

# Friends of Rhyl Miniature Railway

Newsletter No. 45

Website: [www.rhylminiaturerailway.co.uk](http://www.rhylminiaturerailway.co.uk)

June 2023



## Autumn Gala event at Rhyl Miniature Railway to feature six locos in steam!

(Subject to availability!)



It has been a busy six months at the Rhyl Miniature Railway, including carrying out restoration work on our locomotives *Michael* and *Billie*. This culminated on 25<sup>th</sup> May when *Joan*, *Railway Queen*, *Billie* and *Michael* were all steamed for their steam tests in front of our boiler inspector.

This was the first time in over fifty years that four of the Albion class locomotives had been in steam together. On 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> September we plan to run all our locomotives for a special railway gala event, the first railway gala that we will have held since 2011.

*Michael* was first steamed during December 2022.

Attention was then paid to various snag list items. Most recently it passed its steam test, was fitted with a new mechanical lubricator, and has entered passenger service.

Progressively parts were assembled for *Billie* and it was steamed up to working pressure on 4<sup>th</sup> May, for the first time in at least thirty years. It was a relief to find that not only was the boiler sound, but the safety valves and injectors worked fine.

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**RHYL**  
MINIATURE RAILWAY

THE  
**EVERYTHING GOES GALA**

23rd and 24th SEPTEMBER 2023

## Restoration of *Billie*



The final stages of restoration of *Billie* have progressed in between a wide variety of other tasks. By the end of November the arrangement of pipes in the cab had been decided and there was a shopping list of parts that were still required. The smokebox was sealed up with the blower pipe in place.



The tender body from *Billie* was detached from its chassis, and has required new plate to be welded in. A galvanised trough was installed inside to hold the water, which is standard on most of our locomotives.



On 24<sup>th</sup> April *Billie* had a fire lit in the boiler for the first time since the 1980s.



Things were looking positive such that on 26<sup>th</sup> April pressure reached 100 lbs psi and the loco was able to move around under its own power. On 9<sup>th</sup> May both injectors and the safety valves were seen to work, which enabled the locomotive to pass its boiler steam test in front of our inspector on 25<sup>th</sup> May.



A lot of progress has also been made with restoring *Billie* to its identity from the Dreamland Miniature Railway at Margate. This has been helped by the new nameplates and dome cover made for the project by friends at the Sherwood Forest Railway.



# Winter Projects 2022/2023


## Coach 9

The new carriage entered service for the 2022 Santa season. It is tall and luxurious, finished off inside with plush red upholstery.



## Track re-laid

The major project of the winter was the re-lay of 21 panels of track on the south side of Marine Lake. The panels of track were separated and lifted out. The base was then dug out, this material was screened and only clean stone reinstated. The track was then re-laid and finally filled with new limestone.



**Visitors to Rhyl should travel on the Miniature Railway at the Marine Park and Lake**

Open Daily    Sundays excepted

This Railway is over one mile in length and is the longest and finest equipped 15in. gauge Miniature Railway in the United Kingdom, and passengers make a complete tour of the Marine Park and Lake.

**Fares: Adults, 3d. Children, 2d.**

*"Special Party" Tickets at reduced rates: 12 Adults, 2s. 12 Children, 1s. 6d. These Tickets are transferable.*

Locomotive Builders and Contractors for the Railway: Messrs. Bassett-Lowke, Ltd., London and Northampton. Engineer: H. Greenly.

*Rhyl Miniature Railway in 1911*

# Other RMR News

**Santa Trains 2022:** Last year's Santa trains once again broke all records with 867 children visiting Santa. This number was helped by two extra group bookings. We ran 9 days of public trains and all trains were fully booked with this being first public use of the new coach 9 and it was loved by all who travelled in it.



*RMR loco Michael was sufficiently complete to be steamed on 14<sup>th</sup> December following its overhaul*



**New Museum Panels:** Two new panels have been produced for display in Central Station. Thanks to our new track layout it will now be possible to display *Prince Edward of Wales* and the *Cagney* on the track facing the platform when they are not in use. The new panels will explain to visitors their historical significance. The **Marine Lake Users Forum** is working on a new panel which the railway is sponsoring. This will explain to visitors the commemorative stone on top of the lake sluice gate, which was inscribed in 1894.

*Prince Edward of Wales* has visited the Fairbourne Railway for their Gala on 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> May. It worked their heritage train along with FMR diesel *Gwil*.

RMR loco *Railway Queen* failed during steaming up on 27<sup>th</sup> May due to a serious problem, a cracked regulator casting inside the boiler. It is not yet known how long it will take to make and install a new casting.

## 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 Rhyll Miniature Railway

Our group has been formed to support the Rhyll 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  
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, John Myers.