

Newsletter of the Bala & Ffestiniog Railway Heritage Trust



B&FRHT



Ian Ffestiniog Station, Source unknown

CONTENTS

Shane Barry



PAGE 2
Chairman's Report

PAGE 3
Llan Ffestiniog

PAGE 4
Llan Ffestiniog - Future

PAGE 5
The Plans

PAGE 6
The Money Trail

PAGE 7
Bygone Images

PAGE 8
AGM 2022

PAGE 9
Model Railway

PAGE 10
Job Opportunities



Welcome to our eight newsletter!
This is the first newsletter since

a lot of the Covid restrictions were eased. I realize that there has not been much activity on the ground for the last few months but there certainly has been a lot of work and negotiations going on in the background.

Part of the reason for the lack of boots on the ground was at the request of the current owner of the Llan Ffestiniog Site to enable discussions to take place surrounding the future ownership of the site. More on this later in the newsletter.

In addition to the background negotiations there has been activity on the Facebook pages and groups to help promote the railway resulting in the formation of a small group of people to build a model of the proposed site to help promote the project and raise funds for the Trust. There will be progress on this in the next newsletter as the baseboards for the project will be purchased this week!

Trolley Progress has been slow which is in part due to the problems caused by Covid and due to only one member having time to carry out the work on the trolleys. There is a short update about the progress of this project in the next newsletter.

Happy reading.

Shane Barry
Interim Chairman (2019 - 2022)



Llan Ffestiniog

The background

The Trust started working on the site of Llan Ffestiniog Station with the permission of the Landowners (who are also both members of the Trust) and a good bit of progress was made towards improving the layout of the site and tidying up the mass of weeds and debris on the site. Quite a few weekends work has enabled an improved access to many areas of the site for the owners and members of the Trust.



This work enabled us to get a better idea of the layout of the land and enable us to plan future works in a more structured way. It also enabled the Trust and the site owner to access areas that were overgrown and chart out a split of the land that benefits both parties.



Llan Ffestiniog - Future

The Trust long term aim is to rebuild the old station building as it was prior to demolition (in full working order not in its decayed state!) with a view to using it as a base for all future activities of the Trust as well as enabling the creation of an exhibition of the line thus promoting the work of the Trust.

This is likely to be the first major project for the Trust, sadly there is no space on site to rebuild any of the other buildings including the old goods shed and carriage sidings but we will at least have the space to be able to recreate the station building again.



The current site has the remains of the village side platform in place and some of the footprint of the old station building. However it is likely that the old foundations will have to be removed in order to be able to rebuild a replica of the station as construction will need to be to modern standards.



The Trust currently does not have a lot of images of the old station site and is trying to find as many as it can from open sources and any other source that we can access. If you know of any more images of the station building please do point us in their direction so we can rebuild as accurate a representation of the old station as we can.

We would be especially grateful of any images of the internal structure of the building.

The Plans

Acquisition

The first stage is to ensure acquisition of the site and we are fortunate that the current owners of the site are very supportive of the project and its long term aims. This does not mean negotiations have not been easy!

The current draft agreement (subject to further negotiations and signing) is for the Trust to lease the site for a period of 5 years enabling the Trust to have stability with regards the site and allowing it to start to implement its plans towards maintaining and improving the site. Any more permanent changes would need agreement of the current landowners but it is believed that as they are good supporters of the project that changes (if any are necessary) should be possible to complete.



Once the draft agreement is signed it will enable the Trust to fence off the land covered in the lease. This fencing will be temporary to enable the Trust to establish its boundaries but also to enable the Trust to start planning its site maintenance works with a long term view towards creating a usable site for a rebuilt railway station / Trust base.



In the long term the plan is to replace the temporary fencing with a boundary wall built to traditional stone wall construction to further help the station to blend into the local environment.

The existing entrance on station road may be replaced by a replica GWR gate but this is subject to discussions once the lease is completed.

The money trail

The lease of the land will be for 5 years with a view to purchase in 5 years time. This gives the Trust stability for at least the next 5 years and enables it to carry out works aimed at supporting the rebuilding of the station.

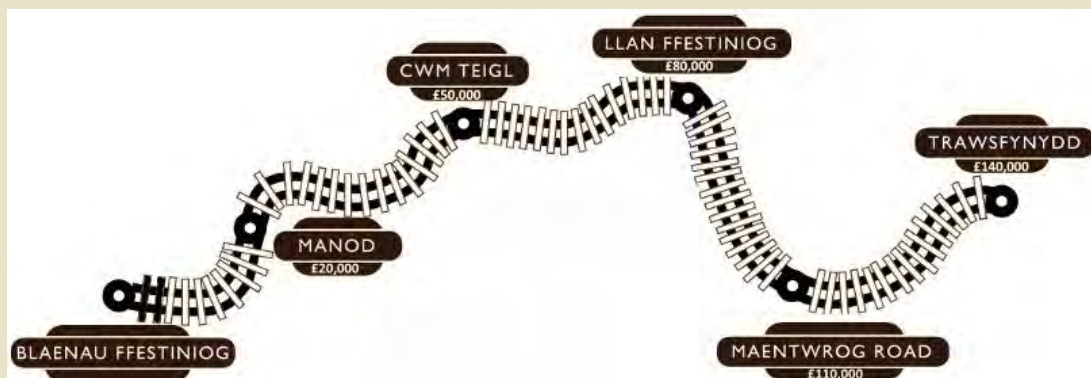
To this end the Trust now needs to make financial plans to enable it to cover the cost of the lease over the next five years, cover the cost of maintenance works on the site as well as build up funds in view of its aim to complete the outright purchase of the site in 5 years time.



To help achieve its aims the Trust will need to register as a charity and at the time of writing we only need a minimum of 28 people donating £5 a month (plus gift aid) to achieve the necessary £5,000 a year to register as a charity.

To really give the Trust a comfortable level of fundraising over the next 5 years we need to aim for 100 members a year who also donate £5 a month. If we achieve this target we will comfortably be able to afford the annual lease charges as well as have a surplus in 5 years sufficient to cover the purchase of the land and costs associated with maintaining the land while it is leased to the Trust.

We look forward to welcoming your continued support and any new members who join us over the next few months and years.



Bygone Images

We are grateful for this selection of images that were sent into us recently for use by the Trust to help in its efforts to rebuild the station, with thanks to Dr Keith Jagers.



AGM 2022

The delayed 2022 AGM was held virtually on the 8th May 2022 during which various updates were given to the members. These updates have been overtaken by the contents of this newsletter.

The AGM included the election of two new members to the committee, these are Matt Henchcliffe and Andy Bullimore. Their stories are below

Matt Henchcliffe

Age 50

Blaenau Ffestiniog

Experience of standard gauge railway came at age 28 with GTRM and Railtrack working on the West Coast Mainline route modernization operating Windhoff MPV trains electrification renewal trains. After a long stint with Freightliner intermodal as a train driver and instructor from 2003 I joined GB Railfreight in 2017 as Train Manager progressing my career on the footplate.

It makes me incredibly proud carrying on the family railway tradition where most spent their careers working at Welshpool station. A photograph currently hanging the restaurant at Welshpool shows the station staff smartly dressed in GWR uniform except for my great uncle who noticeable by his trench coat had not long arrived home from demob seeing action in Burma.

Being a part of this exciting project I bring a wealth of experience from the volunteer sector where I hold company director, chairman and communications positions.

In more recent times my focus has been developing my interests in hospitality with a hotel and Airbnb businesses.

Andy Bullimore age 49 Conwy

Having been brought up within a railway family, my Father having worked as Traffic Inspector in Llandudno Junction, before being made Chief Movements Inspector at Chester he ended his career as Assistant Area Production manager in Liverpool. My brother having worked up though the ranks as Signaller is now one of the MOM'S in Llandudno Junction.

My career started with British rail in 1990 as a booking clerk and travel advisor based in Chester, before moving onto retail in 1994, where I held department manager positions for Spar, Safeways,

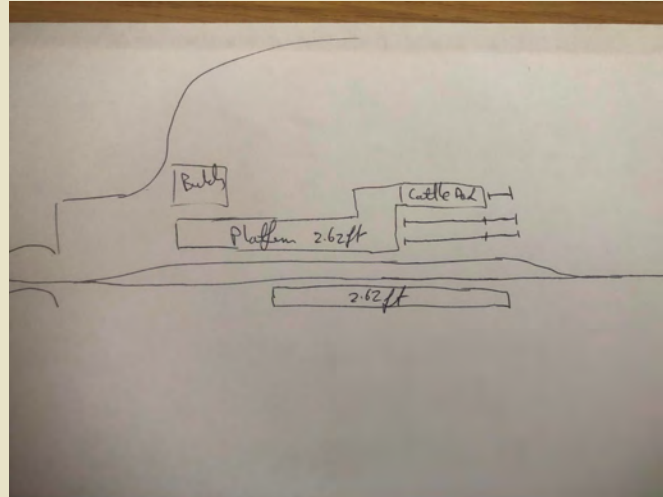
Morrisons, Asda and Tesco. After 15 years, I fancied a change and moved into Logistics and for the last 13 years have been a delivery courier for Hermes/Evri, Amazon and Yodel.

I still have a keen interest in railways and travel extensively, alongside my other passions of Walking, climbing, historical buildings and architecture.



Model Railway

Shane Barry



A few members are coming together to design and build a model of Llan Ffestiniog Station to show the development plans of the Trust as well as to enable them to change the plans in model form before building the real thing.

This enables the trust to ensure that its plans are feasible and not overbearing to the nature of the area. It will give a visual representation of the site and will be able to convey the plans in a visual format rather than people trying to view it in their minds.

The layout will also enable the Trust to promote the project at model railway exhibitions and other areas to further raise the profile of the Trust.



We are recruiting!

Website Translator

We have a need for an individual who can assist us with the translation of our website from English to Welsh to help ensure our website is bi-lingal and accessible to all. This is a post which would be suitable for an individual to work from home.

This is a volunteer unpaid position.

Membership Secretary

We have a need for an individual who would be interested in managing our membership system and assisting members with any queries they have with their membership, ensuring receipt of gift aid forms and recording receipt of cheques (including banking). In time the role will also involve issuing of members ID cards either through direct printing or liaising with an ID card printer to print the cards on our behalf.

This is a volunteer unpaid position.

Surveyor

We have a need for an individual who can assist us with the survey of the lands as and when we gain access to them with a view to accurately recording the land and providing relevant advise to the trust.

This is a volunteer unpaid position.

Architect

We have a need for an individual who can help the Trust to produce architectural drawings and plans for its building works moving forward with the initial works being concentrated at Llan Ffestiniog. The plans would need to be suitable for use by the local planning authorities.

This is a volunteer unpaid position.

Construction

We have a need for an individual or individuals who have experience in building conservation and construction to advise and assist on building works to be carried out within the Trusts remit.

This is a volunteer unpaid position.