
THE ZURGENA RAILWAY NEWS

April 13th 2021

Nº 7



In issue 6 we had a photograph of a 35 ton wagon, so in this issue we have the same type of wagon being pulled by a double header (and possibly a triple with a loco at the rear) coming out of Zurgena to take the climb of 41 metres (135ft) up to Huércal Overa. The locos were Nielson 1890 Mogul (2-6-0) PULPI and ALBOX. The loading of the wagon could explain why one can find much iron ore along the track, even today! Photo: Beckett.

NEWS

We have just received some more news from Raphael regarding the Association, and the meeting on Saturday 17th. I reprint it here verbatim for all of those who haven't seen it yet on FaceBook.

Good afternoon everyone, another little note of the news from our association of friends of the Zurgena railway.

Last Friday, April 9, I was meeting with the mayor of Zurgena, Mr. Luis García to sign the collaboration agreement that will allow the reconstruction of the Zurgena station tracks, the turntable and the construction of the railway material restoration workshop .

In addition to this, Mr. Luis García commissioned me, in parallel to the work already agreed, to draft the reconstruction project of the railway from the town of Zurgena to

Huerca Overa because the Zurgena City Council considers that this is a priority project to return to Zurgena the importance it had for 100 years in the Almanzora region and that it should take advantage of the opportunity that has now presented itself to have the necessary technical collaboration to be able to carry out this project with the due guarantees of success.

So, we took advantage of Friday morning to travel the railway line with the all-terrain vehicle of Zurgena City Council, councilor Fran and myself, checking the bridges, the tunnel of "Las hermanicas", the boulevards, etc., taking notes and photographs of the main flaws to be able to write a preliminary study that allows us to see the jobs that need to be done and the budget that will be necessary to invest in these jobs.

Right now I am drawing the plans of the line and detailing the work to be carried out, I hope to be able to return this week to Zurgena to continue taking notes, both of the railway layout and the area of the station's turntable, the first place where we will start the work of reconstruction in Zurgena.

Here you are some pics of the trip along the bridges and railway line, one of these days we have to go for a trip walking to detail you the works to do.

I keep reporting the news, a cordial greeting to all, Rafael

So, we have an EGM on Saturday 17th at 11:30 in the meeting hall at the station.

GEORGE BOAG



We'll give Gustave a rest for this issue and talk about George Boag (pronounced like 'rogue').

The photograph was taken in 1925 on the steps of his house in Águilas after he was awarded a 'Medal of Merit' by Águilas Town Hall, which can be seen on his lapel which was placed by his 17 year old niece. He is front right next to niece Mary.

He was another of the great men of The GSSR, giving his life to the railway and the employees. He started a healthcare system for all of the staff with two resident doctors, nurses etc. He also started a first aid training programme for all staff who wanted to be involved, many of whom passed their St. John's exams.

He was the longest serving manager (1913 - 1936) and was in charge when the catastrophe at Pulpí occurred, personally helping the injured and dying amongst the wreckage.

He also initiated the company magazine called 'El Boletín' with the intention of informing and educating staff and passengers alike. We have seen some of the quizzes from it in previous issues.

He was another keen photographer (maybe due to the influences of Gustavo - after all, he spent three years under him as assistant general manager). He, like Gustave, loved to photograph the local people and was very interested in the 'ordinary man'. He was also a keen motorcyclist.

See:

www.gssr.es/boag.php

www.gssr.es/people.php#boag .

However, Don Gaunt has written an excellent article on his website:

<https://faydon.com/Boag/Boag.html> .



DON GAUNT

My friend and mentor, Don, has very kindly written a piece for the newsletter which I reproduce verbatim here:

How I discovered the GSSR

My wife and I first started going to Almeria Province in 1995 when we bought a time share apartment in Mojacar (two weeks a year). One day, on a drive out from there we spotted an old railway just north of Zurgena. Tracing the line on a map we followed the route back to Aguilas. Here we found a museum and discovered that the line used to be British owned and was called the Great Southern of Spain Railway.

During the rest of my time that year and on many succeeding years I traced the line to Baza. I also went to the archives in London and learned a lot about the GSSR and other companies such as the Hornillo company and Bacaes mines.

At that time all of the railway lines were still intact as were most of the stations. Zurgena looked good with all the lines there. Luckily I was able to trace the railway the whole way like that. The lines were removed shortly after. I took many slides over the years, Max has copies of these.

At the time I knew nobody else who was interested in the GSSR. In consequence I had to trek over rough terrain on my own, leaving my wife Faith in the car. Faith said she should write a book "Lay-byes I have sat in". This would be followed up by her blockbuster "More lay-byes I have sat in".

Since then I have written a book, made many friends and discovered a host of new things. Time has taken its toll and I can no longer explore new things. For that I pass the baton to Max who has, more than one could hope for, kept the GSSR alive.

I wish the Zurgena society every success in their venture and look forward to hearing how things are going.

Don Gaunt

April 2021

I hope to see you all on Saturday.