

NARROW GAUGE

WORLD

JULY - AUGUST 2012

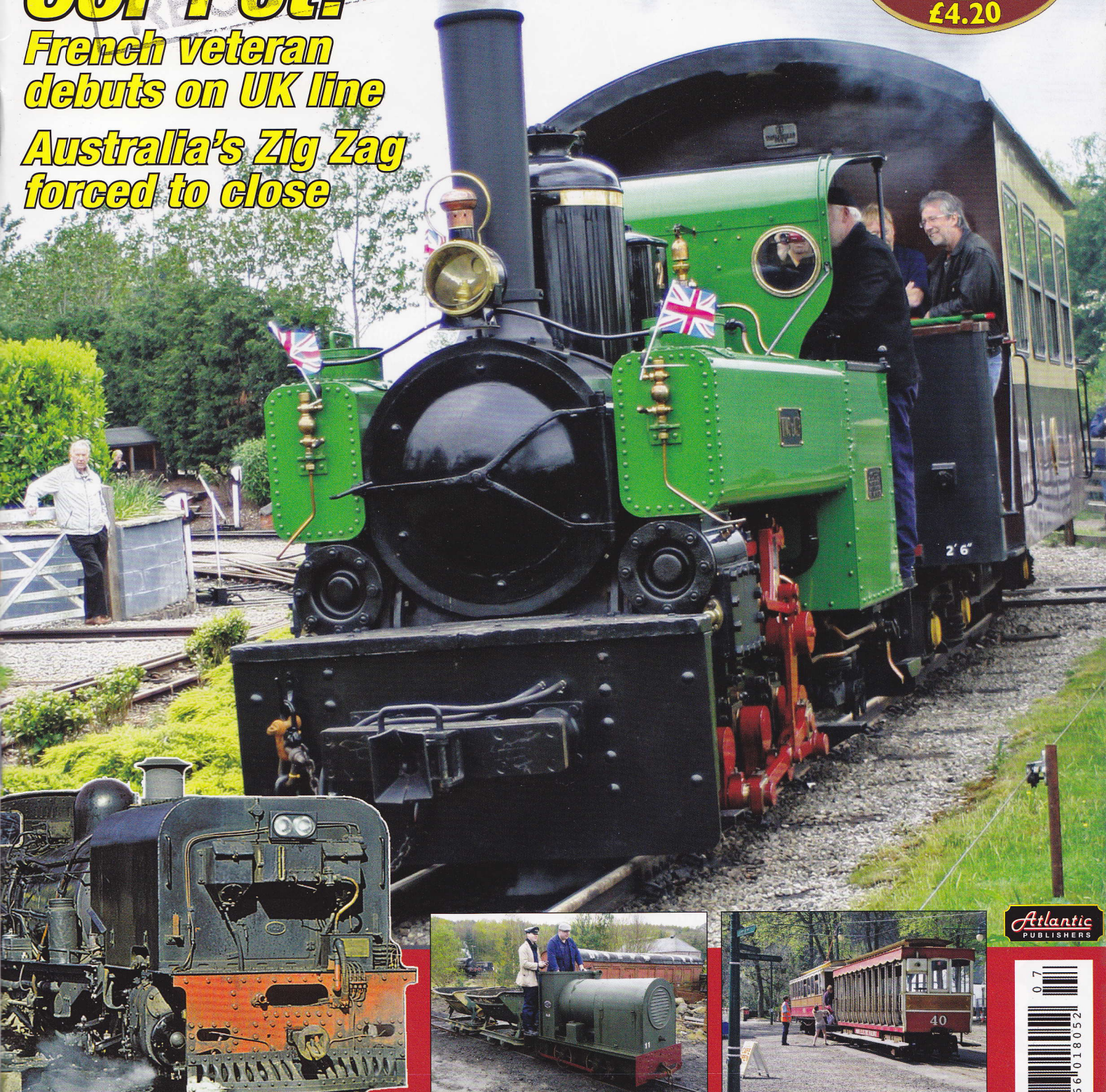
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Cor Pet!

**French veteran
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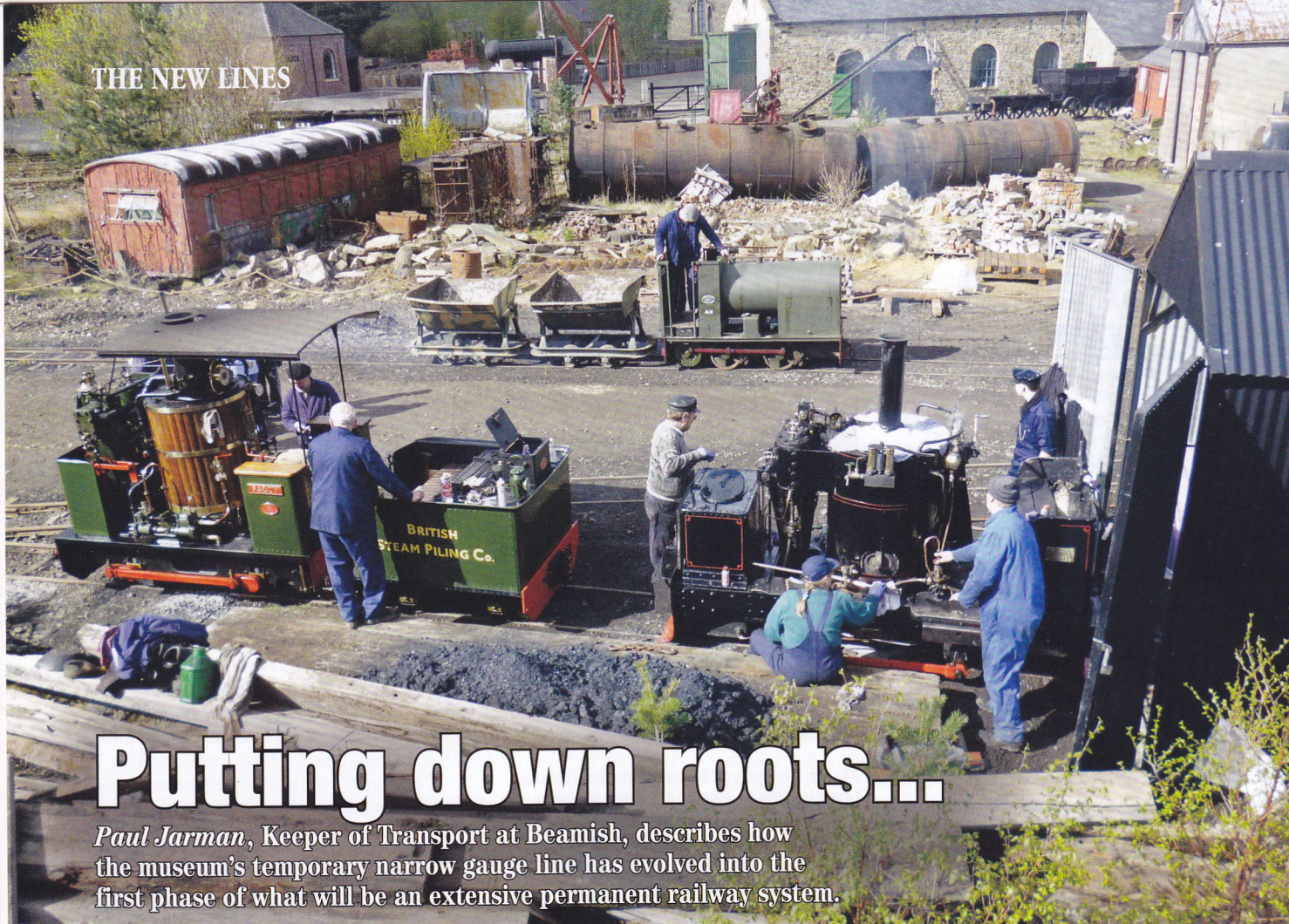
Engines that bend...
The glory that is the Garratts

**New narrow gauge –
Beamish steps up**

**Iconic Manx scene
set for total change?**

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Putting down roots...

Paul Jarman, Keeper of Transport at Beamish, describes how the museum's temporary narrow gauge line has evolved into the first phase of what will be an extensive permanent railway system.

Over the last three years, the two large four-day transport events at Beamish Museum in County Durham have been graced with a temporary narrow gauge railway. Laid, contractor's style, using Hudson Jubilee panels of track (owned by Graham Morris and previously used at the Hayfield sheep dog trials), with a suitable engine shed to suit, the line has been used in conjunction with the Museum's stone crushing display, hosting a number of the smaller

narrow gauge locomotives including Barclay 'Jack', Kerr Stuarts 'Peter Pan' and no 3114 and Amerton based new-build 'Paddy' over the mine. Thus was established both the appropriateness of a narrow gauge railway for our Colliery area and the huge appeal to visitors of a working narrow gauge display.

The temporary railway had, I felt, run its course, however. It had to be laid and dismantled four times per year and the 20lb track weight

Above: A view from the Colliery pit heap at Beamish showing the layout and position of the first phase of the narrow gauge railway. Steam power, in the form of Amerton based 0-4-OVB 'Paddy' (now fitted with chain drive in place of gears) and De Winton 'Chaloner' from the Leighton Buzzard Railway are being prepared for the day ahead.

restricted the size of visiting locomotives. So, for 2012 it was decided to begin phase one of what will eventually become a comprehensive two-foot gauge system around the Colliery area at Beamish.

I had been stockpiling track and components for some years, including a large quantity of 35lb rail. A new influx of 20lb Jubilee track from Ireland was also added to the mix and so, in March, the Beamish track team of Darren Hall and Mark Elliott began work. Using a hired-in excavator and armed with a very 'fag packet' sketch by myself, the pair rapidly set up a working area and began the creation of this new railway for the Museum.

Cuts both ways

The original shed was to be incorporated, so was moved to a new location. Much excavation was required to enable a firm foundation to be prepared. Meanwhile, 50 standard sleepers were cut in half lengthways then crossways at the Springwell workshops of the Bowes Railway. This provided 200 sleepers for the project. A large quantity of tunnel rail was available, complete with one-piece sleepers and pandrol clips. These were used in areas where, to enable vehicle access, the track would be buried.

Progress was rapid, with assistance



Left: How it was – the temporary contractors line exemplified here in this shot showing an 1889 Marshall traction engine driving the stone crusher, in turn feeding the railway being operated by Graham Morris' Kerr Stuart Wren 'Peter Pan'. All photos: Paul Jarman



from an apprentice track technician, Owen Edwards, who was training under Darren and Mark. Use of modern plant greatly speeds up progress – I well recall tracklaying at the Ridge Danyers College site of the Moseley Industrial Tramway (later to move to Apedale) and how long it took when doing everything by hand!

Within four weeks the target date of 12th April was reached – this being day one of our Great North Steam Fair, for which Paddy was once again hired, to work alongside De Winton 'Chaloner' – the latter being an engine I had long hoped to see at one of our events. Some very long shifts saw enough railway ready to open for demonstrations at the event (itself our most successful yet, attracting 15,000 visitors over the four days) and it was operated with very few problems throughout. Also appearing was the Abbey Light Railway's WW1 Baguley 0-4-OPM (now diesel powered) and two Orenstein skip wagons.

In two directions

Some 150 yards of railway was available for the line's opening in April, and basically forms an elongated Z-shape. Turnouts are ex-Groverake leadmine and these required some extensive repairs and re-modelling to suit their new purpose. Further materials are available and the line will be extended in two directions in time for our 'Power from the Past' event – on through the legs of the overhead gantry that leads to our pit heap and up to the stone boilerhouse which supplies steam to the three working stationary engines in the colliery area. The other extension will be arranged to create additional running line and a siding, with flat crossing, leading to a new future engine shed complex.

In the longer term the line will be extended to a brick yard, including parallel running with our industrial standard gauge line. With additional sidings in the colliery stockyard, the line should provide a very interesting system for visiting engines to work.

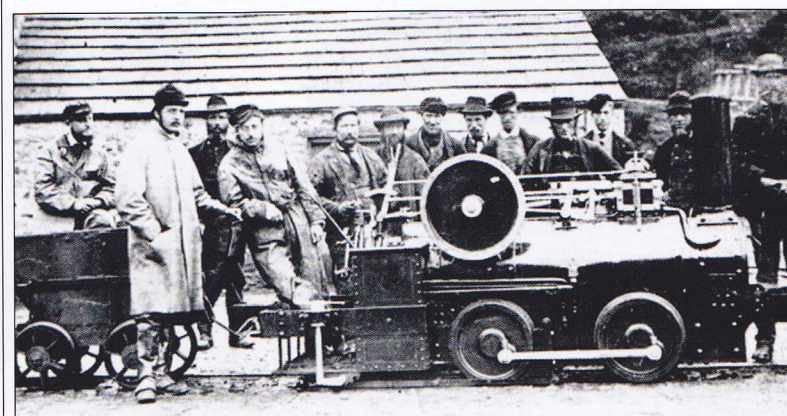
Above: First steps – ground being broken ready for a new trackbed to be prepared. The engine shed has been moved to its new position.

Top right: Darren Hall at work on the line as the phase one deadline looms...

Right: First loco on the line, and also motive power for the first train, was the Abbey Light Railway's WW1 Baguley 0-4-OPM (now diesel powered).

Right: Paul has been fascinated by Chaloner since childhood, and had long wanted to bring it to Beamish for one of the events.

Below right: For the future? Paul says his love of Stephen Lewin of Poole's locos is well entrenched (having spent several years restoring the standard gauge 0-4-OST No 18, set to steam this year) so the idea of building a 2ft gauge replica of the 1874-built 'overtyp' named 'Samson' has great appeal! The loco worked at the Cornish Hush mine near Frosterley. It is thought to have been removed for scrap in 1904.



THE NEW LINES

As for our own motive power, initially I am looking for a diesel locomotive (an early Ruston or Motor Rail), but there are plans for at least two steam locomotives to be built in the future, both replicas of locally-used engines.

Travellers home

Separately, I was delighted to be able to offer shed space to the ex-Burnhope and then ex-Penrhyn pairing of 'Glyder' and 'Ogwen' (in Durham they were named 'Grey' and 'Durham'). These two locos have recently been repatriated from the USA in an operation organised by Julian Birley (see *NGW* 81). Being 1ft 10¾in gauge they are not compatible (yet!) with our new railway, but they add a very complimentary attraction to the narrow gauge colliery theme.

The railway will next be in use at the aforementioned Power from the Past event in late summer, with hopefully at least two visiting steam locos and possibly some internal combustion attractions. It will also be integrated into a new stone-crushing display to give the line operational purpose. I am looking for appropriate rolling stock for our system, skips (preferably of the pre-Rugga variety) being particularly sought. Meanwhile, Darren and Mark will continue to develop the trackwork in between their many other duties maintaining the three standard gauge railways, electric tramway and wooden wagonway at the Museum! **NGW**



More Information

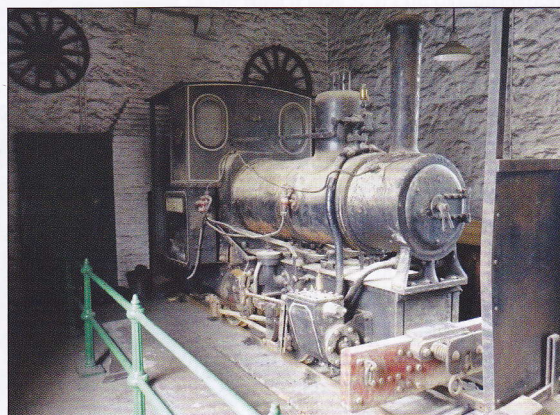
■ Photographs and film of the event, including extensive coverage of the narrow gauge railway (including some period re-creations of film showing Chaloner in 1930s and 1960s style) can be found on Paul's transport blog at <http://beamishtransport.blogspot.com> and also on Beamish's flickr pages, accessible via the blog.

The same website will include news of all narrow gauge developments (as well as wider transport collections news from Beamish) in the future.



Top: One way to move a narrow gauge coal tub! Fowler crane engine 'Duke of York' does the work in April.

Above: Chaloner meets some standard gauge brethren. The 1877-built De Winton is seen against a backdrop of 1871 and 1873 Head Wrightson machines. The older, red engine is in working order, whilst the green one is provisionally planned for restoration to start later this year.



Left: Four shots showing the arrival of the two former Durham County Water Board locos on their return from the USA.