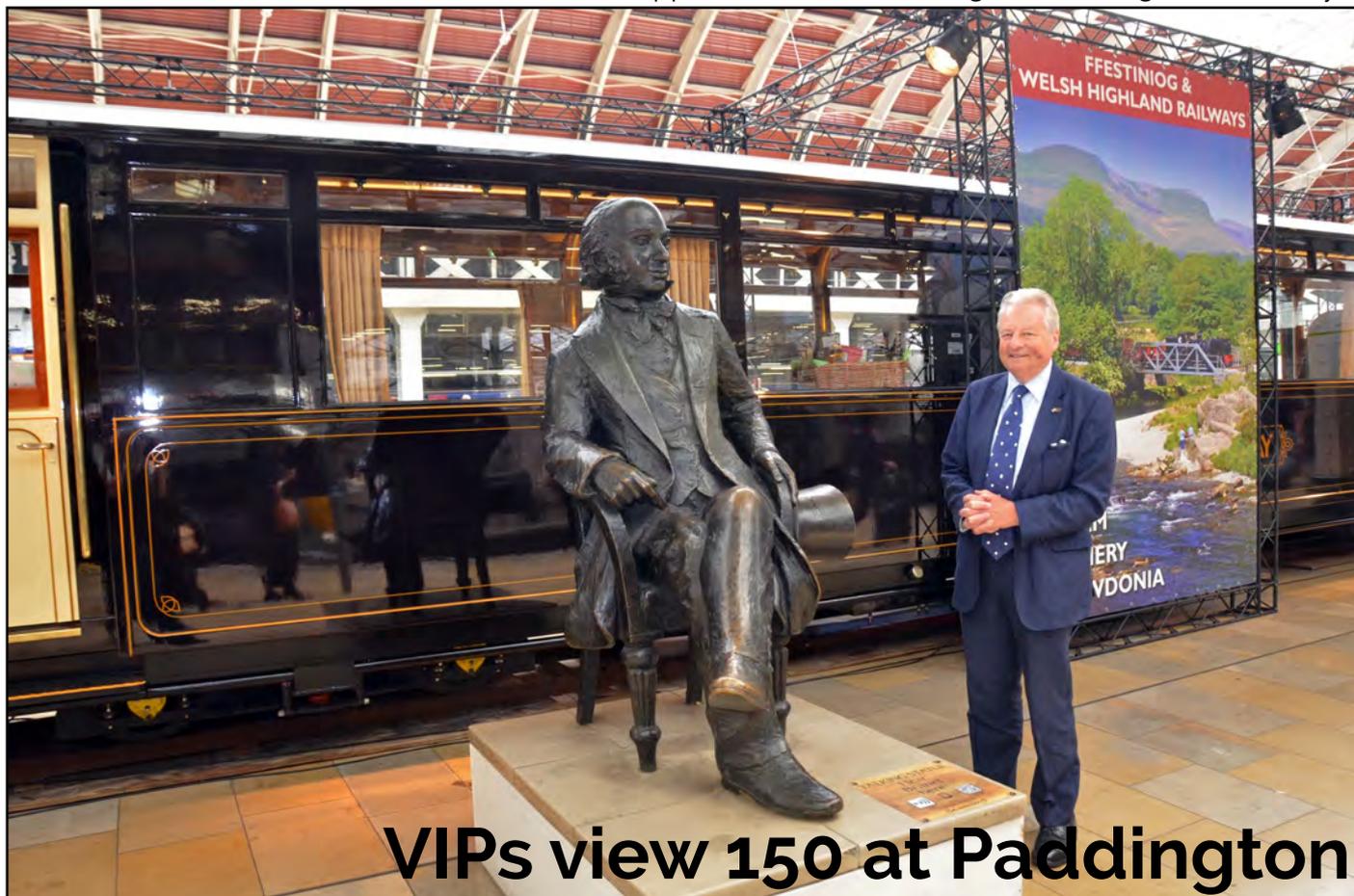


Inside Motion

June 2015

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



VIPs view 150 at Paddington

New Pullman observation car 150 has returned from its three week trip to London Paddington, where it was seen by thousands of travellers every day. Some 2,500 copies of the new edition of TLC magazine were handed to commuters passing through the station.

Amongst the VIPs examining the carriage were Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas AM and the new Westminster MP for Dwyfor Meirionnydd, Liz Saville Roberts.

New Network Rail Chairman Sir Peter Hendy visited, just before his appointment was announced, in his capacity of Commissioner of Transport for London. Sir Peter presented Paul Lewin and John Prideaux with an enamel London Underground roundel - an honour accorded to few organisations or individuals.

As a result of Sir Peter's visit, links between the F&WHR and TfL have been further strengthened and a group of TfL apprentices will be visiting the railway during Kids' Training Week later this year.



This monthly newsletter is distributed to those who request it by email and is also accessible from the main website at www.festrail.co.uk along with previous issues. Diary and event information is available on the online site. Feel free to print this document in order that people without web access can read it. Contributions, details of group meetings etc to athomas@ffwhr.com

Minffordd Yard Developments

The steelwork for the new Infrastructure workshop arrived on site during the first week of June and the contractor began to assemble it straightaway. The main structure of the building consists of seven equally spaced frames with interconnecting beams at the eaves of the building. This basic framework was all in place by the end of week 25 (12th June) and fully bolted together. During the following week the contractor began the task of fitting the roof purlins and 'Z' rails along the sides, which support the insulated cladding sheets that form the building's exterior wall of the building. Extra steelwork forms the doorways and window apertures.

With the steel framework in position and the building squared up, we grouted the bases of the steel columns. This involved pouring a very thin mix of sand and cement around the base of each column, thin enough to flow underneath. As soon as this had hardened, the buildings department were able to lay the base courses of bricks. This incorporates the damp proof course and also acts as a base line for the external sheeting of the building. By the end of week 26 (26th June) all the lower brick work was in place and the contractor had fixed the insulated sheeting to both ends and the rear wall. The next stage is fitting of the roof sheets by J. Lloyd, while the Ff&WHR Buildings Department crack on with building the internal block walls up to finished floor level throughout.

By early August the watertight building shell will be ready for internal fitting out. The first task will be completion of the internal walls up to the first floor level by Anthony and Richard from the Buildings Department, followed by installation of the floor beams and sheeting. Internal walls can then be painted and installation of new electrical services can begin.

The pace of this activity depends greatly on the availability of the Buildings Department, who have many other calls on their time and labour resources, so it is difficult to give a definite date for when the building will be ready for occupation. However, progress can be speeded up with your help, either directly by helping on the workshop build, or indirectly by volunteering to help with buildings projects and maintenance of other structures on the railway. If you think you can help us contact either Anthony Brierley abrierley@ffwhr.com or myself - ihartill@ffwhr.com.

Meanwhile the Waggon Tracks project has been quietly progressing, with more clearance of the final site. This has involved breaking up the remains of the last of the old wooden huts and clearing bits of wood, which will be used for lighting up the steam locos.



Once all the materials currently occupying the site have been sorted out and moved to temporary locations in the yard the remaining old concrete foundations can be broken up. Due to the size of the job a man with a digger and a hydraulic breaker will be brought in to clear the site in a day or two.

By early July J. Lloyd & Son of Corwen, (the company making both the workshop building and Waggon Track shed) will deliver the foundation drawings. The final position of the shed can then be marked on the ground, work started on the drainage to deal with the rain water, and the building foundations started.

Do take a look at the special appeal leaflet that was distributed in the latest *Ffestiniog Railway Magazine* no.229, which describes what is planned for the summer and autumn, and how the project can be supported. If help is available over the summer it is hoped to complete the modifications of the points which will connect the shed to the rest of the yard tracks, and to get these installed.

So if you want to see even more rapid progress please look again at the Waggon Tracks leaflet and come and lend a hand. Contact Sam Miller smiller@ffwhr.com , Iain Wilkinson iwilkinson@ffwhr.com or me, Ian Hartill ihartill@ffwhr.com

Colourful displays

We had an excellent turnout and dry weather for Planting Out Day in May, so we had a pleasant day planting 1,500 plants at four stations on the FR. Others had already planted the bedding plants on the WHR.

We were also lucky that rain on the following days meant we'd no problems with water for the plants in the beds, tubs and planters, however the temperatures were low and the poor plants hardly moved four weeks. Now the weather is warmer they are starting to grow and to flower.

We have many perennials and shrubs in Minffordd and TyB stations and hopefully will have in the new bed at Harbour Station before too long. In addition, having alternating displays of spring bulbs in the tubs and raised beds, followed by summer flowers provides eye-catching splashes of colour around the stations. We know these are much appreciated as we get many compliments from our visitors.

However the removal of the dying bulbs and putting out the new plants is only a start and there are a number of small jobs which must be regularly carried out in order to maintain the attractive displays and ensure the plants don't die.

As far as the weeding is concerned, we usually manage to get this done by our P&G volunteers, but we wouldn't say no if anyone had a few minutes to spare and wanted to help!

In order to encourage the plants to flower throughout the summer, the old fading flowers need to be removed regularly. We are appealing to folks around the railway - staff or FR members on holiday here to spend just five minutes pinching off a handful of these dead heads and throwing them in litter bins, this would give us much better colour.

In this wonderful Welsh climate, watering of tubs and planters is rarely a problem unless we have a dry spell of four or five days; the hanging baskets at Porthmadog have a watering system which is turned on early each morning, whilst TYB cafe staff do an excellent job watering theirs.

The window boxes at Harbour Station are a major concern; the ones on the window sills on the car park side get very little rain and the ones on the platform side get none, so it is essential that these boxes are watered daily. The car park attendants are keeping the car park side watered and Harbour Station cleaners usually water the platform window boxes.



Unfortunately these are occasionally missed, due to unexpected absences and as a result the plant growth is affected, at times leading to the death of the plants which then have to be replaced. So if anyone notices these window boxes are dry, a few minutes with a hose may save the day.

Attractive displays contribute to our customers' enjoyment of their visit and this leads them to tell friends about us, which is a most effective way of getting publicity. A little help with this would be appreciated.

Eileen Clayton

Seventh Garratt arrives



Major components of NG/G16 Garratt 130 have been delivered to the Welsh Highland Railways workshop at Dinas.

Two power units, the boiler cradle, bunker and water tank arrived by road from the Exmoor Steam Railway, having been acquired by Gloucester-based Steam Powered Services Limited at the end of 2014. The boiler is being assessed at the South Devon Railway boiler works.

SPS intends to restore the locomotive to service with an anticipated first steaming date in the spring of 2018. The locomotive is expected to run on the 25 mile Welsh Highland Railway.

SPS Managing Director Peter Best will manage the project with the work being done by contractors. The F&WHR has already secured the contract to build a new bunker, water tank and cab, along with examining the power bogies to draw up a list of the work needed to return them to service.

F&WHR Works Manager Tony Williams comments: "We're very much looking forward to working with Peter and seeing another Garratt in action in Snowdonia."

130 was last operational on the Port Shepstone-Harding branch in Natal and was withdrawn in 1985. It was imported for the proposed Whitby to Robin Hood's Bay Railway in the 1990s before being moved to the Exmoor Steam Railway.

The locomotive was one of a batch of 12 built by the Manchester firm of Beyer Peacock in 1951 and exported to South Africa for use on the extensive two foot gauge railways of the Cape and Natal.

The design dates from 1937 and various batches were made by four different manufacturers, with the last of the class being built in South Africa in 1968.

The WHR currently has five NG/G16 Garratts, Numbers 87, 138 and 143 are in service, with numbers 109 and 140 awaiting restoration. 87 was built by Cockerill in Belgium, the remaining locos by Beyer Peacock. The railway also operates prototype Garratt K1.



Rhiw Goch refurbished

Last year we repainted Rhiw Goch box and discovered rot. This year we have replaced the south face and painted it. We also rebuilt the handrail.

With my wife Elaine, I been working with Ian Rudd, Howard Wilson, Dave and Jane Waller and was joined by Chris Chitty and Merf Jones for one day. Robert Moore turned up for two days, as did Rosemary Wilson.

Basically the timber put up eight years ago was of poor quality and has now been replaced with cedar which should last longer. There had also been water ingress around the window frame.

The handrail had completely rotted and been replaced with new timber. The whole job took five days. The Handrail still requires fitting, but thankfully the timber frame was in good condition.

On day five, we travelled to Rhoslyn Cottage to plant geraniums ahead of the Deviation 50 celebrations.

Richard Herington



Dates for the diary *Clare Britton*

Fish and Chip trains run on 29th and 30th July on the 1545, then every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evening in August on the 1805 (with the exception of 6th August which is fully booked).

Plas Tan y Bwlch is holding Guided Walks every Tuesday from 7th July until 29th September. Meet your guide at 1215 at Tan y Bwlch station. Book in advance from Porthmadog booking office or pay the guide on the day.

Jazz trains run every Thursday evening from 30th July to 27th August. Dr Jazz will entertain and there is a BBQ and licensed bar.

On Sunday 23rd August, we are holding a Classic Car and family day at Dinas, which will include footplate rides, sausage and craft making demonstrations, stalls and trips on a genuine Whiteways (O.R. Williams) of Waunfawr vintage bus. This promises to be a great way to spend a late August Sunday.

Welsh Highland Great and Small II takes place over the WHRS AGM weekend of 11th to 13th September. There is an impressive list of model railway layouts and other things besides. More info will be on the website soon.

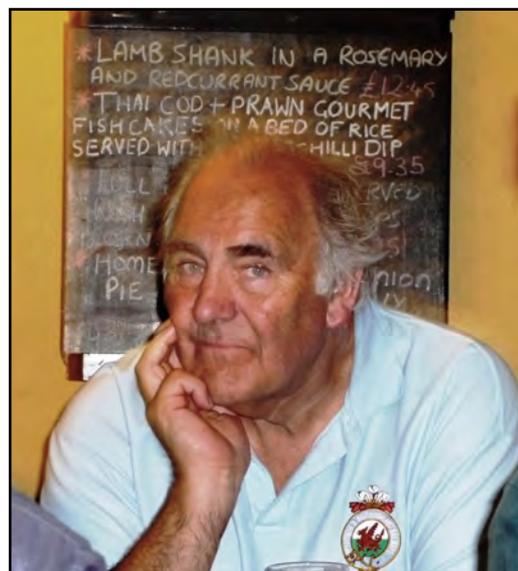
Phil Ankers

Phil had been suffering with cancer for some time and died on the 24th June 2015 at Ysbyty Alltwen, Tremadog.

Phil and his wife Glenys moved to North Wales from the Midlands and he was the Buildings Dept electrician when that department was managed by Eileen Clayton. He also trained as a diesel driver, spending a lot of time on *Vale of Ffestiniog* when that loco was regularly rostered on service trains.

He lived at Penrhyn, where he and Glenys ran a B&B business.

In more recent years, after leaving employment with the FR, Phil volunteered as an electrician for the WHHR at Gelert's Farm.



DEVIATION 50

Even the weather was good to us. Although we woke to rain on Saturday 20th June, the rain stopped and the 60 or so folk who walked from Tan y Grisiau to Dduallt from our special train that afternoon had dry, clear weather, as we did when we all alighted later to explore the Dduallt Spiral. Many of us could sit comfortably outside for the excellent meal at Tan y Bwlch Station prepared by Mai and her colleagues. 140 people had gathered to celebrate 50 years since the cutting of the First Sod of the Deviation, some having travelled from afar. Gerald Fox was there from America, Hilary from Canada, Tom and Hilda from Australia, others from all over the UK. Nine of the 13 people who had been at the First Sod ceremony were present.

Throughout the weekend there had been a mesmerising display of photographs, DVD's and old posters in the Library at Plas Tan y Bwlch which had been booked for the whole weekend and housed some 60 of us. Short speeches were made by Mike Schumann, Gerald Fox, Paul Bradshaw and Paul Lewin after our meal. Gerald suggested that if it wasn't for the Deviationists the Ffestiniog Railway would not be where it is today and there would not have been any Welsh Highland Railway either. Maybe he's right. We had all immensely enjoyed our years of hard work, made enduring friendships and lifelong partnerships.

Moragh Bradshaw



Rest of the World Gang diary dates

Without a well maintained and safe permanent way there can be no trains. No trains means no revenue. No revenue means no railway and all the rolling stock stays shut up in its sheds. The Rest of the World Gang welcomes your help. Why not join us?

Planned dates for our next working parties are:

July 4 -10 Saturday to Friday
August 14-17 long weekend Friday to Monday
September 12-18 Saturday to Friday
October 23-26 long weekend Friday to Monday
November 21-27 Saturday to Friday

Contacts:

Paul Bradshaw	pbradshaw@ffwhr.com	01766 770034
Phil Nock	pnock@ffwhr.com	07947 341817

Claire Podmore *Martin Batcock*

I am very sorry to report that Spooner's manager Claire Podmore is leaving the company after seven years' service to take up a new opportunity as manager of the Aberdunant Hotel, Prenteg. Claire was promoted to Spooner's manager earlier this year and has proved to have been one of its most popular managers since its opening in 1999. She will be greatly missed by staff, volunteers and customers alike. I am sure you will all join me in wishing her all the very best for the future. In the meantime, during the recruitment period, Assistant Manager Joel Alonso will be Acting Spooner's Manager.

Railway recollections wanted

I'm a **guard** and signalman on the FfWHR, as well as an undergraduate geography student at the University of Oxford, and I'll be carrying out research for my dissertation project on the railway over the summer.

I'm looking into the practices of volunteering, and how these connect to enthusiasm, memory and history. I'd like to talk to as many people as possible about your experiences working on the railway and what it means to you, whether you've been around for five days or fifty years, whether you volunteer today or stopped years ago, and whatever department you're involved in. The material collected will also hopefully help towards the railway's efforts to better understand what motivates volunteers as part of their vision of a sustainable future.

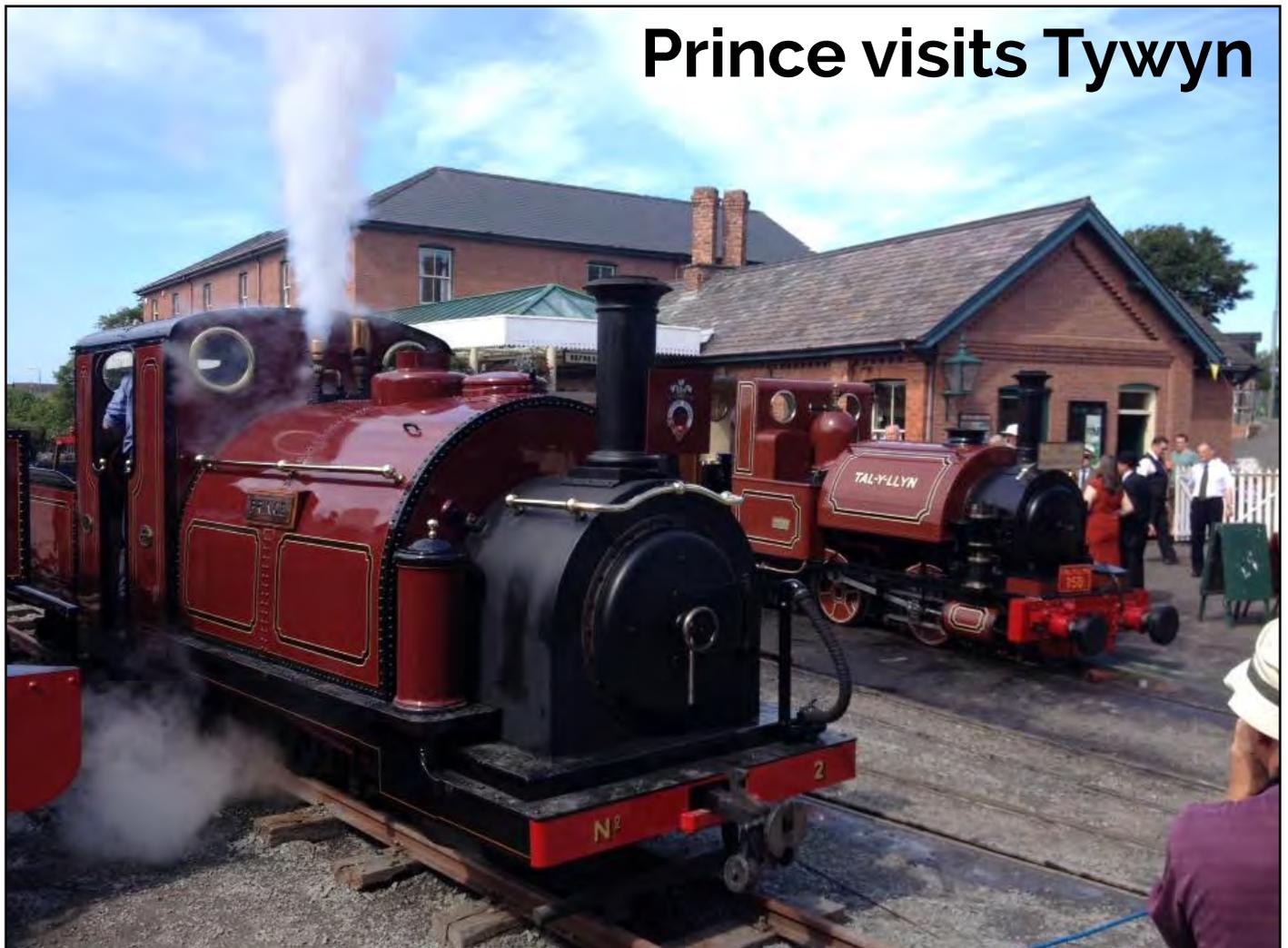
I'll be around the railway for most of July and August, staying in Minffordd hostel and around in Porthmadog on most days.

If you would like to help, please contact me by email david.smith@mansfield.ox.ac.uk telephone 07970 492 920 or in person.

It wouldn't be anything too demanding, just an informal chat about your experiences and what the railway means to you.

I'd be very grateful for your help!

David Smith



Prince visits Tywyn

Venerable steam loco Prince was the guest of honour at the Tallylyn Railway at Tywyn for their 150th anniversary celebrations on July 4th. The old gent is pictured at Wharf Station alongside Tallylyn No. 1, recently refurbished at Boston Lodge Works.

Glad to be of service *Stephen Greig*



WHR Dinas team left to right: Lisa Peters, Doris Bee, Tomos Roberts & Iwan Grenet

The year started off on a very positive note with the three successful Mutual Improvement training weekends where both engine crews and guards shared experiences and good practice. They also had an afternoon of Customer Service training where the question "what should be the core attitudes and behaviours of the company?" was asked.

This has sparked a lot of interest and discussion and is an on-going piece of work that I am aiming to speak to as many people as possible about over the summer period.

This work will give us a grounding of how we keep a pioneering heritage feel in a modern competitive world and how our staff and volunteers can promote this whilst on duty by keeping a professional and friendly manner at all times and exceeding our customers' expectations.

Excelling

The On Train Services department are excelling with this year's equal split of new and returning buffet stewards, through both sales and passenger expectations. TripAdvisor reviews for both railways have been excellent and all remark on how professional and friendly all of the on train staff are.

All of the staff are excelling within the department and are looking forward to the high summer period. The new Welsh Highland Railway 1st class and revised 3rd class menus have been introduced and are proving very popular with customers and hot food sales are significantly higher than previous years.

Doris Bee, a new member of staff on the Dinas stewarding team said, "I am really enjoying working here, our training was good and we have gelled as a team and work well together". A big well done and thank you to Martin Batcock, John Ditchburn, Oliver Bennett and all of the on train staff for such a positive first half of the season!

Reviews

The Trip Advisor reviews for Spooner's have also improved especially with people praising the new evening menu and quality of the food and beer that is being served.

A volunteer "Mystery Shopper" scheme has been introduced and to date we have encountered three of these taking place. All of these include positive reviews and development points on where things could be improved.

As always I shall be out and about training and assessing over the summer both on Customer Service and operating but I urge everyone to keep the feedback on our service and experiences coming to me, I appreciate all comments received!

Finally I would like to praise all of the F&WHR volunteers who have been working tirelessly behind the scenes all over the UK promoting the railways.

I had the pleasure of working alongside Chris Parry and his dedicated team of volunteers at both York NRM and Paddington Station this year and the work performed is truly remarkable, a very big thank you!

F&WHR volunteers head for Romania



Following the successful visit of four volunteers from the Sibiu Agnita railway (SAR) to the FR in March, the return fixture occurred during the first week of June. As well as the F&WHR, volunteers from the Nene Valley, Rother Valley, Welshpool & Llanfair and Welsh Highland Heritage Railways took part.

F&WHR Permanent Way manager Alun Tomlinson joined Chris Phillimore of UK Track Systems, Trevor Streeter and former WHR Construction Co civil engineering manager Alasdair Stewart in a 1,500 mile overland journey to Romania to provide supervision and practical advice to the local team of volunteers.

In hot weather that approached 30 degree centigrade over the course of the working week, rotten timbers were dug out and replaced under a couple of turnouts in the station in the village of Cornatel. Sleepers underneath joints in the plain line were also replaced on the 760mm gauge line in the direction of the next village and station of Hosman.

It is planned that a steam engine and carriage will operate over this five mile section of line during a gala event over the weekend 26th / 27th September to coincide with a FEDECRAIL committee meeting and ever popular traditional Transylvanian Brunch event.

Long term F&WHR volunteer bridge engineer John Sreeves also joined the party and cast his eye over (and more pertinently, under) the bridges and structures on this length of the route.

Despite having been closed to regular traffic since 2001 when the railway was closed without notice or ceremony by state railway operator Căile Ferate Române (CFR) the line was originally well built and engineered and appears to be in a reasonable enough condition to allow the running of a few light trains at low speeds. The biggest problems are the growth of vegetation which makes inspection difficult and the loss through theft of fixings, base plates and fish plates and their associated nuts and bolts...sleepers are in a range of conditions from 'poor' to 'effectively non-existent', making it impossible to compare to anything likely to be encountered in contemporary Britain but is reminiscent of pictures and descriptions of the Tallylyn Railway in Rolt's classic book "Railway Adventure"

With equipment generously provided for the trip by Track Systems UK, the nine British volunteers were able to support a rotating cast of local members of the 'Association of Friends of the Mochanita' – a term that means variously 'coffee pot' or 'little shepherdess of the hills' depending upon who you ask but a term of endearment like our own 'tren bach' – valuable skills, practical tips and 'know how' were passed on to enable the task of sleeper replacement to continue.

The current legal status of the railway is complicated and one member of the party, British expat and lawyer, Neil McGregor, is trying to unravel the current impasse – a task made all the more difficult in a country where 'volunteering' is a term with negative connotations.



There is also little understanding or appreciation of the economic potential of heritage railway tourist developments such as have been seen in the UK.

A small scale demonstration of the possible opportunity for the line was witnessed this month when a party of British travellers on an escorted tour of Romania led by Ffestiniog Travel arrived for a ride on the 'drasine' and its trollies regularly operated by the friends.

These tours allow participants to meet and stay with local people as well as visit attractions somewhat off the beaten path and really highlight some of the most attractive 'hidden gems' of Europe in a genuinely sympathetic and low impact way through the use of a local partner.

Whilst not having quite the same sheer immersive dramatic mountain surroundings as some of the narrow gauge lines in Switzerland, the distant snow-capped Carpathian mountains provided a pretty spectacular back drop to the mixed wild flower meadows along the floor of the Hârtibaciu Valley along which the railway lies.

A UK Supporter's group (SARUK) was formed in 2010. This has the aim of raising awareness of the project, raising funds and helping with advice, expertise and practical assistance.

The group is an interesting cross section of enthusiasts, combining many elements of British railway restoration. Membership is just £15 a year with all money going to support the project. An irregular newsletter – *The Agnita Express* – is distributed to members with coverage of news and activities.



To join SARUK just send a cheque for £15 to membership secretary Frank Cooper, Maple Lodge, Chapel Lane, Sibsey, Boston, PE22 0SN. Readers with a Facebook account can keep abreast of SARUK's activities at <http://tinyurl.com/oddsb62>

Alasdair Stewart

Catering Department Vacancy

Spooner's Manager

Spooner's Grill, Café & Bar

Permanent Vacancy

Hours: Up to 40 hours per week, any 5 days out of 7 as rostered

Rate of pay: Dependant on Experience (approx. £20,000)

Spooner's Grill, Cafe & Bar is at the centre of our operations in Porthmadog and delivers a high level of service from breakfast through to evening meals. We are also an award winning real ale bar.

We are looking for a motivated individual to join the management team of Spooner's. This will be a hands-on role and we are looking for someone prepared to lead by example. The successful applicant will work with the Catering Manager to run the day-to-day operations of this busy catering outlet, maximising profit and improving customer service standards. Candidates should have proven experience of working in a catering / hospitality environment. You will have excellent communication and leadership skills and an understanding of budgeting would be an advantage. If you would like to be a key part of one of North Wales' top tourist attractions we look forward to receiving your application.

Core Skills:

Experience (ideally minimum 5 years) of working in the food /catering industry

Educated to at least GCSE level to a good standard

Qualification in Food Hygiene

Qualification in alcohol retail

Proven business ability

Proven leadership and interpersonal skills

Excellent communication skills, both written and oral

Ability to speak Welsh an advantage

Knowledge of the railways, their passengers and the local economic market an advantage

Permanent Way Vacancies

We are looking to recruit new members to our Permanent Way team. Permanent Way is responsible for the inspection, maintenance and repair of the track and related infrastructure in accordance with current and developing Company policies and plans. We have vacancies for the following positions:

Supervisor: must have previous experience of working in railway Permanent Way work, and experience of leading small teams and working with volunteers.

Technician: Must have experience of working within civil engineering and an interest in working in railways.

Trainee: No previous experience required however must have enthusiasm for, and interest in, railways in general and permanent way in particular. This is an opportunity for someone who has a desire to work in the railway industry to receive formal training in track and civil engineering skills.

For more information about any of the above positions please contact Jo Vincent: Email jvincent@fwhr.com or phone 01766 516073. We also accept applications by C.V. with a covering letter.

Ffestiniog Travel vacancy

A consultant is required to work in a busy travel office. Duties include selling tickets and providing information for rail travel within the UK. Successful applicants will receive full training and in time will progress on to European ticketing and tour administration.

Requirements: Experience in general office procedure, customer care skills, articulate telephone manner, numeracy and general computer skills, ability to compose correspondence. Previous experience is not essential as training will be given, the ability to communicate in Welsh would be an advantage but is not essential.

Full Time position – 40hrs per week

Hours of Work: Mon-Fri 9am – 5pm plus occasional Saturday Mornings by rotation.

Wage: Exceeds National Minimum Wage

Application forms from Dan May – Tel 01766 772050 / dan.may@ffestiniogtravel.co.uk

Coming down the track...

- *Lilla's* overhaul is progressing well and the loco is on schedule for its visit to Threlkeld Museum of Mining near Keswick with *Hugh Napier* on the 25th and 26th of July.
- *Leary* is to visit Bristol Temple Meads Station on the Bank Holiday weekend between August 29th and 31st.
- Carriage 150 and *Lilla* will be at the Shrewsbury Flower Show between August 14-15
- *Blanche* will be guest of honour at the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway gala in North Devon from September 25-27.
- July 25 - August 29 Free footplate rides on Saturdays at Porthmadog Harbour Station
- July 25-August 31 Summer of Fun
- August Wed & Thurs Fish & Chip trains
- August Thursdays Jazz trains to Tan y Bwlch
- September 11-13 Welsh Highland Superpower Gala
- September 20 Ras y Cob
- September 26 Trailffest Half Marathon
- October 9-11 FR Vintage Weekend
- October 29 - 31 FR Halloween trains
- October 29 WHR Halloween train
- December 12, 13, 19, 20 WHR Santa trains
- December 12, 13, 19, 20 FR Victorian Santa trains



On its return from Paddington, Carriage 150 was delivered to Dinas and paid a flying visit to Caernarfon where Paul Lewin and Dafydd Thomas gave a briefing on the plans for the new Caernarfon station to Ken Skates AM, Deputy Minister for Culture, Sports and Tourism.