



# BOTTOM LINE

The Electronic Newsletter of The Blaenavon Heritage Railway December 2021



**Welcome** to the December 2021 issue of the electronic version of Bottom Line. It is intended to publish this newsletter quarterly. If you wish to receive the newsletter by email then please click the subscribe button on our website at <https://www.bhrailway.co.uk/>

**The Society** manages and staffs the Railway Shop, 33 Broad Street, Blaenavon, NP4 9ND and Eric's Emporium located at the Furnace Sidings Station. All profits from the shop, the emporium and other fundraising activities support the Blaenavon Heritage Railway. Telephone 01495 792263

Email: [shop@pbrly.co.uk](mailto:shop@pbrly.co.uk)

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Kevin Mayo

Bottom Line is published by the Pontypool and Blaenavon Railway Society.

Edited by; Steve Thomas & Martin Herbert

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**The Company** is responsible for all aspects of the operational side of the railway including locomotives, rolling stock, buildings, stations, track and future developments. The railway is staffed entirely by a loyal band of volunteers and is overseen by a board of directors who are elected and co-opted by the membership.

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Alex Gourlay and Alex Hinshelwood

**Uniform Grades Inspector:** Philip Tiley

**Diesel Inspector:** Matthew Thomas



Cover photo: 'Jessie at Furnace Sidings'  
(photo courtesy of Thomas Coombes)

Photo above: 'Rosyth' August 2020  
(photo by Steve Thomas)

**The Pontypool and Blaenavon Railway  
Company (1983) Ltd**

is a not-for-profit, volunteer-run charity.

Charity registration number: 514809.

Registered address:

33 Broad Street, Blaenavon, Torfaen, NP4 9NF

**Facebook and website links:**

**Heritage Railway**

<https://www.facebook.com/pbrailway>

<https://www.bhrailway.co.uk/>

**Railway Shop**

<https://www.facebook.com/Railwayshopblaenavon>

<https://www.bhrailway.co.uk/the-railway-shop-blaenavon>

**Model Railway Club**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/PandBMRC>

<https://www.bhrailway.co.uk/model-railway-club>



# Support us by becoming a member.

Blaenavon's Heritage Railway is supported by approximately 400 members. By paying a small annual subscription they help keep the railway running for future generations to enjoy.

## Benefits:

In addition to helping to preserve our railway, members enjoy a range of exclusive benefits and opportunities. These include:

- Up 50% off ticket prices on normal (i.e., non-event) running days.
- A 5% discount on purchases from Eric's Emporium and The Railway Shop
- Receiving our Top Line in-house magazine, with the latest news, photographs and articles
- Access to a regular Electronic Bottom Line newsletter. (by download from our website)
- An invite to our exclusive members evenings, with delicious food and drink, entertainment and trains.

Becoming a member is also essential to becoming a volunteer at the railway, and many members go on to undertake a range of voluntary activities with us! However, even if you do not wish to become a volunteer, by becoming a member you will be helping us to preserve and maintain our railway for future generations to enjoy!

## How to join:

Those wishing to become a member may join either the Pontypool and Blaenavon Railway Company or the supporting Pontypool and Blaenavon Railway Society.

Membership of the Company is open to British nationals aged 18 and over and affords the widest range of benefits. This the recommended route for eligible adults to become involved, granting the greatest range of privileges and opportunities. Others, including foreign nationals and young persons under the age of 18, may join the Society.

## Annual membership prices:

Annual membership prices are currently as follows:

- Adult Company membership: **£15.00**
- Adult Society membership: **£15.00**
- Joint adult membership (Company or Society): **£23.00**
- Society membership for under 18s: **£7.50**

## Lifetime membership prices:

We also offer the opportunity to become a lifetime member of the railway for a onetime payment. The current prices are:

- Lifetime individual membership: **£300.00**
- Lifetime joint membership: **£525.00**

## Become a member online!

We are currently finalising a brand-new online membership application process.

[click here to download a membership form.](#)

You will need a PDF reader installed on your device to open the file.

Purchase online membership or renew membership.

<https://www.bhrailway.co.uk/onlinestore>

Please send completed membership forms to the below address, enclosing a cheque for the appropriate fee.

**Membership Department  
The Railway Shop,  
33 Broad Street,  
Blaenavon,  
Pontypool,  
Torfaen  
NP4 9NF**

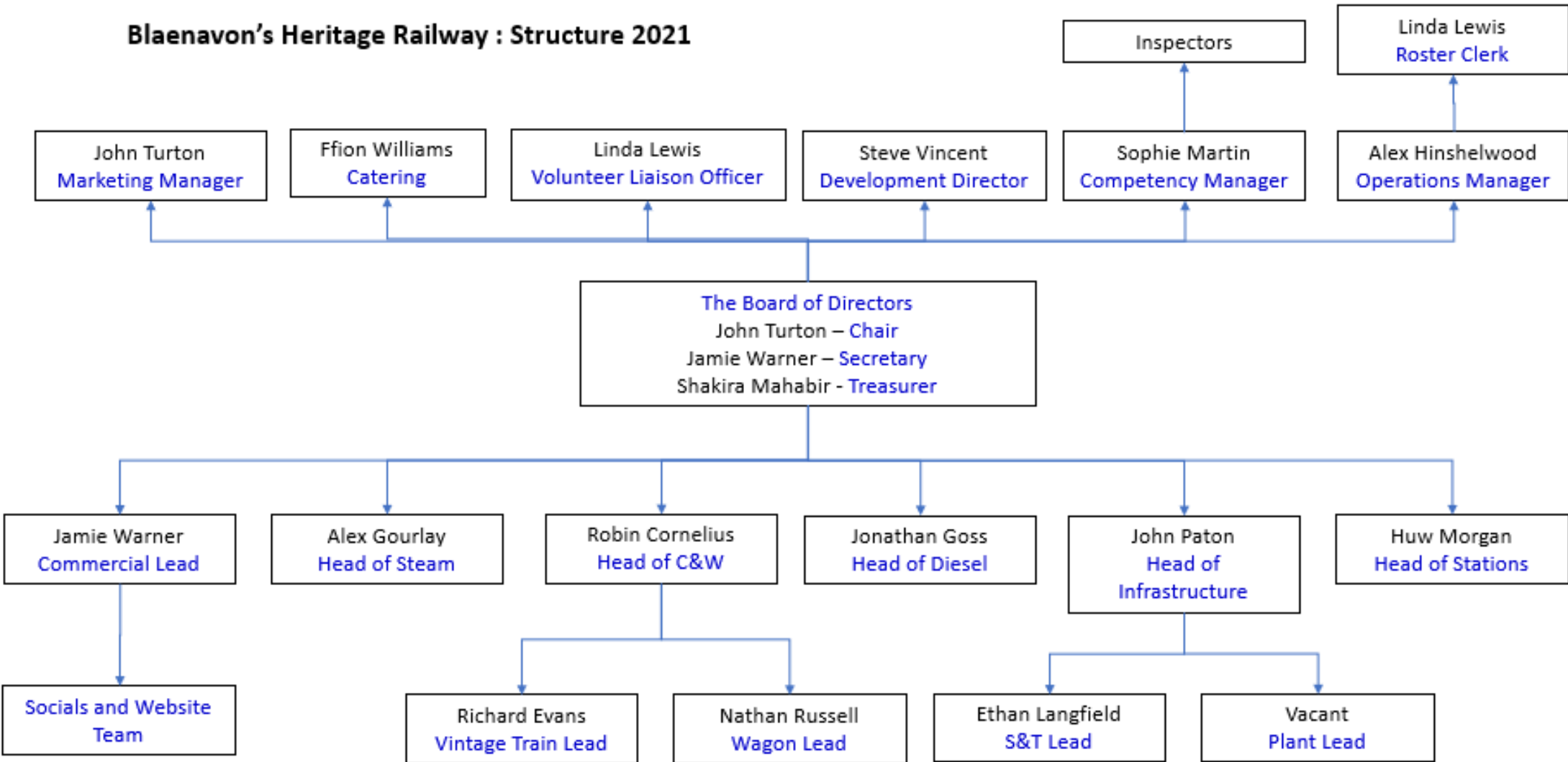
Alternatively, you can take your form to Eric's Emporium or The Railway Shop for processing. Memberships can be paid by both cash and card at both locations.

## Membership terms and conditions:

The terms and conditions of membership are outlined on our website.

<https://www.bhrailway.co.uk/membership>

## Blaenavon's Heritage Railway : Structure 2021



Note: the Safety Management System is the responsibility of the relevant Head/Manager with the Board accountable.



**Meet a volunteer**  
**Submitted by Luke Jones**



How I became interested in railways.

My first encounter was with Thomas the Tank Engine at the Dean Forest Railway in approx. 2004.

My parents could see I was interested and kept taking me to Thomas events before gradually progressing on to steam and diesel galas.

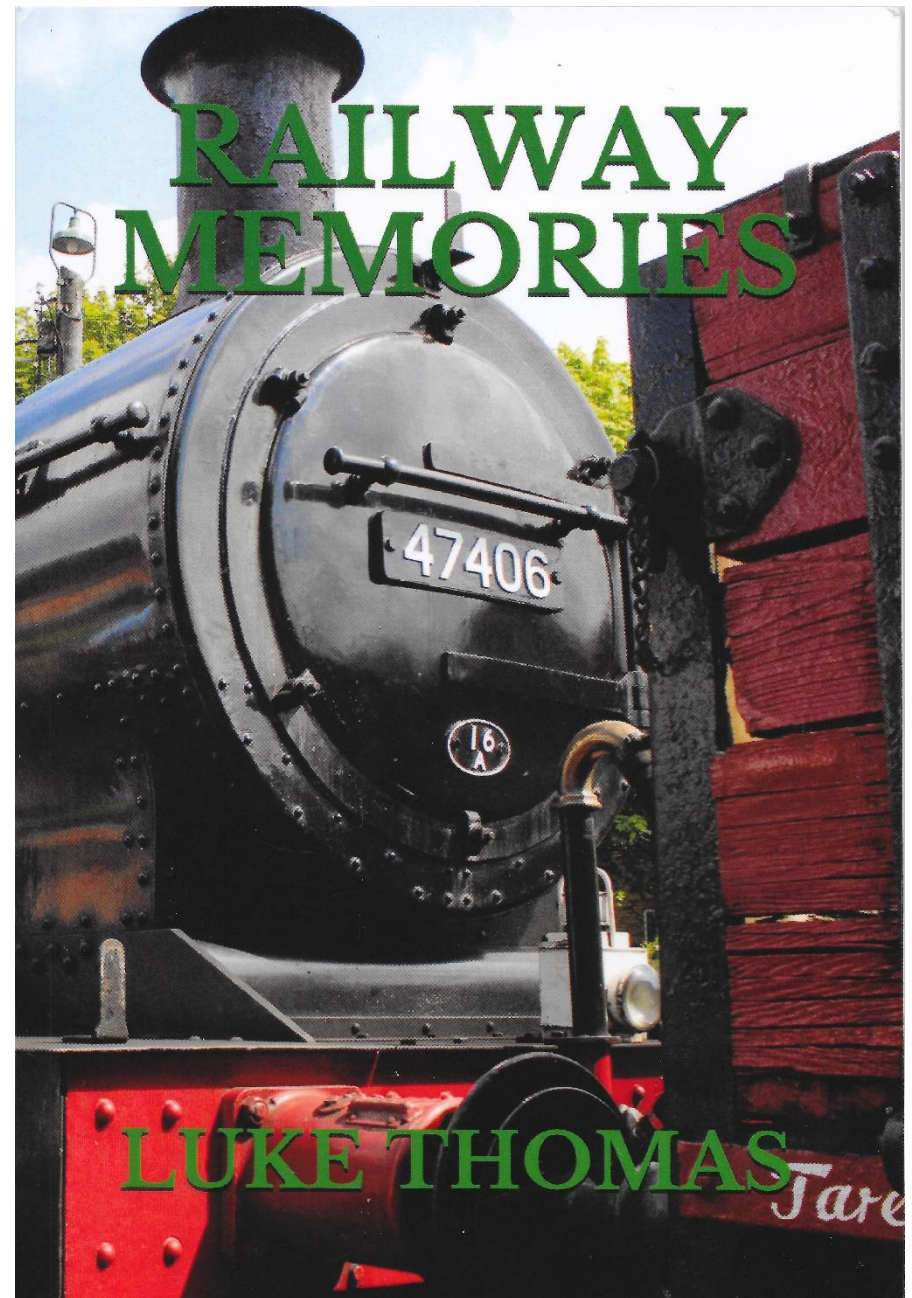
I then began to go trainspotting and taking photographs before starting on my model railway. This is in the attic at home and measure 18ft by 10ft.

I have done a footplate experience at the East Somerset Railway where I drove Ivatt Class 2 2-6-9 locomotive number 46447.

I am a volunteer at the Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway where I am an engine cleaner, in addition I help with the Santa Specials at Christmas and have also been a ticket inspector on occasions.

I decided to write a book titled 'Railway Memories' after hearing so many people's stories about the railways, this was published in the summer of 2020. My second book is titled 'Cinema Memories' and is an anthology of quotes, experiences and reminiscences of people with a love of film.

*(Luke's book 'Railway Memories' is available from the Emporium at Furnace Sidings)*



## Model Railway Club Submitted by Steve Thomas

The club has re-opened – post COVID – at the usual times of Tuesdays 11am-3pm and Fridays between 7pm and 9.30pm.

As the cabins had been locked for well over a year quite a lot of black mould had grown on the ceilings and walls in both cabins which were completely dry inside so thankfully no water damage so we put it down to lack of air circulation. The work done on the outsides the previous year obviously paid dividends and made them leakproof.

A small group of members set about cleaning and treating the mould and repainted the ceilings and walls. The layouts themselves were in surprisingly good condition and after a little track cleaning trains were running again. All electrics were OK and all points working.

Attendance was quiet at first but is now growing and most previous members have returned along with a couple of new faces. We welcome new members regardless of experience and knowledge. The club is very democratic as all decisions are made by the whole membership. We welcome young people to join but require those under 16 to be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Our OO gauge layout 'Stonebridge Junction' is almost complete and just needs a little TLC to keep it fresh. Our O gauge layout is progressing well and features a coal tippler that is controlled by an Arduino microprocessor. Tony Brooks designed and 3d printed the tippler module that includes a motor driven wagon pusher, the tippler itself and a traverse section where the emptied wagons are moved to a siding where they are collected by a loco ready for dispatch. This is quite a unique item for any model railway and we are proud to say it has been designed, printed and programmed entirely by Tony from scratch – there are no commercially produced items in the unit.



Two very different units on our O gauge layout

In the coming months we will be establishing an outside oval of track in order for members to give their locomotives a good running in session. This is likely to be O and OO gauge and capable of analogue or dcc control.

In September four of our members went on the 'Man of Kent' rail tour from Newport to Margate. The diesel locomotive 67005 headed the train from Newport, through the districts of London, to Battersea where the West Country class steam loco 35028 'Clan Line' took us onto Margate. We took the opportunity whilst in Margate to visit the HQ Visitor Centre of Hornby before returning to the station for our return leg with 'Clan Line' that went via Dover, Folkestone and Ashford before returning us to Acton where the diesel was waiting to take us back to Newport.



Clan Line at Dover Priory station

A long, exhausting but very enjoyable day with good company.



## The Railway Shop

Submitted by Martin Herbert

Many of you will have seen or perhaps have purchased our former colleague Phil Williams' book 'Railwaymen of the Welsh Valleys 1914-1967, Memories of Steam Working from Pontypool Road Shed (86G)'. Indeed, you may have got your copy from the Railway Shop, Blaenavon or from the Emporium. As well as the stories from and the focus on the wide range of railwaymen who worked at the shed, the book contains a wonderful array of photos of the local area throughout that period. Well, the good news is that there is soon to be a Volume 2 to complement this.

Currently the publishers, Silver Link, are suggesting that it will be released in late October 2021 and I can assure you, we will be looking to have copies of this book for sale on the Railway as soon as we can get our hands on it. I know that many of you on our Railway will have known Phil well and the contribution he and his family have made to our project since its instigation.

Whilst we sell a number of new books, which are generally those of local interest, both the Railway Shop and the Emporium carry a wide range of second hand (mostly) railway books. If you have any interest in railway topics, from old working timetables, through modelling books to large erudite works on sometimes very focused aspects of the subject. Our collections are always worth a browse.



Bachmann OO9 narrow gauge locomotive

A comment that I often get when people visit us, is just how well stocked we are, particularly in terms of 'OO' gauge modelling. What we do like to emphasise though, is that anything that we can't lay our hands on immediately, we are happy to order from our suppliers. This is particularly relevant in those scales where we have less stock (i.e., 'N', 'OO9', 'O' and even 'G' gauge). E-mail, ring or visit us in the shop or emporium and we'll search it out. As mentioned before, there are a number of interesting models pending, such as the Rapido '15XX' class and the Accurascale 'Manor'. Keep an eye on our Facebook page to see when something new and interesting has arrived at the shop.



Dapol O gauge Class 122 railcar

We have been largely successful in maintaining 6 days a week opening in the shop, however this is difficult to maintain when (dare I say it) some of our volunteers take time away to go on holiday or such things. A couple more people on the shop roster would make an enormous difference with the regular opening. In the coming months we are looking to fund the removal of a water tower from the Severn Valley Railway to Blaenavon and the retail sales will form the main bulk of the support for this. So, if you would like to spare some time helping the sales side of things, do get in touch.



## The Emporium Report Submitted by Steve Thomas

The Emporium has performed really well to date this year and takings have exceeded those when compared to the same opening period in 2019. In 2021 new stock has had to be ordered twice every month instead once every other month as in previous years. The increase in sales could be a result of 'staycation' but hopefully the trend will continue in the future.

The most popular items by far this year have been fridge magnets, a low-cost item that could be viewed as pretty mundane but these have been selling by the hundreds. In fact, as this goes to press an order is in for 300 more. Certainly, our own exclusive branded items including clothing, mugs, coasters, pens etc have all proved extremely popular and is what our customers want. We are looking to expand our exclusive range of goods in 2022.

Secondhand magazines are not a great seller, in fact they take up valuable display space that could be better used. The first thought was to box them all up and send them for recycling, instead I decided to offer them 'FREE' (With an optional donation instead). The first weekend over £15.00 was donated for 'FREE' magazines when less than £5.00 has probably been taken previously all season. A request then – please do not donate any more magazines – once those in stock are gone, we won't be accepting any more. Good quality **railway** books however do sell well and these are welcomed donations.

If you have any suggestions on what you think the Emporium should be selling then please let me know, sales are very much directed to families with young children as they tend to be the ones happy to part with their money.

In July we started stocking the BigJigs range of wooden locomotives and accessories and these have proved to be extremely popular. I contacted the manufacturers to enquire whether they would be interested in adding representations of our home locos to their range. They were extremely interested and asked for photos to work from so don't be surprised if 2022 sees 'Empress' and possibly 'Jessie' on the shelves for sale.

## BLAENAVON'S HERITAGE RAILWAY

**\* EXCLUSIVE \***

Now available in the Emporium

Our exclusive range of coasters, mugs, clothing, fridge magnets, pens and key rings.



The image shows a woman with blonde hair, wearing a green polo shirt with a logo, standing next to a display of railway merchandise. The display includes a train model on a track, a mug, and a purple cap. The background is a dark red panel with white and yellow text.

I have gained a certain reputation in the Emporium; Huw Morgan now calls me Auntie Wainwright (from 'Last of The Summer Wine'). Whilst others call me Arkwright (from 'Open all Hours'). I consider this to be a compliment and am happy with my new found reputation if it brings in more money for the railway.

**P&BR Loco Group**  
**(Submitted by Martin Herbert)**

Well, these last couple of years have been difficult, haven't they?

Recent weeks have seen a gentle restart to work on our GWR Pannier no. 9629. Not surprisingly, after this time, the footplate and the splashers are needing some work on them to tidy them up. Martin B. has started on this work with cleaning down these items and derusting them where necessary.

Also, hopefully the leaks in the shed, which will have played a part in causing these problems, have now been attended to and so the new work will have a greater degree of protection.

We have been trying to obtain some metal in order to progress the refurbishment of the loco's axle boxes and this process has thrown up a number of interesting issues, very much of our age. Firstly, there is the task of finding the suitable modern equivalent of the metal required and then finding a supplier happy to accommodate our needs.

When the Loco Group was set up, internet banking was for the future and hence there was no accommodation in the constitution for it. However, nowadays Companies are not comfortable with being paid by cheque and (as we found out) on occasions, don't appear to know what to do with one. At the time of writing, it looks like we've solved that one, but there is the strong suggestion that the Loco Group needs to join the 21<sup>st</sup> century, at least as far as banking is concerned.

Hopefully work will be able to restart work again on the axle boxes and that in the not-too-distant future the cab and bunker will be in a position to re-join the refurbished footplate and splashers. If any of you out there are looking to join in then you'll be most welcome.

Our e-mail address is: - [pandblocomotivegroup@googlemail.com](mailto:pandblocomotivegroup@googlemail.com) .



*GWR no. 9629 shortly after its arrival at Blaenavon from Cardiff. It is almost looking restored and ready to run.... but then take a closer look at that dome.*

## Carriage and Wagon Department Report

Submitted by Martin Hope

Following on from our successful Shark Wagon restoration earlier this year we were asked to undertake the reconstruction of one end of the M&M GWR Inspection Saloon.

At some time in the past a door to allow a carriage connection to be used had been constructed. Our brief was to remove the door and replace it with a window whilst the carriage was repainted by Harry Spencer from West Somerset Restoration. All this had to be completed in order that the carriage could run in the Autumn Steam Gala.

The team accepted this challenge and by utilising Ron Shackell's woodworking skills ably assisted by our young apprentice Max May-Moebus the door was removed, new framework put in place and new timber exterior wooden sheeting cut and installed.

Inside the coach new wooden panelling was cut to size and fitted ready to be stained and varnished to match the original panels.

Many other tasks were undertaken by all members of the team which allowed the exterior of the carriage to be totally repainted and released for service in the Autumn Steam Gala.

Phase 2 of the restoration has now commenced with installation of lighting, reconfiguration of the toilet compartment and construction of a Guards compartment.



C&W oldest and youngest volunteers Ron and Max pictured at an early stage of the M&M reconstruction.





Steam Department  
Andre Barclay 2074 Llantarnam Abbey undergoing restoration at West Somerset Restoration, Williton



**Steam Department Report  
Submitted by Alex Gourlay**

**Andrew Barclay 'Rosyth No. 1'**

Rosyth has continued in service with no real issues, double heading over the August Bank Holiday weekend with fellow Barclay 1219 and playing its part at our annual steam gala. The fire grate has become very tired and this will be replaced over the next month.

**Hunslet 1873 'Jessie'**

Jessie operated the bulk of the Summer holiday traffic throughout August with no issues and is currently away for a short visit to the Cholsey and Wallingford Railway. It is planned to return to us before the end of October.

**Bagnall 3061 'Empress'**

Empress was in service, the only repairs required in August were some brake adjustments to bring the number of hand brake turns down. The loco has settled down nicely to become one of the best all-rounders in our current fleet.

**Andrew Barclay 1219 'Caledonia Works'**

Caledonia Works operated trains double headed with Rosyth over the August Bank holiday weekend, the loco then received a bit of fettling to solve a few issues found and was back in service to take part in our Annual Steam Gala.

**RSH Austerity 71515 'Mech Navvies'**

Dismantling of the locomotive continues between running trains and carrying out running repairs. The loco has now been jacked up high enough to allow removal of the axle boxes for inspection and the first two of these have been removed. We are just about at the end of the stripping stage with the chassis so the next part will be to clean it all up, paint, undertake any repairs found necessary then start putting it back together.

**Andrew Barclay 2074 'Llantarnam Abbey'**

The overhaul of the chassis continues to progress at West Somerset Restoration Williton. The chassis was lowered onto the overhauled wheels and axle boxes at the end of July making it a rolling chassis again for the first time since 2004! Following this the overhauled springs and spring gear have been refitted, overhauled brake gear refitted, new piston rod made to replace one found defective, new piston rings made, sanding gear made and fitted, drain cocks overhauled new linkage made and fitted, the majority of the inside motion has also now been overhauled and fitted with just the eccentric straps left to complete this. The main task remaining on the chassis part of the overhaul at Williton is the manufacture of the new bronze bearings and the fitting of the outside motion. The Company has also recently agreed to fund the boiler overhaul and construction of a new water tank for the locomotive. The boiler will soon be leaving for overhaul at Williton and Alex Drummond will be constructing us a new tank.







2021 Steam Gala (photo by Thomas Coombe)  
The four locos from our steam gala captured in one photograph.



## 2021 steam Gala

Submitted by Alex Hinshelwood

Well, that's a wrap for another year. A huge thank you to every single one of you. It was great to see all departments pulling together and working as one big team, we should be extremely proud of the show we put on this weekend. Good passenger figures are always a boost to morale.

**The Gala passenger Numbers are:**

**Sat - 261**

**Sun - 200**

A fab turn out considering no visiting locomotive.

Great numbers in the Tea Room and in the Emporium.

Well done on a considerably profitable and most importantly enjoyable weekend which showcased the best of us!



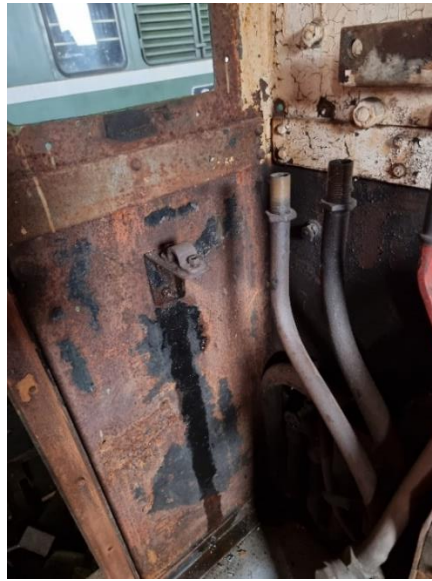
2021 Steam Gala (photos above and below by Thomas Coombes)





**RT1 Progress Report  
(Submitted by Adam Stephens)**

Over the last few months, a lot of progress has been made on RT1 some of which is plain to see other bits not so much. The most obvious of this progress is the work that has been done to the cab. We started this work at the beginning of the year during the short break in restrictions allowing us to come back up to the railway, we started by stripping out as much as possible from the cab including the doors, windows and anything else that could be removed.



Next the surfaces around the windows were cleaned back to bare metal with a wire wheel and painted while the same was being done with the cover for the exhaust which used to run up through the centre of the cab desk.

Most of the paintwork and cleaning was done by Ollie Day who has helped massively with the progression of the locomotive. While this was going on the oil pots that act as topping up pots for the axle boxes were cleaned up and then painted along with a preliminary inspection of the Brake controller.







Once the pots were back from painting (Thank you Roger) new wicks were made for the pots prior to their installation back into the cab.

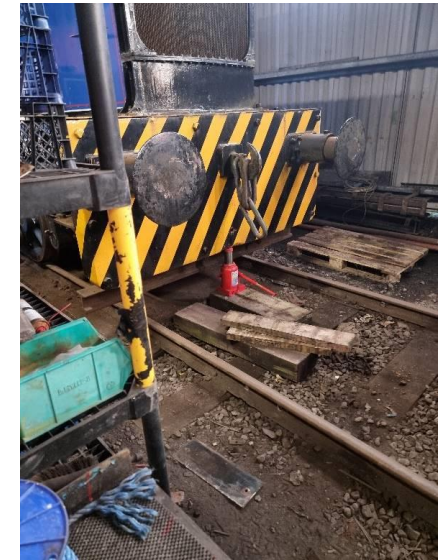


The Con rods were then inspected, and it was found that none of the oil pots for the bearings had wicks in them and that most of them were filled with gunk and water that needed to be cleaned out before new wicks could be made for them and the locomotive allowed to move more freely.

Once this was done new wicks were added to the pots and then tested over a 3-week period to be sure correct function which was a resounding success.



The next job on the list was to sort out the axle boxes as an inspection revealed them to be filled with old, contaminated oil that could be simple scooped out by the handful due to its viscosity. This required the locomotive to be moved over a pit and lifted into the air which was done with the aid of Jonathan Goss and Matthew Thomas.



This allowed for the axle box tops to be cleaned out of all the gunk and new wicks to be installed as well as the axle boxes filled with new oil.

While underneath the locomotive the brake rigging was oiled to allow for smoother operation and the springs were checked for any brakes or signs of excessive wear and happily nothing was found to be wrong.







The next Job that is currently ongoing is the emptying and flushing of the gearbox and drive cogs to allow for proper inspection.

While all this has been going on the brake controller has been taken back home with me and has been painted in its first coat of primer after being cleaned up.





## Bottom Line Report (Submitted and photos by Ethan Langfield)

Well, what a great time it's been for S&T lately!

Finally, after beginning this project back in November 2019, we have completely restored and rebuilt our very first signal! This is a BR WR Ground Signal and would be a common sight in and around yards across the Western region. One of our upcoming S&T plans involves the use of two of these signals as 'point indicators', so hopefully we shall be able to see a couple of working signals in Blaenavon very soon for the first time since 1963! The second signal is also progressing well, with around 75% of the components needed already cleaned up and restored, so keep your eyes peeled for the second signals completion soon!

As well as this excellent progress has been made with tidying up our depots around the railway. In doing so we've made some very interesting discoveries, and many more than will be incredibly useful as the department grows and moves forward. After discussions with John Patton, we have now been given the use of one of the old coal bunkers below the bottom shed, and so now we shall store most of the larger long-term equipment in this, to keep everything in order, and to remove the large amount of equipment strewn outside of the Weighbridge.

A few weeks ago, we also straightened the Start of Token Section board at Furnace Sidings, which had become a bit 'wonky' since its initial installation. We have now rectified this with some postcrete, and the view down towards High Level now looks much improved! As always, if you wish to join the team, and be a part of the re-signalling of our wonderful little line, please get in contact with me at [pbrsignals@gmail.com](mailto:pbrsignals@gmail.com).



Our first restored signal



Adam inspects our new storage area



**Obituary**  
**Marcus Butler 1937-2021**

It is with great sadness we announce the passing of Marcus Butler.

Marcus founded Marcus Music in 1982, nearly 40 years ago.

Over the years Marcus has provided a platform within the folk music industry serving not only concertina players, drummers & re-enactment groups, but also providing a repair service for all kinds of musical instruments within the folk world.

Marcus was also the founder member of Tredegar House Folk Festival, bringing performers from all over the world to Wales.

As some of you know, Marcus has had dementia for the past two or three years, and has had to step back from the business, leaving his team to carry on manufacturing concertinas and rope tensioned drums.

Next year 2022 we will be celebrating 40 years of being in business serving the folk music industry.

Marcus leaves behind his loving wife, three children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

His name will live on in the concertinas and drums we produce.

We'll leave you with a photo of Marcus from 2016 with his other great love of station master at Pontypool and Blaenavon Railway. Photo by Nick Treharne.

Marcus Music 13<sup>th</sup> November 2021.







## Halloween Ghost Trains (Submitted by Alex Hinshelwood)

That wraps up a fantastic Ghost Train event!  
A huge thank you to everyone involved, with a special thanks to [David Perham](#) and [Philip Coombe](#) for the many hours of preparation work.

A whopping 4195 passengers through the doors over the four days in a controlled, prebooked, stress free way!



Photo by Thomas Coombes









## Stations report

(Submitted by Huw Morgan)

This has been a very busy and productive period for the station department and work has continued with the development of the Whistle Inn station including the installation of a new look fence to match the one at Blaenavon High Level station.

A mini digger was taken to the site to scrape the platform surface away, taking away the old weeds and grass in readiness for the new gravel surface. I would like to thank all those who have helped me with the renovations, upgrade and general help. It is much appreciated.







Great news, at the last board meeting it was agreed that the footbridge at Furnace Sidings will receive a major make over.

This will make a huge difference to our 'shop window' and has been made possible by our society as one of their sponsored projects.



Phillips Coombe and myself have made new notice boards for Furnace Sidings, whilst Ray James, Richard Arthur and Stephen Brookman added guttering to the rear of the building at Whistle Inn. They also added slabs for the generator, used to power the building lights, to stand on. Heather Arthur applied the second coats to the two benches and also did some additional tidying up.

The flower beds around Furnace sidings have also been weeded and tidied up and will shortly be planted with perennial plants that will hopefully add some extra colour in the future.

Spring bulbs including bluebells, daffodils and tulips have also been planted to add some spring colour.





We have made a start on BIG PIT Station and the path up to the car park.

Myself and [Philip Coombe](#) removed the big tree which was leaning over the fence, [Stephen Brookman](#) and [Richard Arthur](#) removed all the weeds and overgrown vegetation on the path and as a collective we cut down the gorse and other bushes to reinstate the disabled pull-ins again.

[Heather Arthur](#) once again pulled it out of the bag with the benches on Furnace Sidings with the sanding down and applying Danish Oil. We also started cleaning the back flower bed ready to sow the wild flower seeds ready for spring.



### **The lamp hut refurbishment.**

I finished off the top coat on the lamp hut framing so the next stage was to re-sheet it by bolting the sheeting and roofing back on and trimming etc

The front door now needs to be fixed on before we can complete the renovation.

**Huw Morgan**







Heather Arthur made a start on the creosoting of the fences at Big Pit station whilst Richard Arthur and Stephen Brookman tidied up the debris and vegetation.

Above are before and after photographs of the work they have done so far.





# The Eric Edwards Carriage Shed Official Opening



On Friday 10th September at 15:00 we officially opened the Eric Edwards Carriage Shed. Our avid supporter and advocate Torfaen MS Lynne Neagle attended and conducted the official opening. Many of our volunteers who worked hard on this project both on the ground and behind the scenes, also attended. Following the ceremony refreshments were served at our Furnace Sidings Station. (Alex Hinshelwood).







## Diesel Department

Submitted by Jonathan Goss.

Though many man days have been lost in support of Railway priorities, operational duties and general emergencies, the projects have all moved forward.

### Facilities:

#### Top shed:

The central walkway illumination has been improved with the removal and cleaning of all the diffusers and coupled with the replacement of any failed units.

The central walkway at the front has been cleared ahead of a visit from the mini-digger where we plan to address some of the uneven floor.

Additional lamps have been sourced to illuminate the walkway against the wall of road 1, these are awaiting responses to the damaged roof before we plan erecting.

### Mainliners:

**31203:** Has been involved in shunting in the yard, a lovely sight to see now it is moving once again, a few electrical niggles to be investigated but nothing that stops it from functioning as a shunting loco.

**37216:** Has had a visit from contractors, sadly an electrical fault was encountered which has caused damage, the extent and cause of which is still being investigated. Additional staff have been called in to assist with the fault finding and the rectification thereof.

**37023:** The roof has had a few hundred broken rivets replaced, preparing for paint has also started. Once this is completed, we will be calling in a Crane!

### Shunters:

**1344:** Has had a few issues rectified, a new Radiator is on order which will resolve the leaking radiator problem, the loco is currently undercover whilst we address some other challenges, these include electrical, mechanical, woodwork and bodywork

**5511:** Since its return to traffic, it has been used to aid shunting, other than scaring the drivers, thinking it is going to stall, as the new idle speed is much lower than that previously, there is little to report.

**7063 (170):** has taken a huge leap forward from being a dull grey to warning yellow, red, black orange and off white. The team has pulled out the stops brightening up the shed. The overhauled torque converter has been plumbed in and filled whilst the old unit has been palletised awaiting dispatch for overhaul.

**22497 (RT1):** has had some ups and downs, the team have inspected and undertaken all required works to the axle boxes. the loco was jacked up for this and is already back down on all 6 wheels. Attention now turns to the gearbox and final drive.











# BLAENAVON'S HERITAGE RAILWAY



## Join us this July for our Classic Transport Rally **16TH & 17TH JULY 2022**

We're looking for classic and unique vehicles to join us at our annual transport rally at Blaenavon's Heritage Railway this July.

Email a photograph of your vehicle and a brief description to  
**[transport@pbrly.co.uk](mailto:transport@pbrly.co.uk)**

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







6979 ON COAL TRAIN AT FURNACE SIDINGS IN MARCH 1970

Dear Santa,  
We've been  
very, very, very  
good  
(most of the time)

Photo by Thomas Coombes



## Santa Specials 2021 (Submitted by Steve Thomas)

Despite encountering some issues and hiccups leading up to the event the Santa Specials proved to be one of the highlights of our year.

A frantic search to locate Santa and the late delivery of presents were just two of the problems we had to overcome before we were ready to welcome **3,763 guests** during the six days of operation of our Santa Specials in 2021. (1,986 in 2019, that's **89%** up! (Source Alex Hinshelwood)).

The fact that tickets for the whole six days sold out within 3 minutes of them going on sale online demonstrated just how popular this event has become with our paying guests.

Once again it proved that when we work together as a team, we can deliver an event that we can be proud of.

Feedback from our guests strengthened the decision to offer pre-booked online tickets that led to a much calmer and professional delivery, given the amount of people who attended.

Having Santa on board the train, with his helpers who ensured that each child received an appropriate gift, was also a hit with many saying they preferred this way of meeting Santa.

A small team of volunteers worked tirelessly on the train to make sure each person received their mince pie and either sherry or fruit juice.

Following the event, it was decided that a sub group would meet to plan the event for the 2022, the objective being to undertake the preparations, including decorating the station, ordering presents, and the method of delivery in a much timelier fashion to avoid a mad rush at the last minute,











## Jessie at Big Pit station – photo by Thomas Coombes

If you have any PBR related stories or anecdotes you would like to have included in the next issue of 'Bottom Line' then please forward them to: [steve.thomas@pbrlyco.uk](mailto:steve.thomas@pbrlyco.uk) by no later than March 2022 Thanks to all those who contributed reports for this issue.

Items submitted may be edited to fit in available space. The views expressed in the articles in this issue are those of the contributors.

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