

Letters

Books

Darjeeling & Matheran 1969: Steam on the 2ft lines

This wonderful book starts with 85 pages of stunning B&W photographs of the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, and then includes a further 12 pages of photographs of the Matheran Hill Railway. They were taken in 1969 and 1970 by Hiroyuki Shimojima and Yukio Sugi.

Apart from the excellent quality of the photographs what really sets this book apart is that all the shots of the DHR were taken in 1969. Then the DHR was still functioning as a complete railway, with freight trains, passenger trains running with multiple sections, most steam engines working and NO DIESELS. This was the DHR at its best.

We start at Siliguri Junction where crowds are mobbing round the Darjeeling train, and then head onwards and upwards through Sukna into the Terai. There an excellent shot that features the former loop No 1, washed out in 1991, Chunbhatti can be seen devoid of any building development, then its Tindharia, Gayabari and on to Darjeeling. There, shots include the Godown in the town's Market, a section of line removed in 1986.

The scenes on the Matheran are no less impressive, shot on a return visit to India the following year. They feature one of the line's 0-6-0 O&K Klein Linder tanks in service. From locations clearly marked on an accompanying map it can be seen with its train of short wheelbase wagons and vans climbing gradients around curves that are even tighter than those on the DHR.

This treat for the eyes comes with Japanese text but also, fortunately for many of us, with a 10 page translation into English of all the salient text and photo captions.

In total there's around 140 photographs, plus maps, station layouts and drawings of locomotives and rolling stock. It's fully recommended.

98pp including a 3-page wide foldout photographed at Batasia Loop, size 284 x 210 mm. Card covers with dust jacket. Available from the DHRS sales at £29.95 plus postage.

Peter Barnes,

Website

www.dhrs.org

Highest bidder wins!

Keith and Mary Strickland have kindly offered for sale a

David Charlesworth GRA watercolour of Darjeeling station in support of Darjeeling Railway Community Support.

The dimensions of the painting are approx 13.5 x 10.5 inches, plus the frame and mount.

Offers from £150 are invited.

To Val Mead, 43 Geraldine Road, Malvern, Worcestershire

WR14 3NT UK

or e-mail: drcs@dhrs.org



Darjeeling Railway Community Support

Founded in 2006 the DRCS has now donated over £50,000 to community needs from Siliguri to Darjeeling.

