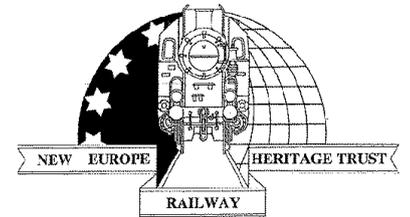


Eastern Star



Journal of the New Europe Railway Heritage Trust,
helping railway preservation in the New Europe

New Plans for Borzhava Valley Railway



Since 2002 NERHT has been supporting the campaign to restore the historic Borzhava Valley Railway in Western Ukraine. In this time little progress has been made towards the aim of reviving this narrow gauge line as a tourist attraction, and the process of decline has continued; passenger services now only run from Vinohradiv to Khmelnik (having been cut back from Irshava) and the class Gr 0-8-0 steam loco was removed some time ago.

The latest plans are centred on the scenic – but derelict - upper section from Irshava towards Kushnitsa. German preservationist Sebastian Trolle, acting as a consultant to the Ukraine Minister of Infrastructure for the pilot project in August 2017, has sent us the following account of this challenging scheme.

The aim of the project is the introduction and management of a tourist train operation on the Borzhava Raiiway using a steam locomotive. For the project I recommended a pilot scheme within the defined framework conditions, to introduce regular tourism traffic as a trial operation following the example of European narrow gauge railways, and the holiday month of August was considered appropriate.

Experience in other countries shows the attractiveness of a whole region can be considerably increased by steam operated tourist trains. This can lead to greater identification by the resident population with their home region, economic growth and reduced unemployment, (reinforcement of wish to stay i.e less out-migration) The Borzhava railway can perform a key role in the economic development of the areas served.

The pilot project on the Borzhava railway resonated in the entire Ukrainian radio, TV, and print media as well as in one of the largest German daily papers, the *Berliner Zeitung*. Local people participated in a lively manner and were enthusiastic about steam trains. Identification with the railway as part of their home region was astonishingly strong. The project was seen as offering real promise and should be followed through as well as extended. A time period of five years for development is planned. The next tasks are obtaining an operational steam locomotive, building up an operational management structure, and bringing up to operating standard a stretch of line in the upper section from Irshava in the direction of Kushnitsa.



Key decision-takers were contacted by myself and included the Ukrainian Ministry of Infrastructure (Minister Volodymyr Omelyan), the management of Ukrainian State Railway, and the Governor of Transcarpathia, Genadiy Moskal (on whose recommendation the President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko would like to become patron of the project).

The railway should be given national recognised technical heritage status. Support has been expressed by the relevant cabinet minister for this. The German Embassy in Kiev offered to support the project in the Year of the German Language which has just started. (This is an annual programme of technical and other measures paid for by the Federal Government)

The regional government of Transcarpathia has calculated the costs of further construction at 140 million Ukrainian Hrivna (approx. 4.6 million Euros) The project would be transferable to other regions and fits in with the goals of the Ukrainian Decentralisation and Regionalisation Reform proposals.

For the time being the project has been supported by the Verein Ostgleis with an eye to its experiences on the Wassertalbahn (Viseu de Sus Romania). The project would not have been possible without the work over many years of the NGO Borzhava Initiative.

(Sebastian Trolle has also supplied the two photographs showing the pilot scheme in action)

Ukrainian Heritage Railway Projects

In July 2018 Stephen Wiggs and Livius Kooy were privileged to attend the 10th anniversary celebrations of the Ukrainian Railway Heritage Association ('AZIZU'), and while in Ukraine they took the opportunity to visit several railway sites in the country as well as taking part in a conference in Lviv on the long-standing plans (see previous issues of *Eastern Star*) to develop the Znesinnya Railway just outside the city for tourism. We will publish news from these lines in future issues of *Eastern Star*, and an account of the latest plans for the Borzhava Valley Railway appears above. Meanwhile, here is a picture by Livius Kooy of the intermingling of local market and railway activity at Vinohradiv on the Borzhava Valley line.



Obituary



On April 18, 2018 our faithful Comrade, the head and organizer of AZIZU, Alexander Nikolayevich Hopkalo, suddenly left our life. The life and active work of Alexander Nikolayevich was at the turn of two epochs: socialist and capitalist. Alexander Nikolayevich grew up in Kyiv, which is a major railway junction. From his youth, he collected models of the rolling stock in 1:87 scale. With his parents, Alexander travelled a lot by rail and before his eyes occurred the sudden replaced of the steam locomotives by the so-called. "progressive" types of traction. But the meaning of his life was precisely these engines - the steam-breathing workers, and their preservation for future generations. Alexander Nikolayevich actually joined this work from 1978. One of his first goals was the preservation of the Su Class steam engines (2-6-2), of which were only a few in Ukraine in those years. One of them, which was installed as a monument in Kotovsk, was saved only thanks to unprecedented pressure on the railway

authorities in Moscow. Alexander's proposals submitted to the communist party bodies and to the South-Western Railway about the creation of the railway museum of Ukraine remained without consideration; in the late 80s there was little interest in this matter from CPSU officials.

Alexander, thanks to his organizational skill, in the 90s was able to rally around him a team of activists, whose common task was the creation of the Ukrainian Railway Museum. Great help was provided by enthusiasts from Great Britain, which made possible a small collection of steam locomotives, which could become a part of the future museum. Unfortunately, most of this collection was destroyed or dispersed by high-handed actions

by officials or individuals. In 2000, Alexander's efforts were focused on creating of a public organization that could break the resistance of officials who did not want to change their attitude concerning preservation of the railway heritage. He became chairman of this organization (AZIZU) and led it until his death. The aim of AZIZU was not only to preserve the railways of the old days, but also to popularise the profession of railwayman. Regular trips with steam traction and volunteer trips for the repairs of locomotives in the Tsvitkove depot were carried out. There were also exhibitions of relics from old-time railways and railway models as well. AZIZU is well known outside Ukraine. NEHRT and Fedecrail provide extensive assistance to the members and management of AZIZU, including methodological support and visits to volunteer youth camps in various European countries. All this became possible thanks to the active position and efforts of A.N. Hopkalo.

Alas, but recently the attitude of officials towards AZIZU has become more and more complicated. A.N. Hopkalo and a team of like-minded people saw in their actions a strong desire to get rid of public control, and the risk to the remaining steam locomotives utilization. All this could not but affect the mood and health of our colleague.

Unfortunately, Alexander's achievements and talents have not been fully revealed. He was a good photographer and possessed a phenomenal memory, fixing all significant moments from the history of the Ukrainian railways. Alexander Nikolayevich was a true patriot of Ukraine. He managed to share some of his knowledge with colleagues and publishers of a number of popular scientific publications, and we are grateful to him for this.

We believe that the business of our leader will be continued and we will have a museum of operational historical railway items in Ukraine. Alexander will forever remain in our memory as the best of the best.

Victor Gorodnyanskiy

Romania

Lifting Jack for Romania

Members and contacts of NERHT are always keen to help our friends in the East, so when Bucharest-based lawyer Neil McGregor saw a lifting jack for sale at a bargain price on eBay he knew that it would be just right for track work on the Sibiu-Agnita Railway. Happily, our web-master Mark Dewell was able to collect the jack from the seller, a neighbour of his in Essex, and NERHT member Bill Parker has agreed to transport this useful item on his next overland trip to Romania. Our thanks go to all who have helped with this exercise.

Fedecrail Youth Camp

For some years Fedecrail has been organising a working holiday for young volunteers from railway heritage sites, with the aim of widening their experience and deepening their interest. NERHT customarily offers some assistance to a selected few from the countries which it covers. Here are some appreciative accounts by four Ukrainian participants who received help from NERHT to attend the 2018 camp, held in Sweden.

Oleksandr Berdnikov thanks Fedecrail and NERHT for 'our wonderful trip' and was especially interested in the Malmcoping and the Stockholm tram lines. Andrii Bukrieiev gives some details of his practical work, fitted in with museum visits.. His first task was cleaning and painting seat frames. Another day he was dismantling and cleaning a compressor and not long afterwards was engaged in cutting lineside bushes. Dmytro Turovets also fitted in some practical work between visits to historic railways and museums. He mentions in particular the Marrielfred line where the ex-Russian TU4-3147, formerly at Haivoron in Ukraine, is at work. He was also impressed by the national railway

museum, especially for its cooperation between the state and enthusiasts. Earlier, on the 891mm gauge line from Faringe, he and others had tried various professions, including repair work and on-train ticket inspection. Oleh Hudzeliak, a 21-year old student and narrow-gauge enthusiast wrote `...it was really nice! ...It was very intensive nine days.... There was a friendly atmosphere in the camp, it was interesting for me to find new friends



from different European countries. I was pleasantly surprised at the very high level of preservation of the historical heritage of the railways. It was especially interesting for me to find out how it is possible to maintain and develop narrow-gauge railways and the historical rolling stock, as this issue is very relevant in Ukraine. In conversations with many narrow-gauge railway workers I realized how this success was achieved in Sweden, in what form the state and enthusiasts are interacting. This experience will be very useful as, in Ukraine, all

narrow-gauge railways with passenger traffic (except one) are fully governed by the national railway operator, and we are looking for the optimal form of cooperation between enthusiasts on the one hand and the national railway operator on the other hand to preserve and develop our narrow-gauge railways. Also, I was quite impressed by Malmkoping heritage tramway. Especially by the amount of heritage tramways there! Many thanks to the organizers of the camp, especially Mimmi Mickelsen, who spent all these 9 days with us. I arrived back in Ukraine with a new knowledge, experience and a huge inspiration to make even more efforts to improve matters with the preservation of heritage railways in my country!

(The photo showing Ukrainian participants on a museum visit is by courtesy of Volodimir Berdnikov)

Russia



A New Hand Trolley

A hand trolley has been built in the Talitsy Museum workshop at Pereslavl for the Alapaevsk Railway. This picture by Alla Okulova shows it on view at Verkhnyaya Sinyachiha station.

Top Russian Railways Meeting at Ekaterinburg

The annual assembly of Russian railway managers (CEOs) is a big event, and this year it was held in Ekaterinburg. Apart from the managers of the different railway companies, the head of Russian Railways and significant political figures also attended. The assembly's business was of course concerned with big issues of the mainline railways, but the fact that Ekaterinburg and its mainline Sverdlovsk Railway have an interest in railway preservation does have some significance. Sergei Dorozhkov writes:

Of course, most discussion topics were very far from preservation, but the sightseeing programme included visits to the Sverdlovsk Childrens' Railway and the new narrow gauge museum. Two steam engines, O&K 0-8-0T no.9 ex Mansfeld Kombinat from Germany and Votkinsk 0-8-0 VP-4-1425 were in steam for the event. The contribution of the Sverdlovsk Railway to the preservation and conservation of heritage was highly appraised by the Assembly participants. Thus there is more confidence that preservation topics will receive attention not only on the Sverdlovsk Railway, but also on other divisions of the Russian Railways. Not without some caution it might be stated that the preservation efforts of the Sverdlovsk team received a green light for broadening horizons - literally, for including broad gauge steam into development plans. This sets new targets and brings new possibilities.



VP-4-1425 outside the new educational and technical centre on the Ekaterinburg childrens railway. Photo Evgenii Zdrovenko

Russian Narrow Gauge: the Pre-war History

(Continuation of Sergei Dorozhkov's presentation at our 2018 AGM)

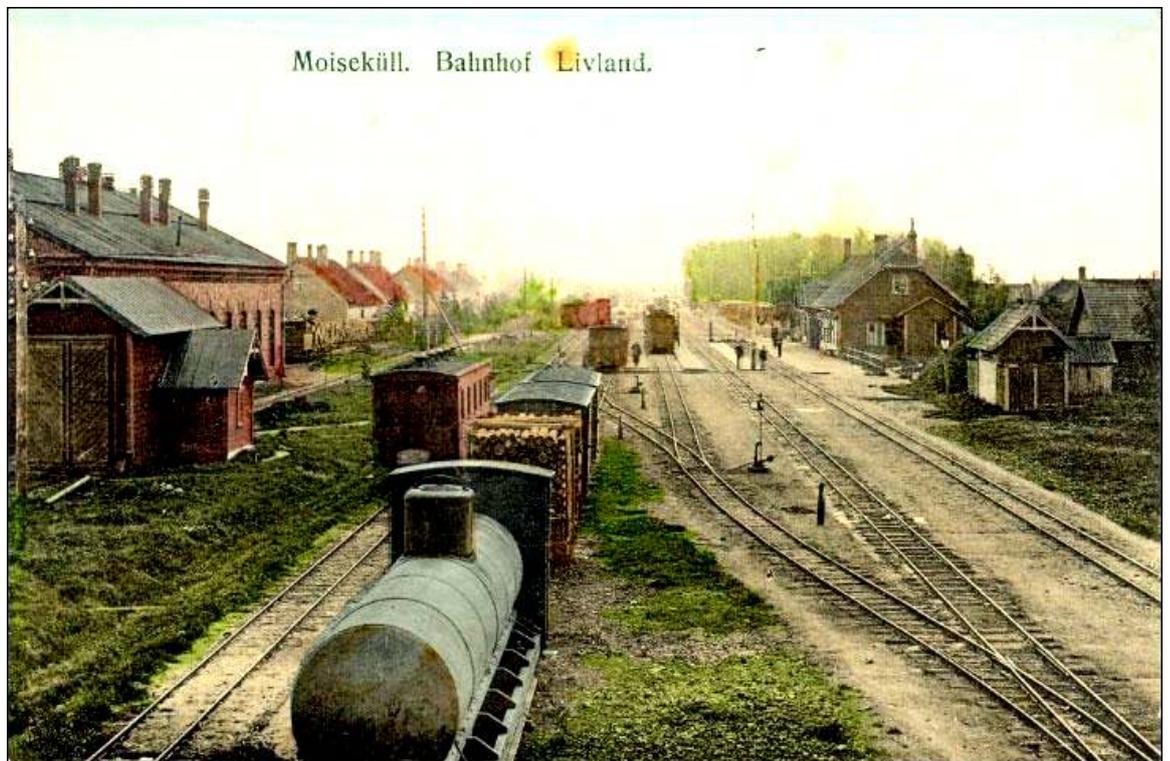
As Russian railways developed it became obvious that the 5-foot gauge was often too expensive, needing extensive earthworks and space. The cost of broad gauge equipment also came as not the last topic to consider. Thus, again exploring international experience, and to much extent under the influence of Robert Fairlie's advertising campaign, 3-foot 6-inch gauge lines were tried out. First of these, from Verkhovye to Livny, was financed by the local district council. The other two were built by private capital.



A Livny Railway Fairlie loco, built by Sharp Stewart in the 1870s

It is interesting to note that the line from Yaroslavl to Vologda, which was later extended to the northern port of Archangel, was built to a pattern very reminiscent of John Fell's light railway concept. This topic needs thorough investigation with extensive search in the archives. . .

These three lines did not show outstanding results in operation. The government lost interest in the narrow gauge, leaving this concept entirely to private entrepreneurs, who were welcomed to risk their own stakes. It took 20 more years for the narrow gauge to prove its right to exist. Lines of diverse gauges began to be built both as industrial and public operations, and towards 1892 it became clear that the narrow gauge sphere needed legal regulation.



Picture postcard showing Moisekiüll station on the Pernov-Reval division of the First Feeder Company

It is worth mentioning, that the late Nineteenth Century was a time of comprehensive standardisation of the broad gauge in Russia, with the introduction of standard locomotives, rolling stock, watering equipment and operating rules. Thus the Feeder Railway Act of 1892 came as no surprise. Strictly speaking, these regulations of 1892 were

not exactly 'narrow gauge'. They set the legal framework for feeder railways to the main system. Feeder railways could be built to lighter standards, but with compulsory observation of certain requirements, such as certified types of rail, standardised locomotives and rolling stock, provision of public service and inclusion into official timetables. Each project had to receive approval in the Ministry of Ways of Communications. In certain circumstances, the state could even take a financial interest in the construction. The recommended gauges were 750mm or 1 metre. However, even at this early stage it was strongly advised to think twice about the gauge, because transshipment costs were already well understood. It was recommended to consider construction of light railway of standard 5 foot gauge instead of choosing a narrow gauge.

However, if a railway system was to operate independently within an insular economic area, the advantages of smaller gauge were only too evident.

With the legal framework ready, narrow gauge construction boomed. First came two private feeder railways companies, both established on the same day, on 26th of March, 1892, and known as the First Company and the Moscow Company. They built extensive systems of 750mm gauge.



A Koppel 0-8-0 on the Beloretzk system in the Southern Urals, c.1914. (The covered van behind the loco is a special tank wagon for some kind of alcohol. It was common in Russia to build alcohol tanks inside covered vans for better protection from theft).

A train of the Southern Division of the First Feeder Rlys Co. at Zhitomir in the early 1900s



Numerous branches of metre gauge were built by the Moscow-Kiev-Voronezh Railway and the Ryazan-Ural Railway. To facilitate transshipment, the former made use of transporter wagons to carry broad gauge covered vans on the narrow track. The Ryazan-Ural Railway operated a complicated ferry system on the river Volga in Saratov, where transshipment of grain was done from narrow to broad gauge. The Transcaucasus Railway ran two 900mm gauge branches to quarries and water assets. There were several others, and many more were planned, when the Great War and subsequent events halted further construction.

In industry, narrow gauge railways blossomed. Locomotives and rolling stock came from an array of foreign and domestic manufacturers. The legislation did not require ministerial approval for lines not carrying passengers and general freight, so owners could choose sources of equipment where they wanted. The presence on the Russian market of many foreign industrial companies meant that their railways were built to foreign patterns. Towards 1917 over 30 dimensions of narrow gauge were in use in Russia, and we still do not know where some of them operated.



Manning Wardle 0-6-0 at Bakaritsa station on the 3ft 6in gauge Yaroslavl – Archangel line.

The military also picked up advantages of the narrow gauge. Following extensive trials they chose the 750mm gauge and rapidly developed complete systems of portable tracks and bridges, special rolling stock and other equipment for horse, petrol and steam traction. Many fortresses received their own networks, sometimes quite extensive. Best known was the system of Peter the Great Naval Fortress in Reval (now Tallinn). The First World War showed that expectations were generally met, and railway troops constructed trench railways of considerable length on all fronts. Some public narrow gauge lines in present-day Ukraine or Belarus started life as trench railways of the Great War.



Derailment of Deutz twin locomotives on light portable tracks during trials in the Russian Army, 1910

The October revolution of 1917 and subsequent civil war put an end to the flourishing world of narrow gauge in Russia. The very first intention of the new Bolshevik power was to unify and standardize everything. To many, small private railways came as remnants of the bourgeois past. Unable to cope with diverse and often precious techniques of narrow gauge operation, new owners quickly reduced the aim of feeder railways to industrial conveyors. From now on, the main task for narrow gauge was not comfortable local transport or development of remote areas. Now it was an instrument to get hold of natural reserves quickly and cheaply and take them out for utilization. And nobody cared what would happen after resources were exhausted. . .

Some pre-1917 projects received new evaluation. One of the immediate tasks for the Bolsheviks was electrification of the country. Many of the new power stations were fuelled with peat and, to transport this commodity, systems of narrow gauge railways were built across the country. In some areas, like Shatura near Moscow or Balakhna near Nizhniy Novgorod, new peat railways developed into complicated networks, reminiscent of rural feeder railways of pre-1917 times and providing regular passenger and general freight services. However, it was rapidly decided that prerevolutionary 'outdated' techniques were overcomplicated, and most younger systems were built to much simplified standards. The race of industrialization, started in 1928, needed reliable means of transportation at various construction sites. Lorries and roads being few and inadequate, narrow gauge railways came as welcome helpers to bring materials and manpower to areas where presence of industry was previously inconceivable.



Brand- new Podolsk Type 159 0-8-0 no.160 of 1935 at the construction of the Moscow-Volga canal in the same year

Photo

Mikhail Bulanov

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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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