CHILDREN'S RAILWAY IN THE CITY OF GORKY (NIZHNY NOVGOROD)

Educational and research work in English

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2017
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Introduction

On the first of June in summer the Children's railroad has been opened for nearly 77 years. It brings together the pupils from “young railroad workers” Club to open summer railway practice. I managed to sweep along the route of the Children's railroad this summer and to look how my peers comprehend the elements of the first serious profession and approach the performance of the professional duties very responsibly.

It can be observed every summer when pupils in a beautiful uniform of railroad workers help passengers to take their places, check tickets and to examine carriages before the departure. Besides they can work as engine drivers and keep the train on the first professional road.

After such a fascinating trip I wanted to learn how everything began in 1939.

The search for answers for the issue has allowed us to determine the relevance of the topic of the research which lays in the fact that it is very important to study the history of the area where we live in order to preserve it for future generations.

The aim of the research is to study Gorky Children's railroad history.

The object of the Research is Gorky Children's railroad and its stations.

The subject of the research: The Buildings and constructions of the stations of the Children's railroad.

Research problems:

1. To study the stages of construction and development of Gorky Children's railroad.

2. To analyze architectural appearance of the remained buildings of Gorky Children's railroad.

3. To collect data on the lost buildings of Gorky Children's railroad.

4. To show the current state of Gorky Children's railroad.
Chapter 1. GORKY CHILDREN'S RAILROAD

1.1. History of emergence of Gorky Children's railroad

The construction of the children's railroads began in the USSR approximately in the thirties of the 20th century.

The first-ever children's railroad was open on June 24, 1935 in Tiflis (Tbilisi). Soon the children's railroads appeared in many other cities of the country. During six pre-war years more than twenty similar roads were constructed. The Construction of one of them began in June, 1939 in the city of Gorky (N. Novgorod).

The road was constructed by the method of “national construction”, no funds were taken from the city budget. As a result the road was constructed in five years and six months. At the time of opening it became the largest narrow-gauge road in the USSR with the extension of the main track more than nine kilometers.

The children's railroad connected two areas of Gorky – Zheleznodorozhny district (now Kanavinsky) and Avtozavodsky districts. Some written documents say that it was used all the year round as one means of the city transport system.
1.2. The Main stages of construction and development of Gorky Children's railroad "HAPPY – THE HOMELAND"

In April, 1939 the initiative about the construction of the children's railroad was taken by pioneers of secondary school No. 15 of Sverdlovsky district of Gorky.

The decision concerning the beginning of the construction of the children's railroad on the route "May 1st Park — Avtozovod" was made on May 13, 1939.

On June 1, 1939 at a meeting of architectural and technical council of Gorky the submitted projects of «HOMELAND» station suggested by architect A. A. Yakovlev and «HAPPY» station by architect V. M. Anisimov were approved.

On June 24, 1939 the construction of «HOMELAND» station began. The length of Rodina station was more than 40 meters and the station consisted of two parts: the extended rectangular one and a two-story cylindrical one. On the top of the cylinder, there was a clock and sculptural figures of young pioneers - railroad workers. The lower cylinder building was rusticated for the masonry and the frieze was decorated with coats of arms of the Union republics [Appendix 1 fig.1].

On June 28, 1939 the construction of «HAPPY» station began. The building was remarked for its elegant shape: the whole perimeter was surrounded by a decorative colorful frieze with a vegetable ornament. The four-columned portico with a balustrade had sculptures of pioneers with horns. Exits to the platform were framed with large archs [Appendix 1 fig.2].

«Mayakovsky» station was built at a distance of three kilometers from «Homeland» station [Appendix 1 fig.3]. The station was designed by architect K. P. Sidorchuk and the project of «Pushkino» station was developed by architect S. R. Bazhan. The wooden building of the station was designed in the Russian style and his internal interiors were based on A. S. Pushkin's fairy tales and settled down within 3 kilometers from the previous station [Annex 1 fig.4].
The Opening of Gorky children's railroad took place on November 8, 1939 and became a considerable event in the city life.

On August 7, 1941 the children's railroad was closed. Almost during all the war years the road was used for training of railroad workers of main roads.

On August 25, 1944 the order to restore the children's road was issued but the restoration of the road went very slowly.
Chapter 2. THE ARCHITECTURAL LOOK of BUILDINGS of STATIONS of GORKY CHILDREN'S RAILROAD

2.1. Post-war destiny of the buildings of stations of Gorky Children's railroad

The building of the station "Homeland" in post-war time was in a poor condition but it was restored [Appendix 2 fig.5].

In not numerous fragments of photos of «Pushkino» station its main facade was decorated with a fantastic bird and the internal furniture of the station was decorated with characters of fairy tales of A. S. Pushkin. The building of «Pushkino» station was demolished in the sixties.

The wooden building of the station «Mayakovsky» was burnt down during the war and it hasn't been restored. The one-storey wooden building had the waiting room for passengers, offices of the chief and a person on duty in the station, a ticket office, a buffet and a room for the watchman.

In 1947 there was a ceremonial opening of the first summer post-war season at Gorky children's railroad. The 9,1 km long railroad again connected two areas of Gorky – Railway (Kanavinsky) and Avtozavodsky districts.

After the Great Patriotic War, the Children's railroad developed more slowly despite the fact that there was a necessity for it, however it gradually returned itself a rank of the best one in the country.

In post-war years it was especially popular with citizens. The tram line laid in the same direction, being especially busy in those years. The citizens began to use the Children's railroad as one more means of the city transport system. Only for the first year of operation the road transported more than 100 thousand passengers.
2.2. Trouble events for Gorky Children's railroad

In the 1960-s the children's railroad was found in the area of housing building and construction of the high-speed highway, there was a question of its transfer. For the Children's Railroad it was the last year when the extension of its tracks was 9,1 km, and there was an inscription: "Happy - the Homeland" on tickets.

In 1965 the considerable part of the track of the narrow-gauge railroad, except for the small site at «Homeland» station was dismantled. The road was left with only 1,4 km track compared with 9,1 km track in previous years.

The station at «Happy» was left without railway tracks. The building of the station was not demolished, and even received the second life after its transfer to Avtozavodsky district near the Wedding palace.

The terminal station of the road was called "Happy" and this name for the building was really fortunate. The building changed its function but it did not change its architectural look.

Once the best Children's railroads of the country practically stopped to exist and in order to resume its work and continue the train service along the shortened route, it was necessary to build at least one more new station.

However for many years this decision has been postponed ....
2.3. Modern time for the Children's railroad

After the events of 1965 the road was long operated in a cut form and only in 1991 works on its reconstruction began. The small site of a railway line which remained at installation of the main part of the road between «Homeland” station and «Mayakovskiy» station was prolonged to one kilometer more. A new station which was named in memory of the old station was built in this site which was several kilometers away from the former station «Pushkino».

It does not make sense to speak about the architectural concept of the built station. This construction had nothing in common with the former building of «Pushkino» station which was represented in a really fantastic wooden tower with the characters from fairy tales of A. S. Pushkin.

In 1994 one more new section of the road came into operation, and in memory of «Happy» station the station and the platform were called «Happy» which has also no relation with the former station. The Wedding palace of Avtozavodsky district is located now in the former station «Happy» site sending happy couples to a family way.

Only "Homeland" station remained untouched and preserved. Today there are ticket offices, a waiting room, a museum and a ceiling panel under the name "Happy Childhood" painted by artist M. M. Tikhomirov at the main station "Homeland".

It is a pity that there are no buildings of stations «Mayakovskiy» and «Pushkino» and it is possible to see them only in models in the museum of the Children's railroad and in small photos.

If to look at the modern plan of the Children's Railroad it represents a triangle of 3,2 km long with three deadlock stations at which it is necessary to hook a locomotive at other end of the structure in order to continue the movement to the following station. Besides four passenger platforms appeared [Appendix 2 fig.6].

Today it is possible to have a trip by the Children's railroad which opens every year on June 1. The passenger train, as before, goes from "Homeland" station, then arrives to «Pushkino» station, changes the direction of the movement and follows to «Happy» station, there the locomotive is re-hooked and comes back to "Homeland"
station again. It is pleasant that Gorky (Nizhny Novgorod) Children's railroad is one of two Children's railroads of Russia where the operation of trains has still remained.

During the existence of Gorky (Nizhny Novgorod) Children's railroad more than 40 thousand young railroad workers have been prepared and trained. More than 1000 children studied in a railroad club, many of them continued education in educational establishments of railway transport.
Conclusion

On the basis of all the said we can make the following conclusions:

1. Constructed in pre-war time Gorky Children's railroad today is the developing center operating as educational center in which children learn not only to keep real trains, but also develop creative and professional skills.

2. "Homeland" station which has preserved its building and the building of Autozavodsky Wedding palace where «Happy» station of the Children's Railroad was located earlier remind us of former greatness of the Small Gorky railroad and all of us need to remember that it is necessary to protect for future generations the restored to life buildings.

3. Data collection and processing concerning the former wooden buildings of the stations of Gorky children's railroad will allow to recreate according to photos and drawings the lost buildings with the help of modern 3D - modeling that is of special interest for our future research.

It is important to remember that without memory of the past there is no future.
Sources of information


Fig. 1. The station «Homeland» [3,4].

Fig. 2. The station «Happy» [3,4].

Fig. 3. The station «Pushkino» [3,4].

Fig. 4. The station «Mayakovsky» [3,4].
Fig. 5. The station «Homeland» [3,4].

Fig. 6. Modern plan the children's railway [4].