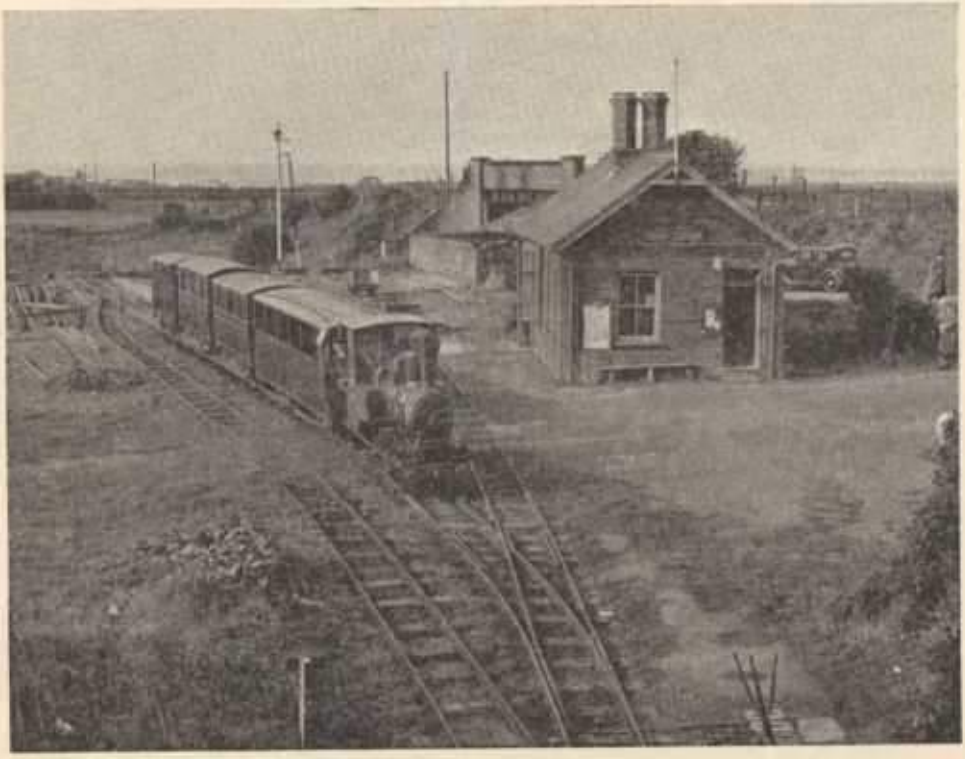
TALYLLYN NEWS

THE JOURNAL OF THE
TALYLLYN RAILWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY

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The Rt. Hon.
The Earl of Northesk.

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No. 11 - MAY, 1956.



WHARF STATION, TOWYN, WITH ENGINE No. 6 "DOUGLAS"
(Photograph from "Talyllyn Railway in Pictures")

IN GENERAL

The printing of this issue is an experiment which has been sanctioned by the Committee, and if it is successful and well-received the idea will be continued, and possibly developed. Naturally it costs rather more than the duplicated "News" and we may have to reduce to three issues a year instead of four. Also, of course, the postage bill will be increased by several pounds per issue when the new rates come into force in June. However, Members may rest assured that we will do everything possible to give them as much information as possible, as often as possible.

Members who visit Towyn to work during the running season are reminded that they should be conversant with the Company's operating Rules and Regulations, and should be prepared to sign to that effect. It will be appreciated if members will give prior notice of when they will be available, if possible. Correspondence in connexion with the above should be addressed to Mr. D. Woodhouse, 17, South Road, Smethwick, 41, Staffs., from whom copies of Instructions to Volunteers and Accommodation List may be obtained.

This year's Time Table shows no change from last year, except that the season is one week longer, that is from 19th May, to 22nd September, and that Quarry Siding now appears in the list of request Halts.

R. W. I.

FIRST TRIP

by H. E. V.

Here I am, on the footplate of No. 3, as fireman to Driver Dai Jones. It is my first official footplate duty and I am on "appro". I glance round quickly to get my bearings. Blower on, water level O.K., after a quick blow-down, fireman's injector, driver's injector, vacuum brake valve—wish I knew which way it worked—handbrake, firedoors, tin of sand, cylinder drain cocks, reverser, regulator. This seems the lot. Oh yes, a good fire in the box.

In no time we have topped up the tank and marshalled the train before proceeding to Wharf. Train staff in order, points locked behind us, and then on again, gathering speed on the level and checking in good time for the Stop signal. A long whistle—what's this? No reply? Vacuum brake full on and we are going to overshoot. Handbrake full on and she slows just in time to get the green. I unwind the handle quickly and we trundle under the long bridge into Wharf, pulling up inside the loop. I push past Dai, uncouple, and we draw up to the stop block.

"No slack!" orders Dai, and we fill up the basket with lumps, hump it, tip into the bunker, and back again time after time until the sweat rolls off us in the hot morning sun. At last the bunker is filled and we run round and back on. I catch my fingers as the coupling falls home, and again as the weight on the end of the screw lever catches them against the buffer. A quiet oath, then back to the footplate whilst Dai

visits the office for running orders. I look round again. Steam is 20lbs. down and there are ten minutes to go so I try the blower. Pressure creeps up and five minutes later it is only 5lbs. down and rising rapidly. I try the fireman's injector and fail to get it to work. I try the driver's and fail again. She begins to blow and I am very worried until Dai appears and asks "Injectors not working?" He gets his on first time, smiling "Water full on and cut the steam down". So that's the trick!

"Right away!" This is the real thing! With a deafening blast from exhaust and open drain cocks we thunder through the bridge and hit the grade. The noise eases as the cut-off comes back, and we are soon whistling to hurry up the gathering working party. As we pull up at Pendre I get my injector going to keep her quiet, cutting it off as we get under way again. A good start and we're jolting and swaying for a good run up Hendy bank. We've both bogie coaches and three Talyllyn carriages on, and No. 3 blasts up with all she has, dealing bruises indiscriminately to head and hips of the raw fireman. The track is good here and this is nothing to what it will be on the older lengths.

"Injector!" cries Dai above the din, and I leap into action, failing repeatedly to get the water in.

"No good!" I shout back, and Dai comes to the rescue on his side as she begins to blow. My morale falls. Round the dog-leg bends and he knocks the water off ready for Cynfal bank. We romp up to it like nobody's business and this time I succeed in working my injector first time as we enter Rhydyronen. I feel better.

Once again "Right away!" But no, the rail is wet and she loses her feet, again and again. "Sand" cries Dai, and I squeeze past the only exit, plod to the sandbox in the front, fill my hands and run to the rear—No. 3 is working backwards up the grade. I quickly put what is left in my hands on to the line and run back for more. Dai tries again and the wheels and motion disappear in steam, so I put the sand as near as I can, with great respect for the big-end, whirling somewhere in the fog. Again and again I stagger backwards and forwards, once losing my footing and throwing the sand all over the motion. At last she gets a grip and I jump on hurriedly, lest I get left behind. But no, she stalls again and I repeat the drill. This time I catch a glimpse of worried heads sticking out of the carriage windows, and someone makes a provocative remark. No comment!

She moves again and I make a desperate leap on the the front end as she gathers speed, later climbing round the outside of the cab on to the footplate. I relax as we pass over the bridge over the stream, to notice that the water has fallen out of sight. Pressure falls away as I put cold water in, and I begin to panic. I am failing on my first trip! "Coal!" orders Dai, and I nervously put coal on the fire, which has been pulled badly by the slipping. It must have used a lot of water too. Blower on full; Dai tactfully restricts it to a more moderate setting. It seems an age since we first tried to leave Rhydyronen, but it can only have been about seven minutes, and I am already exhausted before the trip is half over! At last we run over the loop into Brynglas, and I hope to get the pressure back to normal during a breather. But after a token stop we go straight on again. No. 3 slips again in the cutting beyond and the rail is wet all

the way now, before the sun reaches it. I sand as we go, through the hole in the back cab sheet, from the tin on the footplate. It's a good thing she's running bunker first.

After an age and being almost pitched head first through the hole several times we roll into Dolgoch as I manage to get the injector on at the first attempt. I climb up and fill the tank, forgetting to put the blower on. Dai comes to the rescue and attends to the fire at the same time. I must surely be the worst fireman he has ever had! My attention wanders and the hose slips out of my hand, drenching three passengers who are standing in the line of fire—more black marks against me. I begin to feel very depressed.

Off again, and I decide to lift the fire a bit with the pricker. It gets red hot and ignites a pile of old cotton waste in the corner of the footplate as I put it back in its place. The cab stinks foully—yet more black marks. Glass low again, and I fail four times to get water into the boiler. Dai to the rescue again and I feel yet more depressed.

We pass Hugh and a P.W. gang with No. 8 at Quarry Siding. Then a sheep holds us up and I hurry him along with toots on the whistle. He runs aside and we resume speed, bucketing and rocking on the old track as fast as we safely can.

At last, Abergynolwyn. We run round and I relax. Fifty minutes since we left Wharf and it seems like fifty hours, all packed with incident. But what's this? Here comes No. 8 and the P.W. gang after us. They've heard my whistling and come to help, thinking it was a distress signal. Dai breaks it to me gently that the whistle is not generally used for scaring sheep off the line, the cylinder drain cocks being preferable. My morale reaches rock bottom, where it stays whilst we return to Wharf and run back light to Pendre for lunch.

With my heart in my boots I ask Dai, "Will you want me again this afternoon?" "Yes, if you can manage it". My morning is complete.

PUBLICITY

The following new items are now available, at the prices shown. Postage is extra in each case.

Photo-card No. 31. Locomotive No. 4 (with buffers). ...	4d. each
Guide for 1956. Eight new views included.	1/- each
Time Table leaflets for 1956.	1d. each
Talyllyn Railway Pencils, green, triangular.	6d. each

Colour Post Cards, continental size 6d. each or 3/- the set of 6 as follow

C1. No. 3 on Down train after arrival at Wharf.
C2. No. 4 on Up train at Wharf, taking passengers from tour coach.
C3. No. 3 on Down train at Rhydyronen.
C4. No. 3 on Down train at Dolgoch.
C5. No. 6 on Up train, taking water at Dolgoch.
C6. No. 6 on Up train at Quarry Siding Halt.

Calendars.

This year orders for calendars, both from this country and America, have come in rather more slowly. Consequently we still have a stock in hand and anyone who has not yet obtained a copy should send for one at once. The price is 2/6d. per copy, in this case post free.

Press Publicity.

We continue to receive general publicity in the press and various periodicals, but we could do with snappy items that are "News", so if you come across any send them along to Mr. Rolt, the Press Officer.

Several articles are in hand for local technical periodicals and we have been promised an early article in the American magazine "Trains".

ENGINEERING NEWS

Locomotives.

No. 2 "Dolgoch" is still awaiting an estimate for the necessary repairs. The firebox of No. 3 "Sir Haydn" also requires major repairs, and a report is awaited. No. 4 "Edward Thomas" and No. 6 "Douglas" are both in good working order; the sanding gear of the former is to be modified and new boiler plugs are being fitted to the rear end plate of the latter.

Coaching Stock.

A new coach, No. 12, has been constructed, using a built-up steel channel underframe, mounted on ex-Festiniog axleboxes, springs and hornways, and ex-Corris wheels. The bodywork is the remaining Penrhyn coach. It has been fitted with standard "Talyllyn" side buffers, and this leaves Coach 7 (Penrhyn) as the only one with centre buffers. The Corris Van has also been "standardised".

An excellent job is being made of the Talyllyn Brake Van, No. 5, entailing complete rebuilding of both ends and the provision of new headstocks. This vehicle was damaged in a minor shunting accident some time ago.

Buildings.

Concreting of the Wharf Office floor has been completed, but it has not yet been possible to deal with the Refreshment Rooms at Wharf or Abergynolwyn. The Carriage Shed and Engine Shed doors at Pendre have been painted.

Permanent Way.

Steady progress is being made in the region around and beyond Quarry Siding, although considerable ballasting and levelling are still required East of that point. A new stop-block has been erected on the end of the loco run-round at Wharf, using frames from Nuneaton and a piece of crossing timber for the beam. Painted black, with a red face, it looks very fine, and it is hoped it will be a long time before it has two black buffer marks on it.

Saved.

The only surviving Talyllyn slate wagon with boarded-in sides did its

last job of work at Easter, bringing some old sleepers from Brynglas to Pendre. After unloading, the wagon was manhandled off the rails at Wharf, and pushed into the Museum Shed.

"Road Motor Department".

The Railway now rejoices in the possession of a Morris Commercial motor lorry of pre-war vintage. This is a most generous gift from a member in Hampshire, and needless to say it is proving most useful. Anxious or purist Members may rest assured that there is, at present, little likelihood of our acquiring a motor bus.

Wanted.

Should any Member be in a position to supply, free or at low cost, any of the items listed below, it would be appreciated if details could be sent to the Engineering Secretary, Mr. Faulkner, "Redcliffe", Red Hill, Hunnington, Birmingham:

Bench Stand for ¼" Black & Decker Electric Drill.

Supply of Hardboard.

2 h.p. Single-phase 230-volt Electric Motor and Starter Switch.

Extending Ladder.

Oxy-acetylene Gas Welding Equipment.

Steel Storage Racks for Bolts, etc.

(We are again indebted to J. N. S's Newsletters, Nos. 34 & 35, for certain of the above information — Ed.)

CHARLIE UREN.

The Society has suffered a great loss by the death of Charles Uren on Friday, 2nd March, 1956. Charlie had been with us since the very early days, when he became an active helper. Later he served on the Committee and during the past two years spent the whole of the Summer Season at Towyn as Superintendent, Pendre. He also assisted George Walker in the running of the Catering Department. All of us, whether on the Committee or at Towyn will miss his cheerful personality, and our sympathy is with his wife and family.

A small party representing the Society attended the funeral on Tuesday, 6th March.

LONDON & HOME COUNTIES AREA NEWS

M.R.C. Exhibition.

Once again our small stand at this famous show has produced record results, a total of over £100 being taken. This was mainly due to the drawing power of Mr. Keith Bannister's 4m.m. scale, 8m.m. gauge layout in the illuminated glass case (the second Aquarium at this show?) Enclosure of the layout not only made Dolgoch Viaduct and Station a "framed picture" but also meant that by keeping the dust away the layout gave almost faultless operation for the whole of the show, after a few teething troubles were overcome.

Our grateful thanks are due to all who helped in the preparation, setting up, stewarding and dismantling of the stand, particularly, of course, Mr. Bannister.

The new coloured postcards made a strong appeal to the public and almost killed sales of the old black and white cards. Other items also sold steadily, mainly depending on which item any particular steward happened to be pushing!

Working Parties.

A score of Members were at Towyn over Easter and smaller parties have gone on the ordinary week-end working parties earlier this year. Several more are planned, so if *you* can help please write to Mr. J. N. Slater, 14, Castello Avenue, Putney, London, S.W.15. He will be happy to add you to his list—and to prove that you *can* get to Towyn and back in a week-end and still do a worthwhile job of work there.

A.G.M. Special Train, 22nd September, 1956.

This year again, for the convenience of Members and friends who wish to attend the Annual General Meeting and, in some cases, to make their annual visit to our Railway, a special train has been requested to run from Paddington to Towyn, calling at Greenford, High Wycombe, Birmingham and Shrewsbury. Times, fares, etc., have not yet been finally agreed, but they will be somewhere near last year's, *i.e.* depart Paddington about 8 a.m., and return from Towyn departing at about 11-30 p.m., giving some nine hours in Towyn. It is hoped the train will be hauled by a G.W. "Star" class engine as far as Shrewsbury and from thence by one of several "foreign" 4-4-0's that are being investigated. The train itself will be partly antique stock and partly modern stock, the latter for those who prefer up-to-date comfort!

It is hoped the fares will be about 50/- from London, 25/- from Birmingham and 15/- from Shrewsbury. Refreshment facilities will be available. At Towyn a film show is being laid on for the benefit of non-members unable to attend the actual meeting, but all will be welcome of course, to the Social that follows.

In order that plans may be sent you with the least delay, please drop a suitable note to the London Area Secretary, who is organising the trip, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope. Support is particularly sought from our Midland friends; the lower fare makes it an even cheaper trip than it is to our more remote Members.

NORTH - WEST AREA NEWS

Some sixty members from various parts of the country attended the Easter working party, about half of whom came from the North-West Area. The work done was a joint effort by everyone present and included making preparations for the Museum at Wharf, painting the carriage shed and engine shed doors, and a party working on the Penrhyn coaches and Talyllyn brake van.

Higher up the line, a telephone repair party was in operation, whilst Tadpole Cutting was cleared and the bridge stripped of ivy. A ballast train was run every day, the section east of Quarry Siding being ballasted on the Friday and Saturday, and the section between this point and Dolgoch on Sunday and Monday. Guards were provided for the passenger trains and three North-west members acted as locomotive crew.

Mr. David Baxter has found it necessary to give up his post of Area Transport Officer and our thanks are due to him for the able way in which he has carried out this job in the past. These duties are now being undertaken by Mr. Alan Chorlton, 6, Sunnybank Road, Longsight, Manchester, 13 (RUSholme 1863), who should be contacted by all members wishing to join working parties. Please give plenty of notice and enclose a stamped addressed envelope. (See back page for working party dates).

The Area Re-union was held on 8th February, in the Memorial Hall, Manchester, as in previous years. Over one hundred members and friends attended, and were given a review of the past year's work, by Mr. Boyd, followed by a show of films and coloured slides. A collection and the sale of refreshments realised over £12.

The final takings at the Manchester Model Railway Society's Christmas Exhibition amounted to the record figure of £47 9 6d., including first subscriptions from five new members.

NORTH-WEST AREA WINTER WORK PROGRAMME 1955 - 56

The end of Winter also ends the fifth year of our scheme for sending working parties to the railway. Our Area has concentrated more on the organisation of such parties than on lectures, exhibitions and the like, which, though arranged, are not on a scale comparable with those in other Areas. It is natural that over these years our members have lived through changing circumstances, and the personnel of the parties is always changing, despite a hard core of regular attenders. Marriage, change of job, moves to other parts of the country, are among the reasons.

Over fifty Area members have taken a part during the last two years and each has taught himself or herself a score of different jobs, many of which entail using tools in a different manner from the usual, but which experience has found to be the quickest and easiest way of doing the job! The simple instance of removing old rails from the sleepers may

be given. At first we conscientiously slid off the old chairs, having worked out the spikes beforehand. All this took time. Now we give each chair a clout with the sledge hammer (it fetches the same scrap price whether in one piece or two) and insert a mattock spike in a fish-plate hole at each end of the rail. A twist, and hey presto! the rail is wrenched from its insecure fastenings.

This speed and lightening of labour are important. Enthusiasm being what it is, there is a tendency to go hard at the job, having in mind the short time we are usually at work. And the work in question must be measured against a background of arrangements at home, the use of a car, the cost of transport and 'digs', and the risk of bad motoring conditions in winter. The actual job, therefore, comes as a final stage in the chain of personal arrangements of each volunteer, and it is up to the gangs themselves to try to use their energies conservatively, if only to avoid arriving at business again on Monday with an arm in a sling or on a stretcher! So those fifty volunteers have each learned something new to them and many have become quite skilled in a bewildering variety of tasks.

We have carried on with these jobs in snow, heatwave and rain, and the strange thing is that save for an odd one or two who have made a first appearance and never been seen again, the majority come back for further dosage! I like to think that this is because we have found amongst ourselves not only the common aim of doing something which brings a dividend to each individual, but also a team spirit which embraces everyone. This spirit shows itself best in the shocking repartee and banter which is the background to every task, or the laughter which accompanies the derailment of a wagon, and the extra wagon of ballast loaded when the day is far gone. These remarks apply equally to every Area's working parties.

This winter the North-west was given the job of relaying a certain stretch of track, with an average attendance of thirteen members for the five parties sent between September and February. Two members attended all five parties, four members four parties and five members three parties. However, we must view the work in terms of achievement in the general picture of improvement on the railway as a whole and, most important, relative to each volunteer who has done his "whack" and who can feel, as we must, that the measure of his work is vital to the railway.

J. I. C. B.

EAST MIDLANDS & SOUTH YORKSHIRE AREA NEWS

Although considerable progress has been made in this Area it seems that many members within our boundaries have not yet joined us. Activities have so far been confined to working parties, but it is intended to hold local meetings as soon as practicable—depending upon the support *you* give. Much more support is necessary for the Area to become really active and a firm asset to the Talyllyn Railway. Full

details of our activities are given in our area newsletters, which are circulated to *area members* from time to time.

If you have not already done so, write now to :— Mr. D. R. Smith, 41, Loughborough Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham.

Area News.

A small party visited Towyn at the New Year weekend, activities being concentrated on ballasting work near Quarry Siding. There was an informal evening meeting at the White Hall Hotel, when ideas and suggestions were exchanged. This proved a great success and it is hoped to continue the practice on future occasions.

The next official working party is to be held at Whitsuntide and it is hoped that we will have a really effective turn-out.

For full particulars of working parties, transport offers or requests, write to the Area Transport Officer :— Mr. M. Gillott, 12 Hoober Avenue, Sheffield, 11. (Stamped addressed envelope please).

BIRMINGHAM & MIDLAND AREA NEWS

The Midland Area was officially inaugurated at a very successful Meeting at the Queen's Hotel, Birmingham, on Saturday, 11th February. Some sixty members were present. Area Officers are as follows :— Chairman: Mr. C. S. N. Walker; Treasurer: Mr. L. Adams; Working Party Leader: Mr. D. Gardiner; Transport Officer: Mr. R. A. Hope; Committee Members: Messrs. B. R. Whitehouse and C. H. H. Franklin.

The Area Secretary is Councillor E. Gibbons, "Glynavon", Stream Road, Kingswinford, Brierley Hill, Staffs., and the Area Representative on the General Committee is Mr. G. H. Walker, The White House, Little Aston Park, Streetly, Staffs.

SIGNALS & TELECOMMUNICATIONS.

Major David Robinson points out that consequent upon the high level of traffic which we now bear, the necessity for good and reliable communications is greater than ever. He would like to organise a Signals and Telecommunications Department within the Society which will operate working week-ends and maintain communications.

He therefore asks any member who has equipment of any sort, or who is interested in the project, to communicate with him at 24, Oak Avenue, Romiley, Cheshire.

POINTS FROM LETTERS.

"I was intrigued by the article by 'Litera Scripta Manet' on Guard's duty. It is apparent that he has not digested the Rule Book. Rule 9 states that the Engine Crew shall clean and oil the coaches. It is a job which is generally *done* by the Guard out of kindness of heart, since the engine crew are usually otherwise occupied." —J. J. Davies.

"Could we have another Talyllyn Railway as good as "The Pop Special?" My youthful pupils found the combination of "pop" and "Douglas" quite irresistable!" —Ian L. Wright.

"I should like to congratulate all concerned with the publication of the 'Talyllyn News' — an excellent little paper, full of interest and well produced." —C. E. Beeson.

Mr. E. E. Smith suggests formal opening of the season by some glamorous film star, and would himself prefer Miss Gina Lollobrigida. He adds that Miss Glynis Johns, as a Welshwoman, might be an eminently satisfactory substitute, and finishes "Perhaps unmarried Mem bers would give their views on this weighty subject and on my suggestion generally".

"Items Wanted" in the September issue last year prompted Mr. Tristram England to produce the following :— "Here is an S.O.S. for Hooks. Will William Hooks (known as Bill Hooks) last heard of some years ago in England, please go to Pendre Station, where his sister Blunt Scythe, is dangerously ill — from overwork, no doubt."

He adds, "Thanks for your good work in letting us distant members know what goes on at Towyn."

HEARD ON WORKING PARTIES

After a prominent Member had fallen into a clump of gorse, "A Boyd in the hand is worth two in the bush."

"Why is everyone asking John what to do; is he the Gaffer?" "He must be — he's the only one here whose coat matches his trousers."

"Do you mind moving those pickled onions down-wind?".

SOCIETY DIARY

May 26th. West Wickham Model Railway Club Exhibition (T.R.P.S. Stand).
May 26—27th. North-west Area Woking Party at Towyn.
Aug. 4th—6th. (Bank Holiday) London Area Working Party at Towyn.
Sept. 22nd—23rd. Annual General Meeting. London Area Working Party. North-west Area Working Party. (All at Towyn.)

SPECIAL TOUR OF AUSTRIAN NARROW-GAUGE RAILWAYS

Final arrangements are now being made for a party to leave London on Saturday, 18th August, for a tour of certain Austrian narrow-gauge lines. The party will travel via Dover—Ostend to Bregenz, thence over the Austrian Federal Railways' narrow-gauge line to Bezau. Afterwards steam and electric narrow-gauge lines in the Tyrol will be visited, also the line from Zell-am-See to Krimml. Arrival back in London will be Saturday, 25th August.

Anyone interested in joining the party should write *immediately* to Mr. E. G. Cope, Hon. Secretary, Narrow Gauge Railway Society, 10, Piece Wood Road, Tinshill Lane, Leeds, 16, Yorkshire, enclosing a *foolscap* stamped addressed envelope for itinerary and cost.

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Mr. T. W. Robertson, 23, Portway, Ewell, Surrey.
North-West Area Secretary :-
Mr. David Chatfield, 27, Lynwood Grove, Sale, Cheshire.
East-Midlands & South-Yorks. Area Secretary :-
Mr. D. R. Smith, 41, Loughborough Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham.
Birmingham & Midland Area Secretary :-
Councillor E. Gibbons, "Glynavon" Stream Road, Kingswinford, Brierley Hill, Staffs.
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