

Raising Steam

Summer 2020

No.31

TRACK BED RECLAIMED

More progress at Chirk Station; full report inside



PLUS:

Planning for the future

Working party photo reports

Walking the GVT

Then & now

Small talk: GVT modelling

Exclusive poster offer inside!



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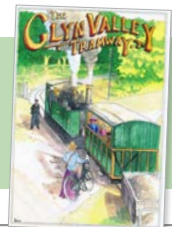
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Our amazing new A2-sized posters by Eric Leslie, available to members only.

Cover picture:

Recent working parties, during 2019 and 2020, have exposed a sizeable part of the original double trackbed at Chirk.
Rick Wilson

Make sure you investigate our incredible 'Members Only' art poster offer featuring the amazing talents of Eric Leslie.

Find out the details on the back cover!



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Welcome

An introduction, from the editor



Hello again, once more it has unfortunately been a while between journals. When we left you last, the planned summer working parties were thwarted by a series of them being postponed by some rather inconveniently timed inclement weather.

We began 2020 with a flurry of activity at the Chirk station site, with weekly working groups literally getting dug in to return the site to how it had been last June, removing all of nature's regrowth that had sprouted. Project Manager, Mark Edlington, led the team superbly, and we are pleased to report that several new volunteers were keen to help out. If you fancy getting involved in the near future, turn to page 19 to find out how.



**Rick Wilson, Editor and
GVTT Membership Secretary**

You might have already noticed that this issue includes your free A6-sized postcard of our superb new fundraising poster, produced from the amazing artwork generously donated to us by Eric Leslie. If you'd like one (or more) of the big A2-sized posters, details can be found on the back cover of this journal.

For more news updates, visit the Trust's website:

GLYN VALLEY TRAMWAY TRUST

JOIN US AND YOU CAN HELP TO RECREATE THIS HISTORIC TRAMWAY

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www.glynvalleytramwaytrust.co.uk

News & updates

Latest developments at the GVTT



Rescheduled 2020 AGM confirmed for 15th August

Our AGM was originally scheduled for 25th July as an online 'Zoom' meeting, due to the current Coronavirus restrictions that are in place, but this had to be postponed due to last-minute technical difficulties. The AGM will now take place at 1pm on Saturday 15th August - a link will be emailed to all those who have submitted a valid email address.

Interesting finds at Chirk

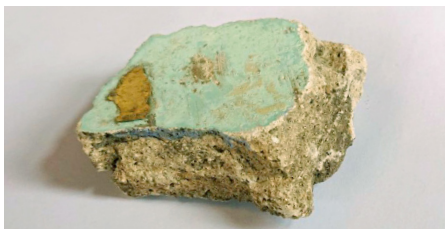
A couple of discoveries unearthed during recent working parties are a piece of rail, still with fishplate attached, and a chunk of plaster from the booking office wall.

The rail and fishplate are to the northern end of the site. Further excavations will be undertaken in due course, but initial thoughts are that this could be around where the turntable was, in front of the carriage shed.

The plaster shows two colours that were used over the years, with the original pale blue faring rather better than the overpainted sandy yellow that has nearly disappeared.



Rail and fishplate unearthed.



Chunk of plaster from the booking office wall, showing paint colours.

Please send a SAE if you would like a membership card

GLYN VALLEY TRAMWAY TRUST MEMBERSHIP CARD

Name *YOUR NAME HERE*

Mem. No. Type Expiry



Enclosed with this issue, you will find your membership renewal form. In order for us to maximise your membership contributions, should you wish to receive a membership card, please send a stamped, addressed envelope back with your completed form.

Planning for the future

Building and replica rolling stock projects coming soon, outlined by Rick Wilson

As we progress the project, with the working parties, to clear the station site of over eight decades' worth of neglect, our thoughts have inevitably been turning to further reinstatement of the Glyn Valley Tramway from Chirk.

Once track has begun to go down, we will then need to attend to the matter of facilities and rolling stock to enable revenue earning services to commence. With the original booking office and waiting room foundations having been uncovered in such good condition, we have commenced communications with

necessary parties to rebuild the original building and platform as close as we can to the original, using as many of the reclaimed bricks as possible. We will, of course, sensitively introduce modern conveniences to the build where practical.

With the recent acquisition of some original and highly-detailed technical drawings, future plans to recreate a replica locomotive and carriages have entered a new phase as well.

Look out for more news of these initiatives very soon!



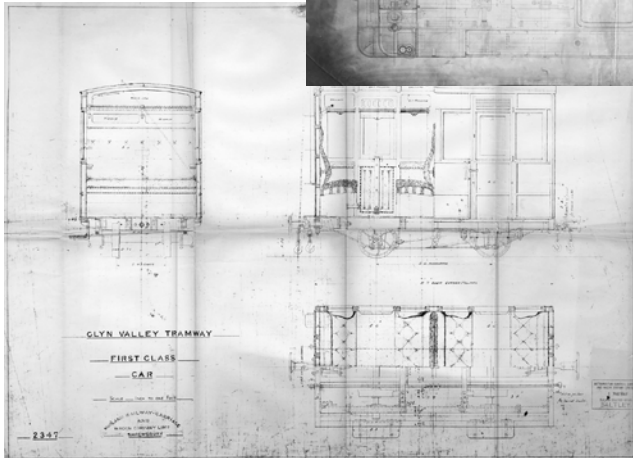
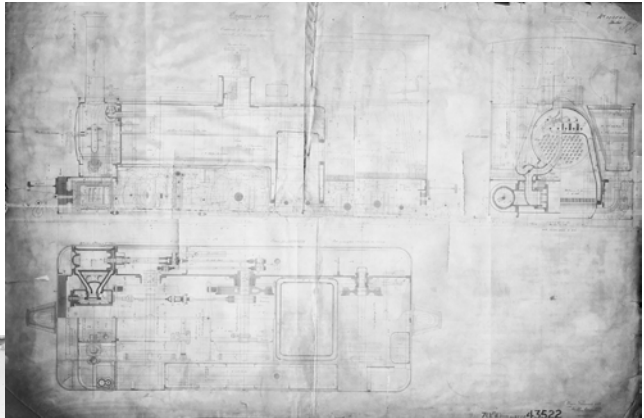
Above: A 1930s image of the original building laid over our centre spread to give a rough idea as to how the station site could start to take shape soon.

Right: One of the early stage CAD drawings of the new building.

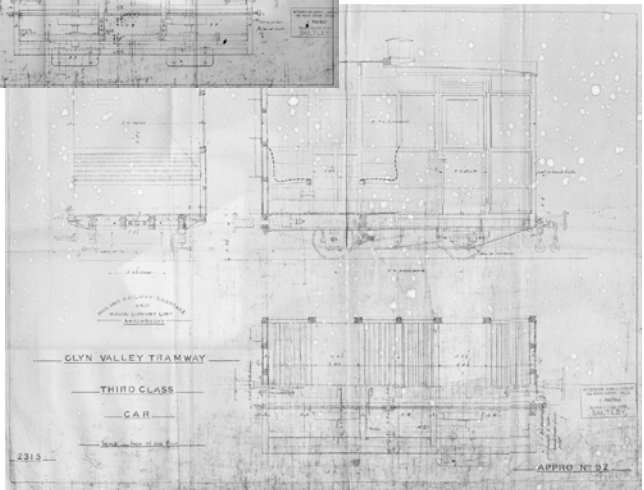




Scan of detailed technical drawing of the general locomotive layout.



Scan of First class carriage drawing.



Scan of Third class carriage drawing.

Working party progress

Mark Edlington reports from the site workings at Chirk station

JANUARY 2020

The latter part of 2019's summer and beyond was a period of little activity onsite due to a break for holidays followed by some very inclement weather, so we began 2020 with renewed vigour, with almost weekly working parties scheduled to take place.

Joined by several new volunteers, the first tasks of the year were to begin to clear away the growth that

had taken place since we were last here, and a general tidy up.

We reorganised all the bricks so far recovered onto the platform, sorting them into good quality and less usable stacks. We also cleared a lot of new growth from the access at the north-end of the site, making it a lot safer and easier to use.

Our new volunteers worked hard, and even came with some of their own equipment - a great help!

(Photos: Mark Edlington)



General clearance was the first order of the year, along with sorting of the huge amount of bricks recovered from our excavations to date.



New volunteers - Annwen Austin, Bob Stone and Barbara Stone.



Access from the northern end of the site has been improved.



More of the original platform edge is slowly being revealed, and the condition of the stones uncovered so far is largely very pleasing

FEBRUARY 2020

A bumper month of working parties, with a total of four such occasions, and with plenty of people on site to help too.

We initially focused on more sorting of the stack of reclaimed bricks and further platform edge clearance, including the first attempts to reduce a huge tree stump prior to its complete removal at a later date.

Towards the end of the month, work began to clear the slope by the road bridge, where the original wooden access steps used to be.

The most exciting find this month was the unearthing of a very corroded piece of rail, with a fishplate still attached. This was found at the northern end of the platform, and may even have been near the turntable for the carriage shed. More investigation required.

(Photos: Mark Edlington)



Clearing at the bridge end of the platform has begun, with the area where the original wooden platform access steps now much easier to see.



The original platform edge is still in great condition in places.



We've found a piece of rail, still with a fishplate attached!



There was certainly some heavy rainfall in February - taken from under Hand Lane bridge, this shows an area we clearly need to keep an eye on.

Compare this with the centre spread in the previous issue - you'll see that the full width of the trackbed has now been exposed. This goes back to about halfway along the platform (where this photo was taken from). Taken just after the last journal went to press, you can also see the exposed foundations of the original booking office and waiting room. *Photo: Rick Wilson*





Warning
of the Danger
of Falling Rocks

MARCH 2020

During early March, we continued with further clearance of the platform edge, and the brick and rubble pile is moving northwards.

As we move further up the platform, it appears to be built to a much higher standard than the southern end. Not only are the joints mortared, but the thickness of the platform wall must be a least double that adjacent to the booking

office foundations. The excavation of the length of tramway rail has also continued - it has a sharp curve.

We have decided to remove as much of the root system as possible from around the large tree stump, it would appear that, thankfully, the tree has struggled to get under the stonework due to its quality.

Further working parties had been planned for late March, but, as we know, something intervened...

(Photos: Mark Edlington)



More of the piece of rail has been uncovered - understandably, it is quite rotten in places after all this time, but we will continue to excavate.



John Holiday digs in to remove mud covering the platform.



This large tree stump is proving to be a tricky one to remove.



How the site looked at the end of what would turn out to be the last working party before the Coronavirus lockdown period.

JUNE/JULY 2020

Once lockdown restrictions had been sufficiently eased to allow a return to site, the first working party after the enforced break took place, and volunteer, Bob Stone, compared the lush new growth to the Borneo jungle! We eventually re-established the northern entrance to the site, mainly due to Bob's hard work with his strimmer.

Having gained access to the

station site, we continued with the removal of the new foliage and weeds, paying particular attention to the retaining wall.

It has been a bit soul destroying seeing all our hard work earlier in the year undone, but further working parties have seen us getting back near to where we were in March this year - it's great to see the station slowly re-emerging from all the foliage once more!

(Photos: Mark Edlington)



The retaining wall opposite the platform area is beginning to clean up very nicely, and appears to be still in very good condition.



Most of the lockdown growth has now been dealt with.



There is still a way to go yet, but the site is coming along well.

Volunteering at the GVTT

Fancy joining us for our working parties at Chirk Station?

Members are very welcome to come along and lend us a hand (we would be very grateful!). All ages and abilities are welcome, we just need you to be a member for insurance purposes.

For updates and news of future dates, please check out the “Latest News” section of our website at www.glynvalleytramwaytrust.co.uk. Updates will also be posted on the official GVTT Facebook page: www.facebook.com/glynvalleytramway.



Walking the line

Exploring the GVT, by Mark Edlington

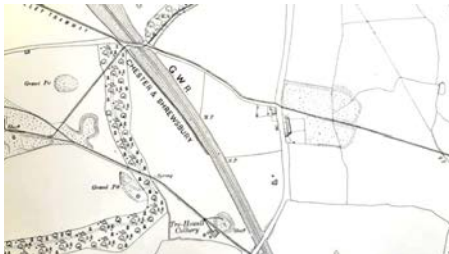


Technically, this should really be entitled “Walking the English GVT”, as I recently explored some of the former line that ran east of the Welsh/English border.

During the Coronavirus lock down we have been walking around Chirk Bank quite a bit, and our next-door neighbours tipped us off about a public footpath that covers part of the tramway’s route between the hamlet of Chirk Bank and the wharf on the Shropshire Union Canal - this includes a section of embankment that is still in place and forms part of the footpath through a piece of woodland.

The approximate route of the GVT is marked in red on the screen grab from Google Maps (below). The photo of the embankment was taken in the wood in the centre of the grab.

Interestingly the older Ordnance Survey maps (courtesy of Wrexham County Borough Museum Archives) show another tramway opposite the GVT wharf that served a brick works sited on what is now the Gledrid Industrial Estate (home to Dapol, among others).



First published in 2009, on behalf of The Glyn Valley Tramway Trust by Bernard Rockett’s Theodore Press, this delightful booklet details two splendid ‘circular’ walks. Both starting and finishing at Chirk Station, we will revisit this pair of perambulations in future issues of *Raising Steam*.





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ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Full membership	£10.00
Senior (65+) membership	£7.50
Junior (<18) membership	£7.50
Unwaged membership	£7.50
Family membership	£25.00
Life membership - individual	£250.00
Life membership - family	£300.00

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Subscription	£
Optional Donation	£
TOTAL	£

Make cheques payable to "Glyn Valley Tramway Trust"

Send completed form and remittance to:
Rick Wilson, Membership Secretary, Glyn Valley Tramway Trust,
School House, Bourne Road, Essendine, Rutland, PE9 4EH.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Members will receive the newsletter *Raising Steam*, when published, and will enjoy travel concessions once services commence. They will have the opportunity to help rebuild and operate the tramway. All members have the right to attend and vote at the Annual General Meeting.

VOLUNTEERING

The Trust relies on the goodwill of volunteers for many of its activities. In the years ahead it is expected that there will be opportunities for members to carry out work on the permanent way, to gain expertise in train operation and to carry out administration. Volunteers need to be a minimum of 14 years old. Please tick this box if you would like to be contacted as a potential volunteer.

GIFT AID DONATION

Gift Aid is an essential part of the Trust’s income, contributing an additional 25p for every pound donated. I declare that I am a UK Taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/ or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay the difference. I want to gift aid all my donations/ subscriptions to the Glyn Valley Tramway Trust Reg. No. 1121437. This is to apply to all future donations and also any that have been made by me in the last 4 years. (*Tick box if you agree.*)

CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

As a member I/we agree to uphold the good name of the Trust, to be bound by the Memorandum and Article of the Trust, to accept the decisions of the Annual General Meeting and the Board of Trustees of the Trust, to use my/our best endeavours to further the aims of the Trust, and to maintain the best relationships with the people of Chirk and the Ceiriog Valley communities.

I wish to apply to the Trust to enrol as a Member and agree to observe the Conditions of Membership above:

Signature

Date

(Signature of Parent/Guardian is required for Junior memberships.)

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*Come
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Then & Now

Memories of the GVT and how it is today



Chirk station with its sheds and goods yard beyond, from Hand Lane road bridge in 1931. Image from Trust collection, photographer unknown



A very different view today, with the area beyond the station now an industrial estate. Photo: Rick Wilson

Small Talk

Modelling the GVT, by Rick Wilson



This issue, our diversion into the modelling world is all about the much-anticipated Bachmann Baldwin OO9 gauge model. Announced all the way back in late 2014, this beautifully detailed GVT-liveried version of the scale replica finally began to arrive in the shops towards the end of last year, and I've managed to snaffle one of these for our exhibition layout currently under construction (this has grown substantially since the plans were shown in the last *Raising Steam!*).

Built during the latter years of World War I, the GVT took delivery of one of these workhorses once the conflict was over, and it was certainly used to good effect until the sad end of the tramway.

The model features a wealth of detail and even comes complete



with etched works plates to attach over the printed versions on the cab rear if so desired, adding extra detail.

Bachmann has wisely fitted its masterpiece with low gearing that helps with the prototypical low running speeds required, making it ideal for use on our future Chirk station and yard layout. More about this in the next issue!

These fabulous models retail at £154.95 each, with the DCC Sound version priced at £244.95.



FRIZINGHALL

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| 391-052 - Quarry Hunslet 0-4-0 'Nesta' Penryhn Quarry, Lined Black..... | £TBA |
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MINITRAINS



- | | |
|---|---------|
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| MT2060 - Greif Steam Locomotive with Tender..... | £TBA |
| MT5195 - Open Green Coach (matching to MT2060)..... | £TBA |
| MT5196 - Open Red Coach (matching to MT2060)..... | £TBA |
| MT5197 - Decauville Passenger Coach, Blue..... | £TBA |
| MT5198 - Decauville Passenger Coach, Red..... | £TBA |



Bachmann 009 Buildings

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| 44-0101 - Slate Built Engine Shed..... | £44.95 |
| 44-0102 - Slate Built Water Tower..... | £19.95 |
| 44-0103 - Slate Built Coal Store..... | £19.95 |
| 44-0104 - Timber Loco Lift..... | £27.95 |
| 44-0105 - Slate Processing Building..... | £45.01 |

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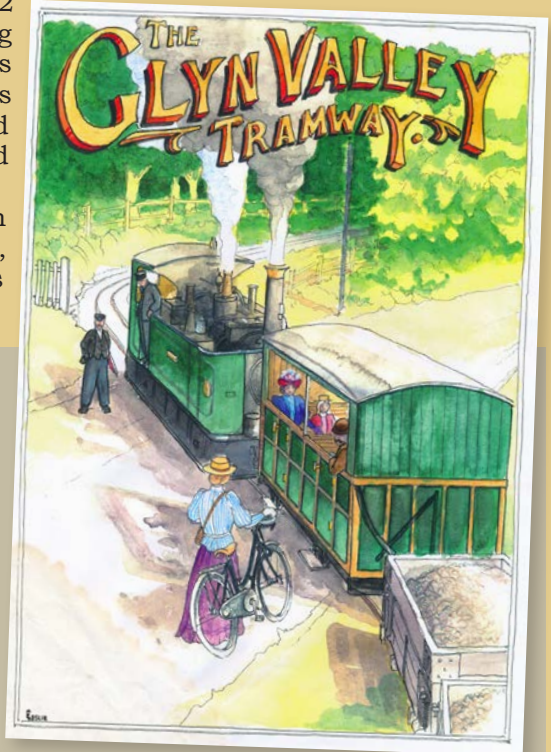
Special large poster offer for members only!

Renowned artist, Eric Leslie, has created this beautifully evocative artwork and very generously donated it to the GVT for fundraising purposes.

Printed as a limited run of just 250, on 130gsm silk paper at A2 size (42cm x 59.7cm), each poster will be ideal either for framing or hanging as is.

Using his wonderful and unique style, Eric's artwork captures a bygone era of the tramway in pre-1932 passenger closure days, depicting a romantic scene at Pontfaen as one of the locomotives begins the climb away from the road towards Chirk with a typical mixed passenger and goods train.

Make sure you don't miss out on this special once only print run, priced at just £10.00 each plus £3.95 postage and packing.



To purchase one of these limited edition A2-sized posters, send a cheque, payable to "The Glyn Valley Tramway Trust", to the address below. Each poster costs just £10.00 and, if ordered together, multiple purchases incur just a single charge of £3.95 for UK postage and packing.

**GVT Poster Offer
c/o Rick Wilson Design
School House, Bourne Road,
Essendine, Rutland, PE9 4EH.**

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