

# Inside Motion

August 2015

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

## Superpower: Great and Small II



**Next weekend sees** the Welsh Highland's main event of the year, Superpower. This year sees the return of the popular great and small theme with some of the finest models of the railway on display at Dinas, the centre of the activities.

With the NG/G16 Garratts handling service train duties, the Dinas complex will be a hive of activity with the smaller locos offering footplate rides and the chance to try your hand at a slate shunt - the wagons for which were delivered last Sunday by *Lyd*, seen pictured here running in an engineers possession enabling the unbraked vehicles to travel on the WHR.

Locos in action at Dinas and on the intensive shuttle service between Caernarfon and Waunfawr include *Linda*, *Blanche*, *Prince*, *Lilla*, *Lyd*, *Hugh Napier*, *Britomart* and new build Quarry Hunslet *Jack Lane*, visiting from the Statfold Barn Railway.

The fun starts on Friday. Check the website for details.



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](http://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](mailto:athomas@ffwhr.com)

# New building developments

**Over the last few weeks** the contractor has fitted the wall panels on the new Infrastructure workshop, and cut holes so that door and window frames can be fitted at a later date. At this stage the front wall on the west side of the building had not yet been fitted. This was to allow the reinforced concrete floor to be poured once the Buildings Department had built the internal walls up to floor level.

After the wall panels were fitted the team from Whitehouse Construction, led by Brell Ewart, arrived to complete the floor and drainage work. Another busy week of work ensued with Brell's team often working from 7:00am to 7:00pm. The main task of the week was to pour the concrete floor on the Tuesday and Wednesday. Concrete was supplied by Porthmadog Concrete Ltd using a combination of a 36m reach concrete pump and vehicles with their own conveyor systems, working through the open west side of the building. The drainage systems for both the foul (sewage) and surface rain water runoff were also completed during the week, and the various chambers and trenches were tidied and backfilled.

Once the concrete floor had a couple of weeks to dry out and reach its full strength, the internal walls could be raised. At the time of writing these walls are more than half built by Anthony and Richard from the Buildings Department, who would be very grateful for any offers of help with mixing mortar and carrying blocks. J. Lloyd's contractors have also returned to complete the sheeting of the open west side of the building, so that windows and doors can be installed during the first week of September.

Further dramatic progress has been made with the Waggon Tracks project. Once the old buildings were cleared a contractor was brought in to break up the remaining foundations and compost bins. The site for the new shed was then levelled by digger and the base ground level created.

J. Lloyds, who were awarded the contract to fabricate the waggon tracks shed, have supplied a ground plan of the foundations, which has enabled design work on the drainage systems to be completed. Whitehouse Construction has again offered to lay foundations and install drainage during a further visit to Wales during September, for which the team is extremely grateful.

The objective is to have the steelwork delivered towards the end of the month once the foundations are complete, and then to assemble the framework and fix the sheeting.



With a clear, level site and the details of foundations finalised, it is possible to begin laying track towards the new shed from both ends. Dave High has been dismantling old turnouts ready for reuse in the new track layout, with the assistance of Dan Jones and Jack Blow who have been working on the project over the summer.

Despite these major advances there still remains a lot to be done, so, if you can help this project make more rapid progress please get in contact with either myself [ihartill@ffwhr.com](mailto:ihartill@ffwhr.com) or Iain Wilkinson [iwilkinson@ffwhr.com](mailto:iwilkinson@ffwhr.com)

**Meanwhile, at Boston Lodge**, there has been steady progress on plans for the major redevelopment of the engine sheds, carriage storage and the erecting shop. The priority is to tackle the very mundane problems of site access, and much needed improvements to the site drainage for both waste water and sewage.

Access by road to Boston Lodge is a problem. The present access ramp has a very steep entry from the main road, the surface is horribly uneven and the supporting walls, which have been built up in stages over time, are showing definite signs of bulging. ►

◀ Because of the proximity to the main road and the importance of keeping Boston Lodge works open, professional help has been brought in. Gwynedd Consultancy (the civil engineering consultancy company who supervised and prepared designs for the Cob widening work at Harbour Station) has been engaged to organise and supervise a programme of ground investigation work, ecological and environmental studies.

Using information gathered from these studies they will develop a design for a new site access road based on a preliminary design prepared in-house by Stuart McNair and Alan Brant. It has become apparent that affordable improvements to site access will be a compromise due to problems of the site location, current highways legislation, and the need to maintain the historical appearance of the area. Designs are being developed and approvals from regulatory organisations are being sought with the intention of carrying out some of the major work over the coming winter period.

Gwynedd Consultancy will also provide options for a larger sewage treatment facility. A further concern is the treatment of contaminated surface water, for example, water lost from locomotives as part of preparation and servicing. At present, schemes to improve these areas are still in development.

In the meantime some activity is also going on to prepare the site. Part of the work undertaken during Kids' Training Week was the careful dismantling of the memorial, which will be rebuilt at a new location.

A further group has finished clearing and sorting all the materials from the old tunnel mess building under the watchful eye of the S&T Department. They then demolished the building, generating yet more firewood for lighting up the engines. A further archaeological investigation of this area and the area around the old gunpowder sheds is planned for later in the year. This work will be overseen by Dr Dafydd Gwyn.

The Works Staff have carefully moved the sand drying furnace from beside the main line, as it was located on what is likely to be the optimum site for the oil and water separator, needed to clean the waste water running off the works site.

It is hoped to put up a new storage shed in Glan-y-Mor yard to keep safe those items of rolling stock waiting attention in the works or just needing to be stored..

The first steps are being taken to clear this area for further investigation ahead of development. All the vehicles in Nine Road have been inspected and old slate wagons taken back to Minffordd, while a number of other discarded items of rolling stock have gone to more suitable long term storage at Glan-y-Pwll.

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## Gigabash plans

**The Summer** is rapidly drawing to a close and so thoughts are now turning to the events of the Autumn.

The weekend of 24th & 25th October is when Gigabash is scheduled to take place. The list of work is being developed and should provide an interesting variation on the usual themes, being the garden at Minffordd, signwriting, work on the track-side drains, some electrical work, lots of painting and maybe some slightly different activity down in Minffordd Yard.

The building of the new workshop is progressing at a pace and may present the opportunity for some internal work to take place; possibly painting the internal walls, possibly some fitting out, maybe some electrical installation. It will be a matter of us waiting to hear from the Buildings Department as to what their requirements will be when the time comes. Construction of the Waggon Tracks Building should also be progressing so we might even be needed there too.

What is certain is that we will still have our special train to Tan y Bwlch café on the Saturday so we can enjoy a hearty three course meal together, and that we will need a goodly number of people to get all the work done. This is one of those opportunities for young and old, and those in between, to spend a weekend working together getting useful work done.

As always, please register with me at [howard@quarrylane.net](mailto:howard@quarrylane.net) if you would like to be involved.

### **Vintage Weekend - help needed**

We're only a month away from this year's Vintage Weekend on October 9-11 and need your help to make it another success. If you can help over the weekend in any capacity, we'd love to hear from you. Contact your head of department or Email Clare Britton [cbritton@ffwhr.com](mailto:cbritton@ffwhr.com)

# Kids' Training Week

Adrian Gray, Tricia Doyle, Jo Vincent

**KTW 2015**, the 24<sup>th</sup> such annual event, came to successful conclusion on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> August with the traditional social gathering in Minffordd yard where the young and the not so young were able to enjoy a hog roast, have a relaxed conversation about a successful week and drive little engines along the sidings.

The week provided 35 young volunteers and a similar number of adult helpers with opportunities to help the railway by completing several projects previously agreed with managers at Boston Lodge. Adrian visits the Works frequently throughout the year, walking round looking for jobs and then having his ear bent by Tony Williams and Dylan Ham about what they would like the Kids to do for them. We always manage to agree on a useful and varied programme, eventually!

This year Dylan's request for new glass in his office window and a repaint of the interior walls was finally answered – at a price! In order for the Kids to get in to do the jobs Dylan had to empty the office and have a tidy up! We left him with gleaming walls and a double glazed window (well half of it because the other panes broke as they were fitted). The two plywood 'panes' attracted much ribald comment but that was water off the duck's back for the KTW (Kids' Temporary Windows) team!

A drain was dug behind the machine shop, in an effort to stop water flowing over the feet of the machinists when it rains, though the back wall itself requires a more fundamental repair for the job to be truly complete. This is by way of a temporary fix as the area will be altered again when the new, extended, New Erecting Shop is built.

A group of senior Kids prepared both *Palmerston* and *Hugh Napier* for dry boiler exams. *Palmerston's* firebox was deemed to require some welding repairs but *Hugh Napier* was passed fit and Kids then reassembled what they had taken down in order that a fire could be raised and a steam test conducted. With that also successfully concluded the team moved on to full preparation so *Hugh Napier* could perform 'drive an engine' duties during the Friday evening BBQ. This was a very rewarding project as it delivered training of benefit to the young people and gave them the opportunity to enjoy the fruits of their labours during the Friday evening drive-an-engine at Minffordd.

We are always grateful to the Carriage Works who generously rearrange their schedule to make space available to KTW for both sign writing and rolling stock projects. ►



◀ This year the latter involved giving a lick of paint to Mike Hart's 40hp Simplex tractor and the rather more complicated job of giving the Works' shunter, *Moel-y-gest*, a fresh livery to replace that applied by another KTW team ten years ago.

The signwriting team of older volunteers completed several complex signs for use around the railway and, in so doing, provided an example of what the new young volunteers might aspire to if they had the right skills. Several of the new starting Kids demonstrated that they did have those skills and we shall encourage them to return to hone them in the future.

By way of thanks to the Carriage Works two of the steel emergency exit doors, installed when the HLF Shed was built, were replaced with some wooden doors constructed by the Works' staff. Even though the steel doors and frames were badly corroded they felt as though they had been built of armour plate and required plenty of muscle to get them into the scrap skip. There are two more to do next year, if the replacements are made for us

The route between the Top and Main Yards is regularly used by road vehicles and the section immediately outside the Den became a large and dirty puddle every time it rained, with dirt being tracked into the Den by every user. Establishing a drain and a decent, hard, surface between the Den and the offices was right at the top of Adrian's list of projects for 2015, even before we cleared up in 2014. Just before KTW a mini-digger was used to excavate a hole so we could place the drains at the right levels and be sure of a base beneath the paving strong enough to bear the road traffic.

We expected to find Mother Wales but got some interesting archaeology instead; a slabbed floor and the base of a wall associated with the former boiler/engine house from when the Works was powered by steam. Records were made and then the hole was filled, concreted and drains and paving were laid. This became a larger project than anticipated and was only brought to a successful conclusion by Kids and adults working very hard together.

KTW 2015 made a modest contribution to preparations for Boston Lodge redevelopment by dismantling the Memorial circle. The materials are on pallets and will be relocated to a new site. In the Top Yard demolition of the section of the former Dduallt Tunnel Mess that served the S&T Dept. as a workshop for many years had to be preceded by three days working with S&T staff to recover more 'valuable' junk than one thought the shed could possibly contain. When I joked about it with one of the youngsters he wearily told me, "They're bringing it all from Narnia, through that cupboard!" This was another satisfying project but, just as we



congratulated ourselves on leaving the site clear and safe Dylan planted a pallet of materials and Tony Williams parked his pickup in the space! ▶

◀ KTW would not be KTW without the painting projects, some of which can be very tedious. This year Adrian found a job so mind-numbingly boring that after just three days the participants were begging for different jobs, even painting! Earlier in the year two small, brick-built, sheds had been demolished adjacent to no.3 Boston Lodge. The materials were very special, being yellow Ruabon bricks that cannot be bought any more except from salvage yards and only at exorbitant prices. The bricks had been dumped in the sand pit and, before Adrian took pity on the team, nearly 1500 were recovered, cleaned and stacked on pallets pending re-use. At around £3.00 per brick this project made a very significant contribution to the railway, even if it didn't feel like it to the Kids. By way of a change the team moved on to making pit boards for the Works and did so well that there were enough for some to go to Dinas!

KTW is not just about the projects; there is a very important social element to the week, including rides on trains to Beddgelert and Blaenau and the traditional beach night. This year the latter was all but rained off but, at the last moment the rain abated and a good night was had by all, with thanks for the support from some of the younger volunteers from Minffordd hostel.

Kids are looked after by House Parents; Sue & Terry have managed Penrhyn very successfully for several years and at Porthmadog this would have been a second year for Lynne, Helga, Tina and Paul. Unfortunately Helga had a serious accident just prior to KTW which left Lynne, Tina and Paul with more to do than expected. We are very grateful to them for managing the situation so well and to Evey who stepped up to help out. We also wish Helga a full recovery so she is able to join us again in 2016.

Other circumstances left the Soup Dragons, our daytime catering team, one down at short notice. They, too, rallied round and got on with the job without any fuss, to the extent that there was no change in the excellent service provided; thank you Cath, Shirley, Jan, Lauren and Sian.

Our working week concluded after lunch on Friday with the traditional group photograph, a generous and thoughtful message of thanks to all involved from Works' Manager Tony Williams and the presentation of certificates to senior Kids by the General Manager.

Adrian's appeal to the FRS for financial help did not fall on deaf ears and the response from Area Groups and individuals was splendid. It would be unfair to name names but every donation is much appreciated.

Tony and Adrian are already making plans for the Silver Jubilee Kids' Week in 2016. That will be Adrian's 19<sup>th</sup> as an adult volunteer and 9<sup>th</sup> as overall leader but some of



his colleagues have been to almost all of the previous events and the years are beginning to weigh heavy upon them. Kids keep coming along, which is encouraging but, we really must get new blood into the ranks of the adults if we are to continue to satisfy their enthusiasm. Adrian can't quite match Kitchener's moustache but, the message is clear, "Your KTW needs YOU!" This applies equally to those who support the young people on their projects, the house parents and the catering team. Without them we cannot function.

P.S. Word reached us during the week that the Kids' part of KTW is no longer considered appropriate and may, indeed, be deterring potential recruits. We can't have that so Adrian invited both young and older participants to offer suggestions for an alternative, snappy, title for the event. Some have been received and noted - we rather liked YAWN (Young Adults Work Now) - but other suggestions would be welcome. Please email [agray@ffwhr.com](mailto:agray@ffwhr.com) or [tdoyle@ffwhr.com](mailto:tdoyle@ffwhr.com) or [jvincent@ffwhr.com](mailto:jvincent@ffwhr.com)

# Slate to Porthmadog



**A group of rowers** from North Wales is undertaking an epic 230 mile journey as part of the 10th anniversary celebrations of the Wales Millennium Centre. Members of Madog MYC Rowing club are making the journey from Porthmadog to Cardiff, rowing for up to 30 miles each day in a Celtic longboat.

The 'Cob to Cardiff Challenge' is also raising money for the Wales Air Ambulance and Hospice at Home charities. The rowers are stopping at Aberdyfi, New Quay, Fishguard, Whitesands Bay, Dale, Tenby, Porthcawl and Barry, before arriving in Cardiff Bay for the final event in the Wales Millennium Centre's 10 year celebration on Saturday 12th September.

The rowers are carrying a specially commissioned plaque, in tribute to the journey of the original slate foundation stone for the iconic Cardiff building. The plaque was made at Llechwedd Quarry in Blaenau Ffestiniog and transported on the Ffestiniog Railway by a special train of slate wagons headed by veteran steam loco *Prince* to Porthmadog on September 1st for transhipment to the boat.

# Shop till you drop *Dave Charlton*

**The FR Society** has long had links with 'Give as you Live', an organisation that allows people to shop on line whilst a percentage of the spend goes to charity. They also have a search tool in 'Everyclick'. They have now linked up with Sainsbury's to give the potential for the FRS to raise some serious money. Now I've always had a soft spot for this member of the Big Four supermarket chains as they funded an arts centre at my old university but here is a chance for some of their money to go to the FR.

The idea is simple. You register for an 'Everyday Shopping Card'. When you receive this you then add funds onto it in units of £25. The card is then used instead of cash or your debit card. You get a balance remaining each time you shop and this can also be monitored on line.

The bonus is that 4% of the amount you add to the card is given to FRS at no cost to you. If you put £100 on your card, Sainsbury's gives £4 and, considering how much the average family spends on groceries, this could really mount up.

Now I'll admit this is not going to be very useful whilst near the FR with the closest stores being at Llandudno or Rhyl but most of us live not too far from one of their stores. This card could also be of use for those of you helping support a student at University.

Use this URL to get started: [www.raisewithsainsburys.com/charity/ffestiniograilwaysociety](http://www.raisewithsainsburys.com/charity/ffestiniograilwaysociety)



## Narrow Gauge Get Together

**The Narrow Gauge Get Together** is an annual event for staff of the UK's narrow gauge railways. The 2015 Narrow Gauge Get Together will be held at the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway from Friday 6<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November. If you would like to register your interest in attending this event please contact Jo Vincent. [jvincent@ffwhr.com](mailto:jvincent@ffwhr.com)

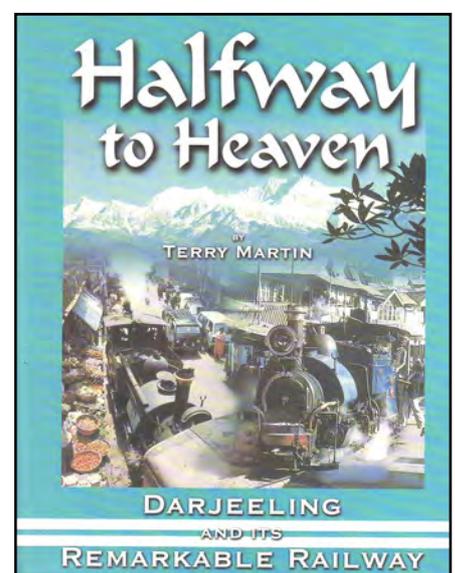
## Book auction

This, and many other scarce books are available in the FR Society book auction NOW.

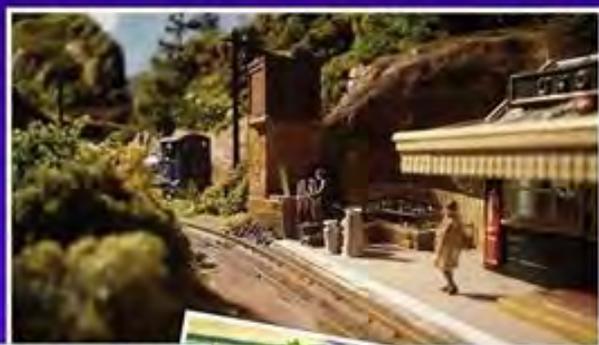
So far this year, we have raised well over £1,000 for the Society from book sales, so check out the current list to complete your library.

And if you have any books you'd like to donate to future auctions, please contact Iain Fraser at [ifraser@ffwhr.com](mailto:ifraser@ffwhr.com)

[www.frsbookauction.co.uk](http://www.frsbookauction.co.uk)



# WELSH HIGHLAND 'GREAT & SMALL II'



10:00 - 17:00

11th, 12th, 13th September 2015

**Come and enjoy some family fun at Dinas**

- Model Railway Show • Miniature Railway •
- Ride on Quarry Engines or in 1920s Carriages
- Food and Refreshment stalls on site

Come and see twelve fascinating model narrow-gauge railways in a range of scales and sizes.  
( Model Railway Show open 14:00 -17:00 on Friday 11th, 10:00 -17:00 on Saturday 12th and 10:00 -16:00 on Sunday 13th )

There will also be four working steam locomotives at Dinas, with footplate rides available, as well as train rides in historic carriages from the 1920s and on a 5" gauge miniature railway

Travel to Dinas by train or bus recommended (very limited parking in the immediate area)

Entry to Dinas site: **£5.00 Adult** (one child free per adult) **£1.00 per extra child**

**Rheilffordd Eryri • Welsh Highland Railway**

Dinas Station, Llanwnda, Caernarfon, LL54 5UP

**01766 516024**

[enquiries@festrail.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@festrail.co.uk)

[www.festrail.co.uk](http://www.festrail.co.uk)

- September 11-13 Welsh Highland Superpower Gala features the most intensive timetable yet and some great model railway layouts
- *Blanche* will be guest of honour at the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway gala in North Devon from September 25-27.
- September 20 Ras y Cob
- September 26 Trailffest Half Marathon
- October 9-11 FR Vintage Weekend
- October 24-25 Gigabash, Minffordd
- October 29 - 31 FR Halloween trains
- October 29 WHR Halloween train
- First week of November - photocharters with guest Quarry Hunslet *Winifred*
- November 28-29 Warley National Model Railway Exhibition, Birmingham NEC
- December 12, 13, 19, 20 WHR Santa trains
- December 12, 13, 19, 20 FR Victorian Santa trains



*Prince* pauses at Tanygrisiau on September 1st on its way to collect the slate plaque for the Millennium Centre in Cardiff.