

Corwen Central News



On Christmas Eve 2021 the Santa Season came to a successful end, having worked over a period of 9 days, carrying approx 600 passengers per day. Our only serviceable steam locomotive, ex GWR Class 2884, “3802” performed successfully and was a credit to the hard work put in by the loco’s owner, Nick Gilbert and a dedicated, but small MPD volunteer group. Unfortunately, the four remaining appearances on the “*Mince Pie Specials*” have had to be cancelled due to the reintroduction of social distancing and a ban on groups of more than 30 meeting indoors.

However, as the New Year of 2022 opens, the Railway Trust is now in a sound financial position, bolstered by the very successful Santa Season. It is no longer in “saviour” mode but



Late Autumn Display brings 2021 to a close Photo : PR

now in “planning” mode, ready to take the railway forward into a new era, where there is still much to do!

As part of this new era, the Corwen Project Team has been very busy levelling the station site, making it more accessible to both volunteer staff and passengers, completing the

cladding on the signal box and continuing with the building of the on-platform waiting room.

Although the winds and rain have struck across the Dee Valley, there has not been any heavy snowfall nor deep freeze, so the Corwen site has never been inaccessible for work.

Filling in



Hands to the Wheel! Team members start to tip one of the Mermaids Photo : DT

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As part of the tidying and levelling process around the station site, several deliveries of ballast ,

Just before the Christmas break, the final pieces of cladding were added to the outside of the Corwen Signal Box.



*The other side! Ballast being tipped in November 2019
Photo :PR*



*Last pieces of cladding being added. Note the steep angle of the embankment
Photo : DT*

recovered from other rail/sleeper renewal projects on the railway have taken place. Recent deliveries have been made using the 08 shunter and Mermaid side tipping wagons. These can deliver about 28 tons a trip. Before being tipped, the wagon needs to be anchored to the running rail on the opposite side to where the contents are to land. Once secured, the tip can start using a hand cranked wheel. As the body rises the wagon door opens allowing the load to fall clear of the running line.

Signal Box Finale



*The signal box in December 2018
Photo : PR*



*Looking smart and ready for action!.
Photo : PR*

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Although it will not be operational for quite some time yet, it will nevertheless stand guard at the entrance to Corwen Station ready for action when called..

Station Building

The work on the station building continues with most window and door frames in the place.



Walls and windows

Photo : DT

As can be seen in the photos, nearly all the walls have reached the height of the steel framework. The internal walls for the toilet block have also put on some height to match the outside



West end of building - internal wall Photo: DT

Rail Ballast

Over a three day period in early December, 300 tons of Dolerite ballast was delivered to Carrog Station Yard. The stone came from Hanson's Quarry in Penmaenmawr in a series of 20 ton loads.



300 tons of Dolerite Ballast in Carrog Yard

Photo : PR

This delivery will ensure that there will be more than enough ballast available to complete any work at Corwen as well as at other points on the railway.

Work is scheduled to take place at Deeside for example, early in the New Year where 140 concrete sleepers will be changed on a bed of new stone from the Carrog stack.

Funding and Lucky Numbers

The winner of the December Corwen Raffle is Neil Evans with Number 50. Neil is a former Chairman of the Railway Trust and was in office at the inception of the Corwen Station Project. He has continued to support the project and in so

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doing has kindly donated his £50 winnings back to Corwen Canopy Appeal.

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	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80

Lucky Numbers

This month's winning number is 50

The Project's Treasurer, Paul Bailey writes :
 “December's draw marks the end of the Corwen Raffle as I will not be running it again in 2022. The raffle has been going for 6 years with the proceeds donated each year to fund a different part of the Corwen Station Project. In total it has raised over £13,500 towards the Water Tower, On Platform Station Buildings and Canopy. Thank you to everyone that has supported this raffle with their subscriptions and also many who have freely donated their winnings back to the Corwen Station Funds”

“In thanking Neil for his donation, I would also like to thank him for producing the excellent Llangollen Railway 2022 Calendar with a fine collection of watercolour sketches depicting our Railway in a style unique only to Neil. I'm hoping that I can persuade him to get his paintbrush out again to sketch some more for a similar offering in 2023. This Calendar has raised over £2000 for Llangollen Railway Trust funds. Having thought we had completely sold out we've found 10 more but that's it and then they're all gone!

Please contact me at the usual address if you want one of these last remaining few – they are £6 each plus £1.50 p&p.

For anyone interested I have run a similar raffle to the one above for the last 12 months for the Llangollen Railway Great Western Locomotive Group (*CCNLs passim*) to raise funds for the contracted Boiler work required to finish off the Group's Small Prairie Loco 5532.



Sister engine 5572 at work in Llangollen
 Photo: Courtesy the 5532 Group

Hopefully, funds permitting, 5532 will be restored to steam for the first time in the preservation era across the next 2 years and will then become a flagship Loco at Llangollen alongside the Railway's own Pannier Tank 7754 over the next 10 years. This raffle is run weekly on a 40 Team Football Card. Teams are £2.50 each and the winner gets £50. Please contact me for further details if you would like to join this weekly raffle.

As we prepare to enter 2022 exciting times are ahead, CoVid permitting, as we finally get to open our New Station at Corwen around mid-year.

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Happy New Year to one and all of our Llangollen Railway members and supporters”.

For donations to the Corwen Project especially the Canopy Appeal - Please make cheques payable to CCRD (Corwen Central Railway Development) and forward to the Llangollen Railway Trust, The Station, Abbey Road, Llangollen, LL20 8NS

If you want more details /payment options. on any of the appeals or merchandise then please contact Paul Bailey on 01490 450271 or email paulbaileywincham@yahoo.co.uk

For details of the 5532 Group please see <https://www.facebook.com/5532locomotive/>

End Piece

In 567, the Council of Tours "proclaimed the twelve days from Christmas to Epiphany (traditionally 6 January) as a sacred and festive season, and established the duty of Advent fasting in preparation for the feast."The historians

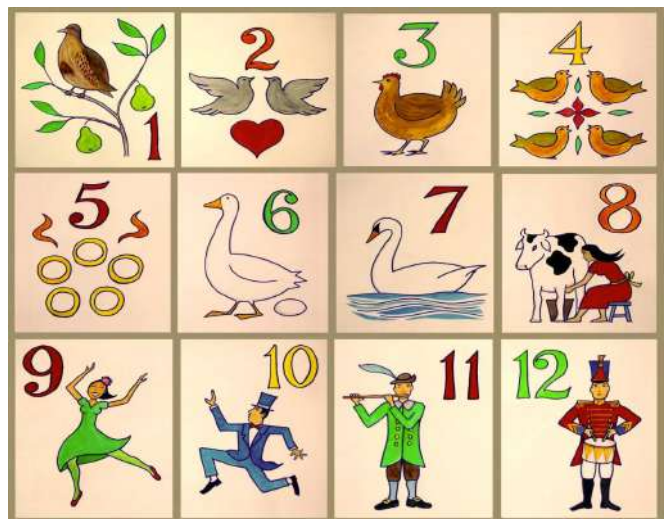


Adoration of the Magi Artist Giotto (1266 -1337)

Christopher Hill and William J. Federer, state that

this was done in order to solve the "administrative problem for the Roman Empire as it tried to coordinate the solar Julian calendar with the lunar calendars of its provinces in the east."

Within the Twelve Days of Christmas, there are celebrations both secular and religious.



Christmas Song/Christmas Card Published in 1780

Christmas Day, if it is considered to be part of the Twelve Days of Christmas and not as the day preceding the Twelve Days, is celebrated by Christians as the liturgical feast of the Nativity of the Lord. It is a public holiday in many nations, including some where the majority of the population is not Christian.

The 26th December is "St. Stephen's Day", a feast day in the Western Church. In Great Britain, it is also the secular holiday of Boxing Day. In some parts of Ireland it is denominated "Wren Day".

The Twelve Days of Christmas are now best remembered in what was originally a counting and forfeit song, first published in a 1780 children’s book called *Mirth With-out Mischief*, a first edition of which sold at Southeby's Auction House for £20,000 in 2014.

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Many variations of the lyrics have existed at different points. Some mention “*bears a-baiting*” or “*ships a-sailing*”; some name the singer’s mother as the gift giver instead of their true love. Early versions list four “*colly*” birds, an archaic term meaning black as coal (blackbirds, in other words). Some people theorise that the five gold rings actually refer to the markings of a ring-necked pheasant, which would align with the bird motif of the early verses.

In the Faroe Islands, there is a comparable counting Christmas song. The gifts include: one feather, two geese, three sides of meat, four sheep,

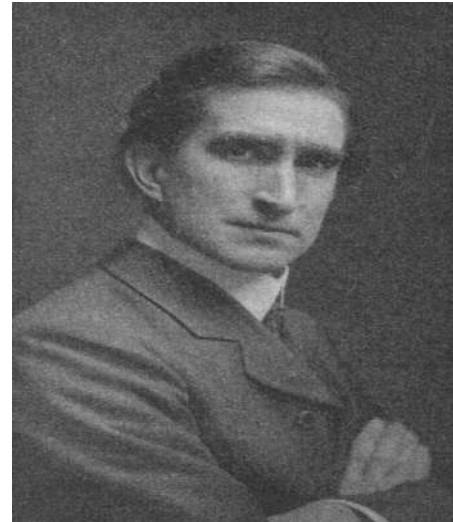


Faroe Islands Stamp

Issued 1994

five cows, six oxen, seven dishes, eight ponies, nine banners, ten barrels, eleven goats, twelve men, thirteen hides, fourteen rounds of cheese and fifteen deer. These were illustrated in 1994 by local cartoonist Óli Petersen (born 1936) on a series of two stamps issued by the Faroese Philatelic Office.

However, the song most familiar to us today comes from an English composer named Frederic Austin; in 1909, he set the melody and lyrics (including changing “*colly*” to “*calling*”) and added as his own flourish the drawn-out cadence of “*five go-old rings.*”



Portrait of Frederic Austin (1907)

Photographer unknown

In its quest to calculate the cost of all the presents in the song, the PNC Financial Services Group has published an annual index since 1984 called the *Christmas Price Index*. For Christmas 2021 the total comes to a hefty \$41,205.58, (£30,720) or \$179,454.19 (£133,793) if you count each mention of an item separately (which would amount to 364 gifts in all) — up 5.4 percent from 2019!!

The up/down side - Swans are still very expensive (at £1,600, or £11,200 for all seven) but at least they havestayed the same price as 2019, whilst the cost of the five gold rings (£633 total) increased 8.5 percent. No matter the cost, actually giving someone all this stuff is probably not a great idea – think of the maintenance – housing for the birds, boarding costs for Lords, milkmaids, dancers, drummers and pipers – **OH! THE NOISE!!**

**WISHING YOU ALL A VERY HAPPY AND
SUCCESSFUL 2022**