

Friends of Rhyl Miniature Railway

Newsletter No. 29

Website: www.rhylminiaturerailway.co.uk

June 2015

Rhyl Miniature Railway renews its Accredited Museum Status

On 19th March the railway received welcome news that it has again been awarded full museum accreditation following a review by CyMAL. CyMAL: Museums, Archives and Libraries Wales is a section of the Welsh Assembly Government which administers the accreditation scheme for all museums in Wales.

The accreditation scheme assesses museums against 21 criteria under the headings of organisational health, collections and users and their experiences. Museums that have satisfied the assessment criteria once are then asked to re-submit accreditation returns once in every three years. Rhyl Miniature Railway was invited to submit a return during October 2014.

Assessment of the return took place in November 2014 to February 2015, and this included a verification site visit by Ann Mansell, CyMAL's Museums Standards Advisor. Full accreditation was awarded at a meeting of the Arts Council on 19th February 2015.

In the process of re-applying for accreditation we were helped a great deal by local heritage consultant Peter Alexander, and supported by our Museum Mentor Susan Dalloe, who is now a Museum Services Manager at the Museum of Cannock Chase. Peter's work for us was grant funded by CyMAL via the Federation of Museums and Art Galleries of Wales.

Part of the accreditation process required the Trust to update or write a series of policy and procedural documents; these were:

- Forward Plan 2014 - 2019
- Collections Development Policy
- Environmental Sustainability Policy Statement
- Documentation Policy
- Care and Conservation Policy
- Care and Conservation Plan
- Access Policy Statement

In order to address an improvement point from our last accreditation review Peter Alexander also undertook work on the Trust's archive collection. All of our photographs and postcards were catalogued, and have now been deposited at Denbighshire Archives in Ruthin, where they can be freely viewed by members of the public.

Simon Townsend, Trust Secretary of Rhyl Steam Preservation Trust, said:

'Rhyl Miniature Railway has consistently increased its visitor numbers over the past four years, carrying 18,500 passengers during 2014.'



'For us, participation in the Museum Accreditation scheme demonstrates our commitment to provide a quality experience for all our visitors. We are conserving our collection, and our unpaid volunteers are enabling our charity to operate sustainably despite charging low train fares.'

'We hope that this approach will help to guarantee the railway's future for the medium and long term.'



Trains preparing for Wizard Weekend, 2015; see next page

Wizard Weekend 2015

Rhyl Miniature Railway's annual Whitsun event was opened by the Mayor of Rhyl, Cllr Barry Mellor, on Saturday 23rd May. An estimated 2,000 visitors attended the three day event, which featured free magic shows, and family entertainment of all types.

Danni-Mac provided lively energetic dance games, Gary Sausage helped the children with circus skills and magic. Splitz and Sequins, local dance school, entertained children, mums and dads, with some exciting routines. There were childrens' rides, barbeque food and many other activities.

The event was organised by David Fall with Rhyl Steam Preservation Trust in order to introduce families to Marine Lake and especially the Rhyl Miniature Railway. People dressed in wizard costumes and were entertained each day by magic shows presented by David Fall, the local entertainer and magician.

More exciting things to look out for at Marine Lake: on Sunday 5th July, Hope House Fun Day, and on 1st/2nd August, a Teddy Bears Picnic.

'What a fabulous event for Rhyl, said Barry Mellor. 'We could do with many more community based events like this around the town, both for local people and for tourists.'

Joan Butterfield, Trustee of the Steam Train Trust said 'We like putting on this annual event which draws people in and enables us to showcase our railway at its best.'

'We had to spend several days filling out bumphy forms in order to get permission to put this event on – every year the Council seems to make the process take longer! 'It's only when the sun comes out and we see Marine Lake so busy that we can remind ourselves why we still make the effort.'

Fairbourne Railway Gala

We provided Cagney No 44 together with a small train to operate on the Fairbourne Railway for their Little and Large Gala on 24th and 25th May. Our train ran on the FMR's newly extended 15in gauge line together with Austin Moss's new steam locomotive *Mountaineer*.

Locomotive Restoration, *Prince Edward of Wales*

The Trust has ordered a new boiler for this locomotive from Road, Rail & Waterway in Oxfordshire. The design has been drawn out and approval has been obtained from notifiable body Royal Sun Alliance. We hear that the first components are now being prepared with a view to delivery of the boiler in early Autumn.

The RMR workshop team is looking forward to tackling the locomotive and new tender of *PEoW* with a target of the locomotive being steamed next Spring. This project will be the centre of our attention during the Autumn months.



Comment Cards from 2014

Can't you get Government grant to electrify the line?

30 AUGUST 2014
 Jasper had a fantastic time here today. He's just 4 yrs old and has been for a ride round the lake. Now he's loving the signals + hoister inside Grandad + grandma brought him + his grandad also rode on this track when he was small in the late 1940's!!!
 THANKS TO BRING JASPER HERE TODAY. THANK YOU

HAGUE FAMILY SHEFFIELD
 A lovely day out with the boys. Enjoyed the magician. But most of all we enjoyed the train rides and hunt for rubbings. Staff very polite.

Very impressed with the museum. So much for the kids to do in such a small space. We have visited many railway museums but this one really stands out for the amount of interactive things. FABULOUS!

24/7/14
 Absolutely amaze-balls. The best part of it was when the train belt broke.

29/5/14
 Enjoyed our ride on "Michael" too! Friendly staff. ALL THE APPALSMITHS

27/6/14
 We had a great time. The driver was brilliant with our little boy who loves trains - let him ring the bell!! Really nice man!! Really friendly staff too! Thank you so much.
 Penny, Ben, Jacob + Eric

Ardderchog! Y plant a'r oedolion wedi Mwynhau ac isio mynd eto!
 29/5/14

1/22/7/14
 We had a lovely couple of trips and it was brilliant to watch the little one on the interactive displays in the museum.
 Thanks for a fab time.
 Duckers Family of Walsall

Lovely little trip! Learned a lot about Rhyl. ♥

Other RMR News



During August 2014 safety aspects of the railway were externally inspected. This resulted

in our receiving a series of recommendations which have been actioned over last winter.

Work started with rewriting the railway's rule book, and then moved on to competence management issues. A friend of the railway who is qualified in assessing offered to help us regarding drivers' practical assessments, both for diesel and steam. He wrote new documentation and carried out all the drivers' practical assessments, having previously done similar work for Llangollen Railway. Llangollen also helped us by introducing us to their railway's doctor, who has now also carried out medical assessments on our drivers and certified them as fit to undertake safety critical duties. The third strand of requirements related to enlarging the railway's safety management system to match with a prescribed pattern. Allied to this have written new maintenance quality standards for steam locomotives, diesel locomotives and track. We have also updated the railway's emergency plan.

Prior to the operating season all of the locomotives received detailed documented mechanical examinations. Around this new programme of documentation a lot of cyclical winter maintenance has been carried out to our steam and diesel locomotives, rolling stock and track.

Locomotive Restoration, *Railway Queen*

No news has currently been received from TRS Boilermakers as to when the new boiler for this locomotive might be received. Over this last winter the chassis of the locomotive has been in the workshop for assessment. The pony truck wheels have been re-tyred. We have assessed the chassis which needs the driving wheels to be re-tyred as their flanges are side cut. Restoration of the tender has been taking place over a prolonged period and this recently took a step forward with final fitting of the new internal water tank. This locomotive may yet be back in steam during 2017.

Article in Railway Bylines

A long historical article about Rhyl Miniature Railway written by Mike Fell appeared in the April 2015 edition of the magazine *Railway Bylines*. Some of the content is (to us) familiar, but the author has carried out much original research into the Butler family which owned Rhyl Amusements Ltd and its allied company Samuel Butler & Co in Leeds. Their story makes interesting reading, describing the people behind the names *Joan, Michael, John* and *Billy*. This magazine is still available as a back number via the internet.

Marine Lake Matters



Aqua Adventures is a new business formed by Chris Read with Chris Williams, which aims to provide water sports training and boat and pedalo rides at Marine Lake. Thanks to their efforts water-based usage of the site should increase. The offer of walk up and go boat rides is most welcome, and should broaden the appeal of Marine Lake for ordinary visitors.

Welsh Water

The new £4.5 million sewer main from Marine Lake to the treatment plant at Kinnel Bay was linked up and commissioned during March, following which Welsh Water's contractors have withdrawn from the site. They finally managed to bore their pipeline underneath Network Rail next to the South East corner of Marine Lake. Final landscaping here has included covering up the concrete slab foundations from the old railway shed.



RHYL STEAM PRESERVATION TRUST

Registered Charity No 1103953

Trustees: Les Hughes (Chairman), Carol Hughes, Louise Webster, Lucille Green, Cllr Joan Butterfield JP, Jack Butterfield, Simon Townsend (Secretary), Justin Bell. Enquiries about railway operations should be addressed to the Trust Secretary, 10 Cilnant, Mold CH7 1GG, Tel 01352 759109.

Friends of Rhyl Miniature Railway

Our group has been formed to support the Rhyl Steam Preservation Trust in its aims to preserve and operate the railway.

Membership costs £8.00 per annum and runs to 31st May each year, including newsletters due in April and September.

President of the Friends is Rev Alan Cliff, whilst its Chairman is Simon Townsend

For Subscriptions and Enquiries: Secretary of the Friends is Dave Bell, of 22 River Street, Rhyl LL18 1PT, Tel 01745 339477.

Friends' Newsletter

Editor: Simon Townsend

Photographs in this issue by Simon Townsend and Justin Bell