



May 2020

Tour Update

There are tentative signs that the British government is working on an exit strategy for the corona virus lockdown in the UK but with nothing announced yet and with the authorities trying to avoid a second wave of infections I'm not expecting major relaxation soon. As I write, there is speculation about what will be eased first:

- garden centres and nurseries selling via click and collect?
- Premier league football being played in empty stadiums?
- non-essential shops to re-open with control on customers entering?
- more workers to be encouraged back to work?
- people to be allowed to associate with a limited group of family and friends who don't live with them?

At the same time the major source of infection now seems to be in care homes rather than hospitals so care homes now need a major intervention to control the epidemic. Prisons could well be the next places! There are also plans to begin tracking Corona virus sufferers and tracing those they have been in contact with - something the UK authorities gave up on early on in the epidemic - possibly assisted by apps on phones. There is also likely to be compulsory quarantine for those arriving in the UK - something that is not happening at present

But at this point, it is still illegal for me to drive to my nearest airport and even if this was allowed, few planes are flying. KLM has no flights from Humberside (my local airport) to Amsterdam (my hub for onward flights anywhere in the world) at the moment. There are normally 2-3 flights a day.

With all that in mind, I can't imagine restarting any tour planning or contacting local agents until I know what the new normal in the UK will look like. Only when I know that we are free to travel around the UK and that flights abroad are available again, will I begin to consider the tours to Romania and China. It's impossible as I write this to know when that time will come.

Of course, it's not just external factors that affect when future tours can restart, it's also how we feel personally. How we feel about getting on a plane again and being confined in crowded spaces with strangers? I don't think I will be ready for that in July for Romania or September 2020 for China.



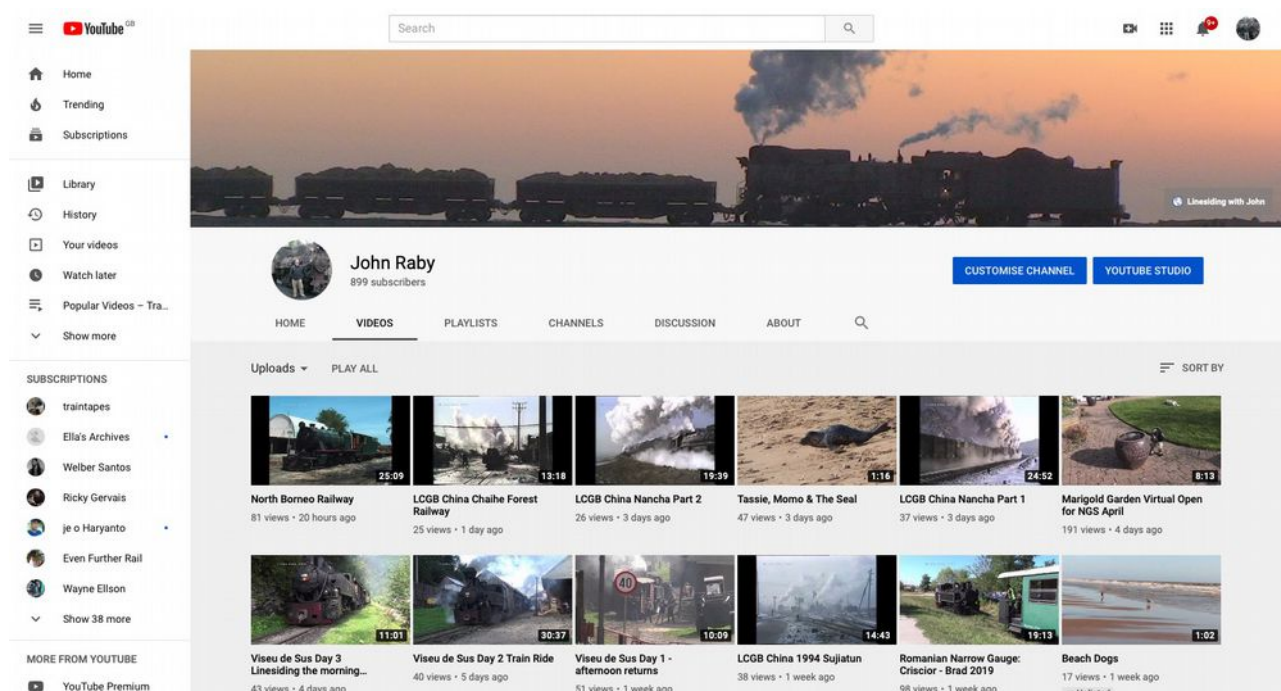
Statfold Barn 2013 - dual gauge track and ex-Pakis Baru No. 1 and No. 5 on the 2ft 6in line. Both locos now consigned to the museum (1 June 2013)

Once we are free to travel around and once the UK preserved railways resume operation, I will be keen to go to Statfold Barn, the North York Moors and my local Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway where I volunteer. All of the preserved railways everywhere will need our support and cash as they attempt to recover. I would also like to try to re-arrange a private trip to Ireland as the Irish peat railways are likely to be severely reduced at the end of 2020 with the closure of two peat-fired power stations and their associated peat bogs and railways. If it is possible to go there in autumn 2020, I would like to do that.

I think the Romanian narrow gauge tour and China Narrow Gauge 3 will have to wait until 2021. If you are involved in these trips, I welcome your own thoughts on this.



YouTube videos



The screenshot shows the YouTube channel page for John Raby, who has 899 subscribers. The channel is currently on the 'VIDEOS' tab. The video grid displays the following uploads:

Video Title	Views	Time Ago
North Borneo Railway	81 views	20 hours ago
LCGB China Chaihe Forest Railway	25 views	1 day ago
LCGB China Nancha Part 2	26 views	3 days ago
Tassie, Momo & The Seal	47 views	3 days ago
LCGB China Nancha Part 1	37 views	3 days ago
Marigold Garden Virtual Open for NGS April	191 views	4 days ago
Viseu de Sus Day 3 Linesiding the morning...	43 views	4 days ago
Viseu de Sus Day 2 Train Ride	40 views	5 days ago
Viseu de Sus Day 1 - afternoon returns	51 views	1 week ago
LCGB China 1994 Sujiatun	38 views	1 week ago
Romanian Narrow Gauge: Criscior - Brad 2019	98 views	1 week ago
Beach Dogs	17 views	1 week ago

You may remember that I have a dream of getting 1000 subscribers on my YouTube channel. After making most of my videos public again and posting roughly one new video a day, I have raised my subscribers from 836 at the beginning of the month to 899. A lot of the increase is down to Indonesian railfans signing up for Java sugar cane videos. Only one more subscriber now for 900 and then a slow slog to 1000.

My recently posted videos are:

[North Borneo Railway](#)
[LCGB China Tour 1994 Chaihe](#)
[LCGB China Tour 1994 Nancha Part 1](#)
[LCGB China Tour 1994 Nancha Part 2](#)
[LCGB China Tour 1994 Sujiatun](#)
[LCGB China Tour 1994 Hunhe](#)
[LCGB China Tour 1994 Anshan](#)
[Viseu de Sus 2019 Day 1](#)
[Viseu de Sus 2019 Day 2](#)
[Viseu de Sus 2019 Day 3](#)
[Criscior-Brad 2019](#)

This list is not exhaustive, I also posted East German Narrow Gauge footage from 1990 and Baishui Coal Line, Sichuan and Yongchuan Coal Line, Chongqing from 2019. [Use this link](#), to see all of the videos available.

Coming soon:

Matian Coal Railway, China 2019
LCGB China Tour 1994 Chanchung including the Japan era trams

See the videos available on my channel (and subscribe!) here:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/trundlebahn/videos>



Screenshot from LCGB China Nancha Part 1

Copy from VHS, video 8, hi-8, digital 8, mini DV and SD card

I'm sure a lot of people have footage on tape that they are not able to view anymore. To make sure that I could access all of my footage, I have built up a collection of cameras, video players, cabling and software that lets me copy everything to .mov files on my computer. The copied files can be view on a computer or burnt to DVD or saved to usb stick or external hard drive. If anyone needs help with this, please email me. Because copying has to be done in real time and one tape at a time, it's a slow process so I have limited capacity to help others but I would be willing to take on interesting projects. Even prior to corona virus, I copied around 100 of the late Ray Gardner's video 8 tapes mainly of Indonesia for John Browning and Rob Dickinson. We all felt that it would be useful to preserve his footage for posterity.

Copying from slides, prints or negatives

This is also something that I am set up to do but in this case I'm not offering to help others. To do this yourself, you will need to invest in a flatbed scanner for photos or a slide/negative scanner for slides and negatives or find a friend to do this for you. It's a slow, hands on process unlike copying video tape where you can go away and do something else while it is copying. The flat-bed

scanner on my Epson XP-245 printer will scan several photos at one time and the software will detect the edges of the photos to copy them as individual jpeg files. My Ion Pics 2 SD scanner takes 4 slides in a holder at a time which you need to feed through manually. It saves scans to SD card which you can then insert in your computer. After discussion with those more expert than me, I now clean the slides in my photo editing program rather than trying to clean them before scanning.

What I'm Reading

Just to mention a couple of corona virus related items you may want to read. The BBC has two news items of interest including one which gave me this quote:

What we are trying to do is have a global restart plan," explains Alexandre de Juniac, director general of the International Air Transport Association. "The main challenge is how and when the different states will lift restrictions to travel."

He believes curbs on travel will clearly last beyond the middle of the year, and some may remain at least partially in force until the end of 2020.

He thinks domestic routes within individual countries will open up first, followed by short-haul international services. Intercontinental travel would probably follow after that, although he admits "that is a point we haven't resolved yet".

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-52441652>

and

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-52470019>

(about how tourism will (perhaps) return in Europe.)

Steam Railway has also covered the likely effect of the pandemic on UK preserved railways and it makes intelligent but grim reading. I doubt that it's freely available on line but if you can find a copy, have a read of:

Robin Coombes, 'Covid-19 poses stark questions for steam', Steam Railway Issue 505, May 2020 pp42-48 (and in the previous issue 504)

<https://www.steamrailway.co.uk>

So, over a month in lockdown and more to come. I'm not expecting much to change in May but let's see what happens. I hope you are keeping busy with projects around the home and garden, model railways and copying old slides and videos. Perhaps it will be time to sort through the library of railway books next. I bet there are lots that you have never read. Now could be the time to read them, decide if they are useful reference sources or consign them to the pile to move on. If anyone has any interesting railway books for sale, let me know and I'd be happy to share your 'for sale' list with The Linesiding Club.

John Raby
The Linesiding Club