

Inside Motion

July 2016
News and information for staff, volunteers and supporters of the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways



Tan y Bwlch road bridge reborn

Hopefully you will have noticed that the bridge over the road at Tanybwllch has had a major “spruce up”.

This started some five years ago when it looked particularly sad, but it was thought the difficulties of undertaking the work were too much at the time.

Last year, the FRS received a legacy specifically for infrastructure and it was felt that this was an appropriate project for some of that money. Particularly as the project would include checking the condition of the bridge deck and carrying out relevant work, not just making the bridge look prettier from the road.

In September 2015, the project was defined, researched, estimates prepared and a funding application put into the FRS which was granted.

The volunteer project team worked closely with the Infrastructure department to plan the work.

Preliminary work identified that the concrete deck needed waterproofing, so this needed the track and all the ballast to be removed, and therefore could only be done during the winter.

This was done in one weekend in January this year, with PW removing track and ballast, and then the small volunteer team got stuck in. ►



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All contributions, details of group meetings etc to insidemotion@ffwhr.com



◀ The weather was absolutely perfect, such that the concrete deck of the bridge was cleaned, dried and three coats of waterproofing applied in one day, with the last coat just drying as light rain started.

Graham Cole undertook close examination of the top of the bridge as part of his role ensuring the structures on the railway are sound. And it is. PW reinstated the track, and normal service was resumed.

The "prettying up" was planned for May, and the planning is definitely significant. To get easy access to the areas needing attention scaffolding was erected, but to do this, the road needed to be closed and it is necessary to give a minimum of four months notice.

This process started in December 2015, with notice being given to Gwynedd before Christmas. Contractors were engaged to produce and install relevant road signs, and scaffolders arranged to start on Monday 9th May. Despite us getting worried a week or two beforehand, everything happened exactly as planned / hoped for, and we got a flying start to the actual work on Tuesday 10th.

Earlier in the year, we had inspected the paint work with a specialist from Bradite, the paint manufacturers in Bethesda. The paint put on in 1986 was in very good condition – well done Dee and Mersey Group !!

The process agreed was to pressure wash first to remove all the "gunge", apply anti fungicide, and then a degreaser, remove small amounts of rust, apply rust converter, two coats of primer then three top coats plus lining out (but not to Glenn's standards) in the various colours.

Most of this was not a lot of work, but we had to wait overnight for paints to dry off properly, so it took quite a lot of days. Again, the weather was kind and we only had a couple of days when work was restricted by rain. But the midges were not kind!

We planned to use the same colour scheme as previously, but the spec included "Dark Green" and "Light Green" without any BS references. We selected colours from a colour chart, standing by the bridge, and had guidance from a volunteer who has had a career doing fine painting, to ensure we chose colours that contrasted but didn't clash – I thought green was green, but have learnt differently.

Whilst closing the road and having scaffolding up, the opportunity was taken to also clean the abutments, check their condition (again good) and repaint small amounts with lime mortar. ▶



◀ Also while the road was closed, the lineside team got stuck in with saws and chipper, to remove some trees and generally clean up where they could around the bridge; and the Buildings Department rebuilt one stone corner post at the entrance to the drive up to the station that had been "nudged" and broken by some large vehicle.

And at the end, we are chuffed with the result. It is not only a good sight (in our opinion), but it was a typical FR volunteer project.

We had lots of guidance, support and cooperation from various members of the paid staff, we had guidance and support from contractors, we had volunteers with us for one day, and volunteers with us for several days, and some for almost all of the days.

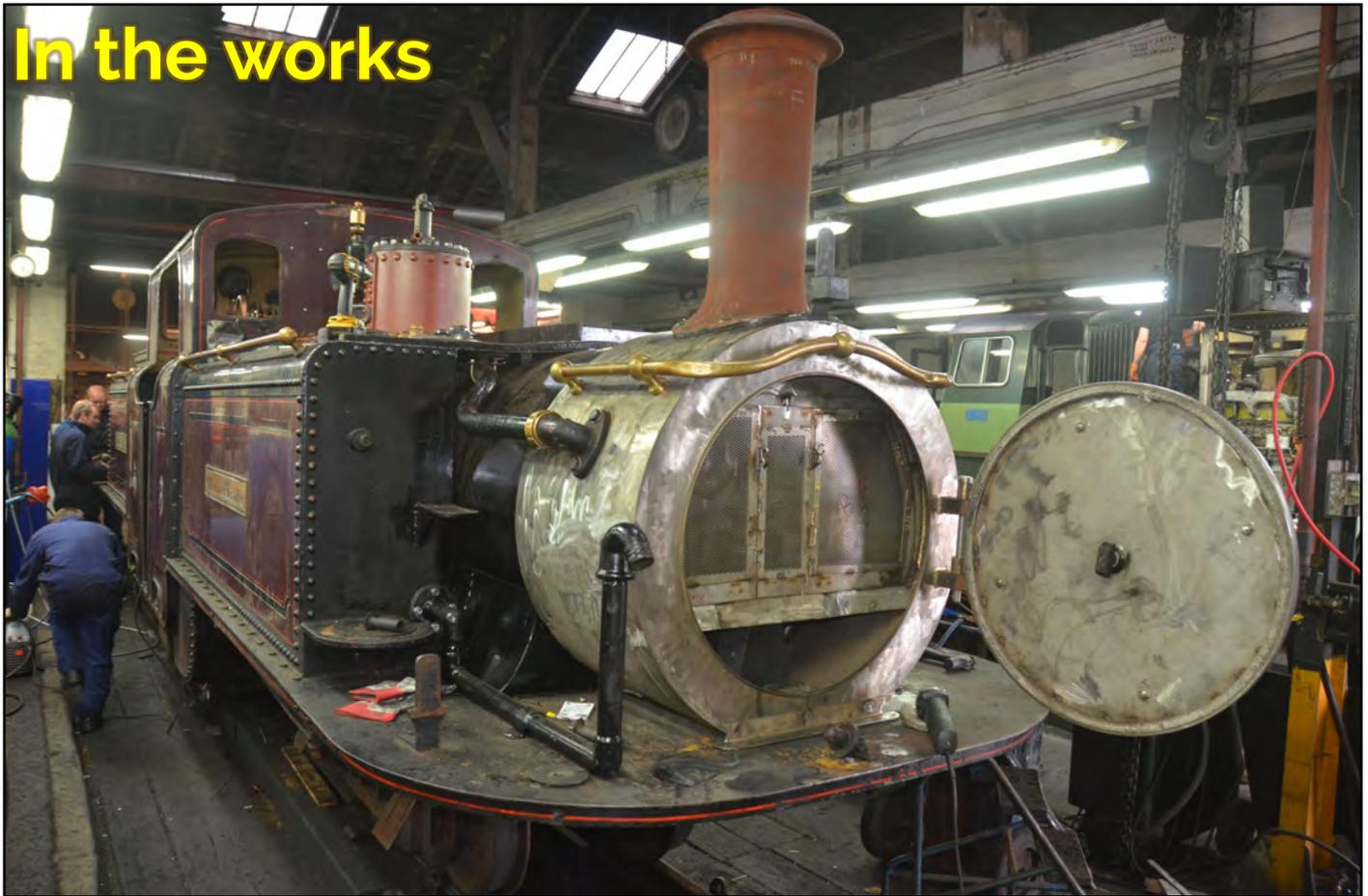
We learnt new things, we watched trains go by, we got frustrated with some things, we got teased about others, we are pleased with the result and we enjoyed really good company.

Thank you to all who contributed (and have you got your diaries for May 2017?)

Alan Norton



In the works

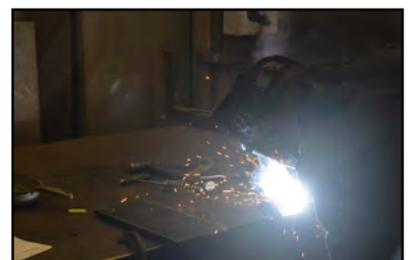


Boston Lodge Works is a hive of activity at the moment with work on Double Fairlie *Merddin Emrys* and Large England *Welsh Pony* taking centre stage in the erecting shop.

Merddin's new stainless steel smokeboxes, spark arrestors and chimneys are in place and it is now beginning to resemble a steam locomotive rather than a kit of parts.

Meanwhile, *Welsh Pony's* new boiler shell is being completed following the boiler inspector's approval of the design a few weeks ago when it was tacked together for the inspection.

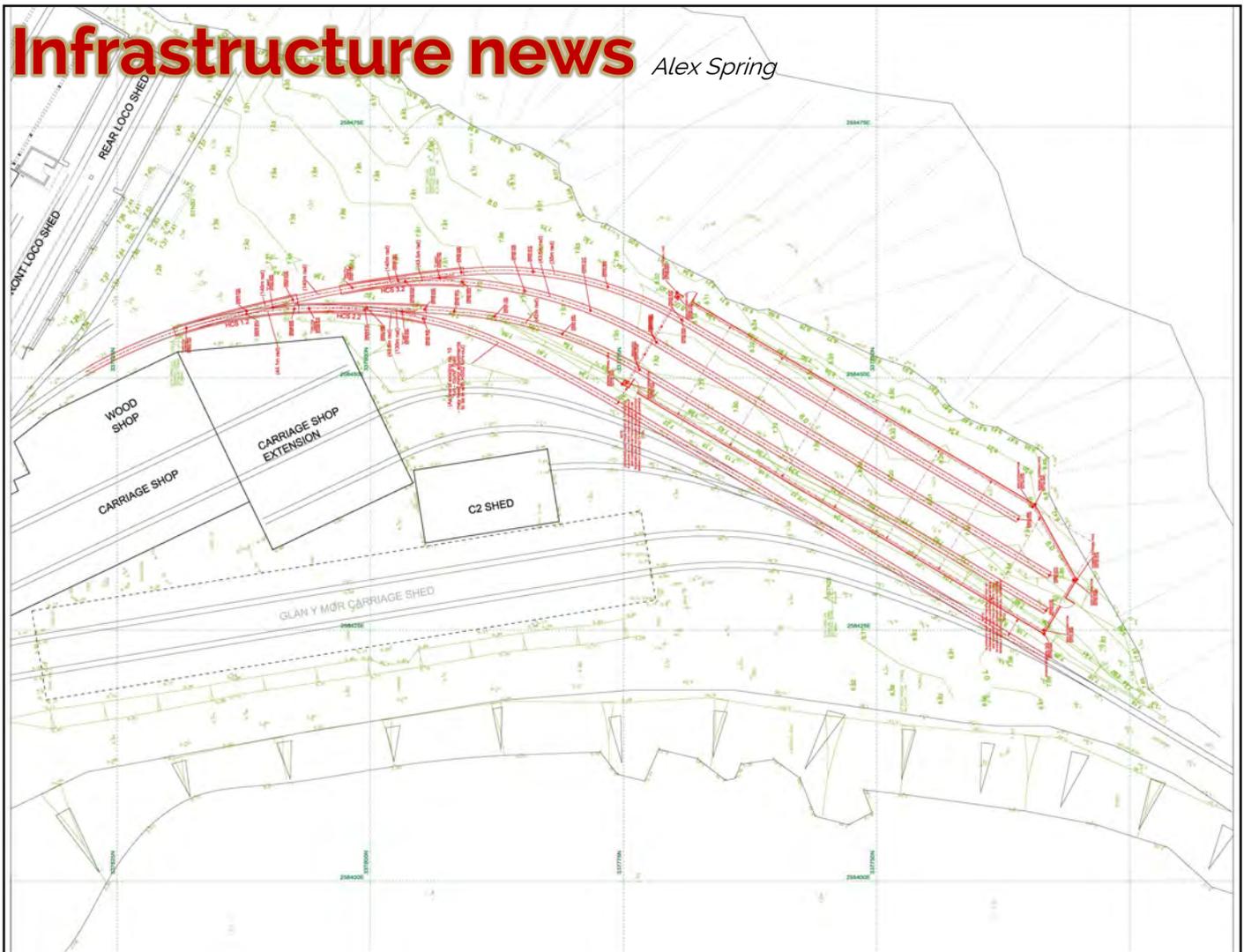
The backhead is also taking shape and the locations for the firebox stays are marked out ready for drilling. The frames will shortly be reunited with the wheelsets, ahead of the loco steaming for its 150th birthday in 2017.





*In the carriage shop, new FR Super Saloon 118 is progressing rapidly.
It is planned that the new carriage will make its public debut at the Southport Flower Show
between August 18-21st, alongside Quarry Hunslet Velinheli, to promote the railway.*

Infrastructure news *Alex Spring*



Exciting times ahead for the Infrastructure PW and S&T teams as we gear up for what could be described as our equivalent of the network rail remodelling at Kings Cross Station over Christmas 2014, only we don't intend to over run.

Orders have been placed for six new turnouts and KGJ Price are currently manufacturing these in South Wales for staged delivery in September and November this year. The turnouts will be prefabricated the factory and delivered to us as completed units on EcoTrax recycled plastic bearers Using new S30 rail.

With as much standardising of components as is possible to allow for easier maintenance and the need to hold fewer spare components as parts will be interchangeable with many of the other new turnouts on the network. We are then left with easy part of the equation, installation.

Three of the turnouts are destined for Boston Lodge where as part of the ongoing redevelopment project they will form the throat into the shortly to be erected heritage shed. Anybody visiting the works at the moment can see the surveyors paint marks on the ground indicating the location for these three turnouts.

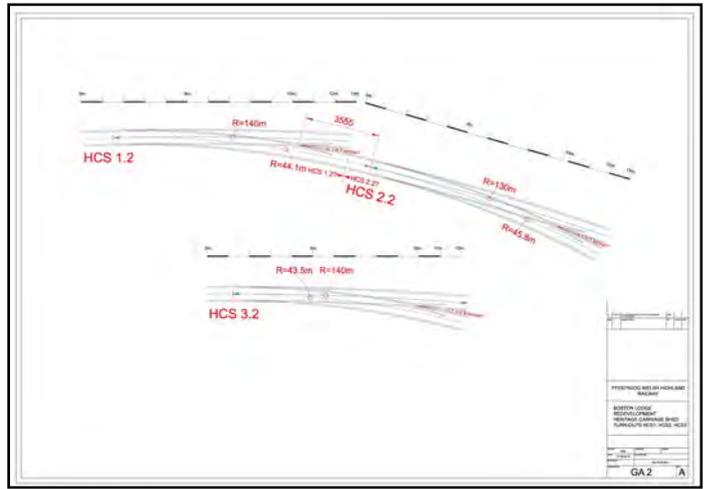


It's our intention to install these three units during late September early October. As this is effectively a greenfield site we are able to install without hindering the daily train service or operations at Boston Lodge.

Once work is completed at the works and the carriages are safely put to bed for the winter at Glan Y Pwll, the PW and S&T team will decamp to Tan Y Bwlch to commence work renewing the turnouts.

Tan Y Bwlch will be the most challenging of all the work planned for next winter. Replacement will be like for like with the new turnouts designed to drop in at exactly the same locations as the existing ones. Taking a total possession of the station tracks, the intention is to renew the top and bottom end turnouts and have completed the work such that the up line can be commissioned for through running in either direction in time for the Christmas week service commencing on the 26th December. Then on 2nd January 2017 the S&T department will move in to reconnect the signalling equipment and test.

Detailed planning is now underway to produce a critical path for these works to avoid clashing with others. The building department is planning to do some drainage and cable duct works in the car park over the winter so we need to ensure the material lay down area is not sited where they need to dig.



In the planning, we are acutely aware of the sensitivity of the area "everybody loves Tan Y Bwlch" and we need ensure that when the daily train service commences the only indication that the station had been a major construction site is the clean ballast.

Key to the successful on time delivery of such a major project will not only be the support of our regular Pway volunteers, but, we hope, new volunteers who fancy experiencing a different side to railway life. So if you are Driver, Guard, Fireman, Buffet Steward, Signaller, Crossing Keeper or a first time volunteer, remember "Infrastructure Needs You" and we would love to see you. Contact either tdoyle@ffwhr.com or aspring@ffwhr.com to plan your visit.

SUMMER OF FUN

FFESTINIOG & WELSH HIGHLAND RAILWAYS
Gorsaf yr Harbwr • Harbour Station, Porthmadog, LL49 9NF
facebook.com/festrail 01766 516024 festrail.co.uk

The brochure cover features a large image of a steam train on a hillside. Below this are several smaller inset photos showing people enjoying various activities: a man with a pig, a child blowing bubbles, a man playing a trumpet, a man playing a guitar, a child on a footplate ride, a family standing together, and a steam train on a track.

The new Summer of Fun brochure is now available, packed with great family-friendly things to do over the holidays. You can download it from www.festrail.co.uk/pdf/summer_of_fun_2016.pdf or from the Summer of Fun webpage at www.festrail.co.uk/summer.htm

Summer of Fun is aimed at helping families during the long Summer holidays. Every year, we organise a wide range of free or low-cost activities aimed at keeping the whole family amused without breaking the budget.

Working closely with the local community, local businesses and a wide range of artists, musicians and entertainers, we offer attractions in a number of locations around the railway such as classic car shows, fish and chip trains, live music, footplate rides, arts and crafts - the list goes on and on.

We are still grateful for donations of wool, cardboard tubes, egg boxes, coloured paper, fabrics, buttons, balloons, stickers, crayons, water based paints, wallpaper rolls, unwanted arts and crafts materials.

Email us at summeroffun@ffwhr.com or call us on 01766 516024 / 01766 516029 or pop in and see us at Harbour Station.
Dale & Leann

Farewell to Bob Washington



The narrow gauge railways of Porthmadog joined together on June 30th to bid a sad farewell to Bob Washington, one of their long-term supporters.

A special train carrying his coffin and accompanying family members ran the length of the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway from Tremadog Road to Penymount behind *Russell*, then on to the Welsh Highland Railway and back to Porthmadog with *Britomart* in charge.

Family, friends and staff from the railways lined Britannia Bridge as the train crossed slowly over the main road before continuing along the Ffestiniog Railway to Penrhyn for a funeral service at Capel Fron. Our condolences go to his widow Margaret, his sons Lawrence and Jeremy and their families.



Above: Russell heads for Penymount.

Top: Britomart passes through Harbour Station en route for Penrhyn.

Permanent way team vacancies

The PW department is looking to recruit suitably qualified enthusiastic individuals to join the team. You should be a good team player and have previous permanent way experience, preferably Narrow Gauge.

Individuals must enjoy the outdoor life that PW work brings. You will be expected to work in very trying conditions and adverse weather (rain). During the peak operational season start times can be as early as 06.00 hrs and regular weekend working may be required with time off during the week.

In return we will train and develop you in all things PW, including the operation of diesel engines and our tamping machine. offer you the opportunity to work in the most spectacular scenery in the Snowdonia National Park - and we will pay you.

If you think this job opportunity fits your future career aspirations please drop a note to jvincent@fwhr.com by 29th July 2016 introducing yourself, detailing your experience and why you think you would fit in with our current PW team.

Hike for Harri raises £1,887

Rachel Turner's fundraising effort for Alder Hey Children's Hospital has so far raised £1,887 - almost double the original target.

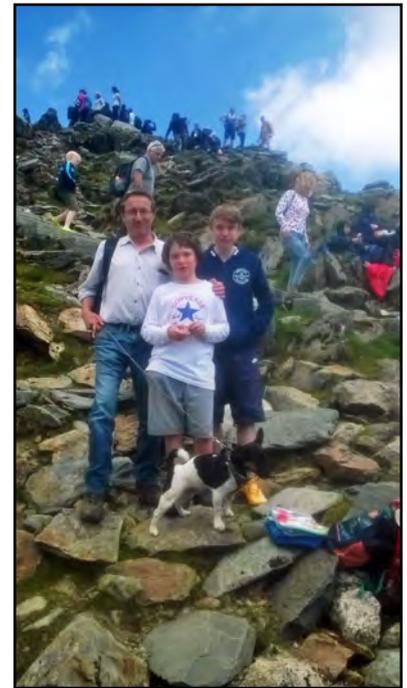
Rachel and partner WHR driver Bryn Jones climbed to the summit of Snowdon with their children Jac and Harri and lolo the dog.

"It was a fantastic day," says Rachel. "We would like to thank everyone for their tremendous support and we are still fundraising to collect as much money for Alder Hey as we can."

Harri has now been successfully weaned off one of his medications and still remains seizure free.

"This is so life changing for Harri, as well as us a family," adds Rachel. "Could you please let everyone know how grateful we are for their generous support but we could still raise more.

Rachel's just giving page can be found at www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Rachel-Turner17 and she says she can also accept donations in the old fashioned way!



Date confirmed for BBC2 show



The BBC has announced the transmission date for its new series on railways, *Full Steam Ahead*.

The first episode of the series was filmed over three days on the F&WHR in February and will be screened at 2000 on Thursday July 21st on network BBC2.

According to Lion TV producer Georgina Stewart, the railway 'looks fabulous'.

Lion is the production company responsible for many other popular TV series including *Victorian Farm*, *Edwardian Farm* and *Tales from the Green Valley*.

The series is fronted by presenters Ruth Goodman, Alex Langlands and Peter Ginn, who tried their hand at trackwork, preparing and driving *Prince*, riding behind *Prince* and *Palmerston* and returning in the comfort of a gravity slate train.

They also had a go at other tasks including hot riveting a slate wagon and taking a ride in Spooner's Boat. There's even a guest appearance by a horse hauling slate wagons at Glan y Pwyll.

Don't you dare miss it...



Pictures from the weekend of July 10-11 show tracklaying in the Waggon Tracks shed using materials from the old Harbour Station, progress on removing the roof from the goods shed and (below) the trackside drains working party in action near Garnedd Tunnel where a large puddle had developed due to a pipe laid over 30 years ago being at the wrong level. It was removed and replaced after the trench had been deepened.



Rheilffyrdd Ffestiniog ac Eryri
Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways

Safety Bulletin 6

July 2016



“It’s good to talk”

...was the slogan for a very successful BT advertising campaign in the 1990s. And who would disagree?

However, what you talk about is important, particularly when dealing with train operations. We’ve had two incidents recently, caused by ineffective communication. One was an unauthorised vehicle being added to a train, the other a handbrake being released too soon. Thankfully, nothing serious resulted, but they underline how important it is to reach a clear understanding about what you are going to do.

So, whilst “It’s good to talk” make sure you’re talking about the same thing, and you’ve agreed what’s going to happen.





Earl of Merioneth crosses Rhoslyn Bridge with a down train on June 29th, ignored by the family of Canada Geese who have set up home on the banks of Rhoslyn Lake alongside the station at Dduallt



Coming down the track...

- 25 July – 29 Aug Summer of Fun
- 28 July, 4, 11, 18, 25 Aug FR Jazz Trains
- 12-13 August, Shewsbury Flower Show
- 18-21 August, Southport Flower Show
- 21 Aug Classic Car & Family Day at Dinas
- 9-11 Sept WHR Super Power
- 18 Sept Ras y Cob
- 24 Sept Trailffest
- 7-9 Oct FR Victorian Weekend
- 22-23 Oct Gigabash
- 27, 28, 29 Oct FR Halloween trains
- 27 Oct WHR Halloween Train
- 10, 11, 17, 18, 22, 23 Dec WHR Santa trains
- 10, 11, 17, 18, 22 Dec FR Santa Trains
- 1-2 April, Megabash
- 28 April - 1 May 2017 Quirks & Curiosities II

View from Harbour Station on June 29th