



TR Register Shropshire Group

Run to

The Ffestiniog Railway

Wednesday 14th August 2019

In July, TR Register Shropshire and Northumbria Groups' enjoyed a joint run out to the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railway's engineering works at Boston Lodge. Following this, members expressed the desire to organise another run with a view to taking a ride on the steam railway.

A date was agreed when the majority of those who wanted to go could make it and a group booking for 22 was arranged with the railway including booking the quite new observation car on the return journey.

On the day, the weather was forecast to be cloud and rain all day and so a number of members decided not to travel in their TRs which may have been a wise choice because the weather forecasts turned out to be pretty accurate.

20 diehard members turned out on a pretty awful day for the drive over the Berwyn mountains to Bala and then onto Blaenau Ffestiniog to catch the train to Porthmadog by the sea! The road across the Berwyns is a real driver's road in dry weather with spectacular views and lovely roads with sweeping bends and tight corners. In wet weather the road is still a great, maybe a slower drive, but today there were no views and we were driving in the clouds.



Road over the Berwyns on a good day – on our drive we were not so lucky.- Google

Despite the weather we had a good drive through Bala and along the A4212 and then over the top on the B4391 to

Ffestiniog, normally a fantastic driver's road with great views, but on our day out visibility was down to almost nothing.

We arrived at Blaenau Ffestiniog to a wet and windy car park and made our way to the Ffestiniog Railway station to catch our 11.30am train to Porthmadog.



On the platform in Blaenau Ffestiniog. – Photo by Gordon Grant



Wet, wet, wet in Blaenau Ffestiniog. – Photo by Gordon Grant

Once on the train we enjoyed the ride down to Porthmadog and whilst

the views were limited by the clouds and windows covered in rain droplets, we nevertheless made the best of it and enjoyed each others' company along the way.

The train was late arriving in Porthmadog and when we arrived at the cafe where we had booked for lunch, (The Port Café), our tables had been given to other customers because they thought that we were not coming. The café however saved the day and within 15-20 minutes had enough tables for us all to sit down to a simple but fulfilling lunch.

After a walk around Porthmadog, the harbour, looking at the shops and around a small but interesting museum showing the history of this small harbour side town mainly based on the export of slate and the importation of timber, we found our way back to the station to catch the 15.50 back to Blaenau Ffestiniog.



Alan Edwards and Phil Desborough taking in the atmosphere of the Beyer Peacock about to draw out of the station on its way to Caernarfon on the Welsh Highland Railway – Photo by Gordon Grant

For the return journey we had booked the relatively new 1st Class Observation Car. This wonderful carriage with its comfortable seats, large windows, was built at the railway's carriage works at Boston Lodge just across The Cob, an



The Observation Car. – Photo by Festrail



Our train pulling out of Harbour Station, Porthmadog and onto The Cob embankment. . – Photo by Peter Napier

embankment built to reclaim land in the estuary and then conveniently used for carrying the new slate railway in the 1830s.

The journey back was as enjoyable as the run down from Blaenau and just as wet and cloudy outside. However, the luxurious interior, whist not up to the opulence of the Orient Express nevertheless made up for the disappointment of the lack of views

over the wonderful scenery of the wider landscapes. There were though some spectacular water falls just metres from the railway line and more than enough nearer views to make the trip worthwhile.

After arriving back at the station we all went more or less separate ways and another TR Register Shropshire Group run was sadly over. Looking forward to the next one though!

Peter Napier 15.08.19



The outward journey on the train.- Gordon Grant



Janet – the photographer being photographed!- Gordon Grant



Rosanne giving an indication of the weather- Gordon Grant



Our esteemed Group Leader and Mrs esteemed Group Leader enjoying a well deserved day off!- Gordon Grant



OMG – (this is one of my current project on the F+WHRly – to bring this disused Tan y Bwlch station house back into reuse as a holiday cottage! – Peter N) - Gordon Grant



Enjoying lunch at The Port Café in Porthmadog – Peter Napier



Our engine backing onto the train in Harbour Station – Peter Napier



Is this Alan Edwards telling Phil Desborough all about this Beyer Peacock? Or are the discussing Brexit? - Gordon Grant



Our Double Fairlie (articulated) engine watering and coaling for our return journey. - Gordon Grant



Which way did he go? - Gordon Grant



Ready to go – Peter Napier



Harbour Station – Peter Napier



Porthmadog harbour - Gordon Grant



*In the Observation Car ready for the return journey.-
Peter Napier*



*Waiting to board the train at Harbour Station. -
Gordon Grant*



Nice view of our train steaming out of Harbour Station and onto The Cob. - Gordon Grant



Working up an incline.- Peter Napier



Passing Boston Lodge Engineering Works. The white building is the old barracks block built to house the men who were building the new embankment which the railway would later use for crossing the estuary. - Peter Napier



Down train passing the up train at Rhiw Goch. - Peter Napier



Down train passing the up train at Tan y Bwlch.- Peter Napier



Atmospherics at Tan y Bwlch station.- Peter Napier



Outward Route