

Corwen Central News



Despite some of the rain attributed to *Storm Eric* and a good “dusting” of snow on the mountains, this last month has been quite mild along the Dee Valley. More signs of life are evident with buds already showing on the trees and daffodils pushing their heads above ground in the more sheltered places. A large flock of mallard ducks have been spotted on the river near Bonwm Halt, with drakes already starting to put on brighter colours to attract a mate/mates for the new season!

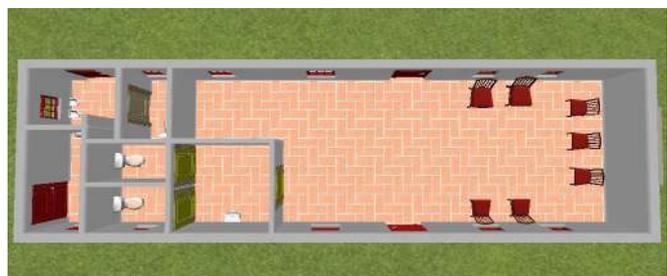


River Visitors - Mallard ducks and drakes (Biological name : Anas platyrhynchos)

(Mallards are not noted for their loyalty to one another once mating has taken place!!!) Despite all of this the work gang has been busy at Corwen, completing the floor and services for the platform waiting room, preparing the canopy columns for machining to the correct

height and profile, completing the clear up of Corwen East and the relocation of the main line buffer stop to become the buffer stop of the UP siding. Team members, along with members of the Plc's Track Gang have undergone training on the Road-Rail Crane.

Platform Waiting Room



Ground plan of the platform waiting room - Design PR

As reported last month, the platform waiting room has received a floor and has had the water and sewage services installed. The temporary electrical switch cupboard has been taken from under the



Open plan of the platform waiting room - Design PR

Corwen Central News

Down platform wall and placed in position against what will eventually be the inside wall of the waiting room. This junction box will supply power for the wheel chair lift as well as to the booking office.



Power box standing within the perimeter of the station building Photo: PR

More saddling up

The saddles have been fitted to the top of the underpass exit complete with fixing studs for the column supports.



Fixing studs in place on top of underpass Photo: PR

In the meantime the columns have been prepared for the workshop where they will be cut to size to

carry the canopy. Along with these, the corner posts and hooped fencing for the top of the underpass exit have been made ready for fitting.



Columns ready for the work shop Photo : PR

Eastward progress

The Up platform wall has reached its turning point complete with oversail blocks and edging slabs. The gap hasn't been sealed yet as access to the west is still required by wheeled vehicles. However, for the most part the platform walls are complete. Attention will have to be turned to filling in the void generously sponsored by the "Tenner a Tonne Appeal"!! After this a contractor is booked to put the paving blocks into place to form the platform surface.

Way out East

Work has now begun to prepare to align the track and to join the station area to the mainline. To this end the Buffer Stop has been removed from the end of the track at Corwen East and placed on the Up side to start to form the Up storage siding. In the meantime all the woodwork has been removed from the Cowen East scaffold, with decking planks being shared between the Project and

Corwen Central News



Track being added to the UP siding

Photo : PR

the next part of the build can go ahead. To this end resources have to be devoted to just moving things about – not greatly productive – but essential if the final “joining” can take place. To this end the machinery compound has been dismantled and preparations are being made to move the site office (“Chicken Dock”) and the engineering workshop. All three items are now in the way of the layout for the crossover and entrance to the Up siding. Once removed the spaces will be filled and levelled and brought up to the same height as the rest of the embankment.

Pentrefelin Carriage Works. The wagons containing the wood have been returned to Pentre, where it will be used to repair other rolling stock – especially goods vans and trucks.

Signal Box - “Bits 'n Bobs”

Local Corwen carpenter , Geraint Tudor kindly offered his services towards the end of last year to provide all the beading for the windows of the signal box - a traditional method of holding window glass in place in a wooden building. Approximately 30 metres or more are required to do the job. Tudor has sourced the wood from his stock and equipped his moulding machine with specially made profiling tools for the GWR woodwork. This is a valued input, much to the relief of Project Carpenter Ron Stansbie, who



Dismantled compound panels

Photo : PR

The scaffolding originally forming the platform at Corwen East has now been handed back to the contractor for dismantling. This will be done on an ad hoc basis so it may take some time to completely clear the site. As mentioned on various occasions (*CCNL passim*) the Project site is quite congested and eventually space has to be made so



Road Railer on the Down Loop ready for work

Photo : PR

Corwen Central News

himself has remade or refurbished all the window frames in the signal box!

Road Railer Training has taken place for members of the project team and the Plc's Track Gang to drive the road rail digger/crane. As the road options start to close on the work site the road-railer will be used to move equipment and materials around as the rail option will be the only one left. Once work has been completed at Corwen the road-railer will be released for track maintenance duties along the length of the railway.

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 **54***

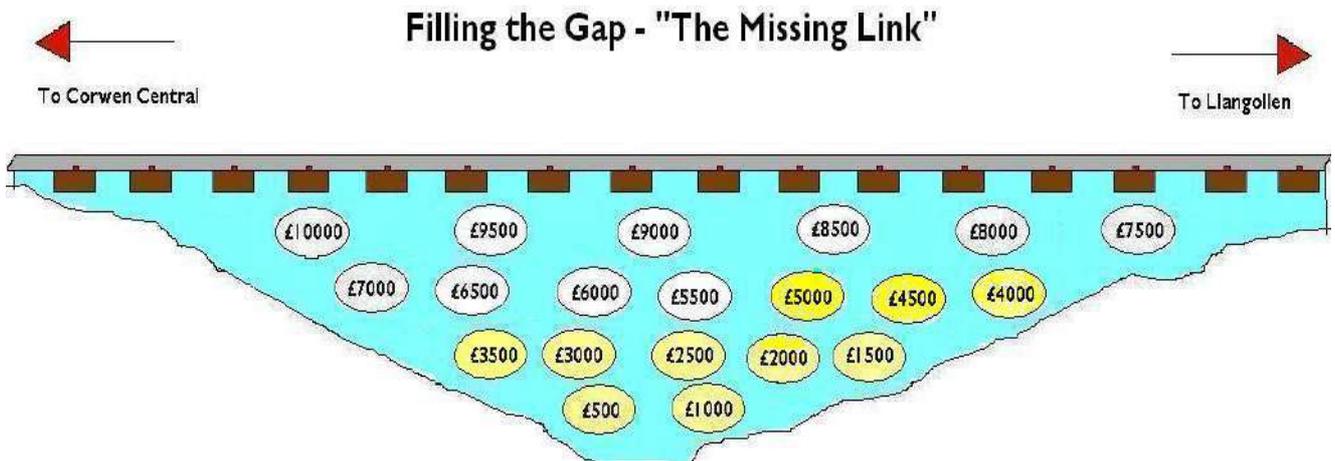
This month's winner of Lucky Numbers is Richard Statham, a member of the Loco

Department and the 5199 Project team with **Number 54**. Congratulations go to Richard on his win.

Since last month the Project's Treasurer Paul Bailey reports that income to the Project at the close of 2018 was just over £89,500 , which after the purchase of materials left slightly under £64,000 to be carried forward into 2019. (Due to Christmas and New Year Holidays there was no management meeting during January, so the February meeting was the first opportunity for the treasurer to report).

Paul Bailey also asks if the remaining 5 subscribers who have asked to rejoin the raffle in 2019 but have not yet paid to let him or the Project Team have the money!! He is also pleased to advise that we have reached half of our £10k target for our "Fill the Gap" Infill Appeal, **"BUT WE STILL NEED ANOTHER £5K so please keep those monies coming and NOTE that anyone giving £100 or more will receive 4 return tickets to travel our line on normal timetabled services in 2019!!"**

Reference is regularly made to the Project's friends and supporters, many of them anonymous, so it is



Corwen Central News

very good to receive a donation and a letter (one amongst many) offering encouragement to the Project Team and reflecting on journeys made along the Dee Valley many years ago

“Welshpool SY21

Hello everyone at Llangollen Railway,

Please find the enclosed a donation towards your ‘Fill the Gap’ appeal at the new Corwen Station. I hope it goes some way towards repaying the joy the railway gave my family in the forties and fifties, travelling to Barmouth every summer for our holidays. My parents, sadly now long gone, and my late brother enjoyed this railway journey and in the nineteen fifties I did too.

My dad always said it was God’s wonderful railway. So very glad you have been able to restore more and more of it.

Now living in Mid Wales, my late husband and I visited the railway many times and have walked the Mawddach Estuary so very often. There are just so many wonderful memories for our family.

With best wishes and grateful thanks to all the people who are making ‘Corwen’ happen.

I shall visit as soon as it is open,

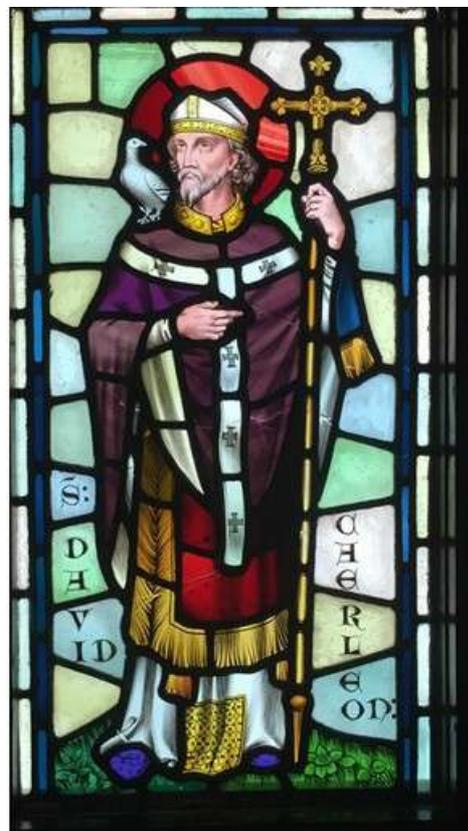
Yours etc.....”

End Piece

The publication date for this issue of CCNL is March 1st – St David's Day, so the Project Team would like to wish all readers and supporters **“Dydd Gŵyl Dewi Hapus!”/ “Happy Saint David's Day!”** Unfortunately St. David's Day is not an official UK holiday date, unlike in Ireland where St. Patrick's Day (March 17th) is a public holiday.

St. David's Day marks the death of the saint on March 1st. 589 A.D. The feast has been regularly celebrated since the canonisation of David in the 12th century by Pope Callixtus II (c. 1065 – 1124).

Traditional festivities to mark the day, include wearing daffodils and leeks, recognised symbols of Wales and Saint David respectively, eating

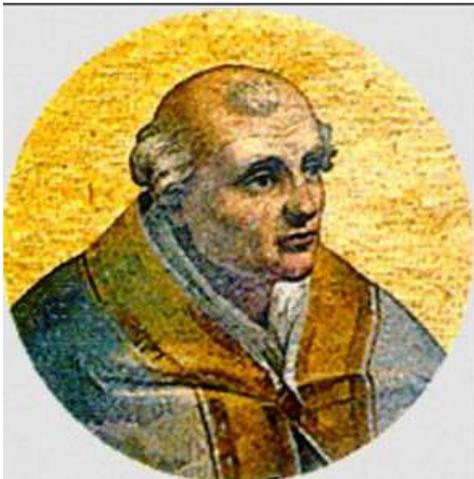


Stained glass depiction of Saint David, designed by William Burges, (2nd December 1827 – 20th April 1881) at Castell Coch, Cardiff

traditional Welsh food including cawl and Welsh rarebit, and women wearing traditional Welsh dress. Some of these traditions are many centuries old, but others come from the 19th century as part of the “Celtic Revival” (See End Piece CCNL

Corwen Central News

March 2019 for the story of “Salem”). Saint David/Dewi Sant was born in Caerfai, south west Wales into an aristocratic family. He was reportedly a kinsman of the royal house of Ceredigion, and founded a Celtic monastic community at Glyn Rhosyn/The Vale of Roses on the western headland of Pembrokeshire/Sir Benfro at the spot where St David's Cathedral stands today.



Pope Callixtus (1065-1124)

Illustration – unknown origin

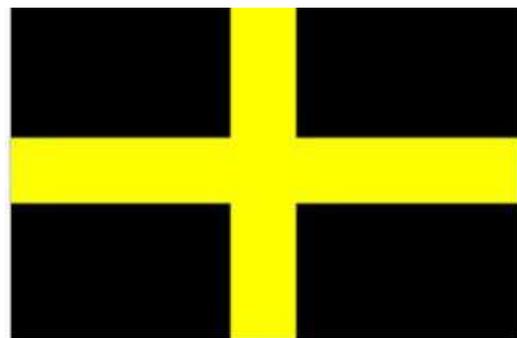
David's fame as a teacher and his asceticism spread among Celtic Christians, and he helped found about 12 monasteries. His foundation at Glyn Rhosyn became an important Christian shrine, and the most important centre in Wales. During the Saxon invasions of the 6th Century St. David told his soldiers to wear Leeks on their hats so they could be easily recognised, whilst Shakespeare in Henry V says that leeks were worn by the Welsh Archers during the Battle of Agincourt.

The wearing of daffodils was popularised by David Lloyd-George in the early part of the 20th. Century, having already been added to the

tradition in Victorian times possibly after some confusion over the Welsh for **leek** (the original national emblem), *Cenhinen*, and the Welsh for **daffodil**, *Cenhinen Pedr.*, thus the daffodil was adopted as a second emblem of Wales.

For centuries, 1st March has been a national festival. Saint David was recognised as a national patron saint in the 12th century at a peak time of Welsh resistance to the Normans. The 17th-century diarist Samuel Pepys noted how Welsh celebrations in London for Saint David's Day would spark wider counter-celebrations amongst their English neighbours: life-sized effigies of Welshmen were symbolically lynched, and by the 18th century the custom had arisen of confectioners producing "*taffies*"—gingerbread figures baked in the shape of a Welshman riding a goat—on Saint David's Day.

Saint David's Day is also celebrated in expatriate Welsh communities outside the UK. Cross-party support resulted in the National Assembly for Wales voting unanimously to make Saint David's Day a public holiday in 2000. A poll conducted for Saint David's Day in 2006 found that 87% of people in Wales wanted it to be a bank holiday, with 65% prepared to sacrifice a different bank holiday to achieve this. A petition in 2007 to make



Traditional flag/banner of St. David

Corwen Central News

Saint David's Day a bank holiday was rejected by the office of the British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

In the poem *Armes Prydein* (The Prophecy of Britain), composed in the early to mid-10th century, the anonymous author prophesies that the Cymry (the Welsh people) will unite and join an alliance of fellow-Celts to repel the Anglo-Saxons, under the banner of Saint David: *A lluman glân Dewi a ddyrchafant* ("And they will raise the pure banner of Dewi").

Although there were occasional Welsh uprisings in the Middle Ages, the country was briefly united by various Welsh princes before its conquest at different times, and it arguably had a very short period of independence during the rising of Owain Glyndŵr, but Wales as a whole was never an independent kingdom for long.

Henry Tudor, 2nd Earl of Richmond, who was born in Pembroke Castle as a patrilineal descendant of the Tudor Dynasty of North Wales, became King Henry VII of England after his victory over Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth Field in 1485, to end the Wars of the Roses.

Henry's green and white banner with a red dragon became a rallying point for Welsh patriotism with the memory of Saint David on his Feast Day.

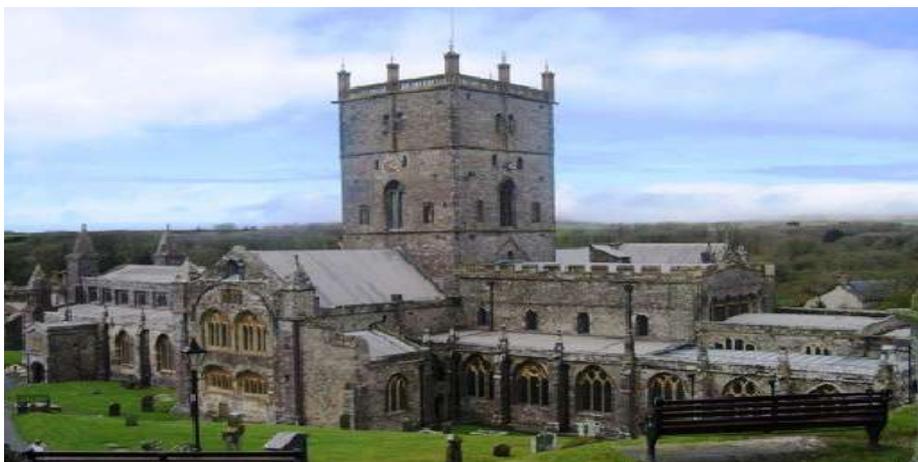
Henry was the first monarch of the House of Tudor, and during the reign of that dynasty the royal coat of arms included the Welsh Dragon, a reference to the monarch's origin.



Shrine of St. David at St. David's Cathedral

Photo: Plucas58

The banner from Henry's victory was not adopted as the official Flag of Wales until 1959. The flag of Saint David, however, a golden cross on a black background, was not part of the symbolism of House of Tudor.



St. David's Cathedral, current day, restored to its 1181 appearance. (St Davids, Pembrokeshire)

Photo : Chris Rivers