

# Corwen Central News

**August in the Dee Valley provided a mixed package of weather, heavy rain followed by warm sunshine and back to light showers. Last**



*House Martins - Delichon urbicum - have returned to Carrog signal box, occupying the same space now vacated by the Swallows Photo : Michael Palmer*

**month, it was noted that one of the limiting factors to progress on the Corwen site was “weather” and especially rain, which is totally unhelpful to building operations and surface preparation for the likes of laying platform pavers. However, for all this the Project Team have continued to remain busy laying the many metres of drainage channel, completing the fencing on top of the underpass, fencing the railway perimeter, commissioning the wheel chair lift and clearing the main line of stored materials in preparation for setting out the east end crossover.**

**Up! UP! and away!**

The month opened with the final work on the wheel chair lift being completed by contractors , thus allowing for load and electrical testing. The lift will offer access to the platform for wheel chair users and to those customers who find stairs difficult to climb. The lift will be operated on

behalf of of those requiring it by station staff, who have received training in its use.



*Corwen Stationmaster Wayne Ronneback tests the wheelchair lift for a seated passenger Photo : RDG*

It will not be a user “on demand” service such as those fitted to domestic premises.

Passengers arriving or departing using mobility scooters will be unable to use this facility but there will be a limited number of British standard wheel chairs available for their use, should they wish to travel on the train



*Project treasurer Paul Bailey tests the wheelchair lift on behalf of wheelchair passengers Photo : WR*

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**Just in case it rains!**

The Island Platform at Corwen is 160 metres long on the down side giving in excess of 1500 square metres of surface area available to catch the rain. In order to protect the structure and to keep customers and staff safe, as much of this water as possible needs to be drained away quickly. In order to achieve this, the platform surface is built with a slight upward taper from the centre to each platform edge.



*John Mason checks the levels for the drainage grids – rather tough on the knees!* Photo : PR

This will allow water to run back to the collection grids without pooling. The other part of this is that pushchairs and wheelchairs will not naturally roll to the platform edge.

Following some accidents on the National Network, where wheelchairs and pushchairs have rolled off station platforms, it is recommended that these should now have a back slope from the rear edge of the platform cover (ie away from the track) of 1 in 40 (2.5%). It is interesting to observe that until very recently there were no standards for the building of platforms. Most

platforms tended to have slight slopes towards the



*Joel Scott on the Nissan mini digger preparing a trench for large drain pipes* Photo : PR

rail to allow for the drainage of rain water! There were incidents in the past where unattended unbraked railway handcarts have rolled off the platform and on to the tracks.

**Please fence me in**

Readers may recall the long paling fence which bounded the sides of the old Corwen East platform and its access ramp and wondered what became of



*Boundary fence at the east end with new and reclaimed materials* Photo : RDG

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the reclaimed wood – all 1200 pieces plus 3000 screws!

The last of these timbers along with their screws have now found a new “recycled” life as part of the fence around the new ticket office as well as flanking the bottom of the north batter and the entrance to the pumping station. Posts and rails for this work were put up by the Fencing Gang, led by Vic Taylor and completed by Richard Dixon-Gough.

### Clearing the way ahead

Work has now started at the east end rail head to prepare for building of the crossover and some realignment of the main line.

position the point components ready for use. A panel of track has been added to the main line bringing it ever closer to the station throat.



*Starting to unpick crossover parts stored in the four foot  
Photo : PR*



*New track panel added to the main line to facilitate the arrival of ballast from the Bonwm stockpile  
Photo : PR*

The intention is to allow ballast to be brought down by rail wagons from the storage pile at Bonwm Farm and spread around the cross over area. Even to the casual observer it is quite clear that the track in its current state drops quite

Readers are now well aware that manoeuvring space on the embankment is very limited so a considerable amount of time and energy has to be devoted to moving stores around to create enough room for the next part of the build. As the month came to a close the work gang started to clear the area where the old buffer stops used to be and to



*RRV and Leyland HIAB share the work  
Photo : PR*

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sharply and the whole area will need a considerable amount of ballast to give a level approach.



Looking east along the main line. Track now tidy ready to receive deliveries of ballast Photo : PR

Once in the platform, trains will be faced by a shallow upward gradient to aid braking and to ensure that any potentially unbraked stock will tend to run towards the main railway rather than towards the buffer stops over looking Green Lane.

### 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 29*

This month's winner of Lucky Numbers is **Sue Ronneback**, a member of the Corwen Station Team and Roster Clerk for R.Os and Guards - with **Number 29**. Congratulations go to Sue on her win. Two previous winners, Phil Morrey (June) and John Bearne (July) have kindly returned their winnings to the Corwen Project Fund. Sincere thanks are extended to them for their continued support.

With the successful completion of the “Gap Fund”, Project Treasurer Paul Bailey writes that the flow of income to the project has eased over the last month, but still leaves a balance of £76,000, most of which has already been allocated to different aspects of the build. To date, two of the four lamposts and one of the four lanterns have been sponsored.

Paul would like to remind would be sponsors that the lamposts are £800 each and lanterns £200 each. These items do not have to be sponsored by one individual but could be done on a group or family basis – possibly to mark a “special occasion” or as a memorial to a family member.

Last month it was reported that the cost of the station building had risen by approximately £10,000 as additional steel work was required to help support the canopy, an integral part of the station building. If readers would like to support this item in particular then Paul Bailey would be delighted to hear from you!

Paul is still keen to let supporters know that donations to the project are still needed, that tickets are still available on the Corwen Central Express – the first double-header into the new station.

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**For funding matters and tickets for the CCE please contact Paul Bailey at the address below**

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

***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.***

***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**

Family, friends and colleagues gathered at Llangollen Station to board the “Phil Carson Special” to bid a final farewell to the late Phil Carson (1946-2018).



*Rob Clarke shows off the headboard before putting on the front of 5199* *Photo : Peter Neve*

Phil, who was the Corwen Project's Engineer and chief “Mr Fix it” died in April 2018. Having put

Phil's affairs into order, the family now wanted his final resting place to be in the Dee Valley, where he had spent so much of his time, latterly, devoted to the Corwen Station Project. Thus on August 7<sup>th</sup>, Rob Clarke's Great Western Directors' Coach was added to the front of the train making up the 15:10 departure from Llangollen.

Phil's family and their guests were welcomed on board by Rob, where refreshments were served before departure.

John Osborne , Phil Carson's nephew was duly kitted out for the footplate before being introduced to the loco crew Driver Paul Reynolds and Fireman Phil Morrey, both of whom were friends and working volunteers with Phil at Corwen. As the train drew out of Llangollen bound for Carrog, many good memories of Phil were exchanged.

After the booked stop at Berwyn, the train made its way out of the station and under the bridge ready for the climb up Berwyn Bank towards the tunnel. With a good fire in the box and the pressure just under the blowing off point, Driver Reynolds opened up 5199 to give a clean crisp bark to bring the train parallel with Llantysilio Hall the home of that other great engineer Charles Beyer. Here with a series of high and low whistles John Osborne and Fireman Phil Morrey put the ashes of Phil Carson into the firebox to be mingled forever with the landscape and changing seasons of the Dee Valley. On board the Directors' Saloon, as the whistles sounded, LR Trust Vice President Gordon Heddon said a few words of appreciation for the life of Phil Carson and a toast was made in his memory.

The train then proceeded to the current western terminus of Carrog where photographs were taken

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and coffee cups raised in salute of a fine gentleman, engineer and friend!



At Carrog : Driver Reynolds and Fireman Morrey hold the headboard with (L-R back row) Phil Coles, Phil Rogers, Richard Dixon-Gough, John Mason, Ron Stansbie (front row) Ron Jones, Tony Cooke, Gwyn Jones, Tom Taylor, Paul Whitton, Peter Neve and Rob Clarke Photo : Howard Pearson



Members of Phil Carson's family his sister Jean Osborne ( 5th from the left) and his nephew John Osborne (1st from the right) Photo : Peter Neve

As the memorial party returned to Llangollen high and low whistles were once again sounded as the train passed Llantysilio Hall.

## PHILLIP CARSON (1946 -2018)



LRT Vice President Gordon Heddon presents the memorial headboard to Jean Osborne Photo : PN



Doing what came naturally - Phil breathing life back into Rob Clarke's Parker's Little Giant concrete mixer Photo : PR