

Friends of Rhyl Miniature Railway

Newsletter No. 42

Website: www.rhylminiaturerailway.co.uk

October 2021



Rhyl Miniature Railway 2021 season

The railway has been very busy this season. During the summer the caravan parks along the North Wales coast became full, and many families chose to visit Marine Lake where they could ride on the train and go crabbing. The one way system which we use at Central Station remained in operation all year, with the shop area being fenced off from the platform. Compartments on the train were cleaned between every trip.



The cover picture shows the workhorse of the railway during 2021, *Clara*. It has been running around with a six coach train, fortunately it is powerful enough to handle any load on our railway.



The steam days were shared between *Railway Queen* and *Joan*, with *Prince Edward of Wales* (below) putting in an appearance over the August Bank Holiday weekend, when we ran two trains.



At the end of the season *Joan* ran coupled to the tender from *Michael*, whilst its own tender was in the workshop being repainted and lined. *Michael* is currently off site in the Midlands at Denver Light Railway, where its boiler is to be re-tubed.

From the Archives: 1978

RE-OPENED THIS SEASON

THE RHYL
MINIATURE RAILWAY

Marine Lake, Rhyl

Trains run throughout the day
every few minutes
seven days a week

Enjoy a trip round the lake on one of
our Miniature Trains

COME TO SEE THE VINTAGE
STEAM LOCOMOTIVE
"MICHAEL" IN ACTION



Friends' member Philip Lloyd has recently given us a large collection of slides and ephemera from the railway's history during the period 1978 - 1988. Seen above is driver Bill Roberts with *Michael*, looking very much as it had done when the railway closed in 1969. Seen below right is Councillor Peter Williams, who was prominent amongst those from Rhyl Town Council who supported the Council's purchase of *Billy*.



Mr Roberts gives *Michael* a final scrub-down

Winter's rest

THE crowds have dwindled and most of the hot-dog stands have closed. Like most familiar owners and a museum caterers *Michael* is to take a rest.

After his first season of pulling thousands of visitors around Rhyl's Marine Lake since coming out of an eight-year retirement

steam train *Michael* is to spend the winter in Gairford. Built 55 years ago, it is to undergo a complete refit and service before returning to Rhyl again for the 1979 season.

Mr Bill Roberts, 74, of Seabank Road, Rhyl, has driven and cared for the engine during the past season.

We r
says

REAFFIRMING it was not

May 20, 1986

Rhyl: Past a

Mayor Councillor Peter Williams at the controls of *Billy*.

Old Billy steams home to a glorious welcome

THE TRAIN now approaching platform one at Rhyl station may not be going very far, but that is exactly how it should be.

Last night the Mayor of Rhyl, Councillor Peter Williams, gave an official welcome back to "Billy 106," one of the famous little steam trains which used to run around the resort's Marine Lake.

The locomotive, built in 1934 by Mr Albert Barnes of Rhyl, was bought by the town council for £2,000 and for the past 12 months has been undergoing a thorough overhaul and restoration at Gatton's engineering works in Derby.

The council has been anxious to find a prominent site to display such a popular part of Rhyl's history and it was eventually agreed that it should go in the booking hall at the railway station.

It was fitting that Councillor Williams, who retires as Mayor later this week, should welcome Billy back as he was one of the leading campaigners in the fight to keep the engine in the town.

"Billy is now in well-earned retirement and is definitely not for sale. He will remain here forever," he commented.

The future of Billy's four "stablemates" is still uncertain. However, as the directors of Rhyl Miniature Railway are still hoping to sell them.

Other RMR News

Santa Trains 2021: Trains are to run this year on nine days, 11th-12th December, and then every day 18th – 24th December. At the time of writing many of these trains are already full and it seems likely that all the others will sell out as Christmas approaches. Lets hope that all the trains operate and none of them have to be cancelled like in 2020.

Winter Work Programme 2021/2022: Justin is doing his best with a few other volunteers to keep up with the maintenance required at the railway. Attention is planned to worn valve gear on *Joan* and *Railway Queen*. Some track maintenance will also be required.

There will be working parties at the railway every Sunday from 10am until 4pm until Christmas, and then again from January. There are also a great number of Christmas presents that need to be wrapped.

RMR Friends and Neighbours

Cagney at Thorpe Light Railway: Cagney has spent the main season out-stationed at Thorpe Light Railway, near Barnard Castle. The shorter track there suits it well and the friendly group of volunteers have looked after it successfully before.

This year Thorpe Light Railway has celebrated the 50th anniversary of its first opening.



We wish a fair wind to the Trustees of **Llangollen Railway Trust** who have taken over operation of their railway following the Llangollen Railway Plc falling into administration.

At the RMR our drivers' medicals are organised by Llangollen Railway and we look forward to continued co-operation with them.

The Vintage Trains Charitable Trust have recently taken custody of the 15in gauge Sutton Collection, including 4-4-2 locomotives *Sutton Belle*, *Sutton Flyer* and Railcar no 4. We hope that this will bring about better fortune for the collection looking into the future. We heard last year from the **Hungarian Railway Historical Park** in Budapest, Hungary, where their 'Little Giant' locomotive *Hungaria* is being restored for future use on their site.



We look forward to cultural exchanges with them once their locomotive is in working order.



RHYL STEAM PRESERVATION TRUST **Registered Charity No 1103953**

Trustees: Les Hughes (Chairman), Carol Hughes, Louise Webster, Lucille Green, Simon Townsend (Secretary), Justin Bell. Enquiries about railway operations should be addressed to the Trust Secretary, 10 Cilnant, Mold CH7 1GG, Tel 07940 261910.

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.

Chairman of the Friends is Simon Townsend
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Friends' Newsletter

Editor: Simon Townsend

Photographs in this issue by Justin Bell