

Corwen Central News



Changes in weather come so quickly across and along the Dee Valley it is sometimes difficult to know what's happening from one day to the next. Just recently, the Valley has been blessed with such a variety changing



Snow bank and waste heap blend on the Horse shoe Pass Photo : PR

from rain to mild days, to bitterly cold ones, biting in from the east and back to sunshine, but more importantly lengthening days, giving more time to get on with maintenance tasks along the railway, ready for the return to operations – CoVid Regulations

permitting. For all this battering, the early shoots of rebirth have been seen along the Valley. Nature is rarely put off “its stride”, bringing much needed colour back into the landscape.

As with so many businesses in North Wales the absence of customers means nil income and a

reliance – if available – on Government funding. The leisure and tourism industry, in which the Llangollen Railway plays an important part has no products which it can sell on-line, the product is the location with a ride on a train or a stay in a forest lodge with walking or pony trekking. The only way these businesses can be restored to health is if visitors are once again allowed to come and enjoy the attractions long the Dee Valley.



Hazel catkins (Corylus avellana) Photo : PR

Stairs with attitude

Restricted access, due to CoVid regulations has meant that work at Corwen has only been allowed to proceed with a few members of the team in attendance and has been run on a care and maintenance basis and in response to contractor

Corwen Central News

requirements such as the delivery and installation of the signal box steps. (see *CCNL February 2021*).

newly refurbished windows brought the box back to life



Ex Weston Rhyn Signal Box in Carrog Yard 2018 Photo : PR

It's just over 2 years since the ex Weston Rhyn signal box operating floor (signal box top) was recovered from Carrog Station Yard where it had been in storage for the last 20 years, and placed on its new concrete base. Since this time it has stood watch over the progress of the track and station



Poor condition of external corner post - compare new wood at top of stairs

Photo : PM

During the installing of the new external stairs to the signal box an opportunity was taken, out of necessity to examine the state of the porch and its floor as all elements contribute to the strength and safety of the building.

The corner post of the cabin was found to be rotten and bowed outward by about 12mm with about 35% of the wood rotten . Work involved the cutting away of the rotten wood, making an insert with a 4mm steel plate glued and screwed on one side and then fitted and secured into the opening made by cutting the rotten wood away.

This will permit the fitting of a tie bar through the whole post . The next task will be the making of a steel housing for the other end of the tie bar which will be located between the outer and inner cladding and secured by hold down bolts through the wood base beams and into the concrete block



SB Stairs with hand rail and porch door open Photo: PM

platform until recently when the addition of the

Corwen Central News

wall. It is debatable whether or not the “bow” can be taken out but it should stop any further movement after the tie bar is tightened

Other pieces of rotten wood were replaced along with external cladding. Finally a new floor was fitted. This has left the signal box dry, safe and secure, permitting ready access for any further additional fixtures and trimmings.



Peter Robson measures up for door clearance - standing on the scaffold below the porch! Photo: PM



Pete Robson and John Mason (R) at the end of a productive day Photo : PM

Repairs were made to the signalbox porch where the same problem with the door post as with the corner post was identified but proved a lot easier to cure. The roof was finished earlier in the month and made weather tight with gutters all the way round.

Signalling the future

A number of readers have asked if there are any other photos showing the proposed signal layout for Corwen Station. Below are a couple more, once again illustrating the use of modern technology to help visualise the future. The



Porch floor boards complete offering a safe entrance to and from the stairs vv Photo: PM



CN11 Shunt signal - UP siding to Platform 2 Source : HJP

Corwen Central News

photographs come from the file prepared by Huw Parker..



CN 24 & 11 UP starter Platform 2 and Shunt signal to Up siding Source : HJP



RexQuote Superailer at work at the West End points Photo : PR

Moving East

With the need to put the new timbers on the Dee Bridge and to join the railway back together again, before operations can re-start, the Superailer RRV is being called up from Corwen to provide lifting capacity on the west end of the current void. No other motive power will be available until the join has been made. The RRV will be handling sleepers and helping with the positioning of the 1.5 tonne timbers.

The reuniting of “east” and “west” will allow a locomotive to travel to the far end of the railway to help with the ballasting of Corwen, supplies for which will be taken from Carrog Yard and Bonwm Farm.

Funding and Lucky Numbers

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***

February’s Corwen Project raffle winner is no. **50 Neil Evans**, former PLC chairman and artist. A cheque for £50 will be going to Neil with thanks and congratulations on his win

Last month’s winner **Derek Foster** kindly donated his winnings to the Llangollen Railway Suburban Group, so many thanks go to Derek for his continued support for this group's activity.

Corwen Central News

This month Project Treasurer Paul Bailey writes “ Once again Project Funds are in a steady state with our main concern being the financing of the **Corwen Station Canopy**, donations to which are very welcome. With the opening of the Railway and in particular Corwen Station still some time away it's worth giving another “*shout out*” for the **Llangollen Railway Great Western Locomotive Group’s Small Prairie 5532**.



Small Prairie 5532 in the Llangollen Loco Shed

Photo : LRGWLG

With reduced motive power on the railway for the foreseeable future this small prairie, along with the LRT's Class 57XX pannier tank, 7754 is destined to play an important part in transporting and entertaining our visitors. If enough funding can be found to complete the boiler work then there is a chance the locomotive can steam in 2022, the 60th anniversary of withdrawal from BR service (1962).

25 of the 195 small boiler tubes are still looking for a sponsor at £50 each for the Llangollen Railway Great Western Locomotive Group’s Small Prairie 5532 Boiler. Also on the sponsorship list are the following items

8 Crown Stays @ £125 each

35 Steel Stays @ £35 each

240 Copper Stays @ £70 each

Alternatively if you could afford £10 per month then the “5532 Club” is available for you to join which would help speed up the Boiler works. We have 27 that have joined so far but if we could double this membership then that would bring in over £500 per month for our Boiler.

For donations to the Corwen Project especially the Canopy Appeal - Please make cheques payable to CCRD (Corwen Central Railway Development)

For donations to LRGWLG Tube Appeal - Please make cheques payable to LRGWLG

For details and payment method for the “5532 Club” please contact Paul below

All cheques and enquiries to Paul Bailey at the following address

Mr Paul Bailey, Dolwen, Bryneglwys, Corwen, Denbighshire LL21 9LY

You can Telephone Paul on 01490 450271 if you wish to pay other than by Cheque.

End Piece

In the last edition of *CCNL* mention was made of the Iron Age Hill forts of Moel Arthur, Moel y Gaer and Foel Fenlli all part of Clwydian Range, forming the northern escarpment of the Dee Valley. It should come as no surprise that **Moel Arthur**, along with many places in the west of

Corwen Central News

Britain, has become associated with the legends of King Arthur (*Brenin Arthur*).



Tapestry showing Arthur as one of the Nine Worthies, wearing a coat of arms often attributed to him (c. 1385) Cited : Geoffrey Ashe, The Quest for Arthur's Britain [Praeger, 1969].

King Arthur (Welsh: Brenin Arthur, Cornish: Arthur Gernow, Breton: Roue Arzhur) was a legendary British leader who, according to medieval histories and romances, led the defence of Britain against Saxon invaders in the late 5th and early 6th centuries. The details of Arthur's story are mainly composed of folklore and literary invention, and modern historians generally agree that he is unhistorical. The sparse historical background of Arthur is gleaned from various sources, including *the Annales Cambriae*, *the Historia Brittonum*, and the writings of *Gildas*. Arthur's name also occurs in early poetic sources such as *Y Gododdin*, a medieval Welsh poem consisting of a series of elegies to the men of the Brittonic kingdom of Gododdin and its allies who,



Arthur defeats the Saxons - 19th Century picture by John Cassell (23 January 1817 – 2 April 1865)

according to the conventional interpretation, died fighting the Angles of Deira and Bernicia at a place named *Catraeth* (possibly Catterick) in about AD 600. It is traditionally ascribed to the bard *Aneirin* and survives only in one manuscript, *the Book of Aneirin*.



Culhwch entering Arthur's court in the Welsh tale Culhwch and Olwen. An illustration by Alfred Fredericks for a 1881 edition of the Mabinogion

Arthur is a central figure in the legends making up *the Matter of Britain*. The legendary Arthur developed as a figure of international interest largely through the popularity of *Geoffrey of*

Corwen Central News

Monmouth's fanciful and imaginative 12th-century *Historia Regum Britanniae* (*History of the Kings of Britain*). In some Welsh and Breton tales and poems that date from before this work, Arthur appears either as a great warrior defending Britain from human and supernatural enemies or as a magical figure of folklore, sometimes associated with the Welsh otherworld *Annwn*. (*the Otherworld* in Welsh mythology. Ruled by *Arawn* (or, in Arthurian literature, by *Gwyn ap Nudd*), it was essentially a world of delights and eternal youth where disease was absent and food was ever-abundant. It became identified with the Christian afterlife in paradise (or heaven)).



The Death of Arthur by John Garrick (1862), depicting a boat arriving to take the dying Arthur to Avalon after the Battle of Camlann

Although the themes, events and characters of the Arthurian legend varied widely from text to text, and there is no one definitive version, Geoffrey's version of events often served as the starting point for later stories. Geoffrey depicted Arthur as a king of Britain who defeated the Saxons and established a vast empire. Many elements and incidents that are now an integral part of the Arthurian story appear in Geoffrey's *Historia*,

including Arthur's father *Uther Pendragon*, the magician *Merlin*, Arthur's wife *Guinevere*, the sword *Excalibur*, Arthur's conception at Tintagel, his final battle against Mordred at Camlann, and final rest in Avalon.

The 12th-century French writer *Chrétien de Troyes*, who added *Lancelot and the Holy Grail* to the story, began the genre of Arthurian romance that became a significant strand of medieval literature. In these French stories, the narrative focus often shifts from King Arthur himself to other characters, such as various *Knights of the Round Table*. Arthurian literature thrived during the Middle Ages but waned in the centuries that followed until it experienced a major resurgence in the 19th century with the Romantic revival and depicted, for by artists of the Pre Raphaelite Brotherhood. In the 21st century, the legend continues to have prominence, not only in literature but also in adaptations for theatre, film, television, comics and other media.

(For example : “*Game of Thrones*, an American TV series 2011-2019 based on the fantasy world created by George R.R Martin in his books “*A Song of Ice and Fire*”)



GOT : *Winter is coming*

Photo : HBO