

# WELSH HIGHLAND HERITAGE

Volume 1 Issue 1

November 1997

## WELCOME!

This is the first edition of a Newsletter devoted entirely to the heritage aspects of the Welsh Highland Railway. It is the voice of the Welsh Highland Heritage Group and reflects the views of the Group. The W.H.H.G. has the full support of The Welsh Highland Railway Co., The Festiniog Railway and The Welsh Highland Railway Society and it will work closely with all of these organisations to achieve its aims.

It will cover and explore all aspects of the line's history, from its early beginnings to the present day but it will concentrate on 'preserving and restoring' those essential elements which made the line unique amongst narrow gauge railways.

Nor will it forget those isolated communities which the line attempted to serve, together with the industries

## WAUNFAWR STATION



There was dismay in Welsh Highland Heritage circles when the FR revealed that their plans for rebuilding the line included, perversely, the demolition of the derelict station building at Waunfawr. This was to accommodate a new layout designed to facilitate the passage of the Garratt locomotives and to allow for a new footbridge to connect with the carpark of the adjoining 'Snowdonia Parc' pub. Although the plans for this footbridge are now under review it still leaves

only two options for the old station building - demolition or removal. The former is unthinkable and the latter costly.

However at a meeting with representatives of the Heritage Group, FR director Mike Schumann, and project manager Tony Smae, agreed that the building could be moved a few yards from its current site and rebuilt on fresh foundations.

In spite of having stood for over 130 years the building continues to attract the attention of modern day vandals who have recently removed the valuable cornerstones from the front/left eleva-

tion.

Architect, and WHHG member, Graham Cartland-Glover has agreed to produce plans to help in the relocation of the building, but restoration may have to be left in the hands of professional restorers.

Contact has been made with St Fagans Welsh Folk Museum in Cardiff. They have had over 50 years experience of restoring Welsh buildings and would be glad to help. They have suggested using local contractors and would be willing to brief them on techniques which could be used, albeit for a small professional fee.



Upper Photo Bill Rear 1948

Lower Photo D Allan 1987

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which prompted its construction in the first place.

The Heritage Group is open to all who support its aims and it will work with everyone who wishes to help to achieve those aims.

The Group will be a focus, a forum, and a coordinator for all the heritage activity along the line.

It is unthinkable for example, that the superb restoration work at Gelert's Farm, including Ray Ollier's wonderful achievements with the old coaches, Mark Wiggley's efforts to restore the weigh house and Dave Meller's evocative replica of Nantmor station should somehow be isolated from the proposed reconstruction of Waunfawr or the refurbishment of Dinas station building.

**THEY ARE ALL  
WELSH  
HIGHLAND!**

## Welsh Highland Tickets - An Introduction

Some of us are lucky enough to have known, or indeed know people who worked for or travelled on the original Welsh Highland. Their mental and photographic memories are recorded for posterity, but unlike the remaining buildings along the trackbed, such records are not a tangible, three-dimensional asset.

However, still available as a



permanent reminder, are tickets. Welsh Highland examples are mainly unused remainders salvaged from FR Harbour station in the 1950s, and are far from scarce. Much rarer are N.W.N.G issues, invariably used, and expensive collectors items.

As an introduction to the subject, this article deals with what one might describe as 'ordinary' W. H. tickets which came in two basic forms - card, and bell punch. Besides these, there were various other issues, including - "Child", "Privilege", "Article", "Excursion", and a variety of "Special" tickets, all of which will be hopefully dealt with in a future article.

### Start of Services

With the start of services from Dinas Junction to South Snow-

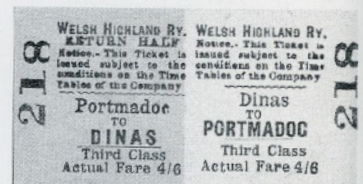
don in 1922, booking offices were provided at both stations, to be complemented by Beddgelert and Portmadoc with the opening of the through route the following year. Each station was stocked with a comprehensive range of 'Edmonson type' card tickets, while passengers joining at intermediate stations and halts were catered for by cheaper-to-produce punch tickets issued by the guard. (There are several photographs featuring long-serving guard, Dafydd Lloyd Hughes with his money satchel, bell punch apparatus, and invariably mackintosh and cap!). Economies soon became necessary and with the closure of booking offices the use of card tickets declined. At closure, only Dinas was issuing tickets.

Card tickets were produced initially by Watterlow and Sons, and subsequently by Williamson and Edmonson. Punch tickets were produced by the Bell Punch Co. for initial services between Dinas and South Snowdon, and comprised a range of eight singles and eight corresponding returns. When services were extended to Portmadoc, various ranges of geo-

graphical punch tickets were introduced from time to time, produced by various printers, including Williamson and Edmondson.

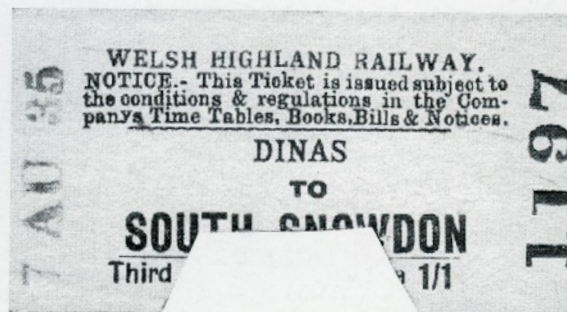
### Colours

From the outset, the colour scheme of the card tickets followed that laid down by the Railway Clearing House, 3rd Singles - Green. 3rd Returns, Buff out and Green return. 1st Singles - White. 1st Returns, Yellow out and White return. No fare was printed on any of the 1922 issues and destinations were filled in by the Booking Clerk on the 1st Class



tickets. With the opening of the completed railway the 'Actual Fare' and 1st Class destinations appeared, as did tickets from Dinas, South Snowdon, and Beddgelert to Tan y Bwlch and Blaenau Festiniog.

The only ordinary tickets produced by Williamson (1925-1929), would appear to be 3rd Class Singles - Beddgelert to Nantmor and Beddgelert to Portmadoc (4d and 1/- respectively). Does this suggest a more intensive use of the southern half of the line? Edmondson's card tickets are readily distinguishable because of their white on black serial numbers, and again they only produced three ordinary single tickets from 1930. These were Dinas to Aberglaslyn, Portmadoc, and Blaenau Festiniog - 3/1 for the latter



## By John Keylock

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journey!

### Paper tickets

The Bell Punch Company's paper return tickets were also overprinted with a large letter 'R' and for 3/6 one could travel from Dinas to South Snowdon and back. But in 1934, one could do the same journey for 1/6!

Subsequent paper tickets introduce one to Rhyd ddu instead of South Snowdon, Hafod Garregog in place of Ynysferlas, and Pitt's Head, which never seemed to appear on any card ticket. Croesor Junction has the unique distinction of not appearing on any W. H. R. Ticket, although it appeared in the

timetable. Edmondson also produced 3d & 4d composite tickets for use as either singles or returns.

The foregoing is very basic; needless to say there are many ticket permutations, particularly when considering those beyond the simple 1st & 3rd, Single & Return. In fact the writer has never actually 'totted up' how many known tickets there are.

It is to be hoped that this has whetted your W. H. ticket appetite and for those particularly interested it is hoped to have a catalogue produced in the not too distant future.

.....To be continued

## Station Signs

The Heritage Group, having expressed anxiety about the proposed new signs for Caernarfon and particularly Dinas, were then asked to make them!

It was felt that the style should reflect the original - but which original style? As James Hewett of Cambridge commented "There are half a dozen type faces, depending on the era! However after John Keylock had discovered tracings of the original Bryngwyn station letters, Cedric Lodge "volunteered" to manufacture them.

The new letters are made in Foamalux a completely weather resistant material, which very closely resembles the original raised letters. They are white on a black background and are mounted on posts of old rail which are painted grey.

The photographs illustrate the changes in the wording of the signs over the years. The newer, lower part of the sign is in a different font to the upper and original sign. Also see the never-to-be "Aberglaslyn" painted on the lower sign.

It is interesting to note that on the photo with the two gentlemen the English word 'for' has been amended to the Welsh word 'fori' meaning 'tomorrow' - perhaps a reflection on the service!

Could the Heritage Group undertake to reproduce the 1923 sign as a heritage exhibit, together with a Welsh version?

## THE AIMS OF THE WELSH HIGHLAND HERITAGE GROUP

The Group has formally adopted the following as its aims, probably called a mission statement in contemporary jargon:

"To locate, record, categorise and preserve all buildings, bridges, mineral lines, quarries and all other artefacts associated with the former North Wales Narrow Gauge and Welsh Highland Railways, with a view to their preservation, restoration and eventual re-incorporation in the rebuilt Welsh Highland Railway."

The officers of the Group, for the time being are:

David Allan - Chairman.

John Keylock - Secretary and Membership.

Michael Davies -

Treasurer.

Cedric Lodge - Committee.

Derek Lystor - Committee.

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Dinas Station Sign 1936



Dinas Station Sign 1997

W.H.H.G -  
BENEFITS OF  
MEMBERSHIP

I have been asked to pen a short note on the Benefits of Membership and I have to confess that they're not that obvious!

To qualify it might be helpful to have a modest interest in nostalgia, a sort of gritty determination, a cosy armchair, and a strong desire to ensure that the Welsh Highland Railway retains its unique identity. Your CV might include a propensity towards eccentricity with a chance to meet like-minded people!

One member for example has a fascination for old graffiti on ancient slate gateposts, and is often to be found scrutinising such a post intently, much to the concern of the casual observer!

To help with all this we shall inflict on you from time to time a copy of this newsletter which will be a mixture of news, views and heritage articles. For now

## Archives and Museums - Gwynedd's Heritage

Gareth Haulfryn Williams

If you visit one of Gwynedd Council's record offices or museums you may well have bought a souvenir pencil with the above motto on it; and it sums up why we are so keen to support the heritage activities generated by the Welsh Highland. Narrow gauge railways are an absolute central part of our past in Gwynedd, and the Gwynedd Archives Service holds the major collection of Welsh narrow gauge records anywhere - Talylyn, Ffestiniog, Nantlle, Penrhyn. Croesor, Padarn, even the most comprehensive narrow-gauge ticket collection we know about.

Link these to records of quarrying and mari-

time history and you see what an important role we try to play in heritage transport studies, and the experience we have.

Any assistance the Council's Culture section can give, will be given impartially and professionally, so that everyone's understanding of our heritage can be enhanced.

There is huge potential in lottery funding and developments in Porthmadog could surprise and excite the whole railway preservation scene if we pool our resources and specialist skills

*Gareth Williams is Assistant Director (Culture) Gwynedd Council.*

it will be produced on an irregular basis depending on the availability of material, though the aim is to produce four per year.

So if all this appeals to you, plus the chance to be involved in the restoration, please send a cheque now for the modest sum of £7.50 to:-  
John Keylock,  
Weathervane Cottage,  
Childswickham, Broadway,  
Worcs WR12 7HL (you can't get a much more

nostalgic address than that!). His telephone No. is 01386 852428, and the best time is between 7.00pm and 10.00pm.



*Waunfawr 1948 - Bill Rear*

## OVER TO YOU

The editorial team welcomes your comments about this, our first edition. We would also welcome your contributions about heritage matters for consideration for future editions as well as subjects you would like to see covered.

Please send your response to David Allan, 132 Eastham Village Road, Eastham, Wirral, L62 0AE.

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