

Friends of Rhyl Miniature Railway

Newsletter No. 36

Website: www.rhylminiaturerailway.co.uk

October 2018



RMR locomotive *Railway Queen* re-named at the Royal Return Gala

At the RMR Royal Return Gala on 18th/19th August 2018 the railway's recently restored locomotives, *Railway Queen* and *Prince Edward of Wales*, were officially re-named and launched back into service.

At the gathering on Saturday 18th August, four Trustees of Rhyl Steam Preservation Trust addressed the gathering of railway enthusiasts and local people who attended. Justin Bell, Les Hughes, Joan Butterfield and Simon Townsend all made short speeches, and then Joan pulled aside the Union Jack flag to reveal new nameplates with the name *Railway Queen*. The event was supported by Rhyl Marching Band, who played the National Anthem to emphasise the occasion's royal connection. There was much applause!

On Sunday 18th August the Mayor of Rhyl Councillor Win Mullen James, attended along with her consort Mrs Catherine McNamara. Win drew aside the Welsh flag to reveal the nameplate of *Prince Edward of Wales*, assisted by Kathryn Bell wearing her outfit as Miss Railway Queen.

Railway Queen and *Prince Edward of Wales* double headed the long train all weekend, whilst *Michael* hauled its usual four car set. There was a big variety of charity stalls, and in Saturday children could play in a double decker bus. Gary Sausage and Carrots the Clown provided childrens' entertainment.



Teddy Bear's Picnic 2018

There was good weather for the annual Teddy Bear's Picnic on 4th and 5th August, and the attendance showed the what an enduring appeal this event has. All of the RMR's working rolling stock was in use, and for long periods on Saturday trains ran at full capacity. Roll on next year's event!



The 2018 season

Easter was early in 2018, and the summer was characterised by hot weather, which has made the railway busy. Our records indicate that we have carried 25,000 passengers so far this year.

The RMR shop sold half as many again slush drinks than it had in 2017. We were also doing well at selling ice cream until our freezer broke down.

Crabbing

Our publicity for the season emphasised the virtue of Marine Lake for 'crabbing', and our new free leaflet on crabbing was well received, as was our new facility for free WiFi.

Crabbing Quiz: Guess at the number of crab lines sold by the RMR shop during 2018.

Was it: A 500, B 1,000, C 1,500? Answer at the end of the newsletter.

Media coverage

On 16th August a crew from BBC Wales TV attended. They were filming the end of an episode of their series 'Weatherman Walking', which had featured a walk from Connah's Quay to Rhyl.

We have also featured twice on BBC Radio Wales, once to plug Teddy Bear Weekend, and on the second occasion a recorded interview on the theme of 'Wales in Miniature' for Eleri Sion's radio show.

Cagney at Thorpe Light Railway

Following its boiler inspection in June, Cagney again departed north to see service at Thorpe Light Railway in Co Durham. It has been in steam at several of their open days, and is still currently away from home.

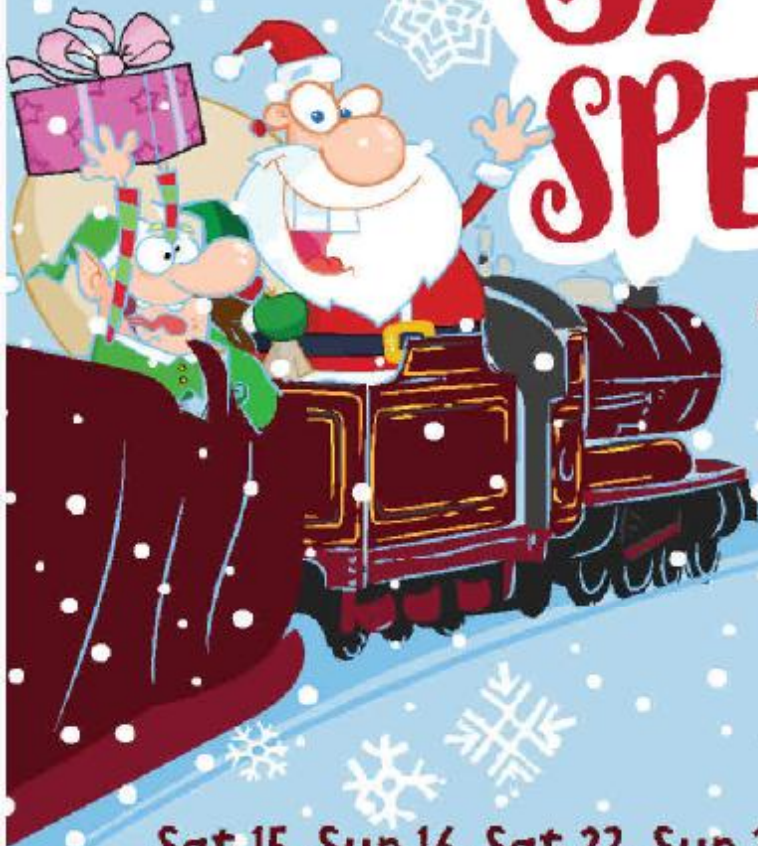
Marine Lake

Usage of Marine Lake itself continues to be shared between Rhyl Sea Cadets, Ocean Beach Water Ski Club and a handful of individual permit holders. Sundays in 2018 have also seen the resumption of sailing training organised by Rhyl Yacht Club.

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RHYL
MINIATURE RAILWAY

SANTA SPECIALS

at Marine Lake,
Rhyl - LL18 1AQ



Sat 15, Sun 16, Sat 22, Sun 23 & Mon 24 December

Steam Train departures every half hour
10am - midday and 1.30pm - 3.30pm

Children £12 each

Every child will meet Santa in his grotto & receive a special present

One adult included per child - includes train rides & seasonal refreshments
Additional adults £3

Please book early as Santa is very popular -
visit rhylminiaturerailway.co.uk
or call the elf hotline on 01745360584 after 5pm

RMR Winter Work Programme 2018 / 2019

Trackwork: Not before mentioned in the newsletter is the steady week by week work by Vernon Aynsough to replace some of the railway's poorest sleepers. Lately Vernon has been concentrating on the section of track by the sluice house, we lately heard him say that he has done 40 sleepers on this section alone, single handed, with a similar number still expected to be needed.

400 replacement sleepers recently arrived at the railway, treated British timber purchased from a new supplier at Bishops Castle.

On dry days over the winter it is intended to relay whole sections of track, commencing with life expired sleepers behind the car park, and moving on to sections next to the river bank probably next winter.

Carriages: At the moment Justin and his team are building three new carriage seats to replace the remaining poor examples on the red coaches. After these have been fitted the red rake will be repainted.

Locomotives: Over the winter all of the locomotives will be subject to the usual annual mechanical examinations.

Michael is in need of a new little end bearing, and it is thought that further attention to the regulator gland and rod might increase the power of the locomotive by getting the regulator valve inside the dome to open more. We have identified that the most inaccessible part of this linkage is very worn, and will require attention once the boiler reaches the end of its ten year life.

Clara has been quite reliable during summer 2018 (better than it had been in 2017!). This winter cycle of maintenance will include changing the hydraulic fluid.



The main winter tasks concern *Railway Queen*. We are purchasing through our friends Jim and Helen Shackell new slide valves, which will require fitting. Together with flattening off of the right hand side port face, this should see an end to the wooshing sound which has accompanied *RQ*'s progress, and make the locomotive also more economic to run.

We have ordered a new mechanical lubricator for *RQ*, the cost of which has been generously sponsored by Rev Alan Cliff. This will enable the lubricator borrowed from *Joan* to be returned, so that at some time in the future *RQ* and *Joan* will be able to operate together.

RQ also needs its tender to be lined out, and various other attention to the paintwork and finishing touches.

Crabbing Quiz: The correct answer was C 1,500.

Billie

We hear that our friend Austin Moss is proceeding well with restoration of his locomotive *Billie*, at Windmill Animal Farm. The wheels and boiler have recently returned from NBR Engineering Services at Darlington. At the present rate of progress the locomotive could well be in steam again some time next year.

The Sutton Collection

The collection of locos and stock from the erstwhile Sutton Miniature Railway (which closed in 1962) has recently been based at Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway, where it has fallen out of favour with the current owners of the railway.

Sutton Flyer and *Dudley* were in evidence at the open day of Birmingham Railway Museum on 28th/29th

September. *Dudley* was working, for the first time for some years, 'top and tail' with *Count Louis*.

We hope that shortly this will spell a new beginning for the SMR 4-4-2s *Sutton Belle* and *Sutton Flyer*; both of which are old friends to us at the RMR.



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 Liz Wright, of 6 Bryn Ithel, Abergele LL22 8QB.

Friends' Newsletter

Editor: Simon Townsend

Photographs in this issue by Justin Bell,
Simon Townsend and John Myers