



## LOCKDOWN SMOKESTACK 2



Again Long before Lockdown a few years ago your President joined a friend in the opposite of the huge land mass of the USA.

Here is the Isle of Man and the rebuilt part of the Laxey Mines tramroad in action.

*October 2020*

This is our second emergency issue in the absence of any Rotary meetings, other than by electronic means. Thank you for your patience!

WE NEED YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO MAKE SMOKESTACK OF MORE GENERAL INTEREST! PLEASE HELP OUT BY SUBMITTING NOTES, PHOTOS, EVEN SHORT ARTICLES.  
WE CAN THEN PUBLISH IT MORE OFTEN!

Your President has given up the thought of the virus being beaten this year and it is well beyond the time for another **Smokestack**. Fortunately, we spread the newsletter by email so there is no difference. Sadly we are still not able to meet even close IFRR friends in person.

As you can see above the President and the Board are the usual contributors to **Smokestack**.

We need news from the rest of the membership. Anything of interest will be gladly received.

PLEASE CONTACT US IF YOU HAVE ANY NEWS RELEVANT TO IFRR AND RAILROADING IN GENERAL. We know that many Railroad attractions are at the moment still closed or have limited access and there may be little to report. However, anything historic would be a welcome addition.

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**Recent News**

Within the last few weeks we, like many other Fellowships, have been asked by RI to contribute some comments and opinions on what holds our particular Fellowship together. This, up to now, has been directed at the Board members. Quite apart from filling out a questionnaire we expect to be interviewed as well. Please also note we can add this type of info to the "Sharing" section of the IFRR website ([www.ifrr.info](http://www.ifrr.info)). We are also aware that the website itself has not been changed for a while now and we need YOU the members to give us ideas on how we can make it more interesting and useful for YOU. Take a look at it and please feel free to criticise – constructively!

Personally, I want to add to this to include recent examples of railroad connections to Rotarians fundraising and have two immediate examples to hand – the Sydney Polio fundraiser we featured in the last **Smokestack** and a current British example raising funds for Antiphospholipid Syndrome. Another potential one in Sierra Leone is added. Do you have any more? Let's start with the most recent topic I have met.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **Riding Britain's Railways for APS**

As a result of his wife's death from APS (Antiphospholipid Syndrome) Phil Godfrey was determined to raise awareness of its effects in order to improve testing and treatment for those who suffer from it. He related his experiences to the President's Club a few weeks ago. The relevance to IFRR is that his fundraising was done most recently by travelling the coastal railways of Britain.

Phil gave examples of women who had suffered from APS but were undiagnosed, not tested or testing was delayed. Clare had a stillborn boy and then three miscarriages before being tested and is now the proud mother of twins. Beth had blood clots on both lungs and became increasingly unwell, but it was only a change of doctor who arranged for an APS test which meant that she had the correct treatment and recovered. Phil's wife Christine was an active person who loved tennis, badminton, walking and gardening. In 1995 she developed a dropped foot and the fingers of her left hand became curled so that she could not straighten them. She had tests and Multiple Sclerosis was diagnosed. It was ten years later when a consultant referred her to Professor Hughes and a test confirmed that she had APS. The original diagnosis was wrong but when the correct diagnosis was made it was too late and Christine lost the ability to walk and died in 2015. While APS and MS have similar symptoms in the early stages, a correct diagnosis would have resulted in treatment and she might still be alive today. Phil determined to raise awareness and money in her memory.

After 18 months of planning a 14,000 mile walk from the Scilly Islands to the Shetlands, Phil set out on a wet, foggy day in March 2017. At different times he experienced heatwave, heat exhaustion and injury. After pulling a muscle in North Cornwall he had to take time to recover before resuming his walk, which he continued to Preston but a problem with his right knee meant that he needed an operation. The consultant advised against continuing his walk, but Phil was determined to try. He managed another 400 miles but then had to give up and change plans.

He decided to travel all around the coast of Great Britain by train, stopping to talk to Rotary clubs on the way. This lasted until just before Lockdown when he had travelled on 650 trains covering 42,000 miles. Fortunately as an ex Railway employee his travel was free. He met a number of people with APS on his travels including a lady on a minibus trip on one of the Orkney Islands. At Portsmouth he met a young man who, when he heard about APS, said that his wife had suffered 3 miscarriages: Phil advised that she should have the APS test.



said that there was a York Rotarian involved as a Trustee of the Friends. Your President is very happy to know that they are also with the Railway Children representative David Maidment, whose activities we might well report in the next issue.

If you need to know more the initial contact is Helen Ashby on [foslnrm@outlook.com](mailto:foslnrm@outlook.com)



How British – Waterloo Station  
the Hub

but in Sierra Leone

Beyer Garratt Loco

The terminus today with Children in

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### Britain's rail history explored. A new puzzle book by York's National Railway Museum

The National Railway Museum in York, UK, has published one of its own, taking readers through the history of Britain's railways with more than 100 brain teasers, anagrams, crosswords and other puzzles.

"Puzzle books have long been enjoyed on railway journeys so it seemed only fitting that we would help create a puzzle book about the railways," says Wendy Burton, group publishing manager at the Science Museum Group, which includes the Railway Museum.

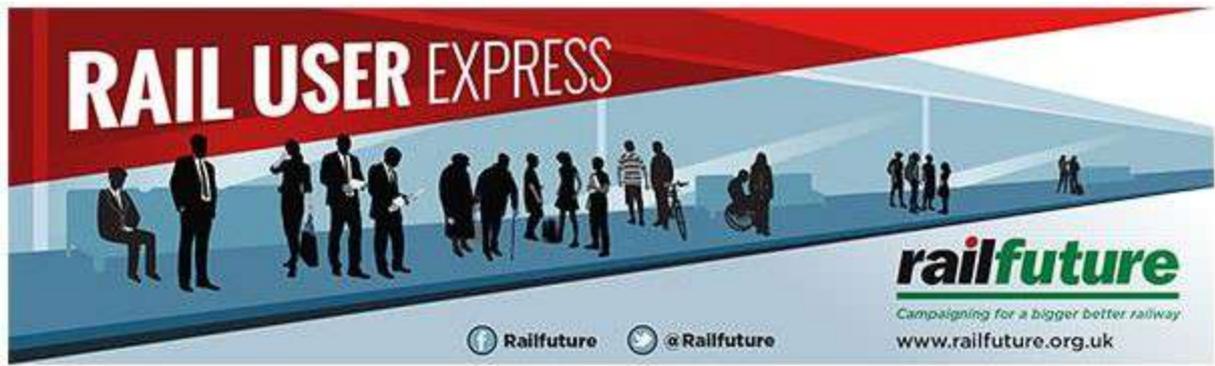
The Big British Railway Puzzle Book features puzzles about railways and locomotives as well as express trains and personalities associated with the railways. The puzzles are accompanied by historical facts and figures, trivia and introductions to each section authored by Dr Thomas Spain, a research associate at the museum.

The Big British Railway Puzzle Book by The National Railway Museum is published by Seven Dials and is out now. Visit [www.railwaymuseum.org.uk](http://www.railwaymuseum.org.uk)

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### Railways in the UK - a summary update

Your President subscribes to RailFuture which covers a summary of developments in Britain. If you are interested the newsletter is readily available. Rather than reproduce 8 pages I just show the header and website details below.



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## Toronto Railway Museum - a regular update

Toronto was a memorable IFRR meeting during Convention. Holding the AGM in one of the Museum's Star vehicles won't be forgotten. The Museum keeps in touch with us with its regular newsletter and a summary is here with us again. You can get full details on [torontorailwaymuseum.com](http://torontorailwaymuseum.com) and I do recommend their cheerful transmission of Canadian rail news.

The Museum reopened on July 1st. Two new guided tours will operate as well as the museum space in Stall 17 of the Roundhouse. The simulator, Mini Train and Don Station gift shop are not open at this time.

**Current Hours** Wednesday – Sunday 12:00-5:00 PM Closed Monday and Tuesday

The safety and well-being of visitors, volunteers, and museum staff are their highest priority. Additional health and safety precautions are in place. They ask that visitors stay home if they have any symptoms of COVID-19 or are considered to be in a high-risk category.

All access to the museum must be by pre-booked tickets to visit so that social distancing can be maintained for the safety of all.

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## Ollie Smith's Chain Driven Rail Vehicles

In an early response to our appeal for contributions New Zealand IFRR member Ian Jenner tells us the fascinating story of his project and the great history behind it. We like it very much! More like this please.

"O W (Ollie) Smith was a carrier and his first major job was in 1928 hauling a boiler from the Rotorua Railway Station to his father's sawmill at Te Whaiti using a Packard truck plus four draught horses to assist the truck and load up the hills.

In 1942 he was carting logs for Gamman and Company's sawmill at Mamaku near Rotorua. Gammans had an extensive tramway but at that time they had a problem. The sawmiller used a small locomotive to transport men into the bush, but the locomotive became un-economic to repair. Ollie Smith converted a truck to run on rails and over a 20-year period he operated many rail mounted vehicles on a contract basis for Gammans, the NZ Railway's (NZR) sawmill at Mamaku, and other sawmills in the Rotorua and Bay of Plenty areas. Between 1942 and 1954 he built 25 vehicles that were used to haul logs, transport men to and from the bush (known as "bush jiggers"), maintain tramlines, and haul sawn timber loaded into NZR wagons from the mill to Mamaku Station. He was known for his inventiveness in building, modifying, and repairing rail mounted vehicles.



In 1953, Ollie Smith extended his range of log-hauling rail vehicles by building one with five axles on the two bogies and all axles were driven. There were two axles on the front bogies, and three on the rear bogie. The drive was distributed from the gearbox to a differential at the inner end of the front and rear bogies by way of a GMC transfer case. The front bogie had two axles with the outer axle connected to the inner axle by chains on sprockets outside the wheels and similarly for the three outer axles on the rear bogie. The cab on the vehicle was from a Dodge truck.

**A real monster truck!**

The unit was used at Mamaku on NZR and Gammans trams to haul log trains and then in the NZR mill yard to shunt NZR wagons.

Following the closure of the NZR sawmill the vehicle was gifted to the Tauranga Museum and was used to haul a carriage the museum had built until it fell out of use and was dismantled. The Ollie Smith vehicle then went to Waihi Railway for a time and then vanished from sight.

Having restored the two of Ollie's Mamaku bush jiggers, I decided I would like to see one of his chain-drive machines and, over a number of years, made enquiries to try and locate this machine. One day in August 2020, Dave Simpson of Hamilton called saying he had been advised it was on a farm at Mamaku, close to its original home. It transpired that Harry Frost, whose family had farmed at Mamaku for many years, had seen the vehicle at Waihi and bought it back to Mamaku with the intention of restoring it and laying track to take visitors to his blueberry farm for tours. That did not happen, so he reluctantly sold it to me for restoration and use at the Bush Tramway Club at Pukemiro.



**Not quite in top condition! As found.**

The chassis and bogies have been delivered to a warehouse at Airport Oaks, Auckland, where they have cleaned, with the chassis ready for sandblasting and painting. A suitable Dodge cab, bonnet and grille, plus a Holden 202 engine have been obtained.

warehouse

As delivered to the



I have previously bought & restored two derelict Ollie Smith jiggers and have rebuilt them. Both are White truck chassis.

Life would be empty without a project! "

**Ian with the restored smaller jiggers**

*Ian Jenner, Managing Director  
Jenners Worldwide Freight Ltd*

Ian – please keep us informed of progress. We'd love to have more in **Smokestack**.

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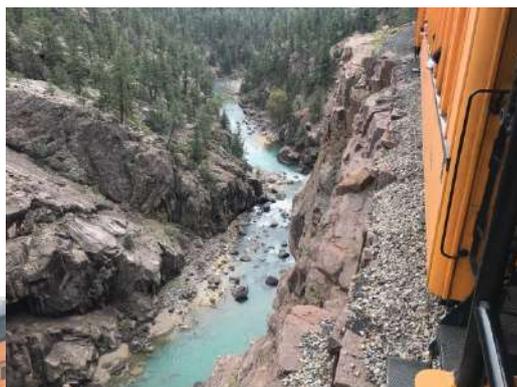
**Tourist Railroads Still Chugging Away in Colorado (USA)**

IFRR VP Curtis Reinhardt recently toured around Colorado to visit Rotarian friends, hike in National Parks and, of course, ride on some historical rails! He and his friend Denise were fortunate to be able to jump on two (of many!) well known Colorado tourist railroads that were running despite scattered Covid shutdowns at various tourist attractions around the US. Both lines were running under steam power with altered schedules that offered shorter than regular round trips with limited capacity. Trips on both these lines are highly recommended by your VP! (Rail Line names included with photos)

Curtis and Denise also observed 100 car coal train consists rolling through Steamboat Springs and visited several rail museums and the recently refurbished Union Station in downtown Denver.



Durango and Silverton  
Narrow Gauge Railroad (VP  
Curtis posing with engine)



Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad (We  
actually boarded in Chama, New Mexico, and  
traveled into Colorado and back.)



Well thank you both Curtis and Denise for this and the fine photos. I thought I should bow to the US IFRR members at the end and put something in from the States! It will also appeal to my fellow members of the Macclesfield Model Railway Group many of whom model US Narrow Gauge steam. Their Purgatory Peak layout is famous in the UK Model Exhibition circuit. Perhaps more on that in the next issue of **Smokestack?**

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**FINALLY!**

Just as we are about to send this issue off, another quick contribution to bring your President back to his own shores and a bit of news from the Severn Valley Railway from a potential new contributor John Hunting – who corrects an error in April’s issue as well (he’ll have to forgive me as I am a London and North Western Railway man who knows little or nothing of these foreign parts of England!). Thanks for the corrections.

*“When reading the April 2020 **Smokestack** I noticed the article titled Heritage Railway assists Rail Operator seemed to contain confusing information. The Greater Anglia stock was held at the Mid-Norfolk railway not the North Norfolk Line which runs from Sheringham to Holt. The mid-Norfolk is connected to the National Network at Wymondham on the main National network which runs from Norwich to Ely.*

*The web link and the photograph were of the North Norfolk Railway.”*

John promises more contributions for our next issue (or possibly additions to the website John?). In the meantime he sends a photo of Great Western nature on the preserved Severn Valley Railway. 0-4-2T no. 1450, whose Boiler certificate expires in January 2021.

**This is one of the last pictures of the loco working a SVR special....**



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Let us know your interests and how you want the IFRR to continue. We would all love to hear from you.

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