

NBL Preservation Group

Honorary President Sir Hugh Reid

November 2011 Newsletter



PARAGUAYAN SURVIVORS

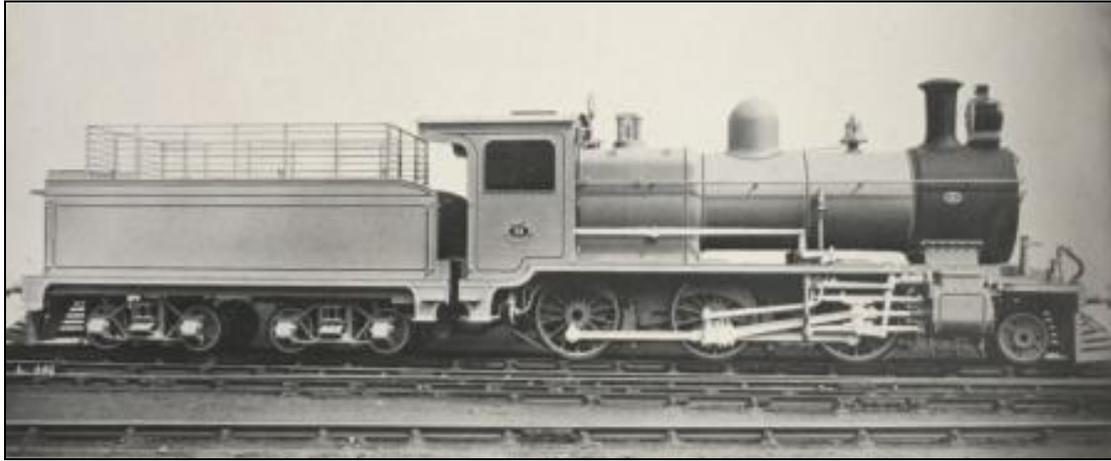
FCPCAL No. 104 (NBL 19147) is seen in the transfer yard near Encarnación (Photo, Danny Thomas)

Just over a year ago, the Ferrocarriles del Paraguay, the last 100 per cent commercially operated steam railway in the America's, was finally shut down. Raising the level of the Yacyretá Dam reservoir from 76 meters to 83 meters above sea level, to take full advantage of a new hydroelectric project's potential, flooded the old Encarnación station yard, loco depot and the track linking the station with the interchange yard.

The remaining rolling stock, including at least four North British steam locos, was moved to higher ground and stored within the interchange yard's premises pending the promise of track re-location and possible tourist services. However, both these dreams have now evaporated leaving the loco's futures very bleak.

It would be a mammoth task to return one of these fine engines to the UK for preservation but being of standard gauge and of classic British outline, they would be eminently suitable to run on most UK preserved lines. It is proposed to conduct a feasibility study to examine this possibility and interested parties are asked to contact NBLPG as soon as possible. Further information follows on pages 2 & 3.

A CENTURY OF SERVICE



NBL Works Photo of the first Paraguayan Central Railway 2-6-0 No. 51 (NB 19134)

Three batches of very elegant Edwardian 2-6-0's totalling 15 locomotives were built for the Paraguayan Central Railway between 1909 and 1912. The Orders were shared between Queens Park and Atlas Works and the locomotives were fitted with 8 wheel tenders for carrying copious supplies of hardwood fuel. The following chart gives details of the three orders and the Paraguay running numbers for the original engines.

YEAR	ORDER NO.	QUANTITY	NB WORKS	WORKS NOS.	PC NUMBERS
1909	L389	10	ATLAS WORKS	19134 - 43	51 - 60
1910	L390	4	QUEENS PK	19144 - 47	101 - 104
1912	L519	1	ATLAS WORKS	20082	105

Over the years the small fleet of 2-6-0's was supplemented with additional 4-6-0 and 2-8-0 locomotives purchased second hand from similar concerns in Argentina and quite amazingly, most of the engines achieved a working life of 100 years in regular service ! One has to ask the question, how many items manufactured anywhere in the World this year will still be doing the job they were intended for in 2111 ?? Since the decline of steam working, reports from Paraguay have been few and far between but, from the information we now have available, the following North British locos are still believed to exist.

YEAR	NBL NO	ORIGINAL RAILWAY	TYPE	NUMBER	LOCATION
1909	19137	Parguay Central Railway	2-6-0 Tender	54	Botanico
1910	19142	Parguay Central Railway	2-6-0 Tender	59	Encarnacion
1910	19143	Parguay Central Railway	2-6-0 Tender	60	Encarnacion
1910	19144	Parguay Central Railway	2-6-0 Tender	101	Encarnacion
1910	19145	Parguay Central Railway	2-6-0 Tender	102	Sapucay
1910	19147	Parguay Central Railway	2-6-0 Tender	104	Encarnacion
1910	19212	FCGU Argentina	4-6-0 Tender	226	Asuncion
1910	19214	FCGU Argentina	4-6-0 Tender	228	Asuncion
1911	19670	Entre Rios Railway	2-8-0 Tender	521	Botanico
1911	19673	Entre Rios Railway	2-8-0 Tender	524	Encarnacion
1912	19835	Entre Rios Railway	4-6-0 Tender	235	San Salvador

We are very fortunate in having received a detailed article from Danny Thomas, the Editor of 'Latin Tracks' Magazine and a summary is shown on the following page. The full article, in English and Spanish, can be found at: www.latintracks.net Some rare video footage by Chris Cairns showing the remaining locomotives at work can be found on the 'You tube' website: www.youtube.com/watch?v=XWqPxne5tuI

END OF AN ERA, from an article in 'Latin Tracks' by Danny Thomas**FCPCAL No. 60 (NBL 19143) shunts the freight interchange yard near Encarnación (Danny Thomas)**

In 1999, Paraguay's standard gauge, 440 kilometer long, Ferrocarril Presidente Carlos Antonio López (President Carlos Antonio Lopez Railway - FCPCAL) suspended most of its commercial operations and survival of this ancient 100 per cent steam powered railway was, in the best of cases, quite grim. In spite of the suspensions, the FCPCAL still ran some weekend steam powered tourist trains out of Asunción, the country's capital city. These excursions finally ceased in 2000, when one of these trains derailed around 15 kilometers out of Asunción leaving two passengers dead and eleven injured.

By the end of 2000, the only surviving section still in commercial operation comprised the international interchange yard and terminal operations in Encarnación, where the Paraguayan railway network connected via a bridge with Argentina's also standard gauge railway. This 6.5 kilometer long section had been left with no physical connection linking it to the rest of the country's railway network, because of the construction and consequent flooding of large tracts of land by the Yacyretá Hydroelectric Dam. The dam's rising waters eventually severed the line between Artigas and Encarnación, rendering the railway absolutely useless. The Ente Binacional Yacyretá (Yacyretá Binational Entity – EBY), responsible for the dam's construction, was supposed to pay for the railway's relocation but regrettably, this never happened.

Until November 2010, day to day terminal operations were handled by four veteran wood burning 2-6-0's dating back to 1910. Usually, two of them were in steam on a daily basis and the others kept in reserve or under repair. The steam locos, never equipped with continuous brakes, were banned from crossing the bridge into Argentina. The crossing was usually handled by superannuated GE U12 or U13 diesels. Today, all of the grain and fertilizer traffic moves by road.

With just a few remaining employees on the railways' books, it is quite possible, that all of the railway's assets spread out along the surviving sections of track will be left unguarded. If this proves to be the case, they will very soon be plundered and vandalized beyond recognition, effectively erasing around 150 years of Paraguayan railway history.

(4)

IDENTITY CRISIS...?



At first glance, the SAR 19D Class 4-8-2 stored inside Voorbaai Loco shed earlier this year looks like a standard North British product in the 33xx series complete with Vanderbilt Tender and diamond works plate. However, closer examination of the cab side shows the loco's number to be 2749 – an engine which was built by Robert Stephenson & Hawthorn in 1946.

But what of the diamond works plate ? Nothing too unusual here you might say, boilers were often swapped around during overhauls so it looks like No. 2749 now has a North British boiler. Hmmm, so far so good but the loco is not likely to be fitted with this particular boiler. The works plate reads 'North British Locomotive Company, Glasgow No. 25539 built 1944'. Now we are getting warm, we may have discovered a long lost Wardale modified super power 19D – the works plate indicates the boiler to be from NBL 15F No. 3000 !



Photos from Ian Cook

ELECTRIC AVENUE (part 1)

Class AL4 Electric Loco No. E3039 (NBL 27796) near Stafford in 1963 (photo www.colour-rail.com)

Probably NBL's most successful modern traction locomotives for British Railways were the 10 Class AL4 25kV AC electric locomotives built under sub contract for GEC in 1960. As the class name implies, these locos were the fourth of the new BR electric designs to appear and were part of the modernisation plan for the London Euston to Liverpool and Manchester lines.

Constructed from mild steel, the loco body was very light and strong and was a significant improvement on earlier designs. All fabrication in the locomotive body was welded in order to minimise stress concentration and the need to use fibreglass mouldings for the cab area to reduce weight was dispensed with. The first locomotive, number E3036, was delivered to Longsight depot, Manchester in March 1960, while the last, E3045, arrived almost exactly one year later.

Although better performers than the NBL diesels, the AL4's were troubled by bad ride quality and also by problems with their mercury arc rectifiers and by 1963 the whole class was recalled to works for modifications. In 1967, No E3044 became the first AC electric locomotive to receive the new Rail Blue colour scheme and was often exhibited at various rolling stock exhibitions around the country.

All 10 AL4s were refurbished at Doncaster and returned to service as Class 84 by the end of 1972 for use on the northward extension of the WCML electrification and they saw out their service days very appropriately working in Scotland. Scrapping commenced with Nos. 84006 & 84007 in 1979 and the last of the class to go was No. 84008 in 1988. No. E3036 (NBL 27793) was fortunately loaned to the National Railway Museum at York for an exhibition in 1979 and this eventually became a permanent arrangement. In 2000 the loco was loaned by the NRM to the AC Loco Group and can currently be seen on display at Barrow Hill Roundhouse.

Further information regarding E3036 and the ACLG can be found on the website : www.aclocogroup.co.uk



I was delighted to meet a real preservation celebrity on 23rd October when Ian Welch, the General Manager of New Zealand Mainline Steam Tours, visited Quainton Road to see North British 25NC No. 3405. Ian has told me before that he has great respect for NB products, so much so that he has preserved no less than seven of them himself ! In view of his efforts to preserve NB steam, Ian has kindly accepted our offer of Honorary Membership and becomes NBLPG Member Number 60-143. The date we met up was entirely coincidental but very relevant as it was exactly 20 years to the day since No. 3405 arrived back in the UK.

Photo David Morphey

Dubs Work Parties : In view of the fact that neither Mike Smith or myself will be available for the next few Saturdays, we have decided to postpone weekend work parties on the Dubs until after Christmas. It may still be possible to get a few jobs done on Thursday afternoons though so please phone or text me on my mobile 07990 575 103 if you are available and would like to come along. Funding for the Dubs has all but dried up in the last few months but we do still need to repay existing loans and cover ongoing maintenance costs. I realize that times are difficult at the moment but please consider sending us a small donation if possible to help keep this fine locomotive in good shape.

Postal Newsletters : We are looking for a volunteer to help print and post out around 20 NBLPG Newsletters each month. The ideal person does not have to be on email but would need access to a printer or photocopier. To put things into perspective, we currently have a newsletter circulation of over 600 people and all but 20 are now sent by email. If you would like to help, please give me a call or drop me a line. By the way, if you are on our postal circulation but now have an email address, please let me know ASAP.



Thank you all once again for your continued support, More News Next Month, Best Regards, Ken

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MEMBERSHIP & INFORMATION

If you would like to comment on our preservation activities or would like further information on any of our projects, please contact Ken or our Webmaster Steve Knapman by letter or by e:mail. Photos and articles for our website should be sent to : steve.k@rubihorn.demon.co.uk

New Members and Supporters are always welcome and funds are urgently needed for all our projects. Please join us and help to preserve North British locomotives from around the World. Our Website Address is : www.nbloco.net

Remember, **there is no annual Membership Fee**, just a one-off joining fee of £10 which will give you regular news updates and the option to participate in our locomotive preservation projects.

If you would like to join us or make a donation, please complete the form below and send it to : Ken Livermore, **Hon. Secretary, NBL Preservation Group, 4 Porchfield Close, Earley, Reading, Berks, RG6 5YZ.** Or e:mail : ken.livermore@btinternet.com

**NORTH BRITISH LOCOMOTIVE PRESERVATION GROUP
HON. PRESIDENT SIR HUGH REID**

MEMBERSHIP / DONATION FORM

NAME :

ADDRESS :

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ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP JOINING FEE : £10

DONATION TO DUBS TANK No. 196 RESTORATION FUND : £

DONATION TO CLASS 11 No. 929 RESTORATION FUND : £

DONATION TO NGR CLASS 1 4-8-0 SHIPPING FUND : £

DONATION TO REPLICA 'ENGINE 61662 APPEAL' : £

TOTAL ENCLOSED : £

All donations, loans and subscriptions will be acknowledged, thank you for your interest and support. Please make cheques or orders payable to 'NBL Preservation Group'