

## Corwen Central News



A good spell of warm dry weather throughout most of April has left the Dee Valley with plenty to be “bright” about. Strong Spring colours have mixed well with the expected greens and russets left over from the winter months.



Looking south across the Clwydian Range Photo : PR

The good weather has coincided with the easing of the CoVid regulations in Wales and the permitted travel across the border to England. Many businesses along the Dee Valley have been dusting themselves down in anticipation of being able to welcome customers and guests back again. Unfortunately, the Llangollen Railway is unable to join in the revival at the moment, still being subject to the Plc sell-off /auction of assets, due to be concluded by May 12<sup>th</sup>.

In the meantime work at the Corwen Station



A bit of early independence , but mum looks on! Photo : PR

Site has continued in a limited way, being under the control of the Railway Trust, but still having to operate under CoVid regulations.

Under this guise all the boarded up windows of the signal box have been replaced with newly repaired glazed sliders, a block floor has been added to the basement, woodwork has now been completed and the stairs has received a fine coat of Western Region brown.

Further to the west attention has now turned to the brick work on the platform building.

# Corwen Central News

## Signal Box



*Signal box awaits external cladding*

*Photo : PR*

The limitations on the Project Team have prevented the finishing of the ballasting of the running lines in the Station, so attention has had to focus on what could be achieved. Previous editions of CCNL have been showing the work on the former Weston Rhyn signal cabin now proudly resurrected on its new base at the east of the Up platform.



*Steel frame and tie bars to bind in the corner posts*

*Photo : PR*

Much of the wood work for this project was due to take place much later in the scheme of things, but the untimely arrival of the CoVid regulation in Wales, limiting the amount of work which could be done on site, meant that time could be devoted to restoring the signal box to its former glory rather sooner than anticipated. The signal box has become an important symbol of continuity and determination for the work gang to deliver the Station as a fully operational western terminus of the Llangollen Railway. To this end the staircase has been painted and the woodwork of the porch and corner posts has been fully secured. The photographs show the completed structure with all windows now “un-boarded” and awaiting the external cladding to the locking room.

Rainstorms in the early part of the year



*New block floor for the signal box basement*

*Photo : PR*

showed that the signal box basement was apt to collect the water – as is the wont of many a basement! Taking advantage of the good spring weather, the basement dried out and now sports a brand new block floor, making use of some remaindered blocks from the platform build.



## Corwen Central News

The result of all this is that the basement floor is rather higher than before and water can drain away without first dampening the contents stored there.

Along with the block floor, electrical power and lighting have been added, courtesy of LR Trustee and Vice Chairman and electrician, Phil Coles

### **Building on**

With the easing of the CoVid regulations, a more substantial work gang can now meet at the station site so a decision has been made to make a start on the brick work of the on-platform waiting room and toilets.

Readers may recall that this part of the project was suspended 18 months ago due to a necessary revision of the building's design. Before CoVid regulations came into force across the UK, the steel frame of the building was erected and potential water and sewage connections put



in place. The design for the canopy and associated steelwork is already in hand and will be prepared by Barnett Engineering of Rhos, near Wrexham, who have already installed major items on site such as the iconic water tower.

Many of the bricks to be used in the first four courses have been recovered from the bridge piers which carried the Corwen – Denbigh and Rhyl railway over the River Dee (Ruthin Spur). These bricks have been relieved of their mortar traces by careful chipping and the use of brick acid to restore the quality of the bricks' surface.

This is another of those “hidden” jobs when all of a sudden a pile of building bricks appear with never a thought for the long hours two or three volunteers have put into making it happen.

The bridge piers were supposed to be made from good quality engineering blue bricks, but careful examination of the recovered bricks would seem to indicate that the “esteemed” Victorian engineers were not above substituting cheaper, lower quality house bricks into their structures!!



*Reclaimed bricks marking the corner post* Photo : PR

The accompanying photograph shows volunteers Peter Jump and Joel Scott laying the first course of bricks for the waiting room.

## Corwen Central News



Joel Scott (L) and Peter Jump laying the first course of bricks on the station building  
Photo : PR

### Only an arm's length.....



The sewer pipe awaiting permission to add "an arm's length" to connect to the main drain.  
Photo: PN

In the April edition of CCNL there was an optimistic report from the Project Team's hydrologist and surveyor, Peter Neve that the longed for sewer connection was at hand. (Joining the platform building's facilities to the Health Centre's sewer) Readers may recall that it has

only taken two years to get this far with an alleged "6week lead time"!!

Unfortunately, Peter reports, another setback has been encountered! The contractor who was asked to quote for the work did not have the required Safety Scheme in Procurement (SSIP) accreditation, despite assurances that he/his consultant was appropriately qualified.

This has caused several more weeks delay (waiting for the quotation in the first instance and then trying to find someone else who could do the work). Discussions are now taking place with another contractor who has been to site and is now preparing a quotation.

Once this has been received and proved to be satisfactory, then Peter has to submit to Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water the contractor's details with a cheque for £169 and provide them with various technical details. When DC/WW have received all this information, they will invite the contractor to provide them with a *Risk Assessment and Method Statement* covering the work in question. If DC/WW are satisfied with all submissions then they will be give permission to make the connection.

Peter concludes "From this, I think you can conclude that the connection won't be made any time soon. It's all very frustrating, but we just have to keep plugging- as it were - away at it!!"

### Funding and Lucky Numbers

The May Corwen Raffle winner is **no.01 held by Martin Soames**, LRT member, a loco fireman in the Loco department, coal man and logistics guru.

## Corwen Central News

Congratulations and a cheque for £50 goes to Martin with thanks for supporting the Project.

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 **01***

The Project's treasurer, Paul Bailey writes : “ The Corwen Project's finances are still in a steady state and are able to support the work at the station site. Everything is still moving very slowly at the moment as we await the outcome of the Plc sale.



*5532 at Ebbw Junction Shed, Newport, on 31st July 1939.*

*Photo : RHG Simpson*

With regards to the *Small Prairie 5532*, shares are still available in the *Llangollen Railway Great Western Locomotive Group* can be purchased in blocks of £25. Membership to “5532 Club” is still open to subscribing £10 per month towards our Boiler Fund. Further details can be obtained by contacting me at the address below.”

All donations to Trust managed schemes (including CCRD – The Station Project) and appeals, **must be sent directly to the Trust's Office at The Station, Abbey Road, Llangollen LL20 8NS**. You can mark your envelope for the attention of Paul Bailey who is still willing to take phone calls and e-mails regarding appeals. Independent groups, that Paul supports can still receive cheques and enquiries at Paul's usual address.

***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***

***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***

***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**

The eleventh of April marks the date, 781 years ago of the death of Llywelyn the Great (Welsh: Llywelyn Fawr, full name Llywelyn mab Iorwerth), (c. 1173– 11 April 1240) who was King of Gwynedd in north Wales and eventually ruler of all Wales. By a combination of war and diplomacy he dominated Wales for 45 years.



## Corwen Central News

During Llywelyn's childhood, Gwynedd was ruled by two of his uncles, who split the kingdom between them, following the death of Llywelyn's grandfather, Owain Gwynedd, in 1170. Llywelyn had a strong claim to be the legitimate ruler and began a campaign to win power at an early age. He was sole ruler of Gwynedd by 1200 and made a treaty with King John of England that year.



*Manuscript drawing showing Llywelyn the Great with his sons Gruffydd and Dafydd. By Matthew Paris, in or before 1259.*

Llywelyn's relations with John remained good for the next ten years. He married John's natural daughter Joan in 1205, and when John arrested Gwenwynwyn ap Owain of Powys in 1208, Llywelyn took the opportunity to annex southern

Powys. In 1210, relations deteriorated, and John invaded Gwynedd in 1211. Llywelyn was forced to seek terms and to give up all lands east of the River Conwy, but was able to recover them the following year in alliance with the other Welsh princes. He allied himself with the barons who forced John to sign Magna Carta in 1215. By 1216, he was the dominant power in Wales, holding a council at Aberdyfi that year to apportion lands to the other princes.



*Statue of Llywelyn the Great at Conwy: the statue stands atop a drinking fountain. The work of art was designed by Grayson and Ould during 1895–98, sculpted by E.O. Griffiths, and unveiled in 1898. Photo : Rhion Pritchard*

Following King John's death, Llywelyn concluded the Treaty of Worcester with his successor, Henry III, in 1218. During the next fifteen years, Llywelyn was frequently involved in fights with Marcher lords and sometimes with the king, but also made alliances with several major powers in

## Corwen Central News

the Marches. The Peace of Middle in 1234 marked the end of Llywelyn's military career, as the agreed truce of two years was extended year by year for the remainder of his reign. He maintained his position in Wales until his death in 1240 and was succeeded by his son Dafydd ap Llywelyn.

In 1194, with the aid of his cousins Gruffudd ap Cynan and Maredudd ap Cynan, he defeated Dafydd at the Battle of Aberconwy at the mouth of the River Conwy. Rhodri died in 1195, and his lands west of the Conwy were taken over by Gruffudd and Maredudd while Llywelyn ruled the territories taken from Dafydd east of the Conwy.

In 1197, Llywelyn captured Dafydd and imprisoned him. A year later Hubert Walter, Archbishop of Canterbury, persuaded Llywelyn to release him, and Dafydd retired to England where he died in May 1203.

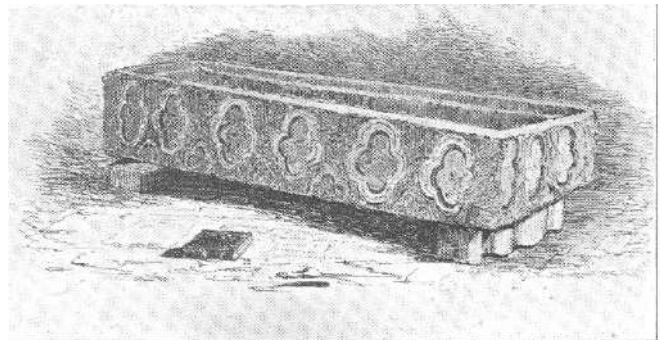
In his later years, Llywelyn devoted much effort to ensuring that his only legitimate son, Dafydd, would follow him as ruler of Gwynedd and amended Welsh law as followed in Gwynedd. Llywelyn's amendment to Welsh law favouring legitimate children in a Church-sanctioned marriage mirrored the earlier efforts of the Lord Rhys, Prince of Deheubarth, in designating Gruffydd ap Rhys II as his heir over those of his illegitimate eldest son, Maelgwn ap Rhys. In both cases, favouring legitimate children born in a Church sanctioned marriage would facilitate better relations between their sons and the wider Anglo-Norman polity and Catholic Church by removing any "stigma" of illegitimacy.

Dafydd's older but illegitimate brother, Gruffydd, was therefore excluded as the primary heir of Llywelyn, though would be given lands to rule.

This was a departure from Welsh custom, which held that the eldest son was his father's heir regardless of his parents' marital status.

Princess Joan, the wife of Llywelyn died in 1237 the occurrence of which appears to have brought on a paralytic stroke in Llywelyn the same year. From this time on, his heir Dafydd took an increasing part in the rule of the principality.

Llywelyn's stone coffin is now in Llanrwst parish church.



Llywelyn died at the Cistercian abbey of Aberconwy, which he had founded, and was buried there.

This abbey was later moved to Maenan, becoming the Maenan Abbey, near Llanrwst, and Llywelyn's stone coffin can now be seen in St Grwst's Church, Llanrwst.

Among the poets who lamented his passing was Einion Iwan:

*True lord of the land – how strange  
that today  
He rules not o'er Gwynedd;  
Lord of nought but the piled up stones  
of his tomb,  
Of the seven-foot grave in which he  
lies.*