

# SEMAPHORE

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Russian Magazine for Railway Transport Enthusiasts  
Published since November 2000

June 2004

Issue 6



**ØRESUND  
LINK**

**RAILWAYS AT MARIUPOL**

**ZEBLYAKI AND YAKSHANGA**

**APSHERONSK-GUAMKA-MEZMAY**

**AMUR RAILWAY HISTORY**

**POLISH NOTEBOOKS**

**OF FLOATING BRIDGES...**

**THE HEREH TALKS**

## FROM THE EDITOR

Dear readers! You are holding the next, sixth issue of “The Semaphore”. Three and a half years ago, overwhelmed by enthusiasm and belief in our own forces, we, the Editors, did not even think, what it a heavy burden it was to publish a periodical. At first, the periodicity of “The Semaphore” has been established once a month, then once in half-year. . . However, insuperable circumstances would overturn all planned terms again and again, and finally the magazine began to appear about once a year, as if it were an almanac. It took us another ten long months to prepare the sixth issue.

Nevertheless, our magazine is alive, to what, in particular, testifies the statistics of visits to the Web site of magazine (up to 400 visits a month). Our correspondents, both “old” and new, from time to time send materials “for the next issue of the magazine”. We understand that their expectations cannot and should not be deceived, and we proceed with the publishing. **“The Semaphore” is open!**

Moreover, this is our first attempt to publish an English-language version of the magazine. While the translation may be not perfect, and some materials (like the crossword) cannot be possibly translated into other languages, we still believe that this undertaking is important, and urge native English speakers to help us with translation.

*Dmitry Zinóviev  
Acting Editor*

### ADVERTISEMENT

## RAILWAY MODELING ON THE INTERNET

The information about the Internet sites dedicated to railway models and modeling is taken from “The (Russian) Railway Ring” (R[R]R) catalog. The list contains the seven most popular sites, based on their attendance, as reported by the R[R]R statistics. All sites are mostly in Russian, unless explicitly marked as English-language.

1. <http://railroad.mnc.ru> — “Railway Models”. The models presented at this site constitute N. Molchanov’s personal collection. This collection exists from 1975 and contains some very rare models, which you will not find anywhere else. All models shown in the photographs displayed at the site, actually exist. Exchange offers are welcome. However, the site does not sell or buy models.
2. <http://modellhouse.com> — “Modellhouse Model Shop”. The main business of the “Modellhouse” is railway models. We implement on demand mass, small-scale and author’s projects, sell various accessories and add-ons, consult on rolling stock and scenery construction. We also provide the review of the world of a hobby news.
3. <http://modelism.by.ru> — “Miniature World”. This is a personal site of Belyakov N. S. Detailed advice to beginner modelers (“Where to start from?”, frame, scenery, buildings and other objects, rolling stock, electric).
4. <http://train-deport.by.ru> — “Roundhouse”. Select a “department” that is interesting to you! Enjoy rolling stock photographs at the “Trench”. Search the dusty files with technical documentation in the “Technical Bureau” (all blueprints are scanned at 300dpi!) Attend the “Do It Yourself” club and admire our models. Read the best of railway papers from various magazines in the “Technical Library”.
5. <http://modelrussianrailways.com> — “Russian railway Models”. This site is in English. It is dedicated to selling Russian-built models in the USA. It also has some articles about Soviet-built locomotives in Cuba and in China.
6. <http://modelena.ru> — “Modelena”. Hobby-center “Modelena” is in business for 11 years. They sell both brand new and used railway models by mail. “Modelena” has customers in Russia, the USA, Finland, Denmark, Argentina, Canada, Spain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, Greece, Germany, Israel, Poland, and practically all C.I.S. states. Being on the market for 11 years means that you can trust “Modelena”.
7. <http://modellmix.com> — “Modellmix: Models to Scale and Souvenirs”. “Modellmix” production group builds and sells railway models to scale, as well as automotive, airplane, helicopter, and military models, as well as all kinds of accessories needed for railway modelers. The group also manufactures souvenirs and gifts to order.

Search for the Russian railway-related information and resources in the “Russian Railway Ring” at <http://parovoz.com/cgi-bin/rrr.cgi?lang=ENG!>

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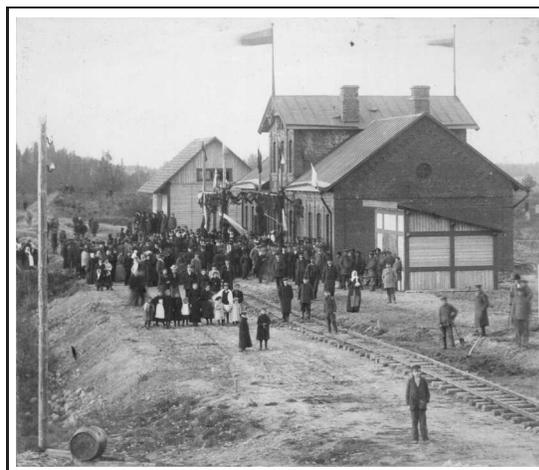
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# SEMAPHORE

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*Waiting for the first revenue train at Alüksne, apparently in 1902  
(from M. Helme's collection) See page 30.*

Front cover — EDD9M-0071 EMU train crossing the Dnieper river on March 7,  
2004, Kiev (by A. Porev)

## **SUMMARY**

This is the sixth issue of *The Semaphore*, a Russian-language magazine for railway enthusiasts. The magazine is published by a group of railway fans. Many materials showing up in *The Semaphore* originally appear in the Internet forums and mailing lists, such as 1520mm@yahoogroups.com (Russian language) or 5feet@yahoogroups.com (English language). The magazine is also available for download free of charge as a PDF file or as a collection of PDF files at <http://parovoz.com/semaphore/>, and can be freely printed and distributed, provided that the integrity of the materials is preserved.

**RAILWAYS AT MARIUPOL**, by A. Gorchakov — Mariupol (form. Zhdanov) is a Ukrainian industrial city and seaport, the home of “Azovstal” combine and many other enterprises. There is little surprise that the city is stuffed with railways of all kinds. The story invites you for a fan trip along the main line.

**INDUSTRIAL RAILWAYS OF SOUTHERN DONBASS**, by A. Gorchakov — Yet another story of the industrial lines of Southern Donbass area.

**140 YEARS OF ELECTRIC MASS TRANSIT IN RUSSIA**, by D. Zinoviev — A statistical review of the development of electric urban transportation in Russia and the USSR.

**YAKSHANGA AND ZEBLYAKI NARROW GAUGE RAILWAYS**, by A. Fetisov — Yakshanga and Zeblyaki railways in Kostroma region of Russia are two typical logging railways. They meet the wide gauge main line several kilometers apart from each other. They have a connecting narrow gauge line. However, their destiny is very different: one railway is alive, the other is all but dead.

**UGNOV FELDBAHN**, by W. Wendelin — A very brief overview of the Ugnov–Vladimir–Volynsky military railway in Western Ukraine and Eastern Poland, built by Austrian troops during WWI.

**POLISH NOTEBOOKS**, by D. Fokin — The author undertook an extensive field study of eastern Polish railways, including the wide-gauge LHS (“Sulfur-Steel Line) and several trans-border lines, some of which have been cut in pieces by the border — seemingly forever.

**NARROW GAUGE SITES OF KRASNODAR TERRITORY**, by A. Vershinin — The crown jewel of Krasnodar territory is the Apsheronk narrow gauge railway in the Guamka water gap. The railway used to be the only means of communications for the residents of the remote mountain villages, until it was washed away with a flood. The author takes you to the green mountain world where everything reminds you of the old logging glory.

**ØRESUND LINK**, by I. Kopaysov — A brief description of the relatively new auto/rail bridge complex between Denmark and Sweden.

**CONSTRUCTION HISTORY OF THE AMUR RAILWAY**, by V. F. Burkova and S. P. Chuykova — Russian domination of the Far East was impossible without a reliable rail connection to the “mainland”, which the Trans-Manchurian railway could not provide. In 1908–14 the new Amur railway was built under the supervision of Eng. A. Liverovsky, that by-passed the Chinese territory.

**GULBENE RAILWAY: 80 YEARS IN TIMETABLES**, by D. Zinoviev — The Livland access tracks on the border of Estonia and Latvia (also known as Gulbene–Aluksne narrow gauge railway) have a 100 year long history. This collection of train timetables gives the historical perspective of passenger traffic between Gulbene and Valga.

**THE WAY THEY CATCH MOLES**, by O. Izmerov — V. Rezun (also known as V. Suvorov) is an ex-GRU spy and a dissident writer. A good writer, if it were not for numerous technical and other inconsistencies in his books. For instance, the chapter in “The Aquarium” that describes the erection of a railway bridge across the Dnieper river during military exercises, is packed with technical mistakes.

**THE HEREH TALES. HERE AND THERE**, by S. Los — This is a fairy tale, the first from a series, that tells the story of two little steam locomotives, Here and There. The locomotives work at a logging narrow gauge railway deep in the Screaming mountains. Good for your kids, but may be fun for you, too.

**FLOATING BRIDGES FOR THE “WARSAW PACT”**, by D. Fokin — In the heartland of Poland, there is a strange railway that would be crossing the Vistula river. If there were a bridge. But there is no one. As it turned out, a floating bridge would be built here in case of “WWIII”.

### **FIND YOUR ROUTE**

The “Supermap” of Russian, CIS, and Baltic railways is your compass to the railway world. Currently it is the only source of information covering the territory of the former USSR and showing all railways according to their history, operational status, and technical parameters. The Supermap identifies abandoned, existing, and projected lines; passenger and freight lines; narrow and wide gauge lines; electric and diesel lines (traction type is shown for the electric lines). The Supermap shows railway division and state boundaries; about two thousand stations, cities, and hubs; streetcar and subway systems; railway ferries. The Supermap is a must-have resource for expeditors, logistics specialists, tourist operators, and general audience.

**Order the “Supermap” (as a raster TIFF 300ppi image) on a CD!**

<http://english.super-map.com>

ZOOM IN**RAILWAYS AT MARIUPOL****FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

Mariupol is a city in Donetsk region of the Ukraine. Its population exceeds 500 000 residents. The length of the railway main line in the city limits is 27 km. All mileposts are relative to Moscow (measured along Uzlovaya–Valuyki–Debaltsevo line). The main stations are Mariupol-Port (1271 km), Mariupol-Passenger (1267 km), and Sartana (1255 km). There is the main passenger station in the city, as well as three freight stations (excluding industrial branches), 8 platforms, one bridge across a river, and about 15 other bridges. There are also 14 tram and 13 trolley bus routes.

Railway Mariupol begins in the container area of the Mariupol commercial seaport, which turns itself into Mariupol-Port station. At the station there are approximately 10–12 tracks, excluding industrial branch lines. There is also the city grain silo here, and an automobile overpass to the seaport. Next to the station, behind a five-meter fence, there is the last stop of trolley buses, and the Directorate of the Azov Sea Ship Company.

and the police. On the second floor there is a post office, currency exchange, and a commercial long-distance ticket office (where one can pay extra money and avoid standing in long lines). On the third floor there is a large waiting room, and a hotel. The building and the platform have been recently renovated. Suburban ticket offices are located in a separate building, next to the suburban platform.



*Mariupol-Port station*

At the other end of the sorting station there is a passenger overpass and Mariupol sea terminus. Here, the railway becomes double-track. At the exit from the sea port there is the ship-repair works (which has its own branch line), and the city beach.

Along the tracks there is Primorsky avenue, where many sanatoriums and recreation centers are located, as well as restaurants and night clubs. The tracks are just 15–20 meters away from the seashore.

Recently several private entertainment spots appeared at the seashore, which are essentially isolated by rail line from Primorsky avenue. One can get over the tracks only through an unofficial grade crossing. The owners made the following deal with the railway: they installed the gates that are always locked, and when someone wants to cross the line, someone makes sure that the tracks are safe, opens the gate, and lets the car go.

The storage yard for passenger cars of Mariupol-Pass. station begins in 2 km. The station building has three stories. On the first floor there is an information booth, a canteen, long-distance ticket offices, storage area, magazines,



*Mariupol-Port station*

Now, let's talk about the station itself. It has 8–9 tracks. Two intercity passenger platforms adjoin the station building, and the suburban platform is located further away. This station is for passenger trains only. Freight trains never stop here. There is also a maintenance facility for passenger cars here, with an abandoned turntable and car shed. Because of the remoteness of the storage yard and its poor security, all passenger consists stay near the station building. In the yard I found a head car of series SR EMU train set (with a round headlight on the roof) and an old boxcar.

The station square bears the name of Warrant Officer Pavlov. Two trolley bus routes terminate here (N5 and N10), as well as several minibus routes

From the station on, the railway is double-track and electrified. Behind a grade crossing (a road to the fishery), on the left side, on a hill, one can see the old part of Mariupol built in the XVIIIth century.

The next station, Azovstalskaya, is located under a large bridge, which connects the Left Bank with the downtown. The only exit from the platforms is through narrow stairs to the bridge that is 30 meters above the station. (Once local hunters after scrap metal stole all the handrails!) The

bridge itself crosses not only the railway but also Kalmius river. It has two lanes in each direction, divided by a tram way.



Mariupol-Port station

Near the station, under the bridge, to the right, there is more track that further branches. All branches end up as dead ends, since they were not finished. For approximately five years there stood many unowned new tank cars built by JSC “Azovmash” on these tracks. Then they disappeared. People say that the owner in the tank cars was nevertheless known – the former Mayor of city.

After the bridge to the right, on the Kalmius embankment, one can see a metallurgical giant – the “Azovstal” Combine (Azov Metallurgical Plant, the second largest in Europe). The color of the sky above the combine as well as above the city, is quite appropriate. . .

The railway follows the river for a kilometer or two, and then turns to the left. There is milepost 1261 km over there, former Karasevka (named so after the surrounding settlement). This is the only milepost in the city that does not have a plant nearby.

Immediately after the milepost there is a bridge across Kalchik river. Under the main line bridge there is another bridge for the branch line to “Azovstal” (across the river this line merges into the main line). On the left there are garages and Ilyichevsky farmers market. One more bridge above Ilyich Avenue – and our train approaches Zavodskaya Ploshchadka station. This station is remarkable for the fact that there is a spontaneous morning bazaar here: the farmers that arrived on the first train, sell their goods right at the platforms. An unfinished nine-story building of a hospital can be seen to the right.

After Zavodskaya Ploshchadka, there follows the industrial area of the Ilyich Combine – the city “breadwinner”. Then follow the city blocks known to locals as “The CIA” and “The Pentagon”, and milepost 1256 km.

We are approaching station Sartana (former Mariupol-Freight.) On the right, there is a double-track line to “Azovstal”. The station is of an insular type – to the left there is the main line and 15–20 tracks, to the right – the tracks of the freight line (10–12). The freight line to “Azovstal” is very winding, and one settlement, which it goes around, is called Azov-Koltso (Azov-Loop).

The tracks to Mariupol-Sort. station branch off to the left. The station itself is located at the territory of the sinter-

ing plant owned by the Ilyich Combine. In the territory of the combine railway shop a steam locomotive (9P-18412) is mounted as a monument, and in the area of the third gates a diesel locomotive (TGM1-1722) is mounted, too. The sintering plant is located in a remote industrial park, where one can get only by tram or shuttle buses. Because of this, several electric trains take this generally purely freight branch line during the hours of morning and evening change. In summer this route is often extended to Aslanovo.



Railway Mariupol © D. Zinóviev

On the main line, along the factory buildings, there follow, one after another, mileposts 1253 km, 1251 km, and 1249 km. After yet another bridge, the line ventures into the countryside. After several kilometers the tracks diverge because of the complex relief. The left track follows a high mound. Under this track, there enters the track from Mariupol-Sort. All three tracks converge at Aslanovo station. In between the tracks, there are located dachas, and the platforms of milepost 1246 km are located on the opposite sides of the “island”. After Aslanovo, to the right, one can see the remnants of the construction of one more station with a lot of projected electrified tracks. The construction was stopped after the disintegration of the USSR. Probably, hence it was planned to construct a branch to Taganrog.

A. Gorchakov (Mariupol). Photo, text

### APPENDIX: Locomotives and rolling stock assigned to Mariupol shed

All intercity passenger trains are pulled by series ChS2, ChS7, and VL8 electric locomotives. All commuter trains consist of series ER2T and EPL2T EMU train sets. Shunting is done by series ChME3 and ChME3T diesel shunters.

Freight trains on the main line are pulled by series VL8 electric locomotives, and industrial lines use series M62UP, TEM1, TEM18, TEM1A, TEM2, TEM2UM, TEM6, TEM7, TGM1, TGM2U, TGM4, TGM4A, TGM4B, and TGM6 diesel shunters.

### APPENDIX: Timetable of commuter EMU trains at Mariupol-Passenger in 2003–04

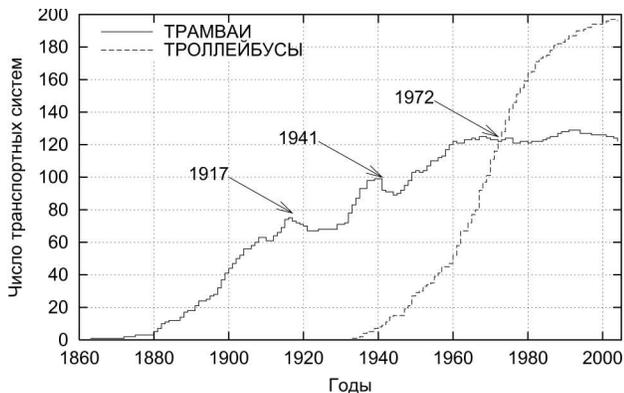
Departure				Arrival			
NN	Route	Dep.	Arr.	NN	Route	Dep.	Arr.
6022	Mariupol–Ilovaysk	05:06	10:25	6117	Yasinovataya–Mariupol	03:28	07:20
6142	Mariupol–Mariupol-S.	05:41	07:05	6105	Yasinovataya–Mariupol	05:53	09:47
6116	Mariupol–Yasinovataya	06:54	10:33	6145	Mariupol-S.–Mariupol	08:30	10:02
6118	Mariupol–Yasinovataya	08:13	11:53	6013	Yasinovataya–Mariupol	08:24	11:51
6106	Mariupol–Yasinovataya	12:27	16:10	6107	Yasinovataya–Mariupol	12:56	16:31
6004	Mariupol–Krasny Liman	14:27	21:43	6109	Yasinovataya–Mariupol	15:10	18:43
6108	Mariupol–Yasinovataya	17:33	21:07	6113	Yasinovataya–Mariupol	16:18	19:52
6110	Mariupol–Yasinovataya	20:30	00:05	6027	Yasinovataya–Mariupol	18:29	22:06
6146	Mariupol–Mariupol-S.	18:10	19:27	6149	Mariupol-S.–Mariupol	20:30	21:48

The timetable is kindly provided by “Mariupol. The Transport Directory” (<http://mariupol.smtp.ru>).

## TECHNICAL

### 140 YEARS OF ELECTRIC TRANSIT IN RUSSIA

In 2003 we celebrated 140 years of the history of urban electric transit (UET) in Russia. The period of 140 years is big enough, allowing analysis and generalizations. On the graph given below, I charted the dynamics of the quantity of urban above-ground electric transit systems (trolley buses and trams) in Russia, the USSR and the former Soviet republics.



The dynamics of the development of the UET in Russia is the dynamics of increase. A natural increase in the number of tram systems was retarded only three times: in 1917, in 1941, and at the end of the 1960s. The first two dates are naturally associated with the destructive events, which occurred in Russia. The third date stands by house.

This is the saturation. Year 1972 is the year of “the Great Change”, when trolley buses choked trams and became the prevailing UET mode. The trams have never set right and will hardly ever be set right from this blow. Unfortunately, I do not have sufficient data related to the number and extent of separate routes, but I suspect that the dynamics of their change do not differ from that given by the graph.

The natural increase in the number of trolley bus systems is characterized by straight-away mathematical smoothness. Unfortunately, I do not know accurately what to anticipate in the future: the same saturation, as in the case of trams, or a sharp decrease. Based on the analysis of the current events, I assume that the scenario of saturation is more probable.

It is interesting to note that the third destructive wave that covered Russia in 1985–98, did not affect the development of the UET in the same ruinous way as the previous two. As can be seen from the graph, both the UET modes slowed down the rates of increase or reached the saturation before the Perestroika.

### Related Links

- <http://parovoz.com/electro/> “Electric Transit in Russia” (The most complete statistics.)
- <http://tram.ruz.net> “Moscow Tramway” (The best site about trams in Russia and elsewhere.)

*D. Zinóviev (Boston)*

ZOOM IN**INDUSTRIAL RAILWAYS OF SOUTHERN DONBASS**

After completing a motor run along the route Mariupol–Novoazovsk–Telmanovo, I drove up to the beginning of the railway part of my journey of — to the village of Granitnoe, Volnovakha district of Donetsk region. At the exit from the village, there is a monument: an old “polutorka” truck.

The railway itself begins in 5 km from Granitnoe, where a stone-crushing combine is located. The railway itself approaches the combine from from Karan station. Judging by the appearance of the combine, it does not work: large unfinished building in the steppe, and evidently not one person around. . .



*Volnovakha station (Northern entrance)*

The quarry itself is located in several kilometers from the combine, and the raw material is brought here by motor transport, and after processing dispatched by railway. In the outskirts of the combine I see three railway lines with two series TGM6V diesel locomotives: N0162 and N0155. In order to examine numbers, I had to approach the engines closely and to talk to the guard. The guard reported that the combine stalled because of the access tracks were under repair.

TGM6V-0162 seemed to be in a more decent state than rusty TGM6V-0155, although both engines were built in 1990. Finally, I learned, that the guard’s responsibility was to keep an eye on the locomotives. Two weeks later I attempted to photograph these diesel locomotives, but the guards did not let me: the combine was already working.

I went further to Karan, along and to the left of the railway. After several kilometers, I noticed ChME3-1272 diesel shunter on the track that was pulling a flatcar (the track repair was under way).

From the combine the railway line goes on a high mound, and in the area of town Mirny passes on an bridge to the left side of the roadway. At the exit from the town the station of Urzuf is located with three access tracks.

I turned to the right and drove along the siding tracks. On the map there is Yanisol station show there, but all three tracks, immediately after grade crossing, go into a well guarded territory (continuous three-meter fence and

barbed wire). I continued to drive along the fence. Soon, an abandoned area began, large buildings in a very lamentable state appeared, — the Zone from the “Stalker”! I drove to the end of the fence, but found neither the continuation of the railway, nor the branch line shown in the map. I did not quite understand what was behind the fence. It resembled a military base: barrack-type large buildings, and the fence was decorated with very typical slogans: “Complete the Five-Year Plan in one year!”, and one more calling to vigilance while guarding strategic objects.

So, I had to return to the grade crossing near the station (by the way, that was the worst road I had ever seen in my life!) The signaling at the crossing continued to buzz, even though there was no rolling stock on the tracks. I turned to Karan and drove across farmlands along the railway on a low mound.

I pass town Kamenka (or, rather, a turn to Kamenka). After several kilometers the industrial branch approaches the main railway line Mariupol–Volnovakha. My map said there was milepost 3 km here on the Granitnoe branch. However, there were no traces of a platform or anything similar. Instead, I found another station at that place, Staraya Karan, but not on the side branch, but on the main line. Next to the platform there stand old abandoned barracks (apparently, from the tsarist times), and the plate with the station name hangs on the barracks.



*Yelenovka station*

The branch line went along the main line to the station of Karan (about 3 km), located in town Andreyevka. The station has about seven tracks. On one of them at the time of my arrival there worked two halves of 2TE116-584 diesel locomotive. Section “A” was noticed going with a consist of gondola cars to Granitnoe, and the other section idled at the station.

I drove to the Northern neck of the station, where several yard tracks were located — apparently for Karan–Granitnoe branch. In the northern neck I met VL8M-795 electric locomotive with a freight consist, and VL8M-977

with three empty passenger cars going northbound. Both locomotives belonged to Volnovakha shed.

After visiting Karan I went back along the route Mariupol–Donetsk and drove up to the town of Yelenovka, 15 km from Donetsk. In Yelenovka a very large elevator is located, where almost the entire population of town works. They are being payed their wages... in flour! Dozens of Yelenovkites stand along the route with the bags in any weather and sell their “salary”.

In Yelenovka I had to make a left turn, towards Stepnoe village, but the grade crossing was under construction. On this occasion the gate was permanently closed; for better security, the maintenance crew bus of stood across the road as an additional barrier. The work was done in a decent rain — apparently, something urgent. I did not want to wait until they finish, and drove elsewhere searching for another crossing. Instead of a crossing, I found the access tracks of the elevator and a pair diesel switchers behind the fence: a TGM23V48 and a TGM23D44.

Judging by the map, the nearest crossing was located to the South, near milepost 1168 km. I drove along the road to Ugledar, following the branch line to the mine “Yuzhnodonbasskaya N1”. Approximately in 5 km “my” road crossed the highway Donetsk–Ugledar. I made a turn to Ugledar, crossed the railway, and moved away from it. By the way, the railway branches into two lines: one branch goes to “Yuzhnodonbasskaya N1”, the other — to “Yuzhnodonbasskaya N3”.

Here it is, one of the largest mines of Donbass, the main employer of Ugledar city!

The mine itself is located in several kilometers from the city. The miners are taken to and from the mine in charter buses. The terminal bus stop and a small park with benches and a water fountain are located in front of the main entrance to the mine. I passed the mine and encountered the end of branch line: a mound with a stub track in the middle of the field.

I entered Ugledar, a city of nine-story apartment buildings, which suddenly appeared from behind a hill. The area of the city of is 5 square kilometers, the population — 17 thousand people. I passed Ugledar and went to the north — for Kurakhovo. Kurakhovo is famous for its power station, located at the Kurakhovo reservoir. I passed this small town in 10 minutes and got at the dam. Unfortunately, the railway bridge of Roya–Tsukurikha line was a bit off my way.

The dam is one-and-a-half kilometer long, with a highway and a protected pedestrian zone on the top; everywhere, where possible, the Stalin elements of design can be seen. At the northern end of the dam there is even a bus shelter. The railway bridge for some reason intersects the reservoir at a sharp angle.

On the northern bank of the reservoir I discovered a nameless station, and went on to Dokuchaevsk.

I began the study of the Dokuchaevsk Industrial Railway at the station of Veliko-Anadol. At the station, there was ChME3-7361 diesel locomotive shunting (assigned to Volnovakha shed.)

To the east of Veliko-Anadol, on the way to Dokuchaevsk, there begin numerous quarries and quarry towns. I returned to the highway Mariupol–Donetsk and went to Yelenovka. Just before Yelenovka the road passes

under the railway Yelenovka–Dokuchaevsk. I drove along the railway to Dokuchaevsk. The line is electrified and has two tracks, but the second track in on wooden ties and looks quite neglected (the catenary poles stand on both tracks.) As I drove, I met TEM2U-0349 diesel shunter pulling DGK-4596 crane and flatcars.



*Veliko-Anadol station*

At a station near the town of Yasnoe they decouple box-cars from OPE1A and OPE1AM tractive units and couple them to series TEM and TGM diesel shunters, that pull the cars further to Yelenovka, to the main line.

At the station I noticed unit OPE1AM-053 and an unidentifiable locomotive: very small, yellow, and with a single-person cab. Further I encountered units OPE1AM-037 and 130.

After passing Dokuchaevsk, I went to the East, along the branch to the town of Styla and further to the city of Komsomolsk. Based on the fact that there were people standing on the platforms, I concluded that there was passenger traffic on the branch Kuteynikovo–Karakuba (which is double-track and electrified).



*Rebrikovo station (Kuteynikovo–Karakuba branch)*

At the end of my journey I visited the Komsomolsk mine authority. The branch to the authority had been dismantled, only some ferroconcrete ties remained.

*A. Gorchakov (Mariupol). Photo, text*

BACKROADS AND BACKCOUNTRIES

**YAKSHANGA AND ZEBLYAKI NARROW GAUGE RAILWAYS**

On 11 April, 2004, I visited logging railways in Zeblyaki and Yakshanga, looked around the local sheds, and met with the old workers.

**Yakshanga**

The branched narrow-gauge system that begins in the town of Yakshanga (Ponazyrevo district, Kostroma region), as it turned out, has a rich history.

It began in the late 1930s, when a horse-driven wooden log railway was built from the town of Severny for timber removal. The need for timber greatly increased in the years of WWII, and, beginning of 1943, “600mm lattices with German iron ties” were delivered to Yakshanga — apparently, the rail-tie lattices of German military field railways. Naturally, the rolling stock (locomotives and trolleys) was also of German origin.

The volume of earthwork during the construction was minimal; in the damp weather the track would “fall through” right under a train, and derailments were frequent. Such track existed between Yakshanga and Severny to the end of the 1940, when, in order to fix the problem, the line was regauged to the “traditional” 750mm. The locals say that one can still find some “German” rails and ties in the most boggy places along the line.

At the same time, at the end of the 1940s, the main logging area shifts further to the South of Severny, and the line gets extended to Malaya Yakshanga. To the middle of the 1950s, the main line reaches Panino, where it hits the Neya river. Panino becomes the main logging town.

In the beginning of the 1950s the construction of the “Northern Line” begins towards Sosnovka. Since the wide gauge main line (Buy–Sharya–Kirov, the Transsib) had to be crossed in this case, an uncommon solution was suggested: to use one of the existing Transsib bridges across small rivers. The Vostochnaya Yakshanga bridge near town, was insufficiently high, and the branch had to follow the left tributary of the river, in 2 km to the East from the broad-gauge station of Yakshanga.

The section from the log mill to the bridge was built to 1952, and then its gradual lengthening began. To 1960 the rails reached Sosnovka, and in the following decade — the town of Shayma (Shaymensky) at the Vetluga river. This river appeared as a natural boundary for all extensive railways of that region: Zeblyaki (Oktyabrsky), Yakshanga (Shayma), and Ponazyrevo (the latter, however, did not reach the Vetluga.)

In the middle of the 1960s the Yakshanga railway switched to diesel traction. The traffic was very intensive: up to 15–20 trains with “whips” or logs would come to Yakshanga on workdays. The passenger traffic in the best years consisted of five pairs of trains: three to Panino (in the morning, in the daytime, and in the evening) and two to Sosnovka (in the morning and in the evening).

The Yakshanga railway was the first in the neighborhood to start carrying passengers in specialized coaches,

still when the town of Panino did not exist. A consist of empty log cars that also carried some workers, got derailed, and as a result six people were dead. Then the railroaders converted a flatcar into a covered coach, and after a certain time acquired some Pafawags and Demikhovo coaches.



Narrow gauge railways in Eastern Kostroma region © D. Zinoviev

The Yakshanga and Zeblyaki railways were indeed con-