



Issue 32

29th October 2020

Dear all,

Hope you are all still keeping well and finding plenty to keep you occupied. A very different week weather wise and a definite autumnal feel creeping in. This has driven me inside, so after revamping my workshop last week to get a freezer in there I have actually ordered some material for my Brighton Belle and have started to cut metal, not much to show yet but at least its moving forward. Today 29th Lorema and I went to meet my cousin and his wife for a socially distanced lunch at the Highland Inn in Uckfield. It is always dangerous recommending places to eat as tastes are so different. We all enjoyed the place and would go again, the staff were friendly, the food was good and the Covid-19 precautions were excellent. If you were to go you do need to book to ensure a table.

On the way there I had called in at John Richardson's to drop off some parts and he briefly showed me his excellent man cave and latest stationary engine project. John and his family are fine and John sends his regards to us all and hopes like us all that we will be able to get the club running again as soon as feasibly possible.

Lorema's week has been a little fraught as she broke a tooth and had to have it removed. That's a Covid-19 experience not to miss!

Hope you enjoy the 32st Edition.

Keep Safe everyone. **Mike W**

Brief club house NEWS

Great to report that, despite the weather, the roof is progressing well. For my sins I went by the club in the rain on Tuesday to get a photo and as you can see they had started tiling and replacing the flat roof on the Monday. By Wednesday afternoon this how it looked.





The front half has been retiled and flat roofer has started on the back workshop roof but he does need some dry days before he can really get to grips with the back flat roofs. Subject to weather by next Thursday we could be in good shape.

I have spoken briefly with Hazel and Norman is successfully through his operation but at the time I spoke with Hazel she had not been able to talk to Norman. He had been too sleepy to talk when she first got through but was hoping to talk to him this evening (Thursday).

I have also spoken yesterday (Wednesday) with Ray Parsons to get the latest on Sheila. Sheila had been rushed into hospital on September the 5th following a mild heart attack and sadly had been in there ever since.

With Covid-19 restrictions on visiting, life had been hard for Ray and he has been seeking ways to get Sheila back home with him.

He finally succeeded on Tuesday this week complete with a home nursing support package, so hopefully they now can settle down to some quality time together.

The leaves are now falling with vengeance and will need clearing and if the tilers are not working to catch up due to the weather, it may be possible to get in a weekend of leaf blowing.

Thanks as always to the team of helpers.

Mike W.

Mike P.'s musings No. 30

As I have reached the “three zero”, I thought I might use this “musings” to reflect on the varied contributions.

First, let me say a thank you to Mike for continuing to produce a weekly news. I’m not sure if anyone reads or enjoys the articles that are published, but as a minor contributor, I appreciate the hard work involved by those who write (or paint) something each week! Perhaps Mike, you could offer a “letters to the Editor slot” for comments or smaller contributions? Just a thought.

Andrew E. I thought the snow painting was one of your best, really excellent, have you thought of selling it for a Christmas card print? I enjoyed your life story on the railways too!

Mike, goodness knows where you find those railway vehicle pictures. Humans have come up with some really inventive ideas. John’s articles on vacuum brakes were extremely comprehensive. How complicated it is to make a “simple” braking system, and operate it safely. Ray and Lorema have designed endless puzzles to amuse.

As for Dave, (“Pommie Dave” to those who live upside down on the other side of the globe, but “Aussie Dave” to us!), I don’t know when you sleep! I assume your food comes under the workshop door at regular and acceptable intervals? Your work output, articles and contributions to club life down under are prodigious. Congratulations from Sussex on your award and status upgrade. Well-deserved I think!

Can I also thank Norman for his life and boiler stories? I would like to follow up Mike’s good wishes to Norman for this week. He has to undergo a serious operation and we all wish him good luck.

Other cameo slots by Andrew S., Chris, Nick, Ray, Roy and others, have added to the variety. There is a lot we don’t (or didn’t) know before about our fellow members. I hope one or two more people will send in some interesting life histories. The way the pandemic is progressing, there is still plenty of time! Today, Monday, I walked past the club and there was a lot of “roof” activity,... about 5 or 6 guys were working. I watched them moving the old tiles that had been stacked on the flat roof above the kitchen, (taken off from the west side of the roof). They were transferring them over the roof apex to the truck below on the car park side. The method was: guy 1 picked up 4 tiles and threw them up to guy 2 balancing on the top whilst avoiding the electric cables! They were then thrown to guy 3 on the scaffolding below and on down to guy 4 standing in the back of the truck. None were broken during the period I was

watching, although occasionally a “miss” throw meant catching a concertina style pack of moving tiles! Another guy had removed the small carriage shed felts, exposing the timbers. With a few showers in the air, I think they were hurrying!

I found a photo I took just before we had the PVC windows and gable ends put in, probably around the early years of this century.



As you can see, we had the old steel framed windows before and painting these every few years was a nightmare. I think John Gange and Steve T. were the last to do them. I remember John Gange and I did the gable end painting using a set of scaffolding frames that John had donated to the club. If Mike can print a large photo, perhaps you can see how much the roof has deteriorated in the last 20 years. It didn't look too bad back then! We will soon be able to compare it with the new one I think.

Stay safe.

Mike P.

Andrew Ellis

Before I got into railways in anything more than model railways, I was into sailing.....



Sailing

When I was 16 I was chosen by my school, as was my brother to join a youth sailing trip from Southampton to the Channel Islands and back. There were two yachts each 100ft long and I was on one and my brother was on the other. We sailed in 3 watches of 4 hours each making our way down to the islands. During the journey we were passed by a Royal Navy submarine which was heading in the same direction and our skipper had us standing down the side of both boats waving our arms in unison, left, right, left, right. To our surprise the crew of the submarine came out on deck, lined up and did the same in return. We then heard the submarine sound its horn. I had been brought up on tales of the Royal Navy, Nelson and Trafalgar and I read countless books both fictional and factual about it and played wargames based on the Napoleonic Navy, so I don't mind admitting that it brought a tear to my eyes. It was quite something.

I remember that on one overnight watch in the middle of the ocean I was on lookout and saw a meteorite fall into the sea. I know that our memories are affected by time but my recollection has always been seeing a ball of flame with a trail of flames streak diagonally across the sky and drop into the sea close enough to hear the whoosh of steam as it hit the water.

When we eventually reached the islands we started to race one yacht against the other. It was very competitive but great fun. We sailed round the islands, trimming the sails, tacking back and forth into the wind. My brother and I both thought our boat was the best for years afterward.

Following this trip my mother was chatting to a friend whose husband loved sailing but who hated it and so it was decided that I would take her place as his crew. Every weekend for a year we would travel down in his car playing The Beach Boys (I still hate their music to this day), row out to his boat and then motor or sail down the river to Portsmouth and then around the Isle of Wight. I remember one night we had anchored off the coast of the island in a sheltered cove but woke up in the middle of the night to find ourselves on our side. We had moored too close to the shore and the tide had gone out. This meant staying awake as the tide came in to adjust our anchor cable to make sure we refloated safely. On a later trip the weather was looking a bit dodgy from my point of view. He decided we would sail as usual. He was quite a forthright person. On the first day the sea swell became more and more extreme and the wind stronger. I think it even began to scare him and so we turned around and fought our way back to Portsmouth. Soon after this I decided that I had had enough of this but I had had some amazing experiences along the way.

Years later my mother mentioned that she was going on a tall ships sailing experience. My mother had been in the Royal Naval reserve when I was a baby. She still has newspaper clippings about her going away for training on an old World War 2 minesweeper while my dad looked after me. Being a huge age of sail enthusiast (I used to regularly visit HMS Victory at Portsmouth and the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich as well as my continued war gaming with friends and reading of Alexander Kent books) I was very interested. My mum was sailing from Southampton to Lisbon so I thought I would join the next leg from Lisbon to Gibraltar. These trips were planned in the off season for fee paying crew members to raise funds to supplement the fees to kids who were taken on trips during the summer including the round the world tall ships race. So, I flew out to Lisbon and joined the rest of the volunteer crew of the Stavros S Niachos. The ship also had a full time crew including the Captain, Navigator, Engineer and Ships cook. The watch leaders were also volunteers but with more experience and required qualifications. Our first day was spent in port carrying out sail drills, just like the books I had read. We were given particular parts of the ship to man. I was assigned to the main yard on the main mast. We

climbed up the mast, climbed out past the crows nest (which meant almost hanging, clinging by ones fingers against the forces of gravity) and had to step out onto the rope that went from one end of the yard to the other. This meant that when someone heavier than me stepped onto the opposite end, my relatively comfortable position of having the yard to hang onto in front of my stomach suddenly altered to it being down by my knees. I am not great with heights so clipping onto a safety line once one the yard was a partial relief (it will still involve a 6 feet fall and reliance on a piece of material to stop a fall to the deck or sea 100 feet below). I remember looking at the tiny deck far below my outstretched leg as I stepped across to the yard. At sea the yards moved depending where the wind was coming from so that if you were on the windward side of the ship there was a larger stretch to reach a handhold. Also at sea the ship of course rolled so that as we climbed up the mast and the ship rolled to the side we were on, we had to cling on hanging horizontally until the ship righted itself. When climbing the mast we didn't have a safety line because it meant letting go of a handhold to clip on and off. It certainly concentrated the mind on the job at hand.

Once we had untied the sails from the yards we had to return to the deck to help pull the ropes and trim the sails. In true seamanlike manner we sang sea shanties that we were taught to keep in time.

On a night watch I was called to help work on the gib (a boom that sticks out of the front of the ship) sails. This involved climbing out on a rope net in front of the ship with the sea breaking on the bow of the ship below. It was pitch black with just the sight of the luminescence of the water below and the navigation and some wheelhouse lights on the ship behind us.

One of the highlights of the trip for me was passing Cape Trafalgar on a square rigged sailing ship and thinking of the battle all those years ago and imagining the sights, sounds, smell and of course the horror that battle. It was a poignant several minutes.

Sailing into Cadiz I was again at my post on the main yard to reef (put away) the sails. There was blue sea around us and several boats following us. Ahead of us a pod of porpoises lead us in toward the harbour jumping out of the water ahead of us. It was a spectacular sight from my elevated position.

Although I took the helm on several occasions including leaving Cadiz in the dark following navigation lights, I was not on the helm when we almost got involved in a war with the Spanish navy. Somehow we managed to sail into the middle of a live naval exercise. We were surrounded by frigates and destroyers, and as I recall hearing from shipmates, told to move away immediately.

It is hard to imagine the experience of being on full sail at sea. The sound of the sails slapping as the wind gusts, the creak of rope on wood, the sound of the

sea, the smell of tar, wood, rope, fresh paint, the sea and the next meal wafting up from below.

One experience I will never forget is sailing through the Strait of Gibraltar at dawn. Firstly I was excited to see Africa for the first time. As the sun rose above the horizon the rock of Gibraltar could be seen, monolithic, thrusting through the sea mist into the sky, firstly silhouetted against the sky and then highlighted by the sun. It was utterly spectacular and again reminded me of the many stories I had read.

Of course there were all the routine jobs to do, helping in the galley (just washing up, although the ships cook did seem to have trouble boiling potatoes which was frustrating for a keen cook but I thought fitted in again with those books of mine), cleaning the heads (toilets traditionally in the beak-head at the front of a ship) and the rest of the ship. My only seasickness experience was when cleaning the heads in a choppy sea. I had to pop up and take some fresh air and a look at the horizon frequently.

I would recommend these trips for anyone, young or old. We had a couple of crew members in their late 70s and one was like a monkey, almost running up the masts. I have very fond memories of tall ships sailing and my shipmates of all ages from 20s up. I would recommend trying sailing to younger people too particularly on the tall ships. I have friends who did it before I met them and we all agree that it was a great experience.

Although I haven't sailed for years now I still have an interest and joined the RNLI although sadly not as crew of course being a bit of a landlubber and the National Coastwatch Institution which are volunteer coast guards who man the old coast guard stations around the coast to offer eyes on the sea, now that the Coast Guard are more centralised inland nowadays. When I have time to commit I hope to get more involved with watch keeping again learning new things. I have always been thankful that the RNLI exist even though I never needed them and I am amazed at the bravery they have demonstrated characteristically dismissively for generations in some cases. Surely they are heroes.

Andrew E.

Firing a GWR Castle.

By John Richardson.

In 1997 I was a cleaner/trainee fireman on the Mid-Hants Railway and had not had many footplate turns. When I turned up on this particular day and looked for the engine number on the board, I saw it was 5080 – a Great Western 'Castle' 4-6-0. This one wasn't actually named after a castle but was called 'Defiant', indicating that it had been built during the war when several of the class were

named after R.A.F. aircraft. I hoped it would be a rather better performer today than its namesake, which was a singularly useless aeroplane. Even back in World War 1, it was the generally accepted view that fighter aircraft should get behind the enemy to shoot them down, so it is amazing that someone should have designed this one with its main armament being a four gun turret that only fired backwards and sideways!

My mates on the day were driver Mick Austen and fireman Richard Faithful – the latter being at least 20 years my junior but who turned out to be an excellent mate and instructor. We climbed up on the footplate to take stock of our unfamiliar machine. Compared to the Standard 5, with its' nice cosy cab, the footplate seemed to be very exposed, having a much lower tender front and more open cab sides. The Great Western obviously believed their men were tough enough to do without much in the way of creature comforts – there were not even any doors between engine and tender to stop you falling out!

We found an absolute mountain of coal on the tender, which needed quite a bit of levelling off to make it safe. I didn't think we would use anything like this much coal on four round trips, but as the day unfolded it showed just how wrong you could be.

Lighting up and preparation followed exactly the same pattern as usual, except that we had rather more firebox to fill up than on 73096 which had been my previous engine. I should mention here that all narrow firebox engines, from small shunters up to large express types such as this, where the boiler has to sit between the frames, will have pretty much the same width of firebox – the frame separation and hence the firebox width, being fixed by the gauge of the track. This means that to obtain a bigger grate area, the only thing you can do is to increase the length – on this engine it is about ten feet long, giving thirty square feet of grate area. Only a very few engines, including the Great Western 'King' class and the Southern 'Lord Nelsons' had longer fireboxes than this. As the power of an engine is to a large extent determined by its ability to burn coal (Gospel according to Bulleid) and to burn more coal means having ever bigger grate areas, eventually it becomes necessary to adopt the wide firebox design, where the firebox spans the frames. All the big four companies except the Great Western, eventually adopted wide firebox 'Pacific' types, with up to fifty square feet of grate for their main line express engines. The Great Western, having built the first British Pacific in 1908 (called 'The Great Bear'), decided they didn't really need engines that big and stayed with 4-6-0s right up to the end of steam.

Mick, meanwhile, was crawling around under the engine, complaining about all the oiling points he had to find – as this was a four cylinder engine with two sets of Walschaerts valve gear and motion between the frames, there were a great many. No doubt there is an optimum position of the wheels for getting at all of these but as we were hemmed in by another engine and had no steam to move

anyway, Mick had to do it as it stood.

Whatever shortcomings the engine may have had, and by now we had also found that there were leaking tubes in the firebox and a loose deflector plate, I was still thrilled to bits to be on it. Having always been a fan of the Great Western, I could remember the many occasions when I had stood at the end of one of the platforms at Paddington station, watching the morning procession of expresses depart, mostly with gleaming 'Kings' and 'Castles' at their head and being green with envy of the crews. I never imagined that one day I would get the chance to fire one myself, but here we were.

As this was 'Thomas' week again, Defiant was pretending to be 'Henry the Green Engine' and even had some nice 'Henry' nameplates made up to fit in place of the real ones. With the engine well cleaned up and his face wiped, we looked quite convincing as we rumbled off shed and down to Alresford to pick up our train, which was six coaches for a change instead of the usual five.

Richard elected to fire the first and third trips and generously offered me the other two, which gave me a chance to see how he did it. One thing about being a third man and working with different crews, is that you find no two firemen do things exactly the same way and what suited your previous mate may well not be viewed favourably by the next. It was good therefore that I could see Richard perform first and also find out what sort of a driver we had.

The basic formula turned out to be exactly the same as on the other engines I had seen, with the fire built right up to the doors at the back and tapering down to about one lump thick at the front. The firebox was very deep at the back end and took a lot of filling, while I could see that it would take a mighty swing to get it all the way down the front. One thing we soon discovered was that with the dampers closed and the fire doors open, the fire died down very quickly and we had no difficulty at any time in keeping the engine quiet – in fact it seemed to need a fair bit of blower to stop the pressure going down, even when standing in stations.

Mick turned out to be quite a hard hitter and when we got the 'right away' we accelerated very rapidly out of the station with not a hint of wheelslip and with that wonderful Great Western exhaust beat bouncing back at us from the sides of the cutting. Richard tended to fire just five or six shots at a time at frequent intervals and soon had the pressure up on the red line, which is mostly where it stayed with him firing – you would have thought he did this every day for a living, instead of which it was his first go on a 'Castle' too – I was most impressed.

We were running chimney first out of Alresford today and Richard reminded me that we would need at least three quarters of a glass of water at Medstead before we could go over the summit. The gradient changes very abruptly here from 1 in 200 up, to 1 in 60 down and as the engine passes this point, the water runs forward in the boiler and the level in the gauge will drop around six inches.

This is actually the easier way to work the engine, because if the water level is a bit low at Medstead, you have the station stop to put things right before going over the top. Coming up from Alton chimney first however, there is no such opportunity for recovery and the water level must be kept right up to the top of the glass all the way up the climb. The final part of the equation is the need to stop in the station, which is just over the summit – the braking has to be done as gently as possible because this too will send all water down the front of the boiler – the level will usually disappear completely for a few seconds as the train comes to the final stop and the glass will be watched anxiously for it to reappear. The danger of allowing the water level to get too low, is of course that the firebox crown may be uncovered and the fusible plug melt – this is called ‘dropping the plug’ and is a heinous crime for any engine crew to commit.

No such disasters befell us however and the trip passed without incident, although Richard said we were using an awful lot of coal and water. Mick reckoned that either the valve or piston rings were leaking past to exhaust, which would help account for this, but otherwise he seemed perfectly at home with his new charge.

When it was my turn to have a go, Richard suggested I started making up the fire before we actually got to Alresford; such was the appetite for coal that he reckoned that it would be cutting it a bit fine to leave it all to do in the station. It seemed to be a lot harder work than on our other engines because the shovelling plate of the tender was level with the cab floor, instead of being set at the same height as the firehole. This meant that every shovel of coal had to be lifted up about a foot before swinging it into the box. Over the course of a day, this amounted to an awful lot extra foot pounds of energy that had to be expended. The deflector plate was very distorted and loose in the firehole and every time the shovel gave it the slightest knock, it became partially dislodged and had to be lifted and bashed back into place with the blade of the shovel. This aside, the engine was very free steaming and quite easy to fire – even I managed to hit the red line occasionally, but we were certainly shifting the coal at an alarming rate. The wretched tender had such a shallow slope that it would not trim down on its own and after this trip, every time we stopped at either end of the line, whichever man was not firing was back in the tender shovelling it forward.

The rest of the day passed in similar fashion, with the locomotive going great guns, Mick grinning like a Cheshire cat and Richard and I working like galley slaves to keep the beast fed and watered. At one time I began to wonder if the coal supply would last out but Mick reckoned we would make it, which we eventually did, with just a few hundredweights left. Finally the day came to an end and we took the engine over the pit and disposed of it. Mick drove the digger and reloaded us with coal, stacking it up higher than the cab roof, while Richard and I emptied the smokebox. The char in there was nearly up to the dart; I didn’t

actually count the number of barrows we shifted but it was definitely into double figures.

By this time I was feeling well and truly shattered and had definitely had enough of steam engines to last me quite a while - maybe 48 was too old to start this lark after all. Hold on a minute though, didn't I put myself down for tomorrow as well? I checked the board in the Manor and sure enough, there was my name written down. Guess what – the engine number was 5080 again!

John R

Norman Payne's World of Model Making

When I started my apprenticeship on the railway at Bricklayers Arms in London, I was taught to make all the tools I would need to do my job as a boilermaster. One of the things I made in model form was an anvil, which I still have today. This I made from a piece of full-size railway line. I heated a piece of rail in a forge and formed the tapered end.

I lived in Orpington, Kent in my early years and joined a model engineering club. There I had the opportunity to drive the club engines at weekend fetes. Through this I became very interested in making all different kinds of models. I built a 3 ½" gauge 'Schools' class locomotive called 'Clifton', which I still have to this day. I also owned a grey Ferguson farm tractor and enjoyed taking this to rallies.

Living in Orpington through the war years meant spending a lot of time in air raid shelters. We had one in our back garden and the experience was similar to the lockdown earlier this year. These past experiences have made the recent events easier to manage. Close to Biggin Hill airport, Orpington saw a lot of bombing during the war and we would see enemy fighter planes come over and Spitfires go up to meet them. I built 3 model aircraft, a Spitfire, a Lancaster and a Red Arrow. I still have these and my son Martin fitted engines to the Lancaster and wired them up during this recent lockdown, so now all four propellers turn.

When steam finished I was working as a boilermaster at Chart Leacon in Ashford, Kent. I continued as a welder, maintaining electric trains, which is why I have since built a 5" gauge 4-CEP motor coach and a 5" gauge Motor Luggage Van, both of which still reside at the club. In addition, I previously built a Class 47 locomotive, which ran at the club for several years and has since been sold to a buyer from Germany.

Whilst working at Chart Leacon, I became involved on the maintenance gang of 'Clan Line' and this got me interested in building my own Bulleid locomotive.

During this recent lockdown I have been busy at home on my 3 ½" gauge rebuilt 'West Country', which is called 'Appledore'. Andrew Brock has helped by turning parts that I wanted whilst rebuilding it, thank you Andrew and for typing up these notes.



So as you have read I have done many things in my life and now at the age of 84 I think it might be time to slow down a bit...

Norman

Did you know?

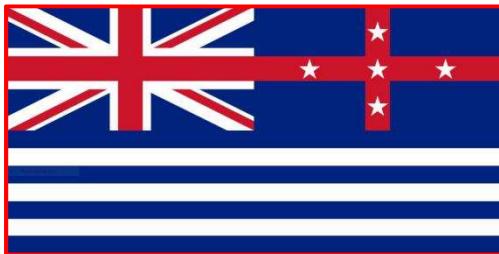
In 2014 French railway giant SNCF found out that the 2000 new trains they had bought, costing in excess of \$20.5 billion, were too big for the stations!

Even best laid plans can go wrong. The new trains had been designed based on some measurements given to SNCF by RFF and the trains had ended up far too wide, or as the BBC describe them too "fat" to safely squeeze pass each other on the rails. The mistake cost SNCF \$68 million to correct.

The error was occurred when RFF the rail network operator had measured platforms that had been built 30 years ago and they had assumed that "one size fits all" and had not taken into account the stations and platforms that were much older and had been built much smaller than the ones measured!!

Mike W.

News From Afar - 28 Oct.



Eastern Koel



Heard a lot at the moment, but never seen before in my garden. *The bird is an adult female Eastern Koel (it is a cuckoo, migrates from SE Asia at this time of the year). Easy to hear but not easy to see or photograph.* (text - Trevor Knight)



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Public Run - Sunday 25th Oct.

A terrible day weather wise. Very cold and windy, but they still came. We had two birthday parties. They must have been under pressure from the three year old who was having one of the birthdays. Everyone had fun according to talk on leaving. We just nearly froze to death driving trains. Just smile and carry on. A steady flow all day and we were happy with the takings. Down of course on favourable weather days, but better than expected.



Driver Darryl and guard Craig's faces tell it all.



Super Woman of course doesn't feel the cold.

Below is my new 'Dress Code' hoping others will follow, and of course following the Beech Hurst standard. I was reminded on our previous public run by the Honourable (or otherwise) club Secretary, that my dress code was in decline. The 'Boy from Burwash' should look in the mirror I thought, but just smiling, I said I would attend to it. Below is my new look. Up to your standard I hope, or at least improving.



Below left, a couple of American visitors and right a young prospect.



Bearing up to on the day staff shortages, but this is barely up to standard. Ouch!

Paul and I talking about something interesting or maybe just b...l s..t?



More Donations.



Above left a 'Moffat Virtue', and right a BSA. Low on the priority list but we will eventually get them going just to give the public something alternative to look at. The 'Ajax' pump will also be restored and probably attached to one of the above. The large trailer came as part of the 'Charley' steam engine deal.

Monday tasks.



In some pretty ordinary weather, Greg Z is seen doing some road maintenance, while I built a quick set of steps to stop the whingers who didn't like climbing up the dirt bank.

Wednesday 28 Oct.

For a change I had a morning taking out PS Enterprise for a shake down steaming, also for the shipwright Mark to have a look at some planks that he thought may be an issue as we are due ti slip soon. All as good as can be expected, well nothing that will cause us any dramas anyway. Crew were a little rusty, but we didn't kill anybody or crash the boat which is always a bonus. No pictures unfortunately. I went to the club after as we finished steaming at lunch time, just to stick my nose in really to see if any work was happening.



I know the pictures are similar but John O here is working on the motor sets on the front and rear bogies of a 42 Class wondering why one motor set is working, yet the other, on which the wiring looks exactly the same is not. Bugger or other such expletives.

PS Enterprise on the slip 2017 just to fill the page up.



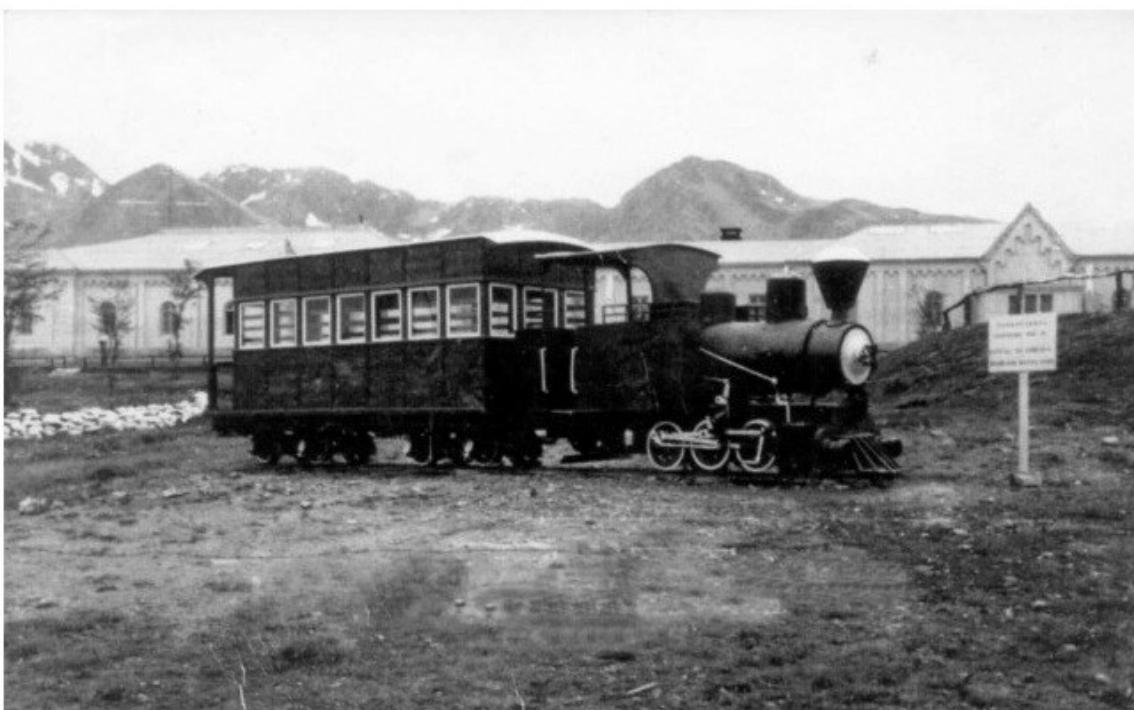
Stay well.

David - Canberra - 28th October 2020

Special Trains.

Most southerly railway Part 1.

I have gone way down south this week and found what is believed to be the most southern running railway in the world.



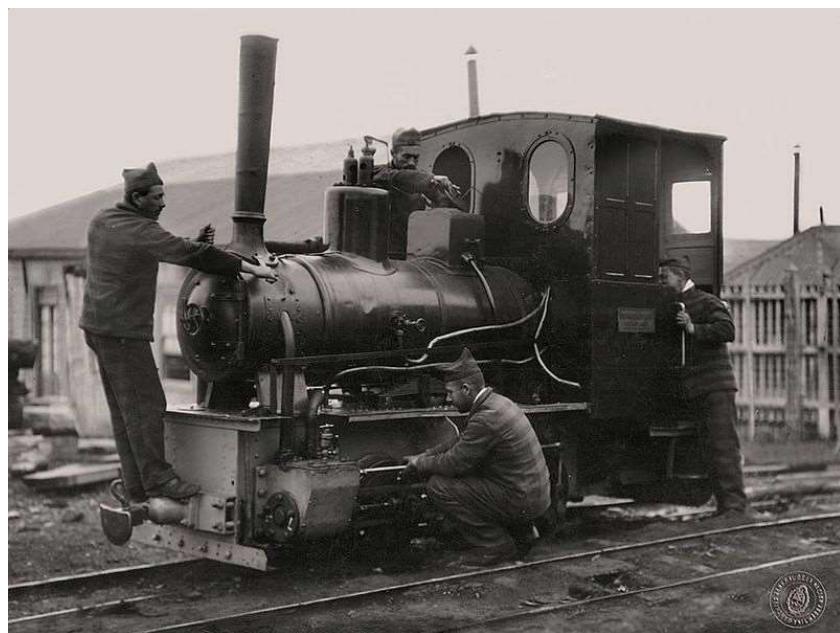
It is known as the End of the World line on the Isla Grande de Tierra del Fuego. This line was initially built when a town called Ushuaia was developed as a penal colony. The first prisoners arrived on the island 1884 but it wasn't until some years later in 1902 that they started to build proper accommodation for the prisoners. This accommodation was built by the inmates and to make transportation of the building materials to the site easier a railway was built where the track was of wooden construction and Oxen were used to pull wagons along a track that was just under a metre wide.

In 1909, the prison governor informed the government of the need to upgrade the line and move to steam locomotives. The Railway was upgraded using a 600mm narrow gauge system developed by a Frenchman called Paul Decauville (1846–1922). Decauville was a pioneer in industrial railways and the system was originally used by the French Military as early as 1888 to supply their bases and several thousand miles of the portable track was used during the First World War.



The track connected the prison camp with the forestry camp and passed along the shoreline in front of the growing town of Ushuaia. It was known as the 'Train of the Prisoners' (*Tren de los Presos*) and brought wood for heating and cooking as well as building.

The railway was gradually extended further into the forest into more remote areas as wood was exhausted. It followed the valley of the Pipo River into the higher terrain. Constant building allowed expansion of the prison and of the town, with prisoners providing many services and goods.



Prisoners servicing a locomotive in 1931.

The prison was closed in 1947 and it was replaced with a naval base.

Disaster struck in 1949 when Tierra del Fuego was hit by two earthquakes just over 8 hours apart and it blocked much of the line. The line was cleared and the train was put back into service but could not maintain a viable service and it closed in 1952.

Part 2 its rebirth next week. Mike W.

Puzzle Corner.

Lorema's last week's Challenge.

Find the word to fit the description that begins with Par....:-

1	On which Scottish island is the town of Stornoway?	LEWIS
2	In what year did the Battle of Waterloo take place?	1815
3	How many ribs does a normal human possess?	24(12PAIRS)
4	Which airport has the code LAX?	LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL.
5	On a standard European roulette wheel how many different numbers are there?	37(0 TO 36)
6	Who wrote the novel Watership Down?	RICHARD ADAMS
7	What direction is opposite North West on a compass?	SOUTH EAST
8	What type of nut should you find in a Waldorf Salad?	WALNUT
9	In which English county did the Tolpuddle Martyrs originate?	DORSET
10	According to the popular saying, what speaks louder than words?	ACTIONS
11	As at 2020, who is the longest serving US President?	FRANKLIN D ROOSEVELT
12	Which Scotsman was beaten finalist in the 2017, 2018 & 2019 World snooker Championship?	JOHN HIGGINS
13	On which London street was Sweeney Todd the Demon Barber said to have his shop?	FLEET STREET
14	Which four US States begin with the letter "I"?	IDAHO, IOWA, INDIANA, ILLINOIS.
15	Who was known as the" Father of the Atom Bomb"?	ROBERT OPPENHEIMER
16	Which foodstuff is known in Italian as Pomodoro?	TOMATO
17	After whom is the headquarters of the MCC in North London Named?	THOMAS LORD
18	The city of Vilnius is the capital of which Baltic state?	LITHUANIA
19	When was the toll on the M4 Severn Bridge abolished?	17 th DEC 2018
20	How many stars feature on the New Zealand flag?	FOUR

Lorema's this week challenge.

Name the country by adding the missing vowels:-

NGLND = ENGLAND

1	MRTN	
2	NGL	
3	GND	
4	SML	
5	LBY	
6	LBR	
7	MNGL	
8	RMN	
9	GRG	
10	LS	
11	CDR	
12	GYN	
13	HNDRS	
14	PNM	
15	STN	
16	LTHN	
17	ZRBJN	
18	MN	
19	TWN	
20	TLY	

My thanks go to all who keep sending me the material.

If you have something for the NEWS please contact me

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