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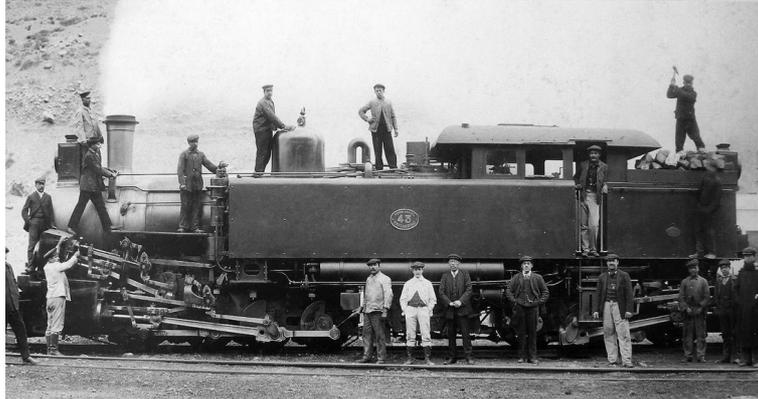
# THE ZURGENA RAILWAY NEWS

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January 30<sup>th</sup> 2021

Nº 4

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This edition's photograph is of a Kitson-Meyer locomotive, taken in 1909. The GSSR had two of these (this isn't one of them, being Nº 43 of the 'Transandine Railway') which they found to be unsatisfactory with respect to power output. This enormously complicated locomotive was articulated and had two bogies with driven wheels. The advantage of this, at least in theory, is that more power could be delivered without the problems of overloading track and of negotiating tight curves (which The GSSR had in spades!). Presumably the advantage over a double header system was the use of fewer staff. Steam was delivered independently to both bogies, each of which had their own pistons and valve gear. See [here](#).

Regarding news, much has been happening behind the scenes. Rafael has been in discussions with a number of worthies, including the mayor. There is agreement in principle that we can have the area which was the playpark, petting zoo or whatever. This will allow us to build a workshop for the renovation of rolling stock. We will keep you updated with respect to this. He has also been busy organizing electronic signatures, which are important for the running of the association.

Another plan is for the construction of a 10 inch gauge railway that can be de-mounted and transported to schools, universities etc to educate students about the history of the area. More on this in the future.

## QUIZ ANSWERS

I am obliged to Richard Emmerson for the explanation of how to calculate the number of wagons in the following problem:

“A businessman who had a consignment of 144 tons of esparto in the goods shed in Lorca Station requested that it be loaded onto a certain number of wagons but the company also had to deal with the transport of other goods, so they supplied two wagons less than the businessman requested. Therefore he decided to load an extra ton of esparto into each of the wagons available to him to the

extent that all of the esparto was loaded. How many wagons did he request originally?"

I take my hat off to Richard for this explanation:

Number of wagons ordered =  $x$   
wagons supplied =  $(x-2)$   
Each wagon contained  $\left[144 \div (x-2) + 1\right]$   
total weight of load is 144  
is weight per wagon  $\times$  no of wagons  
$$144 = x \left[ \frac{144}{(x-2)} + 1 \right]$$
  
Simplify by multiply through gives  
$$x^2 - 2x - 288 = 0$$
  
is Quadratic equation  
solve using  $x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$   
where  $a = 1$   
 $b = -2$   
 $c = -288$   
$$\therefore x = \frac{-(-2) \pm \sqrt{(-2)^2 - 4(1)(-288)}}{2}$$
  
$$x = \frac{2 + \sqrt{1156}}{2} \text{ ie } \frac{2+34}{2} = \frac{36}{2}$$
  
$$\therefore x = 18 \text{ wagons Q.E.D}$$

It is 47 years since I did a quadratic equation, so am happy to take his word for it. Thanks again, Richard.

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A wagon leaves Almendricos with a variety of items and with  $X$  number of bags and packages in the direction of Purchena, discharging in the following stations: In Las Norias it unloaded a half of the packages that it was carrying, and a half more [Note: this means the packages plus half again]; in Huércal Overa it unloaded a half and a half more; in Zurgena it unloaded a half and a half more of what was left; in Almanzora it unloaded 16 bags and a certain number of packages; in Cantoria it unloaded a half and a half more of the packages that were left and in Fines-Olula it unloaded a half and a half more. On arrival at its destination it unloaded the last package(s) that was/were left in the wagon.

How many bags and packages were distributed during the journey?

ANSWER: 127 bags and 254 packages.



Above is a photograph, possibly by Lawrence Marshall in the 1960s. It can be seen from the composition of the train that times were not good for the LBA (as The GSSR was known in those times) as there seems to be a cattle car, a passenger car, a goods wagon, an open wagon and a guard's van. Hardly profitable! I am sure that all of you know this beautiful bridge, but if unsure, please contact me on [maxcastril@gmail.com](mailto:maxcastril@gmail.com).

Once this pandemic is over (if only!), then I would suggest some little excursions along the Almanzora Valley up towards Tíjola and above. Many of the amazing bridges are accessible by car as are all of the stations. It goes without saying that there are many bars en-route for a coffee or other refreshments.

If anybody would like any further information placed in this little newsheet, then please email me.

And now to Gustave.....



This photo is by the great [Gustave Gillman](#) and part of the Murcia archive. He was a very keen photographer in the days when photography was complicated, to say the least. In the day, the services in the area of The GSSR were very basic, and he couldn't send his film to the local chemist for processing, so he had to make his own film and prints from chemicals. Here is a [list](#) of chemicals that he used, written in his own hand.

The photo was taken by him in about 1902 during the construction of the [El Hornillo pier](#) whereby divers took their lives in their hands to help position the concrete blocks for the construction of the pier. I imagine that the diver wouldn't have wanted to go down if he'd just had an argument with the little lad working the air-pump. We are so lucky to have these images - connecting us across nearly 120 years and allowing us to glimpse into the lives of the people who built the railway.

There are some interesting stories about Isla de Fraile - the island in front of the pier (English spy and many shennanigans), so perhaps I will add this to the next edition.

Stay safe.

Max