

## **Linesiding with John August Update**

This is a relatively brief update without photos.

### **Romania**

I am off to Romania on 8 August to lead a small group to visit 7 narrow gauge tourist railways and 1 tourist tramway. All were once narrow gauge forestry, industrial or public lines and are expected to have an interesting collection of locos and rolling stock in addition to a summer tourist train service (mainly steam). This is an exploratory tour as previously I have only visited the railway at Viseu de Sus. If successful, I hope to offer a second tour in 2020. If you would like to hear how the trip is going on a daily basis, email me and ask to be on the mailing list for this blog. I will also post the blog on my website after I return from Romania where it will be available to everyone.

Email [john@rabylee.uk](mailto:john@rabylee.uk) to be on this mailing list.

### **China**

#### **Sandaoling**

I've had only one expression of interest for a tour to see the last real working steam in the world in winter. I'm not sure if it's the winter, the reduction in the steam activity, everyone has been there enough or the security situation in Xinjiang is putting people off. I've put that person in touch with Jun who arranges my China tours. Jun should be there to look after people again this winter. The operation is likely to continue with steam until it closes in September 2020. If anyone is interested in a final spring 2020 trip let me know. I will only work up a plan this if there are several expressions of interest. The tour proposal for the December 2018 tour that didn't materialise can be used as a guide to what is still on offer:

<http://rabylee.uk/SandaolingDec2018.pdf>

#### **China Narrow Gauge 3**

After 2 China Narrow Gauge tours there appears to be an appetite for a 3rd and possibly final China Narrow Gauge tour. I plan this for late September-early October 2020 to catch the reed and cement railways in action. I'll give the itinerary some more thought after I get back from Romania but there are still sufficient interesting narrow gauge lines to visit for the first time or to return to. This is likely to be a tour of around 20 days with an optional Shibanzi wind-down at the end for an additional 5 days or so. Let me know if you are interested. I will assume all those who participated in China NG 1 or China NG 2 are potentially interested so no need to email if you are in one or both of those groups.

You can read what we discovered on China NG 2 here:

<http://rabylee.uk/malaychina2019.html>

and China NG 1 here:

<http://rabylee.uk/chinangtour2018.html>

#### **Plinthed locos**

A Chinese enthusiast contacted Rob Dickinson with the following information:

A Chinese loco guy (Initial: LX·Y) from Shijiazhuang, Hebei Province started to purchase the remained steamers around China in the industrial rails.

He has allegedly bought operable retired SYs from Baiyin and cosmetically painted them and selling to small businesses. Other locomotives include JS 8418 from Changzhi, JS 8355 and JS 6545/6546 from Fula'erji, two JFs with numbers that I couldn't remember, and a couple of QJs from misc original places.

His buyers include small restaurants and parks and so on. Horrible renumbering and wrong paint jobs have been applied to these engines.

Disassembly of engines for transportation was brutal. Cutting "unnecessary" but critical mechanical parts are very common in practices.

LX·Y himself is by no means a railroad professional or workers.

More updates are available under further investigation, if anyone is interested.

Zezhou Wang

My first thought is that this is not all bad. The restored Big Boy in the US came off a plinth and the locos that Billy Butlin bought to display outside his holiday camps all found a good home and most have since been restored to use:  
<http://www.butlins-memories.com/other/locos.htm>

### **Rongshan**

Paul Molyneux-Berry has discovered where the missing C2 from Rongshan has gone (see Rongshan in my China NG 2 Tour report link above).  
[Click for link](#) - best viewed in Google Chrome browser which should translate this from Chinese for you.

### **Indonesia**

Wilson Lythgoe is on his annual Java mill tour. On his way to East Java he noticed that the old branch from Cibatu to Garut (once the home to CC10 and CC50 mallets) was being worked on. It turns out that this line will be re-opened for public trains.

<https://www.liputan6.com/regional/read/3994426/reaktivasi-kereta-api-cibatu-garut-jangan-kasih-kendor>

<https://finance.detik.com/infrastruktur/d-4545352/kereta-api-cibatu-garut-mulai-beroperasi-awal-2020>

I believe that there were thoughts of reopening the Madiun - Ponorogo line but I don't think that got anywhere.

He has found things quite in Situbondo and has confirmed that Asembagus is partially reopened but that the rails to the north are no longer used. Olean has

two diesels in use with just one going to the fields. Wringinanom continues to be 'Derailment Central' but the crews are now very adept at getting things back on the tracks.

### **Weird and wonderful**

Mike Jackson's links:

Perhaps new to you - fascinating piece of film - never realised that there were petrol versions with proper passenger bodies.

System used commercially for a while by SAR -

<https://player.bfi.org.uk/free/film/watch-the-stronach-dutton-road-rail-tractor-1925-online>

Japan - mostly BLWs - Kiso Forest etc

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1hDgTs2Vs0s&feature=youtu.be>

Weird & wonderful - first time that I've seen pole rails in action - Impressed with ingenious 'Flying Passing Loop' - never seen that technique before.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vF24GLEBywM&t=288s>

H&SE would have had kittens at the first sequence - snow-covered trackbed ?

Mike says that these links come from Roy Link's RCL Publications website so although I haven't found the above links on that site, the site looks of interest so here it is:

<https://narrowgaugeandindustrial.co.uk/collections/books>

That's all for now.

**John Raby**

**4 August 2019**