

# Corwen Central News



After such a torrid few months June has definitely been “*Flaming June*”. The majority of the country, definitely our part of it, was bathed in strong sunlight, heralding the return of the house martins and swallows to their

platform. Electrical power has now been taken to the west end and awaits connection to platform services and the demountable booking office at the entrance to the subway.

**Project Management Team – new appointment**

**Peter Neve FGS**

The sudden and unexpected death of Phil Carson reduced the Principal Management Team to two –



*The River Dee at Corwen; Man Fishing and Cattle Watering 1808 from the Sketchbook of JMW Turner*

summer home in Carrog signal box. Low water level along the Dee has brought out many visitors to enjoy camping and sunbathing along the river bank, let alone seeing the cattle, who had been dining out on an island pasture trotting across the river near Bonwm making their way back for their evening rest. This good spell of weather has been welcomed by the Project Team who have been supervising the digging of the footings for platform 1, overseeing the pouring of concrete and installing the water tower at the east end of the



*Peter Neve (front) with Phil Rogers Photo : GJ*

Richard Dixon Gough and John Mason. With Phase 2 of the Station Project entering a very critical period Richard and John thought it a matter

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of urgency that another principal be added to the team as soon as possible. In this capacity they have invited Peter Neve to join them. Peter has been a Llangollen Volunteer for many years( since 1975) culminating in a deep commitment to the Corwen Station Project. As the project has developed Peter's professional expertise in hydrology, surveying and planning has steadily come into its own, proving to be an important asset to the Project. Peter has been responsible for the specification and installation of the borehole, surveying and marking out as the build has progressed and latterly preparing plans to be submitted to both the Water Authority and Denbighshire County Council. The mechanical engineering skills supplied by Phil Carson will be very difficult to cover, and Peter would not wish to claim Phil's expertise in that area in any way, but he does bring another important professional face to the project, and is more than able to explain the project to a wider public.

### Water Tower



*Water Tower arrives at Corwen Photo : GJ*

As noted in the last edition of CCNL, the Water Tower was marked down to be delivered in the middle of June. The accompanying photos show it

has finally arrived on site and has been erected on its plinth.



*The complete installation*

*Photo : PR*

The planning, construction, delivery and final erection of the finished artefact has been a tremendous team effort including the readership of this newsletter who have for the most part funded the whole operation. The water tower was manufactured by Barnett Engineering at their Coppi Industrial Estate works in Rhos, supervised by MD Steve Barnett from an original railway drawing supplied by Andy Maxwell.



*Members of the Project Team salute the new arrival!*

*Photo: PR*

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The collection and delivery was expertly managed by Andy Halewood (Haljon Transport) who was also instrumental in placing the components on the base. The whole structure now stands seven metres high with a storage capacity of 9100 litres (2000 gallons). Electrical control to the pump house has yet to be completed, although all the necessary cables and water pipes were put in place during the erecting process. A run off drain needs to be installed to carry surplus water away after filling loco tender tanks. This drain will be capped by a genuine cast iron grid, recovered locally during a station rebuild.

### Ministerial Visit

The Project Team were pleased to welcome the Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport, Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas to the Corwen work site on June 18<sup>th</sup>. Lord Elis-Thomas was greeted by the Project Manager, Richard Dixon-Gough and shown to the Project office, where he was given an outline of the project's aims and shown maps and diagrams of the station site.



Lord Elis-Thomas (R) on site with (L-R) Phil Rogers, Richard Dixon-Gough and Liz McGuinness  
Photo: PR

The Minister was then shown over the site by Phil Rogers, PA to the Project Team accompanied by Richard Dixon-Gough and Liz McGuinness, the Plc's Business Manager and newly appointed Plc board Chairman. Following his visit, the Minister said, *"I am very impressed with what has been achieved by the volunteer-led project team in creating the new railway station for Corwen. The completion of this project will add a new dimension to tourist facilities in North East Wales and will secure the future of the Llangollen Railway as a major attraction in the beautiful Dee Valley."*

### Best footings forward

The footings for Platform 1 have started to be dug after the replacement of the track (see June edition). When complete the trench will be back filled with Readymix concrete, thus permitting the Easi blocs to be placed.

### Signalling the future

A recent reassessment of the development plan would seem to indicate that the operating floor belonging to the Weston Rhyn signal box, stored



Weston Rhyn operating floor waiting its turn in Carrog Yard  
Photo: PR

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at Carrog ought to be brought to the Corwen site sooner rather than later. The installation of the water tower has meant that building work on platform 1 can start and the east end points can be set out.

However, if this does go ahead then delivery of the operating floor will not be possible. The Project Team therefore intend to put effort into finishing the Locking Room, then adding the operating floor. The plan is to deliver the operating floor as one piece by road. A preliminary survey of the building would indicate that it can be moved as a whole, provided it is surrounded by a suitable lifting frame.

### A different outlook

Early on in this quarter the bases for two of the canopy support columns were cast into position behind the underpass exit to the island platform. Four more bases will be added as the build proceeds. In the meantime six of the “*Blackfriars*” columns have been cleaned and undercoated by volunteer Tony Warren. Also during this period the metal window frames recovered from the old Weston Rhyn locking room have been cleaned and repaired by Tony Warren, Mike Plant and Peter Neve in readiness for insertion in the new locking room.

### Plans coming together

At the beginning of the month Denbighshire County Council granted formal planning permission for the demountable classroom positioned at the entrance to the pedestrian underpass. This has since been linked to the station's power supply and work can start on transforming it into a new ticket office, shop and display area. This part will be

managed by Wayne Ronneback and the Corwen East station team. Although DCC gave the Project the surplus building it did not come with automatic planning permission which had to be sorted using the professional know how of Peter Neve, who is now heavily involved getting the sewage system approved for connection and use!!

### 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
<i>Lucky Numbers</i>									
<i>This month's winning number is 67</i>									

This month's winner of Lucky Numbers is Bob Creasey a member of the station team at Corwen with **Number 67** Congratulations go to Bob on his win.

The Project's Treasurer, Paul Bailey would like readers to know that he intends to run the Water Tower Raffle again in 2019. Although the tower was installed on June 12<sup>th</sup> (see above) there will still be an outstanding sum to be paid to conclude this part of the scheme. Paul now estimates the final cost of the tower to be £28,500 to include final finishing, delivery, installation and testing in conjunction with the borehole.

With regards to the “*Tenner a Tonne*” appeal Paul Bailey reports that this now stands at £6,800, but he would like to reach at least £7,500 by the end of

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the summer. In order to boost this part of the Corwen Project Paul has put together another package to include 4 complimentary Return Tickets (2+2) to travel the Llangollen line on any Timetabled Services Excluding Special Events for anyone donating £100 to the infill fund. He writes "Treat your Family or Friends to a visit to our "Jewel in the Dee Valley" and let them enjoy our beautiful scenery. By donating to the Infill Fund"

£10,000	£5,000	Tanner a Tonne (£10)
£9,500	£4,750	
£9,000	£4,500	£2,000
£8,500	£4,250	
£8,000	£4,000	
£7,500	£3,750	
£7,000	£3,500	
£6,500	£3,250	
£6,000	£3,000	
£5,750	£2,750	
£5,500	£2,500	
£5,250	£2,250	
		£1,500
		£1,250
		£1,000
		£750
		£500
		£250

Alternatively we have Two Other Platform infill Appeals "Five For Fifty " - Anyone sponsoring five tons of Spoil infill for £50 will get Two Tickets on our Corwen Central Express - a double headed 8 coach express to our new Corwen Station when it is opened hopefully in Spring 2019.

"Tanner for a Tonne " - Sponsor a Tonne of Spoil removal from the old Ruthin Branch to infill our new Corwen Island Platform for £10 or as many tons as you like. Each Tonne sponsored will be

entered into a free prize draw to win one of 8 free tickets on the CCE above.

**Please make cheques payable to CCRD  
(Corwen Central Railway Development ) and  
send to**

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

**Offers of materials can be made via the LRT by  
phoning 01978 860979 or via e-mail at  
[info@llangollen-railway.co.uk](mailto:info@llangollen-railway.co.uk)**

### End Piece

When Queen Elizabeth 1<sup>st</sup> decided to establish a weekly post to Ireland in 1572, the route via Chester and Liverpool was chosen, before being switched four years later to Holyhead, which represented a shorter sea crossing.

The weekly post was sufficient when there was an English or British Parliament in London and an Irish Parliament, with urgent messages carried by civil servants, usually on horseback.

The post improved slowly, and by 1784 the Turnpike Act had resulted in improved roads on which a mail coach operated almost daily from London to Holyhead, taking 45 hours to make the journey.

With the passing of the Act of Union in 1800, creating the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland elected Irish members of the new UK Parliament sought the same quality of travel and postal facilities as their fellow members from England, Wales and Scotland.

Improvements continued slowly, and by the time Thomas Telford had completed his A5 road with improvements through Shrewsbury, Llangollen,

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Betws-y-coed and Bangor and his Menai Suspension Bridge in 1826, the journey from London to Holyhead was down to under 30 hours.

The official opening of the Chester to Holyhead Railway took place on May 1<sup>st</sup> 1848 – 170 years ago. This project brought together Thomas Brassey and Robert Stephenson following their collaboration on the Chester to Shrewsbury Railway (Engineer – Henry Robertson). In total 85 miles (137 km) of double-track railway were under construction during a four-year period including two large and impressive tubular bridges at technically very demanding locations.

The pioneering design of the Conwy and Britannia

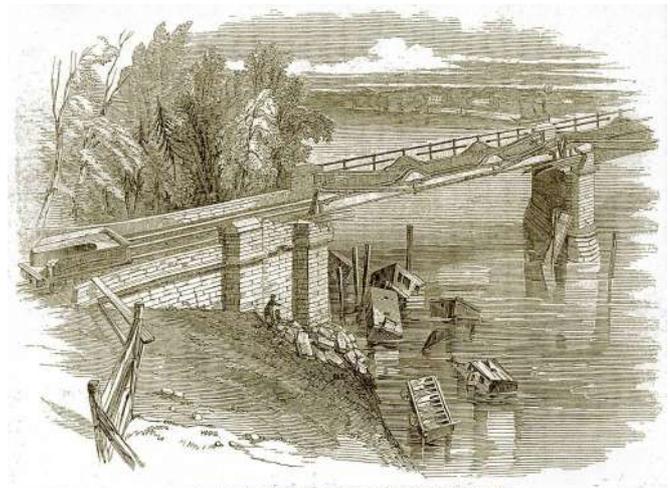


*Conwy Castle with Tubular railway bridge by Robert Stephenson and William Fairbairn Photo : By Mick Knapton @ the English language Wikipedia*

Bridges occupied much of Stephenson's personal attention and his work with William Fairbairn pushed forward the boundaries of railway engineering. The concept was not lasting however, owing to the cost of such tubular bridges. The opening of the full line between London and Holyhead (18<sup>th</sup> March 1850) steadily moved the

travel time to 15 hours for the complete journey to Dún Laoghaire

Yet it was another far less demanding bridge that almost brought about Stephenson's downfall. It was the River Dee bridge at Chester, which had been commissioned early in November 1846 for the accommodation of the Chester Shrewsbury Railway.



*Dee Bridge Disaster from a contemporary engraving from the National Archives*

One of its three 98-foot (30 m) cast-iron spans collapsed on 24 May 1847 just as a passenger train was passing over at about 30 miles per hour (50km/h). The engine and its tender got across but the coaches fell with the girders into the river. The fireman and four passengers were killed and eight injured.

The Dee Bridge disaster was a traumatic event which fortunately led to the demise of cast iron beam bridges reinforced by wrought iron tie bars. However, it would take at least another thirty years before cast iron was replaced by wholly wrought iron bridges.

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**CORWEN PLATFORM APPEAL**

**“FIVE FOR FIFTY” AND “TEN FOR ONE HUNDRED”**

I would like to donate £50 for Five Tonnes of infill for the Corwen Station Island Platform and claim my 2 Tickets on the CCE (Corwen Central Express) ✓

I would like to donate £100 for Ten Tonnes of infill for the Corwen Station Island Platform and claim my complimentary Return Tickets (2-2) to travel the Llangollen line on any Timetabled Services (*Excluding Special Events*). ✓

Please make Cheques payable to  
Corwen Central Railway Development or CCRD and send to

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

Contact Details :

Name : .....

Address : .....

Phone E/Mail : .....

*Please enclose an SEA to receive your complimentary tickets*