor and after some refreshment went on to Swinefleet to Fisons's second peat unit where we saw much the same picture as before except that two new Schöma 0-4-0 + 0-4-0 units were present (one had only arrived on 22/7/91). Four Simplex units were rusting away on a siding. We did not go out on the moor at Swinefleet as we were running late for our next appointment.

Our next visit was to Barton on Humber underneath the Humber Bridge. Here we visited the William Blyth Ltd clay tile works. Here a half a mile of track, a wagon and a Motor Rail unit of 1941 make up the railway system. Clay is excavated by JCB, which also moves the track nearer to the pit face as required. It is transported to the

works (half a mile) by rail in a tipper wagon propelled by the Motor Rail unit. At the works the wagon is hauled up a steep slope to the top floor of the grinding and mixing unit. The haulage is an electric powered winch. An old drive unit lies rusting at the side of the track.

2020 update

According to Wikipedia (23/05/2020) a management buyout took place in July 1994 with the new company being taken over by Scotts on 1st January 1998. Peat cutting on Thorne and Hatfield Moors effectively ended in 2001. The three Schöma Locos are now at the Crowle Peatland Railway near Scunthorpe.

I visited the Blyth Tile works again on 28 July 2002 when the Simplex was locked in its shed, looking as though it had not been used for some time.

David Hanger



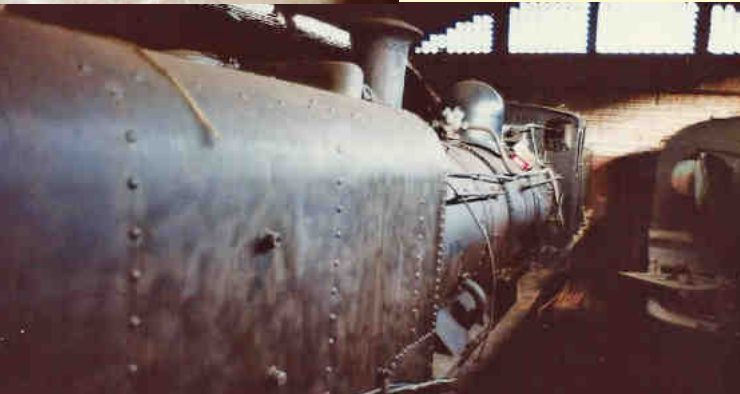


Collection X

These were all taken at "Collection X" in Surrey, now known as the Phyllis Rampton Narrow Gauge Railway Trust on 21st April, 1980 unless otherwise stated.

1. Avonside 2057 of 1931 Renishaw 4 31 Jan 1981
2. Bagnall 2895 of 1948
3. Henschel 16073 of 1918 No 101 31 Jan 1981
4. Couillet 1209 of 1898 No2 Samelices
5. Henschel 16045 of 1918 No 103
6. Hanomag 10634 of 1928
7. Dick Kerr of c.1918 No 18
8. Hulleras de Sabero Directors Coach exterior and...
9. interior

Keith Lewis-Jones





USA Memories

(Above) In 2017 the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) made a documentary about the railcars known as Galloping Geese that operated on the three foot gauge lines in Colorado. Late one afternoon in July Galloping Goose No. 5 built in 1933 was prepared for filming on the Cumbres and Toltec Railroad at Chama having been brought by trailer from the City of Delores where it is normally on display. Shortly after this picture was taken the railcar set off with a full load of passengers. No booking was required for a seat, the film company just wanted it to be seen full of passengers so anyone wanting a free ride could jump aboard!

(Top right) Just before the railcar departed locomotive No.489 arrived from Antonito with the late afternoon train. The iconic coaling and water towers at Chama can just be seen through the steam. No.489 is a Class K-36 2-8-2 built in 1925.

(Right) Whilst mainly used for special trains, in 2017 the smaller Class K-27 2-8-2 No.463 built in 1903 was often kept in steam at Chama in case one of the trains ran into problems.

(Below left) A picture taken hundreds of times which never fails to satisfy. The renowned bend on the so called "high line" of the Durango and Silverton Railroad was photographed in 2017 with No.480, another of the Class K-36 2-8-2 locomotive built in 1925, heading the north bound train.

(Below right) Knotts Berry Farm in California is a theme park with rides for all ages. It is one of the oldest such parks in California and early on it acquired Denver & Rio Grande Western locomotive No.340. Built in 1881 this Class C19 2-8-0 was photographed operating on the oval of track around the property in 1997 known as the Ghost Town and Calico Railroad.

Adrian Garner





Beech Hurst Park Miniature Railway, Haywards Heath, West Sussex. (3½" & 5" gauges) These photos are from my only visit which would have been late 1980s or early 1990s when I was living in north Sussex.

(Above) A general view of the line.

(Below left) GWR pannier tank and train entering the tunnel.

(Below right) LNER 1065 at the steaming bays.

(Bottom left and right) Two views of LNER B1 61003 Gazelle.

Stewart Lanham

NB: The Sussex Miniature Locomotive Society (SMLS) was formed in 1951 and opened its 3½ & 5 inch dual gauge raised level track three years later on 10th May 1954. Originally the track only ran around the bowling greens, but in 1974 it was doubled in length to its present size of almost half a mile. Further improvements over the years means that the railway now boasts two tunnels, steaming bays, covered accommodation for rolling stock, fully automatic colour light signalling, club house and extensive workshops. (Society Web site)



