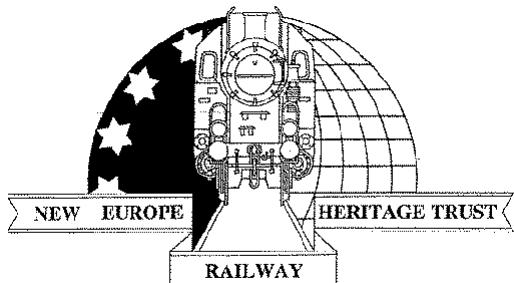


Eastern Star



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The Croatia Railway Museum



NERHT Chairman Stephen Wiggs and Museum Director Tamara Stefanac in the Croatia Railway Museum. Until World War 1 Hungarian locomotives were dominant in Croatia. This 2-6-2 is of the MAV 324 design.

(Continued overleaf)

Following the initial contact made last year by Livius Kooy, Andrew Scott and Stephen Wiggs travelled to Zagreb in June and visited the Croatia Railway Museum and had discussions with the director Tamara Stefanac and representatives of Croatian Railways, the owners of the museum. As will be seen from these photos by Andrew Scott, the Museum contains some very interesting exhibits and we are pleased to hear that it may join Fedecrail.



Another exhibit in Zagreb: No 125-052 of the Hungarian 326 design that originated in 1882

Montenegro

Another constituent of the former Yugoslavia also has a railway history, although less celebrated than that of Croatia. Here is a review of a recent book on the subject.

RAILWAYS OF MONTENEGRO – THE QUEST FOR A TRANS-BALKAN RAILWAY By Keith Chester. Published by Frank Stenvalls. Hard covers, 21cm x 30 cm. 232 pages. More than 310 illustrations in black and white and colour together with maps.

Montenegro is one of Europe's smaller countries, and ceased to exist as an independent state after it was overrun by the Central Powers in 1916 and then incorporated after the First World War in what became Yugoslavia, only to regain its independence in 2006. Its complex and turbulent history is matched by that of its railways. The only line in the pre-WW1 kingdom of Montenegro was the 750mm gauge Antivari Railway from the port of Bar to Virpazar, built by Italian interests as part of Italy's drive for influence in the Balkans. More lines were laid before and after WW2, and in post-war years the country was served by 600mm, 750mm and

760mm railways, the last of these connected to the famous narrow gauge system linking Dubrovnik. Montenegro was finally joined to the Yugoslav and European standard gauge network by the spectacular Belgrade-Bar railway, finally completed in 1976 and also built largely for political reasons. Today the narrow gauge is no more than a memory although plinthed locomotives and stock from the Antivari Railway may be seen at Bar and Podgorica. This summary omits the numerous and ambitious politically-motivated schemes in the 19th and 20th centuries which would have made the country into a major transport hub, all of which are described by Keith Chester. A chapter on industrial railways completes the picture. The author is to be commended for producing a highly interesting and readable study of a little-known topic. S W

Copies may be obtained from Welsh Highland Heritage Railway, The Station, Tremadog Road, Porthmadog LL49 9DY Tel 01766 513402. Price £38 plus postage.

Ukraine

Haivoron Railway – Latest News

Latest news from this threatened Ukrainian 75cm gauge system (see *Eastern Star* 65) is that the lightly-used line from Haivoron (Gaivoron) to Holovanivsk is likely to close but the line from Haivoron across the River Bug to Rudnytsia will remain in use for the time being, as the trains (see picture) are fairly busy and used for journeys which cannot easily be made by road. NERHT delegates travelled over the

whole route in June and July, the trip to Holovanivsk being made courtesy of AZIZU by a 'draisine' in the form of a Zim limousine fitted with rail wheels (see

picture). In recent years a number of tours for Western groups have included the Haivoron railway and it is thought that the Holovanivsk section might have a future as a heritage railway, if numerous difficulties can be overcome. S W

Photos by Gordon Rushton



Steam in Kyiv

Kyiv residents and visitors who braved the heat on Ukrainian Constitution Day (June 28) had the chance to enjoy steam on both broad and narrow gauge. On the children's (or pioneer) railway the GR Class 0-8-0 was hauling five well-filled carriages:



while at the main station an Er Class 0-10-0 headed the vintage train (*below*) which runs around Kyiv on Sundays and public holidays throughout the year. S W



Photos by Gordon Rushton

The Antonivka Project



This Ukrainian narrow-gauge project is continuing steadily forward, and Wolfram Wendelin has sent some recent pictures. This one shows work on restoration of the PD-2 draisine.

Estonia

Enthusiasm for manually-propelled rail trolleys has spread to Estonia, where a rally was recently held. Details, including many pictures, can be found in issue No 87 on the *Velocipede* website.

Latvia

In July a television team visited *Banitis* with the intention of including it in Chris Tarrant's *Extreme Railways* series, to be broadcast on Channel 5 and Discovery channels.



The *Banitis* line has now had inter-war uniforms made for its operating staff, shown here on parade beside the *Ferdinands* locomotive.

Photos Andris Biedrins

Russia

Brightening Russian Prospects for 2017

Sergei Dorozhkov writes:

Poor weather in the first 6 months of 2017 has heavily affected tourism in Russia, with approximately 30% official decline compared with the previous year. Accordingly, many museums and tourist companies had to alter plans. Mid-July saw some improvement of the situation, and a sunny and hot August allowed catching up a bit.

Weather has affected not only tourism. A project was due to start in May to search for railway relics, sunk in Lake Ladoga near St. Petersburg during the blockade of Leningrad of 1941-1944. Among numerous military and civil equipment buried under the water was some narrow and broad gauge rolling stock. Cold water and winds postponed the start of diving nearly a month against the planned schedule. Nevertheless, certain discoveries have been already made, and more are anticipated. We hope to have more details in time for the next issue of *Eastern Star*.

The Sverdlovsk children's railway at Ekaterinburg is running its first season with steam trains, which have appeared very popular with the public. Over 60 thousand passengers were carried in the first 6 months, which came as an astonishing figure. Search and acquisition of historic rolling stock for the new narrow gauge museum on the site of the railway continues.

After many years of neglect internal tourism began to receive attention from the government. Accordingly, local initiative started to be recognised. In Pereslavl, August 20 saw an open round-table with the authorities, where topics of saving historical architecture of the town and region were raised. Questions of further development of the Pereslavl Railway were also touched, and the following day Yuliya Rybakova, the Director of Yaroslavl Oblast tourist department, visited

Pereslavl Railway Museum.

The AM-1 railcar restoration project, described in the September 2015 and June 2016 issues of *Eastern Star*, had to move from Moscow due to closure of the hosting site. Pereslavl came as an obvious choice for a new home, and the railcar (*pictured here by Dmitry Kalinovsky*) was put on rails there on July'7, for the first time after 30 years.



Narrow Gauge Forum. The first, 2016, Forum was reported in December's *Eastern Star*. The second, 2017, is scheduled for mid-September and offers a three-day programme, including a full-day devoted to the Alapaevsk Railway (where it is hoped steam locomotive VP4-1425 will haul the special train). Speakers at the conference will not only include representatives from existing narrow gauge projects, but also from the sponsoring institution (the Sverdlovsk Railway), the Ekaterinburg municipal administration, at least one foreign tours operator, and historians, together with specialists actually involved with the technicalities of restoration.

If last year's Forum was a landmark for Russian preservation, signalling the emergence of an all-Russia movement, this second conference, accenting the integration of narrow-gauge lines with tourism developments, marks a serious getting-down-to-business. Ekaterinburg, capital of Sverdlovsk Region, has for some time been asserting itself as a distinctive city of culture and history, and the Sverdlovsk Railway's previous initiatives (its support of the local ex-children's narrow gauge line, railway museum, and the Alapaevsk line), fit in well with this broader prospect.

J N W



Ekaterinburg's narrow-gauge tourist line in operation

Photo Evgeniy Zdovorenko

Obituary

Richard Tapper 1942 - 2017

Many of our readers will already have heard the sad news that Richard Tapper died in August, having been a member of the NERHT Committee and Membership Secretary since our trust was founded. Richard experienced a serious illness when a teenager and for the rest of his life he faced mobility issues and other health problems which he bore with great courage. Despite all these difficulties he was an enthusiastic and an intrepid traveller, and almost to the end of his life he made journeys - which in many cases would have daunted those fitter and younger than him – to railway sites and events all around the world. Given his interest in foreign travel and in railways it was natural that for many years he was Overseas Liaison Officer of Heritage Railway Association and in the days before Fedecrail and Wattrain were set up he played a major part in developing links with museums and

preservation schemes abroad. He also served as Board Minutes Secretary of HRA, and was a stalwart and hard-working supporter of the association and of all the transport heritage bodies to which he belonged.

When in 1994 the informal committee which became NERHT first met we were advised to recruit him, and over the years he played a full part in our activities; he attended the 2017 AGM very soon after leaving hospital following an operation and came to our committee meeting just over two weeks before his death.

We have lost a good friend and a loyal supporter, and our sympathy goes to Richard's family.



The ever-convivial Richard during a visit to Ventspils in 2003

Photo Andris Biedrins

Baltic Railways Magazine

Tony Olsson writes:

Members will be aware that printed copies of the magazine ceased in early 2015. The online version, the Facebook page and the new BRM App haven't been updated since late 2016 though they can still be accessed on line. However, a recent proposal to change the name in an attempt to attract a wider audience, suggests the project has not yet been consigned to history. Sadly, work seems to have been stopped on other projects, the most important of which is the book about railway vehicles with internal combustion engines (mainly railcars) of Lithuanian Railways during the period of independence 1919 to 1940. This is a complementary volume to the book about steam locomotives during the same period which was published in 2012. From my involvement in checking the translations into English, I gained the impression the new book was not far off being published. When I receive more information I will pass it on, but if any members are able and willing to help get this project back up and running, I would be delighted to hear from them via tonyolsson124@btinternet.com.

2018 AGM. It is now expected that the next NERHT annual general meeting will be held in its usual location at the Model Railway Club near Kings Cross on Saturday April 7 at 2 p.m. followed at 3 p.m. by an illustrated talk (open to non-members) by our visitors from Russia, Evgeniy Zdvorenko and Sergei Dorozhkov.

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The New Europe Railway Heritage Trust ('NERHT') is a voluntary organisation established to help railway preservation in the former USSR and the ex-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe (registered in the UK as charity No 1099229).

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