



Trustees' annual report and accounts

1st February 2020 – 31st January 2021



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Administrative information

The Trust is a charitable unincorporated association registered as a charity in England & Wales, number 1040128. It is governed by its Trust Deed dated 11th July 1994 with its principal object being:

“the collection, conservation and display of narrow-gauge railway relics and material for the education of the public in an enjoyable way”.

Accredited Museum No 1433

Registered office: Wharf Station Tywyn Gwynedd LL36 9EY

Personnel

Trustees appointed by the Tallylyn Railway Preservation Society	Ian Evans	Minutes secretary
	John D Olsen PhD, MRSB, CIBiol	
	Malcolm Phillips	Collections manager
	Wendy Pink	
	C Keith Theobald	Chairman
Co-opted trustees	Diane K Drummond PhD FHEA	
	C Russell Hatt CEng MICE	
Officers	Charles Fleming	Legal adviser
	Robert Gwynne BA, PGCE, DipM, AMA	Museum mentor
	Andrew Nock	Secretary
	Stephen Powell	Treasurer

All personnel served throughout the reporting year.

The Trustees met 12 times during the reporting year. In order to comply with official guidance regarding Covid-19 security all meetings were held remotely by audio-video conference. At all their meetings the Trustees kept in mind their duty to provide public benefit.

Bank: CAF Bank Ltd
25 Kings Hill Avenue
Kings Hill
West Malling Kent
ME19 4JQ

The Narrow Gauge Railway Museum (“the Museum”)

The Trust’s aim is to record and interpret the history of narrow-gauge railways in the British Isles and beyond. While a number of passenger-carrying railways have been preserved and still operate, primarily now to serve the tourist market, many other passenger-carrying lines, as well as numerous industrial and military ones, ceased to exist in the mid-20th century. The pioneering enthusiasts and collectors of those times laid the basis of the collection while it was still possible, so that today the story of these railways can be told, most of which never achieved the widespread following enjoyed by the main lines, but were in their own way important contributors to economic and social history.

The Trust's main activity is managing the Museum to ensure its current operation and secure its long-term sustainability.

The Museum occupies a purpose-made building, opened in 2005 as part of the major re-development of the Talyllyn Railway's Wharf station in Tywyn. Its location alongside a working narrow-gauge railway gives the Museum's story a living context, and adds a significant attraction to the pleasure and interest of a journey on the Railway. Elsewhere on the Wharf site the Museum also has use of the historic Gunpowder Store and new building featuring the original Talyllyn Railway weighbridge.

The Collection

The main collection consists of items relating to narrow gauge railways of the British Isles, and to the Talyllyn Railway in particular.

The Trustees continue to review selectively items offered for sale at auction, and make a reasonable bid for any item which they consider would enhance the collection. Items are also offered to the Museum from time to time, with any accession decision being taken by the Trustees. Most recent accessions have been small, mostly paper, items, reflecting the reality of new material availability, and the pressures on the Museum's space. Accessions during the reporting year are listed in Appendix 2.

Some items in the collection – mainly wagons – are displayed outdoors on the Wharf site. Some large items – locomotives and a wagon – which cannot be accommodated at Tywyn for lack of space are on loan to appropriate institutions elsewhere in the UK.

Risk management

The Trustees maintain, apply and review policies relating to:

- Emergencies
- Safeguarding
- Health and safety
- Environment
- Data protection

The Trustees maintain a Designated Insurance Reserve fund as cover against loss or damage to items in the Collection. Many such items being historical relics are unique and hence 'priceless'; they regard this as better value for money than cover in the commercial insurance market, which is unavailable at a reasonable premium.

The Trustees also earmark a proportion of the Trust's cash balance (held in a high-interest account, £36k at the end of the reporting year) as a hedge against higher running costs. The Trust occupies its premises on very beneficial terms from its landlord the Talyllyn Railway, and could face substantially higher costs if changing circumstances caused the Railway to alter its terms.

Review of the year

The Covid-19 pandemic

As had been customary, the Museum was open to the public the during schools' half-term holiday week in February 2020; normally it would have re-opened for the main season at Easter, but was prevented from doing so by official restrictions imposed to control the

spread of Covid-19 infection. These restrictions, at varying levels, persisted throughout the reporting year.

In addition to the general effect of restrictions, two factors had a particular impact on the Museum:

- The Museum is run entirely by volunteers, mostly in the older age groups that were identified as at especial risk from Covid-19 infection, and therefore unable to work even when museum opening was officially permitted;
- Differing levels and scopes of restrictions in Wales and England; for example, at a time when the Railway and the Museum could have opened, restrictions meant that no-one could visit from England, rendering any activity commercially pointless.

Positively, public financial support for the museums sector was quickly organised and distributed, and the Museum has benefitted from several grants which have sustained it during the year, replacing lost income and funding additional costs:

Awarding body	Value of grant
National Lottery Heritage Fund – Heritage Emergency Grant	£9700
Gwynedd Council – Business grant	£10000
Wales Cultural Recovery Fund – Welsh Government	£26920
Gwynedd Council – Firebreak grant	£1000
Gwynedd Council – Firebreak grant	£2000
Gwynedd Council – Grant Nadolig	£3000

The Welsh Government allowed museums to re-open as from 27th July 2020, but most found the process of re-opening difficult and complex, with the Narrow Gauge Railway Museum being no exception. In addition to meeting enhanced hygiene and safety requirements, it faced two particular challenges; its volunteer attendants were mostly in “at-risk” categories and so could not staff the Museum, and the ventilation needed improving in order to provide adequate air circulation within the building, especially the upper floor.

The emergency grants from the Welsh Government (via Gwynedd Council) and the Lottery Heritage Fund allowed the Museum to make the changes and obtain the materials needed for safe public access, and crucially to take on two paid employees (Museum Assistants), Luke Ryan and Frank Nolan, initially for four months, allowing a phased re-opening.

Phase 1 on 5th September saw public access to the entrance area with a large screen monitor to illustrate the collection inside (and the large door open when weather conditions allowed).

Phase 2 followed very quickly, on 7th September, allowing visitors who had booked on-line to visit the Museum’s ground floor, where most of the larger exhibits are displayed.

Under Phase 3 on 18th November, following provision of improved ventilation, visitors were also able to enjoy prebooked but restricted access to the first-floor displays, including many of the smaller exhibits and the re-created Awdry Study. Regrettably a new Welsh ‘lockdown’ forced the Museum to close its doors again on 5th December, and it remained closed at the end of the reporting year.



New Museum Assistants Luke Ryan and Frank Nolan welcome visitors to the Museum on re-opening day, 5th September 2020

Inevitably, visitor numbers at 1442 in 2020 were much lower than normal (16,671 in the previous year):

From	To	Days	Adult visitors	Child visitors	Total visitors
February half term		9	165	102	267
05.09.20	23.10.20	49	734	67	801
09.11.20	04.12.20	26	349	35	374
					1442

Further grants were received later in the year – a Welsh Government Cultural Recovery Fund Grant of £26,920, and several support grants from Gwynedd Council amounting to £6,000. Among other things the Welsh Government grant financed further work to improve ventilation with the provision of a large window topped with 3 top light opening windows giving an excellent view from the adjacent Neptune Road into the Museum’s upper floor, and creating interest among passers-by. It has also allowed the Museum to extend the employment of the Museum Assistants to the end of March 2021.



New windows on Neptune Road frontage, providing the required ventilation, and an enticing glimpse into the Museum, with star locomotive exhibit 'Dot' in full view

Wider access

In order to involve a wider range of people in heritage, and to compensate for the very limited access to the Museum, the Museum Assistants have expanded its social media presence, and started providing on-line 'virtual' tours. Every week an item from the collection is featured on the website. For the first time, learning materials for children have been placed on the Museum website – for parents to use during enforced periods of home-schooling for example.

Temporary exhibition and writing competition

The Museum regularly mounts temporary exhibitions, often to celebrate a significant anniversary or to focus on a special area of interest. The 2020 exhibition – 'narrow-gauge railways in literature' - was set up in January 2020, featuring some literary greats from the past including D.H. Lawrence, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Henry Williamson, along with more recent authors, some still living, and the work of some children's writers including the Rev W Awdry whose fictional 'Skarloey Railway' was inspired by his experience as a volunteer on the Talylyn Railway in early preservation days. Because the Museum was closed for much of the year restricting the number of people able to see the exhibition, it has been made available on the Museum website.



The "Narrow-Gauge Railways in Literature" temporary exhibition

Complementing the exhibition was a writing competition, an innovation for the Museum. Pandemic restrictions inevitably depressed interest, but some good entries were received and first prize was awarded to Declan J O'Dare for an original and engaging love story centred on one of the Museum's earliest and most distinctive exhibits, the steam locomotive from the Guinness brewery in Dublin. Winner of the Junior prize was 10 year-old Ziyad Abdelaal-Wait, with "The tiny, red steam locomotive". He said "The locomotive is loosely based upon William Finlay, who now resides at the NGRM, and my hopes for it in the future."

Other developments

Over the year the Trustees have continued to work on two important projects, although inevitably the Covid-19 pandemic has slowed progress:

- The oral history project, to record personal memories of narrow-gauge railways and the slate industry;
- Digitising and cataloguing the Museum's extensive photographic collection, including the significant Casserley collection acquired the previous year, to ensure their preservation and to give better access.

Governance

The Trustees continued their participation in the 'Prospering Boards' programme run by AIM (Association of Independent Museums) and have made significance progress in defining the Trust's aims and purpose, and establishing a new Forward Plan. They will soon

be ready to seek Charity Commission registration of the Trust as a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation), allowing the number of trustees to be increased to bring in a wider range of skills.

Recognition

In January the Trustees were delighted to hear that the Museum was to receive the 2021 Heritage Railway Association's *Interpretation Award*, sponsored by Heritage Railway Magazine and Mortons Media. Across the UK, heritage rail operators of every kind regard the HRA awards as the industry's most prestigious form of recognition. This award recognises the hard work, creativity and dedication of the volunteers who have supported the independent, accredited museum over many years.

People

The same Trustees and Museum officers served throughout the reporting year. The two trustees who live locally to Tywyn have been able to oversee the Museum during the period of restrictions and closure, but most Trustee business has been conducted remotely, taking advantage of modern audio-visual technology.

Museum working parties, which generally meet on Thursday mornings, outside during the summer and indoors in the winter, and do work vital to maintain the Museum, have regrettably been suspended for much of year, but were able to meet from late August until mid-December.

The year has been a trying one generally and personally for all the Museum's volunteers, and the Trustees thank them for their loyal support.

The future

At the end of the reporting year, it appeared likely that the Museum, along with the Tallylyn Railway, would be allowed to re-open in the second quarter of 2021, although the extent of any remaining restrictions was unknown. This is clearly good news, but the Trustees are acutely conscious that a return to 'business as it used to be' may not be possible. The Museum's business model, with no admission charge and reliance on donation income to balance the relatively low running costs resulting from a 100% volunteer workforce, may no longer be tenable if volunteers, who came predominantly from older age groups, are unable or unwilling to return in previous numbers. The cost of continuing to employ staff to compensate would significantly exceed previous income levels, and the Trustees are urgently investigating additional income sources.

Other exciting challenges face the Museum too, in particular to work with the Tallylyn Railway to enhance the way the Tywyn area's unique narrow-gauge heritage is interpreted and presented to visitors, and to play its part if, as is hoped, the Welsh Slate Landscape receives World Heritage Site designation.

Financial Report

Narrow Gauge Railway Museum Trust					
Accounts for year ended 31st January 2021					
Fund Type	Unrestricted	Designated		All	Previous year
Fund Name	General	Insurance Reserve			
RECEIPTS					
Donations in Museum	£495.00			£495.00	£ 2,053.02
Other Donations	£4,734.74			£4,734.74	£ 1,078.22
Friends Subscriptions	£887.00			£887.00	£ 1,722.75
Legacies	£0.00			£0.00	£ 79.32
Grants	£52,620.00			£52,620.00	£ 1,511.00
Gift Aid Tax Reclaim	£3,698.69			£3,698.69	£ -
Sales	£0.00			£0.00	£ -
Fees	£0.00			£0.00	£ -
Miscellaneous	£0.00			£0.00	£ -
Bank Interest	£20.98	£580.72		£601.70	£ 8.35
Total Receipts	£62,456.41	£580.72		£63,037.13	£ 7,012.66
EXPENDITURE					
Collection					
Acquisition	£78.68			£78.68	£ 2,901.79
Repair & Maintenance	£0.00			£0.00	£ 43.57
Presentation	£1,164.73			£1,164.73	£ 742.46
Subscriptions	£277.80			£277.80	£ 279.80
Grants	£0.00			£0.00	£ -
Payroll	£10,783.14			£10,783.14	£ -
Covid precautions	£11,540.40			£11,540.40	£ -
Miscellaneous	£455.23			£455.23	£ 1,931.54
Total Payments	£24,299.98			£24,299.98	£ 5,899.16
Net Receipts	£38,156.43	£580.72		£38,737.15	-£ 1,038.37
Balances b/f 01/02/20	£26,333.64	£41,366.96		£67,700.60	£ 25,653.69
Balances c/f 01/02/21	£64,490.07	£41,947.68		£106,437.75	£ 26,233.64

Fund Balances at 31/01/2020					
General			£26,333.64	Insurance Reserve	£41,947.68
Represented by					
NWB A/C gross			£436.20		
CAF Cash A/C 31/01/20 <i>less unrepresented cheques etc.</i>		£27,122.30			
	£0.00	£27,122.30			
<i>plus unstatemented credits</i>					
	£0.00	£27,122.30			
CAF Cash A/C net			£27,122.30		
CAF Gold A/C 31/01/20 <i>plus unstatemented credits</i>		£36,931.57			
	£0.00	£36,931.57			
CAF Gold A/C net			£36,931.57		
Fund balances at 31/01/2021					
			£64,490.07	1-year Bond	£41,947.68

Financial commentary

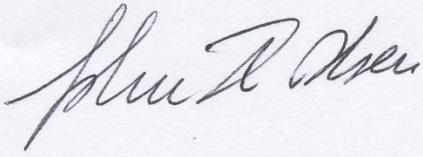
The Trust's accounts for the reporting year illustrate almost better than words the unprecedented changes caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

- Income from visitors' donations was down by 75%, reflecting the very limited opening the Museum was able to achieve, and reduced tourist numbers;
- Grant income, gratefully received and essential to the Museum's survival, increased vastly by a factor of 35 to £52k, as reported earlier;
- The Trustees, concentrating on the Museum's survival, suspended all expenditure on acquisitions¹ and other developments not related to Covid-19 security and Museum sustainability.
- Payments were substantially (by a factor of 4) higher than in the previous year, mostly related to expenditure on employment, equipment and materials building modifications to enable the Museum to operate during the pandemic; these amounted to more than £22,000, showing the high cost of sustaining the Museum and ensuring that, as far as restrictions allowed, it was able to continue to provide public benefit.

Some grant-funded expenditure related to periods after the reporting year end, and remained to be disbursed in the following year.

¹ The accessions reported in Appendix 2 were gifts to the Museum.

Signed:

Trustee (Chairman)	C Keith Theobald	 Date: 9.11.21
Trustee DR JOHN DOMINIC OLSEN		 Date: 9-11-21

Appendix 1

Independent examiner's report



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the
accounts

Report to the trustees/
members of

Charity Name

THE NARROW GAUGE RAILWAY MUSEUM TRUST.

On accounts for the year
ended

31/11/2021

Charity no
(if any)

1040128

Set out on pages

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended DD/MM/YYYY.

Responsibilities and basis
of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's
statement

[The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of [insert name of applicable listed body]]. Delete [] if not applicable.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below*) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

N Roscoe

Date:

1st June 2021

Name:

NIGEL RONALD ROSCOE

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body (if
any):

IER

1

Oct 2018

Appendix 2

Accessions to the Collection, 2020-2021

MAIN

TYWRM:ALR009	timetable	Ashover Light Railway pocket timetable for 20 August 1925 onwards
TYWRM:CU013	label	Instrument labels for Chattenden and Upnor Hard
TYWRM:DQ126	ticket	Ticket for travel on the Padarn Railway
TYWRM:FR056	report	Festiniog Railway Directors report and accounts for December 1909
TYWRM:FR057	plaque	Festiniog Railway plaque mounted crest
TYWRM:LLS013	timetable	Londonderry & Lough Swilly Railway Company Working Timetable for 13th April 1947
TYWRM:PQ071	works plate	Replica works plate for Manning Wardle locomotive No.1382 'Jubilee 1897'
TYWRM:TR359	pattern	Talylyn Railway nameplate foundry pattern for Merseysider (letter M missing)
TYWRM:TR360	headboard	Talylyn Railway cast aluminium headboard for "Rolt Explorer"
TYWRM:ZZ008	photograph	Casserley collection photographs / negatives
TYWRM:ZZ009	photograph	Collection of slides of railways from Philip Sayers
TYWRM:ZZ010	photograph	Collection of photographs from David Mitchell (used in museum from 2004)
TYWRM:FR058	book	Festiniog Railway Guide Book c1972
TYWRM:FR059	book	Festiniog Railway Pictorial Series 2 1971
TYWRM:FR060	postcard	Limited edition of six art-drawn postcards featuring 150 years of the Festiniog Railway
TYWRM:RHD003	book	Guide book for the Romney Hythe and Dymchurch Railway
TYWRM:TR361	timetable	Talylyn Railway card pocket timetable for 1973
TYWRM:TVR001	ticket	Official Opening Day ticket 9th April 1986
TYWRM:WLR015	book	Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway Guide 1973

SUPPORT

TYWRM:SUP273	book	The Railways of Sir Arthur Percival Heywood Volume 1 by James Waterfield
TYWRM:SUP274	book	Narrow Gauge Railways in South Caernarvonshire by J.I.C.Boyd
TYWRM:SUP275	book	Snowdon Mountain Railway by P. Ransome-Wallis
TYWRM:SUP276	book	The Manifold Valley and its Light Railway by R. Keys and L. Porter
TYWRM:SUP277	book	The Welsh Highland Railway by Charles E. Lee
TYWRM:SUP278	book	Slates to Velinheli by D.C.Carrington and T.F.Rushworth
TYWRM:SUP279	book	Bowater's Sittingbourne Railway by Arthur G. Wells
TYWRM:SUP280	book	Vale of Rheidol Light Railway by W.J.K.Davies
TYWRM:SUP281	book	The Glyn Valley Tramway by David Llewellyn Davies
TYWRM:SUP282	book	How Ffestiniog got its Railway by M.J.T.Lewis
TYWRM:SUP283	book	Campbeltown & Machrihanish Light Railway by Nigel S.C. Macmillan
TYWRM:SUP284	postcard	Booklet of postcards of Welsh narrow gauge railways

AWDRY

None