



THE NORTH STAR CHRONICLES – a newsletter primarily for the model railway fraternity

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Editorial

The main feature this month follows on from the June NSC in that it is also Wales based. This time it is where the preservation movement started in the UK – the Talylyn Railway which runs the 7¼ miles between Nant Gwernol near the village of Abergynolwyn and Tywyn Wharf on the coast. My primary sources of information are Wikipedia (as usual) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talylyn_Railway and the Talylyn website itself <https://www.talylyn.co.uk/>.

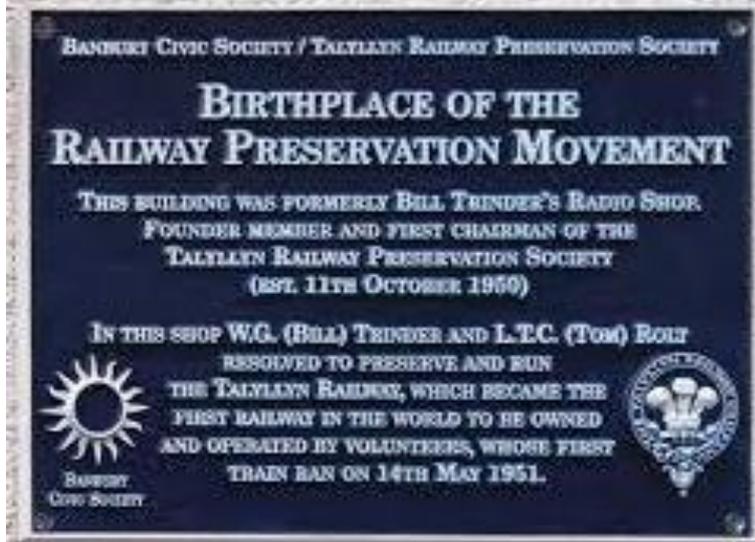
The Talylyn Railway

As with so many narrow gauge railways in Wales, this 2'3"(!) gauge line was built to carry slate, on this occasion from the quarries at Bryn Eglwys. The line has another claim to fame in that although primarily a freight operation, it was the first steam hauled narrow gauge railway designed and built to transport passengers from the outset, the 1865 authorizing Act of Parliament being the first to give permission to do this. As with many such operations it had its ups and downs and at one stage was kept open as a social service. In 1950, following the death of its then owner, Sir Haydn Jones, the line closed.

In 1951, a band of volunteers led by Bill Trinder, Tom Rolt and David Curwen led the group of people who took over responsibility for the line

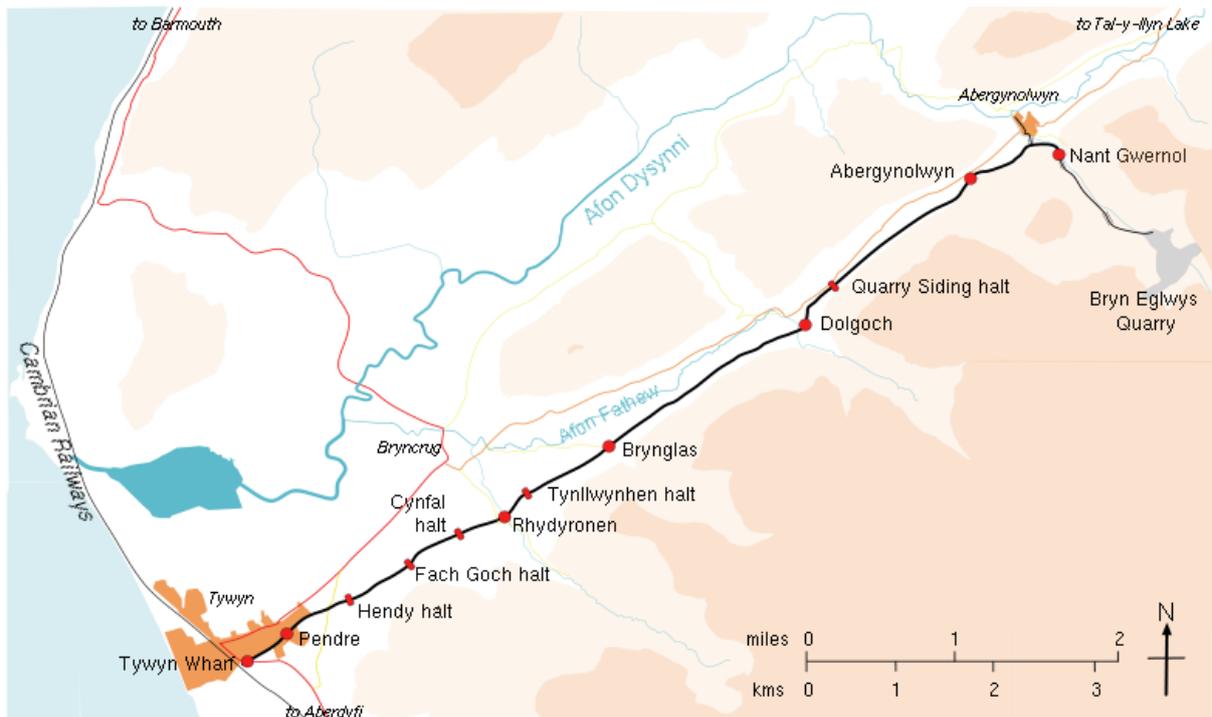
and so it became the first preservation railway in the world taken over by volunteers.

Some years ago while on a narrow boat trip on the Oxford Canal which passes through the town, I was wandering about Banbury of the famous cross fame in the children's nursery rhyme, when I came across the self explanatory plaque below on a building's wall.



Anyone interested in railway preservation, particularly narrow gauge railway preservation, owes a huge debt to the Talyllyn pioneers. The UK was a depressed place in the post war years and to achieve what the volunteers did was a remarkable feat. Those interested in the history should look up the website: <https://www.talyllyn.co.uk/>

The track, motive power and coach stock have been considerably upgraded over the years. The visit to this Talyllyn Railway was a particularly enjoyable experience because of the relaxed friendly attitude of the people involved. Of course safety is a must but it is not necessary to be officious which was my experience on one of the other Welsh lines visited.



Talyllyn Railway map – source Wikipedia

Motive power

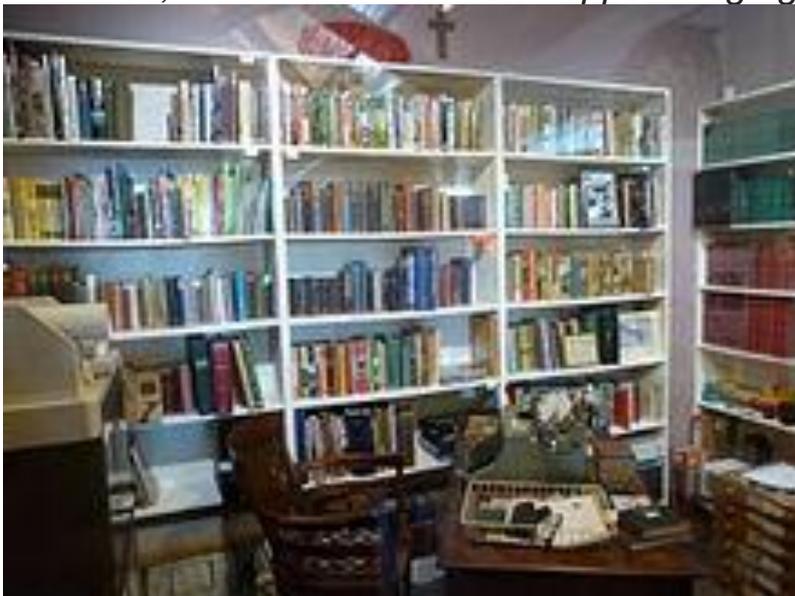
In the early preservation years, no 1 'Dolgoch', an 0-4-0 well tank was the only operating loco. No 2 'Talylyn' an 0-4-2 saddle tank was not serviceable at that stage. Two additional locos which had operated on the recently closed Corris Railway were purchased from BR. The Corris line (together with another Welsh slate line, the Plynlimon and Hafan Tramway and the Campbelltown and Machrihanish Railway in Scotland had also been built to the unusual gauge of 2'3". Numbered nos 3 and no 4 by the Corris, they were renamed 'Sir Haydn' and 'Edward Thomas' respectively. No 6, 'Douglas' built to 2' gauge was received as a donation and regauged to 2'3". Another steam loco was purchased from an Irish peat miner and following a rebuild which included regauging from 3', was renamed 'Tom Rolt'.

The railway has also acquired diesel powered locos for use on engineering trains.

Narrow Gauge Railway Museum

A trip on the Talylyn Railway stands on its own merits but there is another good reason to visit in the form of the Narrow Gauge Railway Museum at Tywyn Wharf station. In the words of Wikipedia:

"The Museum has a collection of more than 1,000 items from over eighty narrow-gauge railways in Wales, England, the Isle of Man, Ireland and Scotland. This includes six locomotives on display (and several others in store or at other sites); eleven wagons inside with a further eleven outside; a display showing the development of track work from early plateways to modern narrow-gauge tracks; several large signals along with single line working apparatus and documents; a growing collection of tickets and other documents, posters, notices, crockery and souvenirs; relics from vehicles scrapped long ago".



On the top floor of the museum, a re-creation, including original furniture and fittings, of the study of the Reverend Wilbert Awdry has been erected. Awdry was the creator and author of 'Thomas the Tank Engine books and an early Talylyn volunteer.

Awdry study – photo Wikipedia

The line



Starting at the end – Nant Gwernol terminus viewed from the run around. Photo source Wikipedia



Ruston diesel “Midlander” on an engineering train in the siding at Abergynolwyn



Just in case anyone is in any doubt – Abercynolwyn station



Passed on the way down at Pendre, no 1 'TAL-Y-LLYN'



No 12 – Baguley-Drewry diesel ‘St Cadfan’ at Pendre.



No 11 – ‘Baguley-Drewry diesel ‘Trecwn’ in the yard at Tywyn Wharf



No 9 Hunslet 'Alf'. Photo from Talyllyn website



Engineering brake van built for the MOD in 1987 by Robert Hudson (Raletrux) as works no 20476. Originally 2'6" it was regauged to 60cm by Alan Keef Ltd and then converted to 2'3" gauge by the Talyllyn. The van carries a plate no 9 presumably an MOD number but is now stock no 70 on the Talyllyn. Thanks to Dave Scotson for supplying the information.



No 4 'Edward Thomas' with a rake of coaches at Tywyn Wharf



View looking at the left hand (uphill) of the 'Y' from the top floor of the Narrow Gauge Museum at Tywyn Wharf



Same position looking right to the former interchange with the standard gauge Cambrian Railway where the slates were transhipped.

One of the objects of writing the NSC is to highlight modelling opportunities. My particular interest is 16mm live steam. An example of what is available in 1:19 scale, 32mm gauge, is Accucraft UK's model of Talylynn 0-4-0 loco no 2 'Dolgoch' (renamed 'Pretoria' in the early 1900s commemorating the lifting of the siege, subsequently reverting to its original name!) This loco, now in production, was shown at the 16mm National Garden Railway Exhibition at Peterborough in April.



Well tank 0-4-0 'Dolgoch'. Photo Accucraft UK's website.



***Planned to be available next year is saddle tank 0-4-2 Talyllyn no 1
Drawings by David Fletcher ex the Accucraft UK's website.***



***Tywyn Wharf station with the Narrow Gauge Museum at rear.
'Edward Thomas' on duty on a beautiful spring day.***

Hopefully you will agree that the Talyllyn Railway is well worth a visit and is also a suitable case for modelling.



Wings Wheels and Whistles/2nd National Garden Railway Exhibition

It is nearly that time of the year! KZN 's premier hobby event which this year will combine the National Live Steam Meet and the 2nd National Garden Railway Exhibition will be held over the weekend 3rd and 4th August. The Garden Railway Exhibition will have two operating layouts and will be preceded by visits to at least two garden Railway layouts.

WINGS, WHEELS AND WHISTLES

An Exhibition of hobbies to suit all ages

**On Saturday 3rd and Sunday 4th August 2019
10am to 4pm**

Hosted by the
Pietermaritzburg Model Engineering Society at Halley Park Miniature Railway
78 Rudling Road Bisley, Pietermaritzburg



Martin Hampton 083 388 3149

Alan Hill 072 396 2592

www.facebook.com/halleypark

www.pmes.co.za

Train Rides R10.00

Entrance R10.00

Catering will be provided by the
Kamberg Honorary Rangers

Sponsored by

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WE WILL ALSO BE HOSTING **THE NATIONAL LIVE STEAM MEET** ON THE SAME DAYS!

The end