

# Inside Motion



News in brief for staff, volunteers and supporters of the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways  
**February 2014**

## Introduction

This monthly newsletter is distributed to those who request it by email and it will also be accessible from the main website at [www.festrail.co.uk](http://www.festrail.co.uk) Diary and event information will remain 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) or [cparry@ffwhr.com](mailto:cparry@ffwhr.com)

## Spoooner's New Look *Martin Batcock*

The new café counter in Spooner's is now open and ready for business. I am sure that you will all agree that it is looking brighter, more modern, more spacious and more appealing. The new counter was made and fitted by a professional shop fitting company. However, the majority of the work, building, electrical, plumbing and decorating, was done in house by Brian Coldwell and his team. We are extremely grateful for their 100% support which has seen the project finished on time, on budget and without fuss.



Last season Spooner's contributed a net profit to the Company of £127,000 and this season it is budgeted to deliver even more, I believe that with the new counter and the outside seating area, currently under construction, and your co-operation we are perfectly equipped to do this.

The remit from the company was to improve customer flow through the counter area, increase the turnover, raise the standard of service and improve the range of what we sell. As you will see, by altering the counter to an 'L

shape' and removing a small wall and cupboard, we have created a much more spacious customer flow area. We have also invested in a second bean to cup coffee machine, a second till and a new refrigerated display. These items are essential if we are to achieve better customer throughput. However, the downside of the new layout and extra equipment is that the cold drinks dispenser has been dispensed with. The reason for this is simply space.

The equipment for this dispenser was located below the counter and took the space of an average office desk. The equipment on the counter, if reinstated, would negate the much needed second till. It was therefore reluctantly decided that the dispenser would have to go. This means that fizzy cold drinks, as provided before, are no longer available from Spooner's. However, soft drink cordials and chilled water are still available from the Guards Room. We will endeavour to keep supplies topped up and ready to quench your thirst.

However, this system has not been tested under hot summer conditions – please understand that we will do our best to react to lessons learned. The company fully understands that you too are our

customers and we want to provide you and our external customers with good, fast and efficient friendly service in Spooner's and this alteration is aimed at doing just that. It is also intended to increase the financial contribution that Spooner's makes to the FF&WHR, enabling future investment in the company.

Since the station has closed for alterations to the platform and track we have striven to improve our customer service, we have begun a programme of staff training and we hope that this is becoming obvious. We have been proud to serve those involved in the construction the work outside and we are grateful to them for their support. We have also provided Network rail with packed lunches each of their working days and have provided them with an evening meal each Thursday during January.

These evening meals have been well received and we are now providing the same for loco crew working parties each Saturday evening. I hope that those of you who attend these evenings can see the beginnings of our commitment to customer service and feel able to support us in these changes. Finally, I would like to thank everyone who has supported us throughout the building work and I hope that we will see much more of you in the coming months, as I hope, Spooner's will become your first choice of call.

### **Harbour Station Update** *Ian Hartill*

Activity at Harbour Station over the past weeks has been frantic with a corresponding leap forward in terms of visible progress. Volunteers have turned out in large numbers despite the terrible weather and deserve much respect and thanks for continuing to work willingly in foul conditions.

Three additional panels of track in the Welsh Highland loop have been removed and the heavily contaminated track ballast was dug out and is awaiting disposal. The track has been re-laid on new sleepers, and the curve into the Welsh Highland platform is also complete. All the turnouts for the new Ffestiniog sidings have been assembled and connected together. These have been laid upon plastic sleepers, the first turnouts in Europe to be laid this way.

This week the Rest of the World gang have been busy laying the Ffestiniog platform track. This should be complete by the end of this week. Rapid progress has also been made with No2 siding. With help from the full time FR PW gang the rails have been curved to the new alignment and there are just three more panels to lay.

A gap had remained in the platform kerb because access across the platform was required to remove 660 tons of assorted soil, slate waste, broken bricks and concrete by lorry, and bring in



440 tons of fresh clean ballast. Upon completion of the track formation the gap could be closed, and on Tuesday 18th the final kerb stone was dropped in, exactly fitting the waiting gap, to the relief of the contractor and applause from the assembled onlookers.

The contractor has laid about a third of the block paving that will form the new platform surface, starting from the far end beyond the new signal box. The new lamp posts are in position, final adjustments to the sewer pipes have been completed and work is now underway on the 'beer garden' wall pillars that will support glass screens similar in style to those typically surrounding continental pavement cafes.

The S&T Dept. are plugging away with the new signalling systems. All the insulated block joints are in place and three out of the five main station points have been energised, tested, and operated from the levers in the signal box. The relay room is complete, has been tested and more importantly has passed by our independent professional signalling tester. In the next two weeks the remaining signals will be assembled and installed ready for the return of the testers in early March.

With just four weeks to go before the daily service starts, there is still a lot to do. Laid track has to be ballasted and levelled, No 3 and No 4 road sidings have still to be laid, and the hand levers for the siding points have still to be installed and connected. We are at that very satisfying stage when every piece of effort is making visible progress towards completing the new station so why not come and help finish it off - we know lots of you have been following progress online at [www.facebook.com/festrail](http://www.facebook.com/festrail) If track work is not your thing, don't forget that Eileen Clayton and Howard Wilson are organising a massive tidy up and spruce up of the original station buildings on the weekend of the 15 and 16 March.

#### **Email Addresses** *Mark Gardner*

Following the introduction of a new email solution last year using the ffwhr.com domain name, please note that the former festrail.co.uk addresses will no longer work after 28 February. Up till now email addressed to festrail accounts has been forwarded to ffwhr accounts – this will no longer happen.

Personal FFWHR email addresses are in the format abbbbbb@ffwhr.com, where a is first name initial and bbbbbb is surname, eg, mark.gardner@festrail.co.uk became mgardner@ffwhr.com

Please address any questions to Mark Gardner – [mgardner@ffwhr.com](mailto:mgardner@ffwhr.com)

#### **JLG Spring Makeover** *Graham Cartland Glover*

This is the first call for volunteers for the JLG Spring Makeover 2014 , which will take place on the four days from Friday morning March 7 until Monday afternoon March 10.

The Friday will be Waunfawr as usual and the Saturday will be at Rhyd Ddu The Sunday and Monday will be at Dinas. It is planned to spend a couple of hours at Tryfan Junction with members of the Heritage Group putting in plants in the new station garden there while we are working at Dinas. I will be able to confirm details of this when I send the second call Email in late February to confirm the programme, giving locations and times for each of the four days and an outline of the main tasks for each station.

Come and join us if you can. It will help me to finalise the programme if you could let me know before the end February if you have decided to come. [grahamcglover@virginmedia.com](mailto:grahamcglover@virginmedia.com)

### **Hostel Manager and Secretary to the FR Society Board** *Howard Wilson*

An opportunity has arisen to appoint a new manager for Minffordd & Penrhyn Hostels. This is a voluntary post with flexible hours, working with Ben Rosen who continues as Warden.

The successful candidate will oversee the running of the hostels on behalf of the Society and work closely with the Warden to achieve the required standards of accommodation and to ensure compliance with statutory and regulatory responsibilities.

The ideal person should live locally, have a grasp of building maintenance requirements and be able to offer advice and support to the Warden as necessary. Experience of personnel management would be useful along with an understanding of general financial control.

### **Secretary to the Society Board**

A vacancy also exists for the position of Secretary. This is a voluntary post which requires the candidate to attend and record the minutes of board meetings, to assist with the compilation of agendas and documents, to organise meetings and the answering of correspondence from members.

Guidance relating to Charity Commission requirements will be supplied along with an understanding of the Society's Constitution.

Consideration would be given to separating the task of writing minutes in order to achieve an acceptable workload for two candidates.

Suitable candidates for either post should contact Howard Wilson by email [howard@quarrylane.net](mailto:howard@quarrylane.net) or 07790 208807.

### **Jobs in the Commercial Department**

We have the following jobs available in the Commercial Department. If you are interested in any of these posts, please contact Joanna Vincent on [jvincent@ffwhr.com](mailto:jvincent@ffwhr.com) 01766 516073 for more details and an application form.

#### **Caernarfon Booking Office Vacancy -Booking Office Clerk & Relief Supervisor**

Seasonal vacancy from 17th March 2014 to 1st November 2014

Rate of pay: Above National Minimum Wage

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

#### **Caernarfon Booking Office Vacancy -Booking Office Supervisor**

Seasonal vacancy from 17th March 2014 to 4th November 2014

Rate of pay: Above National Minimum Wage

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

#### **Porthmadog Shop Vacancy - Retail Assistant**

Seasonal vacancy from 29th March 2014 to 31st October 2014

Rate of pay: Meets National Minimum Wage

Hours: 24 hours per week, any 3 days out of 7 as rostered

#### **Vacancy - Relief Crossing Keeper & Car Park 'Meet & Greet' Host**

Seasonal vacancy from 1st April to 31st October 2014

Rate of pay: Meets National Minimum Wage

Hours: Approximately 24 hours per week

## **Vacancy - Blaenau Ffestiniog & Porthmadog Shop and Booking office clerk**

Seasonal vacancy– 29th March to 31st October 2014.

Rate of pay: Above National Minimum Wage

Hours: up to 32 hours per week

We also have some short term summer positions in Porthmadog Booking Office, Porthmadog shop and Blaenau Ffestiniog shop and booking office. These would suit young people who are of college age. All run from early July to early September with dates slightly flexible according to availability. If you are interested in these positions, please contact Clare Britton with a short letter of introduction and CV to show any railway experience you have and jobs you have already done. Email to [cbritton@ffwhr.com](mailto:cbritton@ffwhr.com) or in writing to Clare Britton, Commercial Manager, Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways, Harbour Station, Porthmadog, LL49 9NF

## **Catering Department Vacancy**

### **Chef in Charge**

Spooner's Grill, Café & Bar

Permanent Vacancy

Rate of pay: Dependant on Experience

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

The Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways are a seven day a week operation and weekend and evening working will be required in this position.

The Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways are two heritage railway in North Wales. Spooner's Grill, Cafe & Bar is at the centre of our operations and delivers a high level of service from breakfast through to evening meals. We are also an award winning real ale bar.

To be our Chef in Charge you must be able to work with the Catering Manager to develop menu ideas and work within budgets. You need excellent standards of hygiene management and good communication and organisational skills. You must have experience of working as a chef in a busy kitchen. We are a small team so a hands on, lead by example approach to the job is essential. If you would like to be a part of one of North Wales top tourist attractions we look forward to receiving your application.

Core Skills:

- \* Excellent communication skills are essential
- \* Good numeracy and literacy skills essential
- \* The ability to work cleanly and tidily is required
- \* A thorough knowledge and understanding of food and kitchen hygiene is essential
- \* A Food Safety qualification is desirable however formal training can be provided if required
- \* The ability to speak Welsh is desirable but not essential
- \* Knowledge of locations on the Railways and their use by visitors is desirable

Please contact Jo Vincent for an application form for the above position. We will also accept application by CV with a covering letter.

Tel: 01766 516073 or email [jvincent@ffwhr.com](mailto:jvincent@ffwhr.com) Closing date for applications: Friday 7th March 2014

The **On Train Services Department** also has vacancies for seasonal positions on the Buffet Cars. We are looking for On Train Stewards to sell refreshments and guide books to passengers. We have two positions available based in Porthmadog working on the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways and one position available based at Dinas working on the Welsh Highland Railway. For more information and an application form please contact Jo Vincent. Tel: 01766 516073 or email: [jvincent@ffwhr.com](mailto:jvincent@ffwhr.com)

### **Terabash 15th & 16th March** *Howard Wilson*

There are now only a few weeks left before our main event this Spring, which this time is called Terabash. The different name simply indicates a larger event than the usual Megabash but with some very specific objectives.

We will concentrate on Harbour Station with the aim of completing work to ensure that the building is presentable, both inside and out, ready for the commencement of the train services from the new station a week later. You will be aware that the platform and tracks have been redesigned to allow trains from both FR & WHR to be in the station simultaneously. It would be unfortunate if our passengers were to step down from their train onto a brand new platform, only to find themselves approaching a very tatty looking station. We can make good use of your DIY skills but come prepared to do plenty of painting too.

As usual, we will also be tending the garden at Minffordd, and carrying out electrical work; the drains gang will also be busy. The Company is kindly providing us with a special train to Tan y Bwlch café where we will have a three course evening meal together on the Saturday.

Because the list of work is so long, we have just started some preliminary tasks which included painting the Booking Hall, the disabled toilet and the outside of Spooner's windows on the platform, along with a new drain across the entrance to the café from the car park. But the main event we need to promote is the weekend of 15th & 16th March. Please come and help make our principle station smart again.

Register with me [howard@quarrylane.net](mailto:howard@quarrylane.net) if you would like to come and let me know if you would like to eat with us on the Saturday.

### **The Terabash Project** *Eileen Clayton*

If we are going to achieve our aim of transforming the appearance of Harbour Station over a large working party mid March, there are many preparation jobs which need to be done in advance.

Richard Buxton is repainting all 28 external noticeboards so that we can put them back up on the working party. The Fenner family are working on many of the Porthmadog platform seats – they've dismantled them, prepared them and re-coated both the woodwork and the legs.

John Peduzzi has worked miracles by preparing most of the ground floor woodwork and many walls using sugar soap, where this would not remove ingrained dirt, then the more aggressive carriage cleaning fluid.



We now need cracks and holes filling, woodwork sanding, cork gluing to noticeboards, a small gate building (wood already cut to size, only needs assembling) two new rectangular flower tubs staining so they'll be dry ready for filling and planting on the big weekend and much more, most of it trivial and some of it a bit boring.

This is a unique opportunity to work without having passengers around, something which rarely happens. If many of us can do a little (Richard B calls it his Kilobash project!), then we can indeed transform Harbour Station. By the time you read this we have less than 4 weeks to do this. So, if you can spare a few hours, a day or a few days, please join in and help us to make Harbour Station look attractive and cared for.

Contact Eileen Clayton [eileen@eileenclayton.net](mailto:eileen@eileenclayton.net) 01766 770 860 or Sam Hughes [shughes@ffwhr.com](mailto:shughes@ffwhr.com) 01766 516024



### **82nd electrical working party**

We had a good turnout – with nine in the working party which included two new volunteers who made a welcome contribution.

This was the working party to install new lights in the Erecting Shop and the HLF carriage shed, an exciting project which will greatly increase the light levels in both areas and make a major electrical energy saving.

The setting up of the working party was hampered by appalling weather the preceding week and two days without electricity plus problems with phones and internet connection, but things got sorted and work progressed.



#### **New Erecting Shop:**

- \* Removed old fittings and installed 10 new LED floodlights
- \* Installed lighting trunking and 7 anti-corrosive LED fittings
- \* Cleaned existing fluorescent fittings around perimeter of shop & re-lamped
- \* 4 road – replaced 5 fluorescent fittings with 8 anti-corrosive LED fittings

There are 8 more anti-corrosive LED fittings to fit in 4 road & redundant lobby fittings to remove

#### **Main Erecting Shop:**

- \* Cleaned and re-lamped 6 anti-corrosive fluorescent fittings

HLF Shed Carriage Works:

- \* Removed 2 rows of lo-bay fittings and replaced each row with 8 anti-corrosive fluorescent fittings with latest slim T5 lamps

- \* Replaced 1 lo-bay lamp with anti-corrosive LED fitting

There are two more rows of fluorescents still to fit

Plas Smart

- \* Disconnected and removed electrical cables

### **The 83rd Electrical Working Party will be held Sat. 15 & Sun 16th March 2014**

This is the Terabash weekend which I'm sure you've heard of. There are so many urgent electrical jobs to be carried out at Harbour Station and at a time when we are not running trains so will have no passengers, that we have little choice but to transfer our allegiance that weekend from Boston Lodge.

Amongst the jobs are new lights for the Booking Hall, down-lighters for the display boards on the car park side, outside light for the through corridor door, several emergency light fittings to replace and a socket to reposition.

If you want to join the working party, contact [eileen@eileenclayton.net](mailto:eileen@eileenclayton.net) or phone Eileen or Neil on 01766 770 860 or Snail Mail: The Claytons, Gwyndy, Penrhyndeudraeth, Gwynedd LL48 6RY



### **Somerset Coast Express Raitour – Supporting the Welsh Pony Appeal**

On Saturday 26th April 2014, the Dee and Mersey Group is running a raitour to Minehead, in collaboration with Chester Model Railway Club.

The train, diesel-hauled by a Class 47 locomotive, starts from Hooton picking up at Bache, Wrexham, Gobowen and Shrewsbury. The train then proceeds south along the Marches Line and under the Severn to the drop off passengers at Bristol and then Weston-super-Mare before continuing to Taunton after which the train joins the West Somerset Railway through to Minehead. Those who so wish may then take a journey on one of the WSR's steam hauled service trains.

For full information and online booking see [www.chestermodelrailwayclub.com/railtours.htm](http://www.chestermodelrailwayclub.com/railtours.htm) or telephone Laurence Wheeler (01244 678070) or Jim Parrish (01244 329944).

The Group has been organising raitours since 1978 with the proceeds supporting many FR projects, the most recent example being the purchase of the slates for the new Porthmadog Signal Box and Relay Room. This year the whole of the Group's share of the proceeds is to be given to the Welsh Pony Appeal.

**SOMERSET COAST EXPRESS**

Saturday 26th April 2014  
Special Excursion Train to Minehead  
Picking up at Hooton, Bache, Wrexham, Gobowen & Shrewsbury

Join us on a rare opportunity to visit the West Somerset Railway on our diesel hauled excursion train.

We will be calling at Bristol, home of the S.S Great Britain, the Clifton Suspension Bridge and much more.

Then we call at Weston-Super-Mare with its grand pier before stopping off at historic Taunton before reaching our destination.

For tickets & more information contact L.J.Wheeler on 01244 678070/329944 or by email at [laurence.wheeler@tesco.net](mailto:laurence.wheeler@tesco.net) or visit [www.chestermodelrailwayclub.com/railtours.htm](http://www.chestermodelrailwayclub.com/railtours.htm)

Jointly promoted by Fleeting Railway (Dee & Mersey Group) and Chester Model Railway Club

**Steampipes** *Railway films – cartoons – silent comedies – organ*

All profits go to the funds of the Ffestiniog, Talylyn and Welshpool & Llanfair Societies.

Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London NW (opposite Euston Station)

Wednesday 26th March 2014 at 7 pm (Doors open 6.30pm)

Compere – Rob Foxon organist – Len Rawle

Featuring:

German Streamline Record Breaking Loco 05-001

Working Narrow Gauge steam in the 1930s

Steaming to Chesham and Ongar in the 1950s

GWR, LMS and Metropolitan Railway in the 1920s and 1930s

The Golden Age of pre-war streamlined steam

Mallard : The Drake's Progress (John Huntley – 1988)

Feature Film extract

Plus full supporting programme of cartoon and comedy films with Organ Accompaniment.

Seats £10.00 (£12.00 at the door) Tickets from :- R. Patenall (Dept. RB), 10 Greta House, 60 Hardy Road, Blackheath, London, SE3 7PA e-mail [Steampipes@patenall.eu](mailto:Steampipes@patenall.eu)

Download booking form at [www.festrail.co.uk/pdf/steampipes2014.pdf](http://www.festrail.co.uk/pdf/steampipes2014.pdf)

**Cut Timber** *Dafydd Thomas*

As you are all aware there have been a number of trees down on both the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland lines; the removal of these trees has cost the Company a great deal. Not only do we have to employ contractors for the larger and more difficult trees but also the Company's staff has had to be diverted from other tasks as well as the cost of maintaining the tree cutting equipment, such as chainsaws and the fuel needed to operate them.

This cut timber is a Company asset, as we can sell it to contractors and suppliers of logs. Anyone taking this timber without authority is in effect stealing. We realise that in the past those who can make use of cut timber for fuel having been allowed to have some at no charge. Whilst we do not wish to seem acquisitive we cannot ignore the fact that it costs the Company to cut and transport the cut timber, therefore we are now introducing the following scale of charges for cut timber.

Volunteers/staff involved in tree clearance – use of own vehicle to collect timber - £0.00

Volunteers/staff involved in tree clearance – use of Company pick-up truck to collect timber - £10.00 per load.

Volunteers / staff not involved in tree clearance - use of own vehicle to collect timber - £10.00 per load.

Volunteers/staff not involved in tree clearance – use of Company pick-up truck to collect timber - £20.00 per load.

Any timber taken without authority will be charged at £100 per load.

All requests for cut timber must be made through the Line-side Supervisor Dafydd Wyn Roberts, – [dwroberts@ffwhr.com](mailto:dwroberts@ffwhr.com) and acknowledged before the timber can be collected.

If you wish to use the Company pick-up truck to carry the cut timber you must be on the list of authorised drivers and you can only use the vehicle when it is not required by the Infrastructure Dept.; journeys are limited to a 30 mile round trip.

### ***Fiji* to arrive in April**

This Hudswell Clark locomotive has recently been restored by the Statfold Barn Railway, and we are pleased to confirm that it will visit the F&WHR for running in and general testing. The loco will be delivered to North Wales sometime during early April.

