



NO.42

# RHEIDOL REVIEW

NEWSLETTER



Photo by Gareth Jones

## ISSUE 1 - 2020

[WWW.RHEIDOLRAILWAY.CO.UK](http://WWW.RHEIDOLRAILWAY.CO.UK)

TELEPHONE US: 01970 625 819 - PARK AVENUE, ABERYSTWYTH SY23 1PG

# THE VALE OF RHEIDOL RAILWAY

RHEILFFORDD CWM RHEIDOL

## ABERYSTWYTH TO DEVIL'S BRIDGE

# 2020 Timetable & Events

1. Pick your day of travel from the calendar;  
2. Match the colour to the relevant timetable below.  
Please note there are no services on white days but our ticket office and shop is open from 9am to 5pm.

| FEBRUARY 2020 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| M             | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S  |
|               |    |    |    |    | 1  | 2  |
| 3             | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  |
| 10            | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17            | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24            | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |    |

| MARCH 2020 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| M          | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S  |
|            |    |    |    |    |    | 1  |
| 2          | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  |
| 9          | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16         | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23         | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30         | 31 |    |    |    |    |    |

| APRIL 2020 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| M          | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S  |
|            |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 6          | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13         | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20         | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27         | 28 | 29 | 30 |    |    |    |

| MAY 2020 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| M        | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S  |
|          |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 4        | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 |
| 11       | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18       | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25       | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

| JUNE 2020 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| M         | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S  |
|           |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 8         | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15        | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22        | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29        | 30 |    |    |    |    |    |

| JULY 2020 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| M         | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S  |
|           |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 6         | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13        | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20        | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27        | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |

| AUGUST 2020 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| M           | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S  |
|             |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 3           | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  |
| 10          | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17          | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24          | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31          |    |    |    |    |    |    |

| SEPTEMBER 2020 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| M              | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S  |
|                |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 7              | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14             | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21             | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28             | 29 | 30 |    |    |    |    |

| OCTOBER 2020 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| M            | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S  |
|              |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 5            | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 |
| 12           | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19           | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26           | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |

| NOVEMBER 2020 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| M             | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S  |
|               |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 2             | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  |
| 9             | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16            | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23            | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30            |    |    |    |    |    |    |

**Daily Workshop  
Tours**  
10.45am & 2.15pm  
£5  
(Subject to staff availability,  
please call for details)

|                |      | ORANGE |      | YELLOW |       |      |
|----------------|------|--------|------|--------|-------|------|
| Aberystwyth    | dep: | 10:30  | 2:00 | 10:30  | 12:10 | 2:00 |
| Capel Bangor   | dep: | 10:50  | 2:20 | 10:50  | 12:30 | 2:20 |
| Aberffrawd     | dep: | 11:10  | 2:40 | 11:10  | 12:50 | 2:40 |
| Devil's Bridge | arr: | 11:30  | 3:00 | 11:30  | 1:15  | 3:00 |
| Devil's Bridge | dep: | 12:30  | 4:15 | 12:30  | 2:15  | 4:00 |
| Aberffrawd     | dep: | 12:50  | 4:35 | 12:50  | 2:35  | 4:20 |
| Capel Bangor   | dep: | 1:10   | 4:55 | 1:10   | 2:55  | 4:40 |
| Aberystwyth    | arr: | 1:30   | 5:15 | 1:30   | 3:15  | 5:00 |

|                |      | GREEN |       | X    | GOLD |
|----------------|------|-------|-------|------|------|
| Aberystwyth    | dep: | 10:30 | 12:10 | 2:00 | 3:45 |
| Capel Bangor   | dep: | 10:50 | 12:30 | 2:20 | 4:05 |
| Aberffrawd     | dep: | 11:10 | 12:50 | 2:40 | 4:25 |
| Devil's Bridge | arr: | 11:30 | 1:15  | 3:00 | 4:45 |
| Devil's Bridge | dep: | 12:30 | 2:15  | 4:00 | 5:45 |
| Aberffrawd     | dep: | 12:50 | 2:35  | 4:20 | 6:05 |
| Capel Bangor   | dep: | 1:10  | 2:55  | 4:40 | 6:25 |
| Aberystwyth    | arr: | 1:30  | 3:15  | 5:00 | 6:45 |

In order to help us to run the trains to time, please aim to arrive at the Booking Office at least 20 minutes before your departure.

- **DRIVER FOR A FIVER** - Footplate Experience  
25th to 28th May & 20th July - 3rd September 2020  
(YELLOW & GREEN TIMETABLE DAYS)  
Drive a real steam engine at Devil's Bridge station

- **RIDE AND DINE SUMMER EVENING EXCURSIONS**  
27th May, 29th July and 1st, 5th, 8th, 12th, 15th, 19th, 22nd & 26th August 2020 (GREEN TIMETABLE DAYS)  
Upgrade your ticket for a Fish and Chip supper at Devil's Bridge station (see website for full menu)

- **HALLOWEEN GHOST TRAIN**  
29th, 30th & 31st October 2020.  
Join us for a frightfully good trip up the Rheidol Valley!  
A Halloween feast will be served at Devil's Bridge station  
Free treat bags for every child. Train departs at 6pm  
**NB: Please book tickets in advance**

- **AUTUMN COLOURS AND WEEKEND TRAILS**  
7th, 8th, 14th, 15th, 21st & 22nd November 2020.  
Enjoy your weekend with a special trip to Devil's Bridge, taking in the ever changing stunning scenery  
Optional Sunday Lunch - 1 course £11.95, 2 course £16.95  
**NB: Please book in advance for Sunday Lunch**

Please visit our website and social media pages for further events in the year

T: 01970 625819 E: info@rheidolrailway.co.uk  
WWW.RHEIDOLRAILWAY.CO.UK

www.rheidolrailway.co.uk



Why not follow us

# Welcome

## A new decade begins...

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2020. The dawn of not only a new year, but also a new decade. The last 10 years saw the railway change and develop with lots more to come.

This year alone will see three if not four milestones completed towards developing our visitor experience. There will be the first steaming on VoR metals of the NGG13 Garratt, the entry into traffic of our rebuilt and upgraded first class observation carriage, which will not only offer an enhanced first class experience but also provide enclosed wheelchair accommodation.

We will also have the opening of our new museum collection and heritage rolling stock protection shed, and this year may also see the completion of the new booking office facility, which will have a shop floor around four times the size of the temporary booking office currently in use, allowing us to provide a greater variety of products including more locally made products.

Even though our first train of the year is not until 15th February, you can still call by and find out what we are up to by enquiring about our workshop tours. For a small fee you will be escorted to our workshop and told about the ongoing projects along with a brief history of the line. Please check in advance before you visit as they are dependant upon staff availability.

As always we are interested in your thoughts so this month's question is:

*What kind of products would you like to see for sale in our shop both in store and online?*

Send your answers by email to [newsletter@rheidolrailway.co.uk](mailto:newsletter@rheidolrailway.co.uk)

Gareth D Jones  
Editor



### CONTENTS

|         |                             |         |                             |
|---------|-----------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|
| Page 3  | News                        | Page 19 | Engines from our Collection |
| Page 5  | Workshop Updates            | Page 21 | Number 3, 'Rheidol'         |
| Page 9  | Volunteers                  | Page 23 | Railway Reviews             |
| Page 11 | Mines of the Rheidol Valley | Page 24 | Our Staff                   |
| Page 14 | An image from the Archive   | Page 25 | Shop Products               |
| Page 15 | Picture Gallery             | Page 27 | Model Railway Products      |
| Page 17 | Gallery                     | Page 29 | Timetable                   |

# Vale of Rheidol Railway News

## VoR Long Service Medal

**M**ichael Langford has recently retired having served the railway at our Surrey workshops for 28 years, making him the longest serving member of staff in the company's modern history.

He worked as part of our engineering team and has passed on his wisdom to many staff during his time.

The medal is based on a commemorative medal which had been presented by the Railway Company to engineer Sir James Szlumper to commemorate his contribution to building the line when it opened in 1902.



The tradition of giving medals to our staff who have given many years of loyal service with the railway was re-established during 2015.

This will be the 6th such occasion that a medal has been struck and issued since bringing it back.

Some of our previous medal recipients pictured below



# Vale of Rheidol Railway News

## Protecting our stock for the future



Our Museum Collection and Heritage Rolling Stock Protection Shed is continuing to make progress. The roof panels have been installed, and will, as the building approaches completion, be lined with solar panels down the southern facing roof.

The first of three roads has had the track laid, ballasted, levelled and tamped ready for a concrete floor to be poured around the track. Once the floor has set the next road will be laid and concreted then the last in turn.

Whilst the track has been going down on one side the wall panels have begun fitting on the other.



# WORKSHOP

## Garratt NGG13 No.60

**N**GG 60 has seen a lot of work take place since the last update. The super heaters have been hydraulically tested and fitted, this means the boiler unit is virtually complete other than fitting a brick arch in the firebox and the in steam inspection. The power units entered the works in December and the boiler unit was placed into temporary store.

So far the power units have both had their cylinders stripped for inspection and were found to be in good order, new piston rings will be fitted throughout. The leading power unit has had the wheels dropped for turning, which is almost complete.



The axle boxes were also inspected and found to be in good condition. The power unit will receive modifications to fit air braking as part of its reassembly then the trailing unit will be brought in for similar treatment.



# UPDATE



## Baldwin No.44699

Work has slowed on the Baldwin over the Christmas period, with the firehole door fitting being the main progress. The wheel sets are ready for fitting and at some point in the near future the Baldwin will be turned into a rolling chassis, though for this to take place a large amount of the super structure will need stripping to facilitate access to wheel the engine.



# WORKSHOP

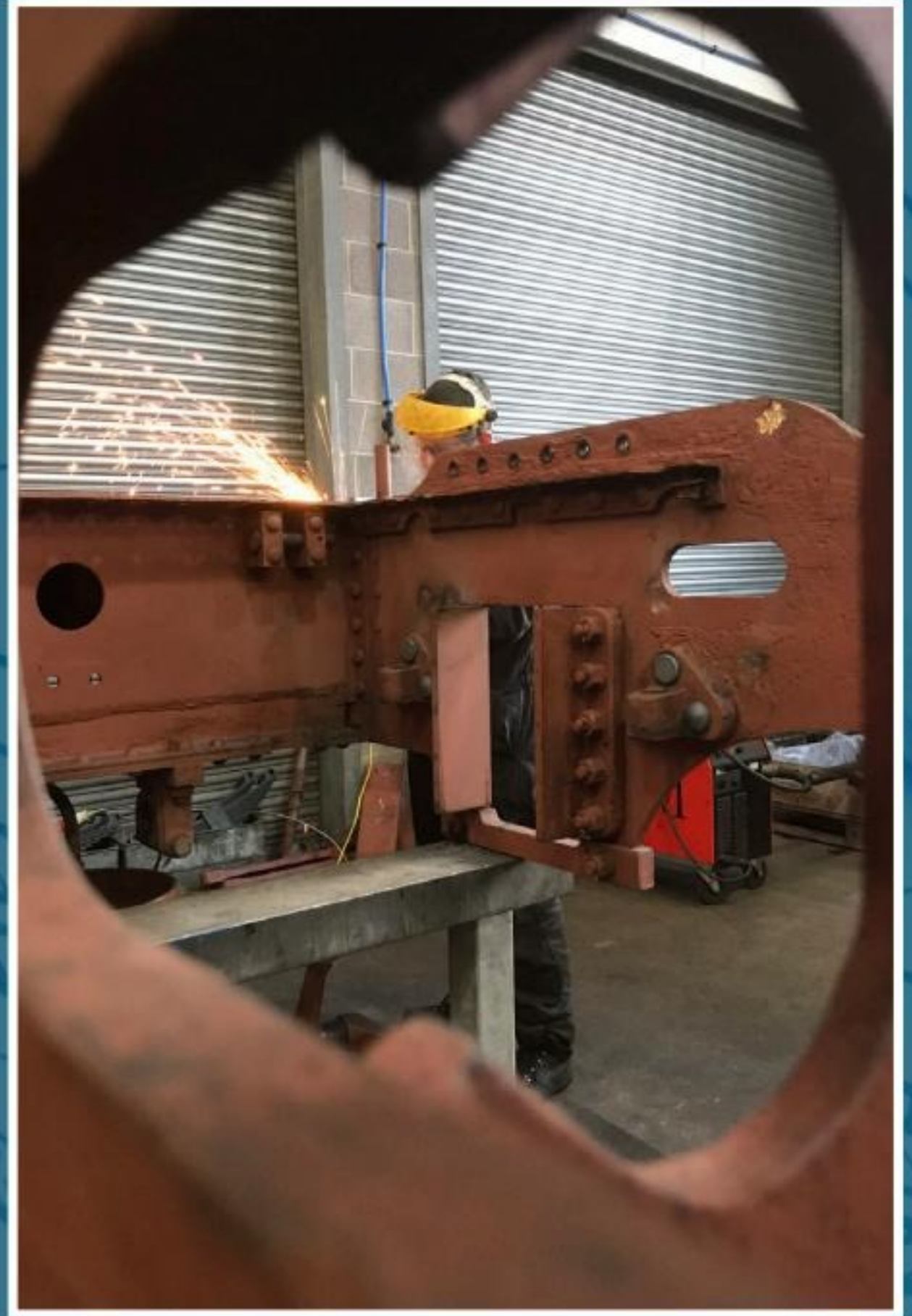
## WLLR's No822

The spring hangers have been removed, built up, machined back to shape and re-riveted to the frames. All the loose rivets on the frame have been removed and replaced.

The beading on the tanks has been removed and straightened. The tank edge has been cleaned and the beading is being re-fitted with original rivet detail. The Cab is being straightened and the worn out rain strips are being replaced.

The axle boxes have been machined and new horn inserts machined and fitted. New pressure strips have been fitted and a mould for casting the white metal constructed.

The frames have been measured and drawings prepared for machining the new horn faces.



# UPDATE

## Carriage Project

The detail work on Carriage 11 has been continuing with bespoke panelling having been designed for the insides of the doors that matches the sides of the carriages.

Work on the fittings such as table supports and the table tops has also been taking place, though much detail work is still to come before this work of art will be complete and ready for traffic.



# Vale of Rheidol Volunteers

*By Clive Higgs, Railway Volunteer*

After a very happy VOR Christmas dinner, the volunteers hibernated or migrated until the rain eased in mid January. Then the stations were inspected and our 2020 jobs were worked out for us. Meanwhile we cleared the platforms of fallen branches, cleared the litter from the car park and garden at Aberystwyth and replanted a conifer that had been blown down in the Devil's Bridge garden.

Last year we had forgotten to top the new fences at Aberffrwd Wood, so we quickly stapled the top wire to the posts. Then added new steps down the bank to the wood's railway gate and added hand-rails beside them. All finished there.

The bulbs' shoots are now appearing in the platform troughs. We are about to blow the leaves away from the gardens, platforms and railway line at Aberffrwd. Gales are expected!

During the schools' half-term holidays, on Saturday 15th February, we are hoping to get lifts on the first 2020 train (at 10:30) to clean the inside of the halts at Rheidol Falls and Rhiwfron, the two most spectacular stops. They are miles from roads and it would be miserable carrying mops, a step ladder and water up the steep paths. New Volunteers are very welcome!

Cleaning work is needed at other station and halt buildings, both indoors and outdoors. The waiting room seats and the Nantyrnen and Aberffrwd inside need particular attention. This ideally will be done soon.

Gardening in earnest will start in March with tidying the gardens, troughs and tubs. The daffodils, tulips and other spring plants should be in full display. Later the summer planting at the stations and Nantyrnen Halt will begin in May if there are no frosts. Then weeding, watering, dead-heading and replacing very few dead plants (hopefully) until the end of October. The corner of crab apple trees at Nantyrnen needs clearing of brambles.

Painting will start in Spring, whenever we have some settled weather. The main painting job will be Aberffrwd Station and its two water tanks. In the dark green colour of the Cambrian Railways, the owners from 1913 to 1922. New roof timbers and "tin" roof sheets will be put onto the large tank before painting.

We hope to re-stain the platform fences at Capel Bangor, Nantyrnen, Aberffrwd, and the two upper halts. The "ABERFFRWD" white stones need their annual re-painting and the roadside Aberffrwd sign needs some new paint.

We wanted to paint the new toilet block that is currently being installed at Devil's Bridge. This

needs to be painted quickly before there are many passengers. But unfortunately Peter White, our best and fastest painter, is moving to Sussex and it might be a very long day for him to drive here for every day's painting. We'll miss him for everything, not just the painting. "Peter the Painter" is at the right of the photo below, but Harm and John are good painters too!



So we are a bit understaffed. If anyone would like to join the volunteers, (s)he would be very welcome. Many of us are pensioners and the work is very varied, ranging from energetic work with a sledgehammer to sitting down and gently weeding the platform troughs from a wheelchair. Everyone is very friendly, even when it's raining! Meeting up and improving something is fun! The volunteers don't work with locomotives, rolling stock or the permanent way. Experienced, fully trained professionals do that. Volunteers mainly work at the out-of-town stations with beautiful surroundings and dry waiting rooms. The working hours are during the daytime, usually starting around 10:30. It can last the morning or all day according to your choice. A lot of the work is done when everyone interested is available. There tend to be gardening and non-gardening groups but several people work in both. The gardeners usually meet up on Tuesday mornings although work like watering can be needed more often over the summer. We try to work on large jobs, like painting stations daily. (If people are available, but often this isn't possible.)

Jobs in the past have included painting, gardening, cleaning, weeding platforms, building fences, repairing buildings, being a station master and porter at special events, drinking tea and coffee, chatting and eating sandwiches. And waving at trains. The more talkative vols chat with passengers.

## Our volunteers at work over the years



*Our volunteers meet once a week, and through their efforts our stations always look at their best no matter what the weather. If you wish to join our amazing band of volunteers helping to maintain our stations then please get in touch via email: [info@rheidolrailway.co.uk](mailto:info@rheidolrailway.co.uk)*



## Child Miner's Boots Discovered 360ft Below Ground

*by Ioan Lord*

**O**ne of the deepest lead mines in the Cwm Rheidol area was explored by two friends and me on 12 January 2020. On ropes we spent over 7 hours climbing a vertical height of over 920 feet (280 meters) to access areas of the mine where nobody had set foot since the late nineteenth century. The mine will remain anonymous due to the value of the artefacts which were discovered, and the dangerous condition of the workings.

The mine was worked from the late eighteenth until the early twentieth century. Below the surface, levels were opened from the main vertical shaft at regular intervals along the vein of lead, at the Drainage Adit level, and at 10 fathoms, 20 fathoms, 33 fathoms, 45 fathoms, 60 fathoms, 75 fathoms and 90 fathoms below the adit (1 fathom = 6 feet). Most of the levels have been 'stoped-out', i. e. the vein has been extracted from all

around them leaving only short sections of the levels amongst cavernous chambers termed stopes, where all the lead-ore has been removed. Our first abseil was 80 feet in depth, and enabled us to access a short section of the 10 Fathom Level, where a miners' lunch bench survived along with a century-old clay tobacco pipe. Three further descents were made from here, the longest being 150 feet on one rope, until the bottom of the 'stope' was reached and we managed to gain access to the 45 Fathom Level, 360 feet below the surface. This level contained remains of a 2' gauge tramway which, rather than the rails connected to the sleepers using spikes, had pins underneath the rails which were wedged into tapered slots cut into the wooden sleepers. Some of the wooden wedges survived in the sleeper slots. This unusual method of track laying has not been observed elsewhere underground in

mid-Wales.

Near the end of the 45 Fathom Level, an extremely interesting area was found. This was a short side-passage which had been converted into a lunch- and store-room. These places were called a croes (English: cross), possibly due to the fact that short religious services were often conducted within them before and after the miners' underground shifts. This is the best-preserved croes yet found during modern exploration in the Cwm Rheidol area, and contained a wooden shelf on the wall upon which was a miner's water flask and clay tobacco pipe. Below the shelf were several tallow candles set in balls of clay, and a wooden bench. Placed under the bench was one of the best artefacts I have ever seen: a pair of children's hobnail boots. The boots measured about 8 inches in length, and were in near-perfect condition although this area of the mine had been abandoned for the past 120 years. The shoe sizes suggest an age of about 11 or 12 for the child to whom they belonged. Children often began work underground in mid-Wales at this age. Boots and other items of clothing were often left underground as an "offering" to the mine spirits or as a memorial to people who had died, so it is possible that their owner was killed in an accident

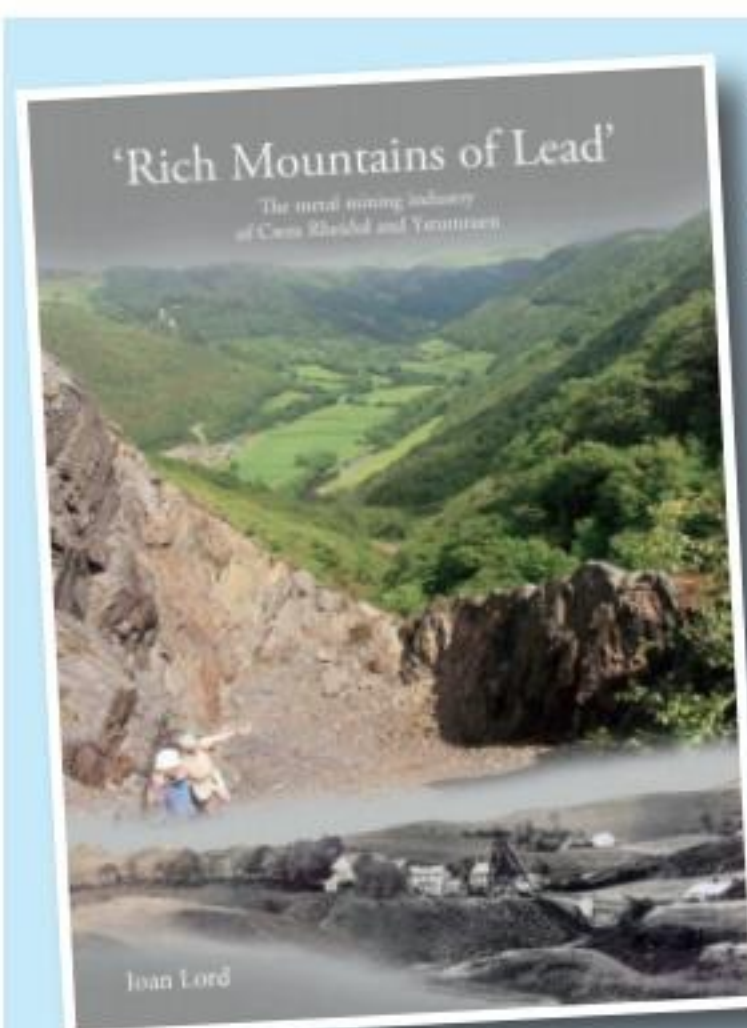
underground and his shoes were left near the place. Alternatively, they could have been an old pair of boots which were left as an offering to the coblynnod or the goblins who were widely believed to live in the mines.

Although the boots and the unusual tramway were only at a vertical depth of 360 feet below ground, the exploration to access the area required almost 1,000 feet of abseiling and near-vertical rope climbing in total. All artefacts were photographed and documented, and plans of the accessible workings are being drawn and compiled. Although rewarding in discovering an area not seen in over a century and superb artefacts, the long climb back to the surface led to many aching thighs for several days after!

Ioan offers underground tours to the general public with his business, Mid Wales Mine Adventures, find out more here; <https://www.midwalesminetours.com/>



Tapered slots in the sleepers of the 2-foot gauge tramway



*'Rich Mountains of Lead' The Metal Mining Industry of Cwm Rheidol and Ystumtuen*  
by Ioan Lord  
Available for purchase in our shop or online £45  
<https://shop.rheidolrailway.co.uk/products/rich-mountains-of-lead-ioan-lord>

N.B. These mines are on Private property and entry is forbidden unless by prior arrangement. Mines in the Valley are very dangerous owing to the vertical shafts and the potential for them to be hidden within woodland. Exploration should only be undertaken by experienced persons!

A44 LLYWERNOG, ONLY 15 MINUTES FROM ABERYSTWYTH



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# Vale of Rheidol Photo Archive

*By Rob Bance, VoR Archivist*



## Cambrian Water Tower 1956

When Aberffrwdd station was originally opened, the water supply for the locomotives was provided from two large tanks that were sited in a dug out of the hillside at the up end of the station, with the water coming from the Abernant.

This supply was inadequate and a ram pump was purchased and installed in 1908 in the dingle above the Cwmdauddwr bend to lift water straight from the stream.

In 1910 a further water tank was added at the down end meaning a total of nearly 3000 gallons of water could be stored at Aberffrwdd.

The water tanks developed serious leaks and in 1919 the Cambrian built the current one we see in this photograph from 1956.







Photo: Geoff Griffiths



Photo: Geraint Roberts



Photo: Simon Fozzard



Photo: Will Smith



Photo: Alistair Greave

# Engines from our Collection

*Compiled by Gareth Jones*



## Maffei 0-8-0T 'Brigadelok'

DFB No.968/No.31 4766/1916

JA Maffei Brigadelok 0-8-0T KLA 4766 of 1916, DFB 968 was built for use on the German army trench railways during World War One. The 11-tonne (24,000 lb) 0-8-0T Brigadelok design with Klien-Lindner articulation of the front and rear axles was adopted as the new military standard in 1901. Approximately 250 were available by 1914, and over two thousand were produced during the war. A Brigadelok typically handled six loaded cars up a 2% grade.

Approximately 20% of the Brigadeloks saw post-war use. Government railways of (Yugoslavia), Macedonia, Serbia and Poland made extensive use of the military locomotives. Significant numbers were used in Hungary, France, Latvia, Bulgaria and Romania while smaller numbers went overseas to Africa, Indonesia, Japan and North America. Much of the trench railway equipment remaining in Belgium at the end of hostilities was shipped to the Belgian Congo to build the Vicicongo line.

Purchased by Ruvenhorst & Humbert in the 1940s, it changed hands in 1967 and again in 1987 when bought by M Mervaux in Paris in 1987. The Vale of Rheidol Railway purchased the loco in an auction in 2002.



# Engines from our Collection

*Compiled by Gareth Jones*



## Borsig 0-4-0WT

5913/1906

Borsig 0-4-0WT 5913 of 1906 is a 20HP Type 2 fitted with Walschaerts valve gear. Built for the Briqueteries, Modernes N.V., Knokke - zwevegem, Belgium, where it ran as loco No. 3 the boiler was repaired by Focquet of Belgium in 1930 and it last steamed in 1965.

Following purchase by Edelhart De Lille of Maldegem, Belgium, in 1972 it went into storage until being purchased by the Vale of Rheidol Railway in July 1994. Another Borsig locomotive is in the private collection owned by the Vale of Rheidol Railway's late Chairman Mr Peter Rampton.





Driver John Pryce Morris and fireman Jack 'bach' Davies pose with Rheidol in its early Cambrian guise, with wooden cab back.

## Number 3, 'Rheidol'

by Geraint Roberts

Our long lamented Bagnall tank engine could have been said to have 'lived' in its years of service. It certainly had a varied career – and gauge!

Originally built in 1896 as works no. E1497, she was ordered by Collier, Antunez & co. for use in the cane plantation and sugar factory 'Usina

Treze de Maio', near Pernambuco, Brazil. She was built in 2ft 5.5 inch gauge, but the order was cancelled due to unrest in the region (War of Canudos).

Bagnalls were left with a complete locomotive, but not for too long. Thomas Molyneux was looking for a bargain, for his quarry line between Llanfihangel Glyn (Llandre), through Talybont, to the Hafan quarry (close by modern-day Nant-y-Moch reservoir), to end the disastrous career of the tramway's vertical boilered 'Victoria'. The Plynlimon & Hafan tramway, as it became known, was 2ft 3in gauge, so after an adaption, the engine was despatched in black livery with white and red lining. The engine was renamed 'Talybont' in green letters and provided sterling service during the line's brief life.

The railway foundered around 1899-1900 and the engine was returned to Bagnalls. Its next lease of life was under



This picture shows Talybont, with the forlorn Victoria at Talybont station, above the village. The Bagnall is still in as-built condition, with balloon spark arrester and open back cab (now hidden by a matchboard cover).

the contractor company, Pethicks. This Plymouth based company was constructing the Vale of Rheidol railway and so 'Talybont' was re-gauged again to 1ft 11.75 inch and renamed 'Rheidol'.

In February 1902, Pethicks offered her for sale to the VOR for £350. The railway decided they needed a shunting engine and paid £400 for her. What they got was a bargain, as the engine provided extra service. She was the stalwart of the 7am early morning stopper to Devil's Bridge and also provided piloting duties on heavier trains. It was the only engine in the fleet light enough to traverse the harbour branch, on the rare occasions it was in use.

It was not unknown for the engine to do two or even three trips up to Devil's Bridge in a day and was a favourite with both passengers and crew. This is perhaps surprising, given that the short wheelbase caused a great degree of corkscrewing and oscillation at speed. Firemen had to top up the corners of the firebox, as the shaking moved the fire to the centre. It also ran for a time without a pressure gauge, usage dependent on the skill of the crew 'feeling' the needs of the

engine!

A flatter back was provided to the cab and the Cambrian finally graced her with a steel one. The back cab shelf was used as a rule to store the coal when shunting. The livery became green and then lined black once more. The Cambrian removed the name and Rheidol became plain 'number 3', although to the crews, it was never anything but 'Rheidol'. On absorption to the GWR, the engine acquired the number 1198. Although there are no records of her using it, a recent discovery of a number plate, shows sign of wear and tear on it to imply it had had usage. Certainly, the GWR would not have bothered to change the livery of the engine.

On the 31 May 1923, it was stopped, being officially withdrawn from traffic on 17 July 1924. It could be said that if the engine had not gone, the Vale of Rheidol would not have acquired a 3rd engine in 1924, number 1213 (BR number 9) being the replacement. However, one cannot but regret the passing of such a plucky survivor.

The more intrepid can still discover sister examples in different countries.



Works no. 2539 at Saidpur, Bangladesh

# VALE OF RHEIDOL RAILWAY

## Google Review

This is a good, long substantial ride through lovely country.  
Highly recommended.

Aart Olsen

## Facebook Review

Super trip through the valley, very picturesque

Douglas Abbott-Morris

## Tripadvisor Review

Excellent ,very scenic trip to Devil's Bridge. On arriving a short walk gives  
you good views of the waterfall.

Slxhawk

## Facebook Review

Thank you Vale of Rheidol Railway  
for making my husbands 65th Birthday a day to remember,  
We thoroughly enjoyed the whole experience on the train, riding  
through lovely countryside and valleys very scenic, and great  
halfway stop to have our picnic celebration at Devils Bridge.  
The day was so perfect.

Susan Haines

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A blast of the whistle and the hiss of steam and  
let us take you on a nostalgic journey

Vale Of Rheidol R

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With a delicious  
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2-6-2 Locomotive  
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Birds of prey such as Buzzards are regularly seen soaring high  
above the valley floor and breath taking views can be enjoyed by all.

The line is a masterpiece of engineering, opened in 1902 to carry lead ore,  
timber and passenger traffic. The narrow track gauge allows the railway to follow  
the contours of the terrain with many sharp curves and steep gradients which  
add to the railway's charm.

**PUMPKIN TRAIN**  
29, 30 & 31 OCTOBER 2018  
Don't miss this special train  
to Devil's Bridge.  
With a delicious buffet to eat  
and a special display of pumpkins  
along the route.



CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION

# About our staff

## Aaron Smyth Engineering Apprentice

Aaron joined the railway in September 2019, chosen from a group of 6 that attended a competitive selection day for a sought after apprenticeship on our railway.

He joined direct from school after completing his GCSEs. He said he was very pleased to get a job with the railway as he loves hands on work.

In his spare time Aaron is passionate about cars and motorbikes. He enjoys opportunities to work on these vehicles.

He is currently rebuilding and restoring a Land Rover 90 hoping to complete in time for his 17th Birthday so it can become his first car, upon passing his driving test.



## Lianne Murphy Cleaner

Lianne joined the railway in September 2019.

She lives with her 11 year old spaniel, Jake and over 500 houseplants. Moving to Wales from Stratford-upon-Avon in Warwickshire in 2017 for university.

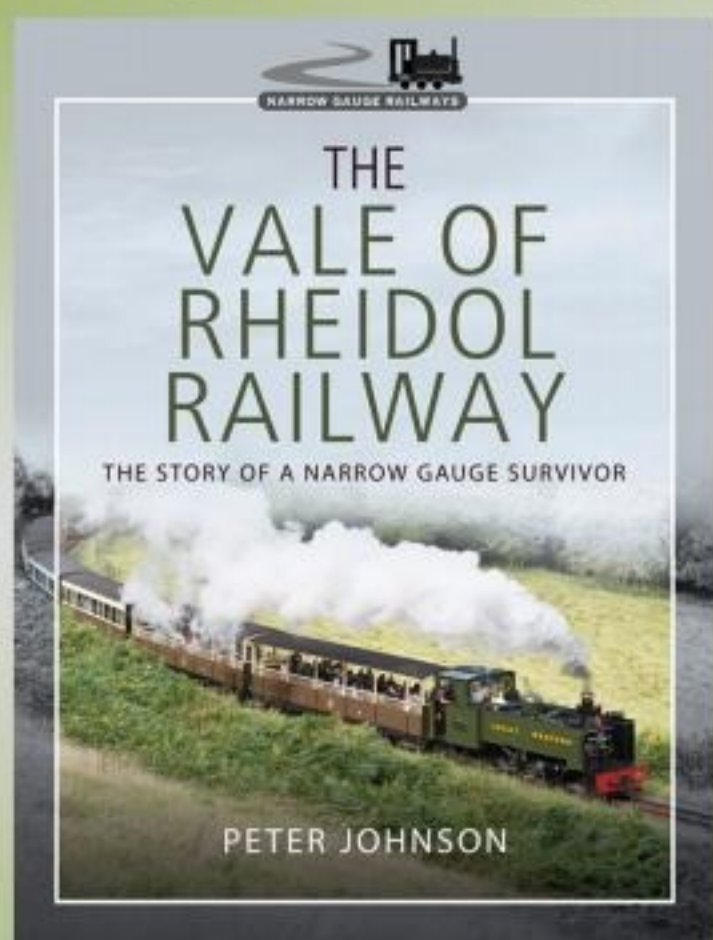
Lianne loves to travel and so far has explored 41 countries and counting. She used to be a Business Intelligence Analyst for an insurance company but decided on a career change whilst camping her way around Africa.

She is currently studying Zoology in Aberystwyth University and wants to work with crocodiles in the wild, all over the World. In Easter 2020 she is off to Costa Rica on a research expedition.

Lianne was brought up in a garage so loves being in the workshop the most. Luckily, she actually enjoys cleaning, too! She says her favourite part of the job is getting the locker room sparkling, if only for 5 minutes before chaos descends...



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PUBLISHED APRIL 2020

## THE VALE OF RHEIDOL RAILWAY

*by Peter Johnson*

The First book to be published about our line in recent times this book brings our history up to date.

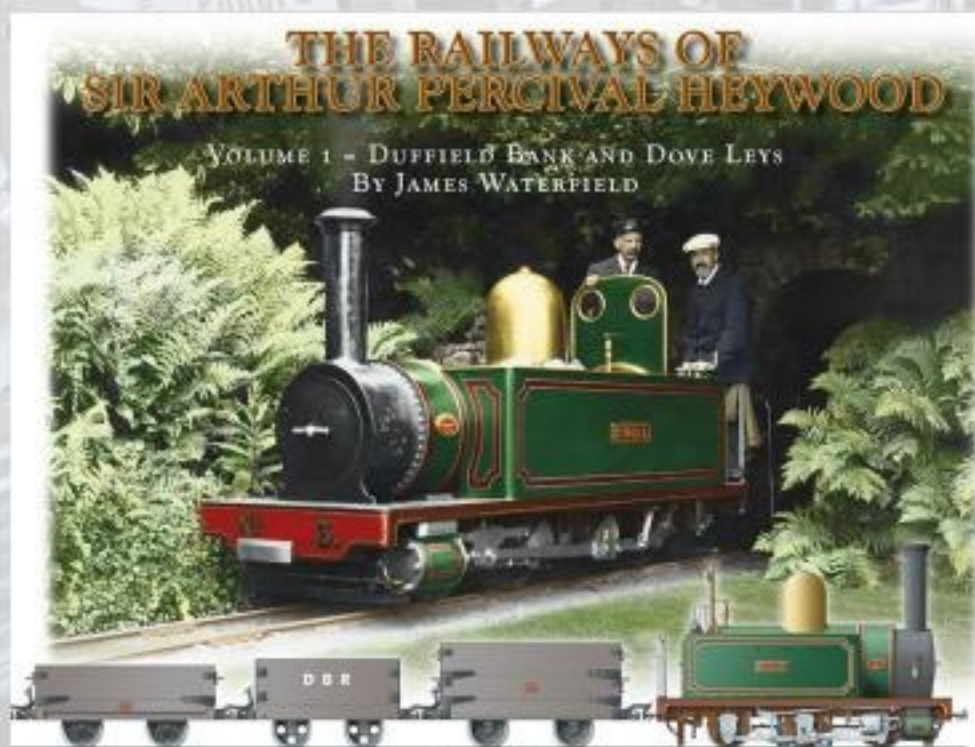
Built to carry minerals from mines in the Rheidol valley, the 2ft gauge Vale of Rheidol Railway found its niche carrying tourists to the tourist attraction at Devil's Bridge, 12 miles inland from the Cardigan coast resort of Aberystwyth. Taken over by the Cambrian Railways and then the Great Western Railway, it became the last steam railway operated by British Rail. In 1989 it became the first part of the national network to be privatised.

Now under the control of a charitable trust it is undergoing a revival that will see it become one of the leading tourist attractions in Mid-Wales.

Available for Pre-Order the book will be dispatched once in stock ready for the publication date of 30th April 2020.

Get yours here; [https://shop.rheidolrailway.co.uk/products/vale-of-rheidol-railway-story-of-a-narrow-gauge-survivor-peter-johnson-pre-order?\\_pos=10&\\_sid=16311b976&\\_ss=r](https://shop.rheidolrailway.co.uk/products/vale-of-rheidol-railway-story-of-a-narrow-gauge-survivor-peter-johnson-pre-order?_pos=10&_sid=16311b976&_ss=r)

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This first volume covers the development of Sir Arthur's idea and the establishment of his experimental 15 inch gauge line at Duffield. Much fresh information is contained in the text and many new, previously unpublished photographs are included. Even those images previously published, are the subject of fresh scans from originals where possible, giving a clarity not seen before. The locomotives and rolling stock are covered in detail, including over forty detailed scale drawings, prepared by Mike Decker. Coverage is given to the houses, the workshops at Duffield, the 9 inch line at Dove Leys and the Heywood locomotives and stock that ran on the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway. Volume two will cover the Eaton Hall Railway.

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## THE IVO PETERS COLLECTION - VOLUME FOUR

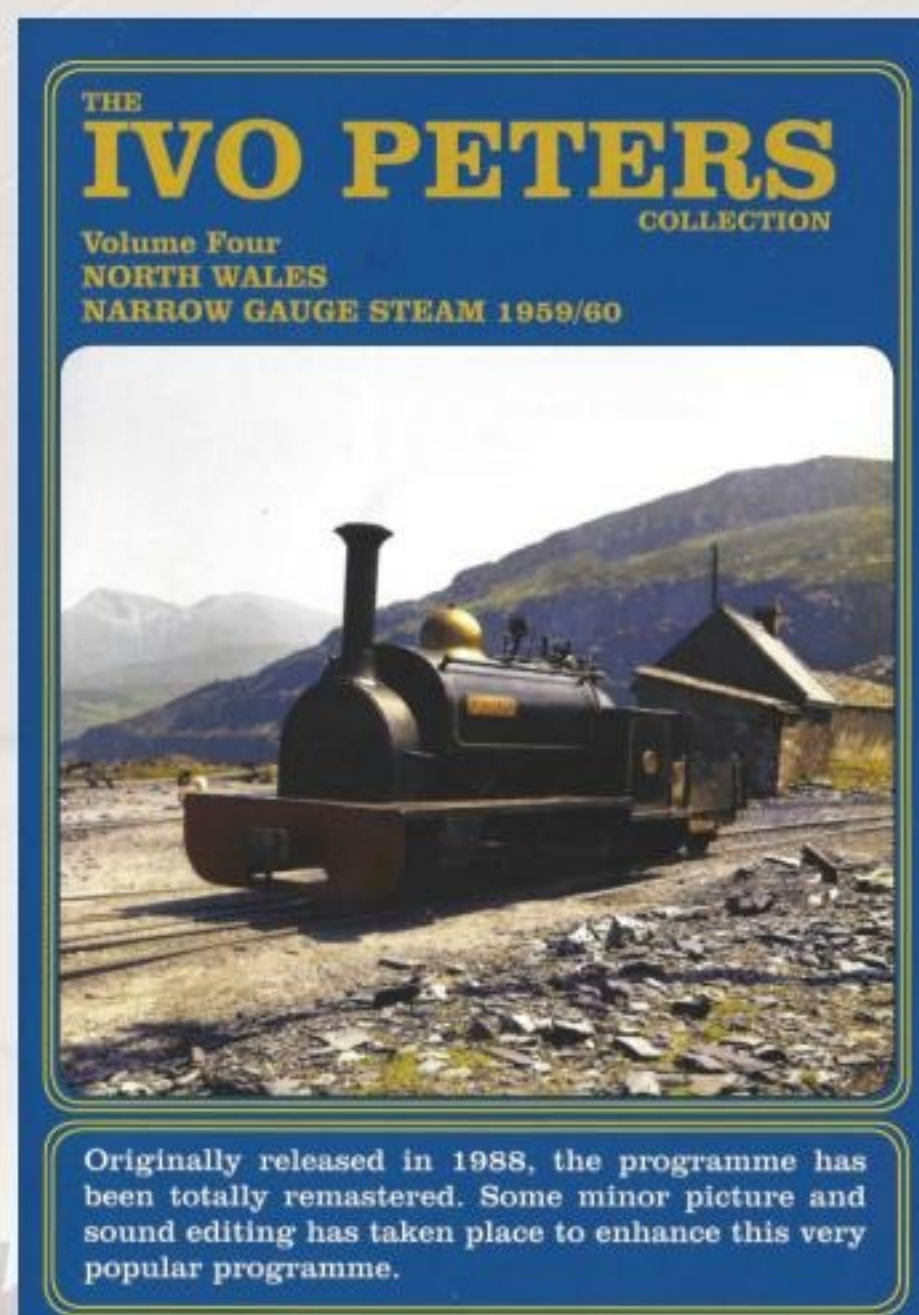
**N**orth Wales Narrow Gauge Steam in 1959/60 - This volume takes Ivo Peters' coverage of Britain's railways into a new realm - the fascinating narrow gauge railways of North Wales.

After a brief visit to BR's last narrow gauge, the Vale of Rheidol Railway at Aberystwyth, we see the early days of preservation of the Talylyn and Ffestiniog plus a journey up the Snowdon Mountain Railway.

The major part of this volume covers the long closed and lost slate quarry railways at Padarn and Penrhyn and Dinorwic Quarry. Each railway is explored in detail including lineside trips up the lines as well as the slate quarries.

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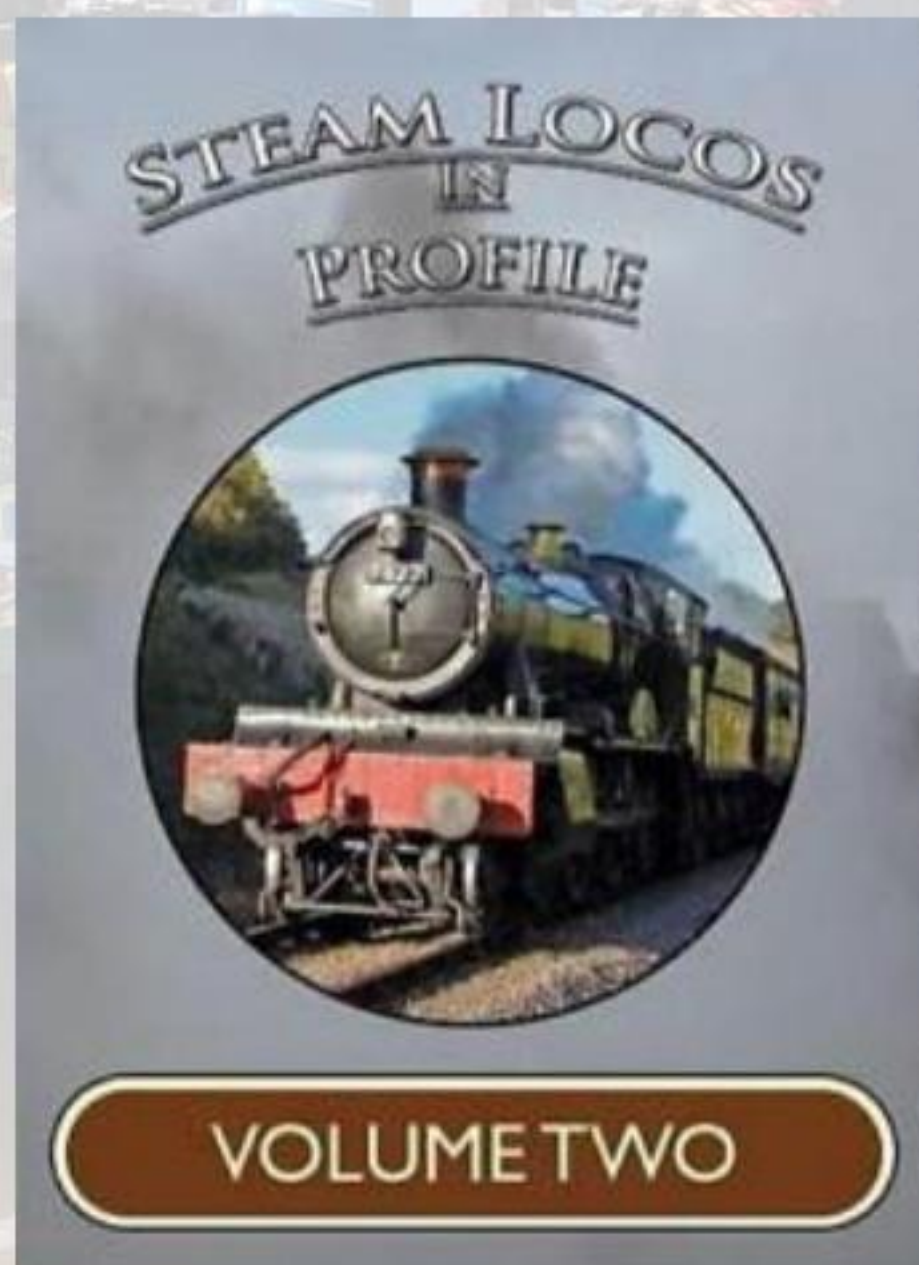
## STEAM LOCOS IN PROFILE - VOLUME TWO

**T**his second DVD release features episodes 9-14 of the popular YouTube show. Including exclusive bonus material filmed on the Vale Of Rheidol Railway in North Wales.

Steam locomotive classes include; GWR 28XXs, GWR Manors, BR Std 4MT tank engines, BR Britannias, GWR Halls and LMS 8Fs. Bonus footage features; Vale Of Rheidol 2-6-2Ts, Vale Of Rheidol Directors Commentary and Aberystwyth to Aberffwd In Four Minutes.

Get yours here; [https://shop.rheidolrailway.co.uk/products/steam-locos-in-profile-volume-2-manors-and-halls-28xx-vale-of-rheidol-dvd?\\_pos=1&\\_sid=2fac8f133&\\_ss=r](https://shop.rheidolrailway.co.uk/products/steam-locos-in-profile-volume-2-manors-and-halls-28xx-vale-of-rheidol-dvd?_pos=1&_sid=2fac8f133&_ss=r)

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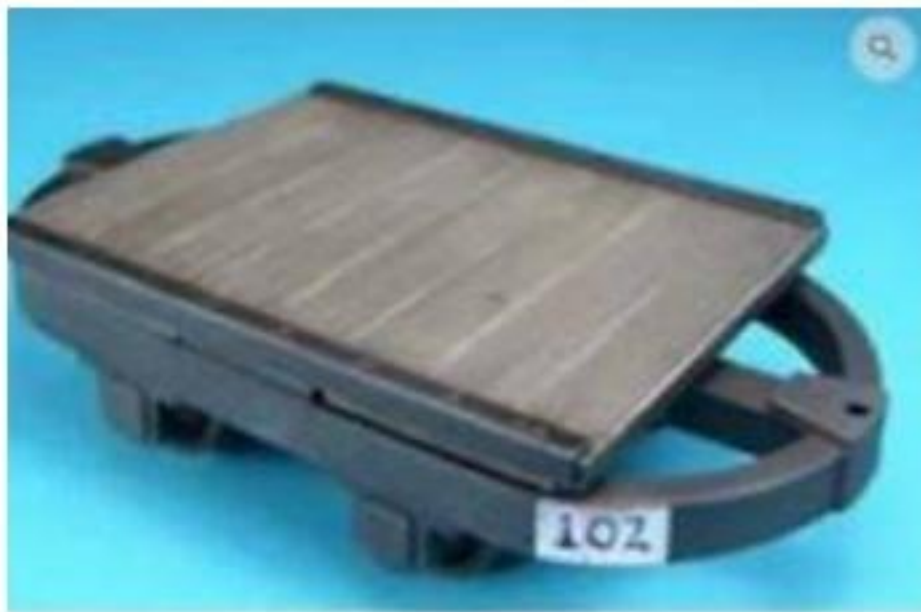
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# Model Railway Shop

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IP Engineering has recently launched a new range of kits, five of which are based on the binnie hudson chassis. There are seven wagons in the range, six of which are featured here as they are new arrivals.



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# Devil's Bridge Waterfalls



[www.devilsbridgefalls.co.uk](http://www.devilsbridgefalls.co.uk)

01970 890233

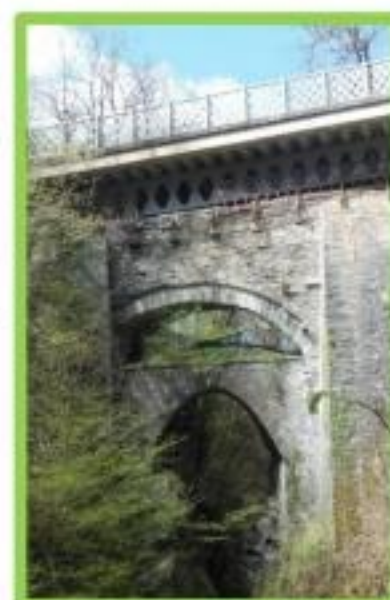


To visit the 300ft Waterfalls, Punchbowl and 3 Bridges built one on top of the other, turn left from the train station and walk down the hill past the Hafod hotel (approx 5 minutes).

The **Nature Trail** circular walk includes views of the waterfalls, 3 Bridges, Robbers Cave and Jacobs Ladder (A steep flight of 100 continuous steps). It takes roughly 45 minutes and is a challenging walk with 675 steep steps. It is not suitable for pushchairs and those with walking difficulties. Adult £3.75 Child £2.00 **20% discount on Nature trail walk by showing this advert to the attendant.**

**Not enough time for the long walk? Too many steps?**

To view just the 3 Bridges and the Devil's Punchbowl enter through the coin operated turnstile. Only £1.00 per person  
**Recommended time 10 minutes.**



## WOODLANDS CARAVAN PARK

*Devils Bridge*

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[www.woodlandsdevilsbridge.co.uk](http://www.woodlandsdevilsbridge.co.uk)

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[enquiries@woodlandsdevilsbridge.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@woodlandsdevilsbridge.co.uk)



# 2020 Timetable

**Step 1:** Pick your date from the calendar. (Please note there are no services on white days.)

**Step 2:** Match the colour shown to the relevant timetable below.

*In order to help us to run the trains to time, please aim to arrive at the Booking Office at least 20 minutes before your departure.*

| JANUARY 2020 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| M            | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S  |
|              |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
| 6            | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13           | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20           | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27           | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |

| FEBRUARY 2020 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
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| 3             | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  |
| 10            | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17            | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24            | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |    |

| MARCH 2020 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
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| 2          | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  |
| 9          | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16         | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23         | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30         | 31 |    |    |    |    |    |

| APRIL 2020 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| M          | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S  |
|            |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
| 6          | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13         | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20         | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27         | 28 | 29 | 30 |    |    |    |

| MAY 2020 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| M        | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S  |
|          |    |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  |
| 4        | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 |
| 11       | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18       | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25       | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

| JUNE 2020 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| M         | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S  |
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| 8         | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15        | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22        | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29        | 30 |    |    |    |    |    |

| JULY 2020 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
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| M         | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S  |
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| 13        | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20        | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27        | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |

| AUGUST 2020 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
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| 10          | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17          | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24          | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31          |    |    |    |    |    |    |

| SEPTEMBER 2020 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
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|                | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  |
| 7              | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14             | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21             | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28             | 29 | 30 |    |    |    |    |

| OCTOBER 2020 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| M            | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S  |
|              |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  |
| 5            | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 |
| 12           | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19           | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26           | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |

| NOVEMBER 2020 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| M             | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S  |
|               |    |    |    |    |    | 1  |
| 2             | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  |
| 9             | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16            | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23            | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30            |    |    |    |    |    |    |

| DECEMBER 2020 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| M             | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S  |
|               |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
| 6             | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13            | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20            | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27            | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |

|                |      | ORANGE |      | YELLOW |       |      |      |
|----------------|------|--------|------|--------|-------|------|------|
| Aberystwyth    | dep: | 10:30  | 2:00 | 10:30  | 12:10 | 2:00 | 3:45 |
| Capel Bangor   | dep: | 10:50  | 2:20 | 10:50  | 12:30 | 2:20 | 4:05 |
| Aberffrwd      | dep: | 11:10  | 2:40 | 11:10  | 12:50 | 2:40 | 4:25 |
| Devil's Bridge | arr: | 11:30  | 3:00 | 11:30  | 1:15  | 3:00 | 4:45 |
| Devil's Bridge | dep: | 12:30  | 4:15 | 12:30  | 2:15  | 4:00 | 5:45 |
| Aberffrwd      | dep: | 12:50  | 4:35 | 12:50  | 2:35  | 4:20 | 6:05 |
| Capel Bangor   | dep: | 1:10   | 4:55 | 1:10   | 2:55  | 4:40 | 6:25 |
| Aberystwyth    | arr: | 1:30   | 5:15 | 1:30   | 3:15  | 5:00 | 6:45 |

|                |      | GREEN |       |      |      |      | GOLD  |
|----------------|------|-------|-------|------|------|------|-------|
| Aberystwyth    | dep: | 10:30 | 12:10 | 2:00 | 3:45 | 6:00 | 11:00 |
| Capel Bangor   | dep: | 10:50 | 12:30 | 2:20 | 4:05 | 6:20 | 11:20 |
| Aberffrwd      | dep: | 11:10 | 12:50 | 2:40 | 4:25 | 6:40 | 11:40 |
| Devil's Bridge | arr: | 11:30 | 1:15  | 3:00 | 4:45 | 7:00 | 12:00 |
| Devil's Bridge | dep: | 12:30 | 2:15  | 4:00 | 5:45 | 8:00 | 2:00  |
| Aberffrwd      | dep: | 12:50 | 2:35  | 4:20 | 6:05 | 8:20 | 2:20  |
| Capel Bangor   | dep: | 1:10  | 2:55  | 4:40 | 6:25 | 8:40 | 2:40  |
| Aberystwyth    | arr: | 1:30  | 3:15  | 5:00 | 6:45 | 9:00 | 3:00  |

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Photo by Gareth Jones

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