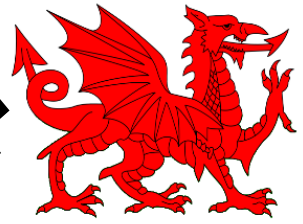


Post Maespedr



Rhif/No. 31

Hydref/ Autumn 2019

All Aboard

We were off on another train journey in September. This time to the top left hand corner of Wales and it had nothing to do with Ivor the Engine. Our guest speaker was Charles Clarke who gave us a very interesting illustrated talk about The Welsh Highland Railway. The Railway is the UK's longest heritage railway and runs for 25 miles from Caernarfon where trains start from beneath the castle walls for the journey to Porthmadog. The trains, hauled by the world's most powerful narrow gauge steam locomotives, climb from sea level to over 650ft on the foothills of Snowdon, before zig-zagging down the steep hillside to reach Beddgelert in the heart of the National Park, then through the Aberglaslyn Pass and on to Porthmadog.

At Porthmadog it connects with the Ffestiniog Railway and to the short Welsh Highland Heritage Railway. The creation of the Welsh Highland Railway fulfilled an 1870s vision of linking the Bays of Caernarfon and Cardigan, via Beddgelert, with a narrow gauge railway.

Its history is a blend of contradictions and complex compromises: It had been planned that its terminus would be Caernarfon, but that never happened.

It was to have been powered by electric traction, but that didn't happen either. It should have been completed in the first decade of the twentieth century but that also went adrift! It finally opened as a through route in 1923, running for just fourteen years, before closing - for ever in 1937. With the coming of WW2 the remains of the WHR were requisitioned for the war effort because of the potential of its metals. The track was lifted in 1941. But 60 years later it began a new existence under the control of the Ffestiniog Railway Company and the entire length of the line has now been reconstructed with steam trains operating once again.

The Welsh Highland Railway Heritage Group was founded in 1997. Its purpose is to foster the heritage aspects of the Welsh Highland Railway and its predecessors.

Charles ended his presentation by telling us about his Welsh connections. He showed us photographs of the Welsh family home and members of his family.





Harvest Time



The October meeting was our traditional Harvest Supper. As usual the table was fully laden with a splendid array of culinary delights which we wasted no time in sampling!



A very pleasant evening was spent enjoying good food in good company. We were delighted to meet Gwen's son David who lives in Australia and was back in the UK for a few weeks holiday.



Castles of Wales

At the November meeting we were entertained with a DVD about Welsh Castles. It featured most of the major castles in alphabetical order. The history of each castle and its main features were explained by a variety of presenters.



Natter, Nosh and Noggin



December was of course our Christmas Meeting. Tony and Morfydd were our hosts for the evening and they had prepared an entertaining programme around the Christmas story. We sang a range of traditional carols, singing some verses in English and some in Welsh. Ellen provided the musical accompaniment on the keyboard and as always did a brilliant job of keeping us on track!

Tony had very generously bought copies of a Nativity story in English (With love from God to you) and in Welsh (Caru-Ti Duw) which he distributed to all present.

The "Nosh" was of course magnificent and there was plenty of "Natter" while we dined and the "Noggin" of choice flowed! The Christmas post was distributed, the Raffle drawn (with the proceeds being donated to the CRISIS charity) and then we wished each other a "Nadolig Llawen a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda at the end of a very enjoyable evening.

