



Llanuwchllyn Express

Adroddiad y golygydd / Editor's Report
9ydd Medi 2021 / 9th September 2021

It has been a successful year for *Llanuwchllyn Express*.

Can I stop there or do I have to keep going?

For the LE, 2020-2021 has been a period of initiative and, latterly, change.

February 2021 saw the launch of **LE - Special Edition 2 ('2020 In Retrospect')** - sold to raise funds for the BLRT/Red Dragon appeal that was then ongoing. At the same time LE-SE1 was reprinted thanks to the kind sponsorship of Nigel Bird Books. Both editions sold out and around £1000 was raised for the Trust, a figure that included in-purchase donations that many made.

After LE-SE2 came **LE-SE3 ('Steaming Towards Bala')**. Launched to coincide with the BLR/BLRS/BLRT 'Bala Re-Railed' event in the summer of 2021, and intended to raise funds for the BLRS, the edition sold strongly. There are a few copies left in stock - so if you have yet to make a purchase please do check the edition out via the BLR online shop. It is by far the strongest of the LE-SE journals published to date, an excellent read.

Meanwhile the regular quarterly journal has recently seen some revisions and upgrades, these coming about after the Re-Railed event. I had lots of prospective content from that event and not enough pages, so I started to look at a change to the journal's architecture in order to make everything fit. As was noted in LE No.170, the upgraded version has four extra pages (it's now 36 pages) and a refreshed cover with a UV spot laminate. I will likely tweak the design in coming issues as I seek to improve it further and to get it just right.

However, what is really interesting is the cost of the upgraded journal. When I took on the role as editor of the LE I moved the print order to a company near my home as this allowed me to speak to the printers face to face. This was rather useful as I was starting completely from scratch, with no handover and no prior experience. I'd never even used desk-top publishing software! Happily, the move brought significant cost savings as the new printers used digital print services over the more expensive lithographic processes of the previous print shop. At A5 size there is no obvious difference between the two print processes, but digital print is generally cheaper.

In order to produce the new version I have again changed printers, now using Solopress.Com. Despite having more pages, better binding (it's called 'perfect binding') and a fancy laminate on the cover, the price has reduced significantly, as shown below.

May journal print costs: 355 copies at £389.00. Price per copy: £1.10

August journal print costs: 400 copies at £262.41. Price per copy: £0.66

So a bigger journal with an enhanced presentation at a cheaper price. The amount of copies printed per issue varies. I went for the rounded figure of 400 because there was little difference between this generic internet-led option and a more precise, lower figure. This also left spare copies to sell in the BLR shop (thus further subsidising the price) and for our Membership Secretaries to use. The next print run will be slightly smaller as the shop will not be open during the lifespan of the issue.

Shop sales: At time of writing, 30 copies sold at £3 each. Cost £19.68, Sales £90, Profit £70.32
Therefore £262.41 - £70.32 = £192.09. Divide by 400, subsidised price per copy: £0.48.

Pretty good....!

BLRS 2022 Calendar

The BLRS Calendar is now an annual *Llanuwchllyn Express* project and new issue has seen the largest print run to date with 100 copies printed.

Featuring 13 high quality BLR images, the A4 size, portrait orientated calendar remains available to purchase though stocks are now running low. It is available via the BLR online shop (with free delivery) and in the BLR shop in Llanuwchllyn, and is priced at £10. Unlike too many flimsy mass produced calendars, ours is printed on heavyweight silk paper. Bright and bold, its text is in both Welsh and English, and there is space to note appointments. It raises good revenues for the Society and I commend it to members. If you have not yet made a purchase, please do consider one. I have only 21 left in stock.

And also....

In other news, I have recently created a new "Join the BLRS" leaflet, with updated images and text. The previous leaflet had been in use a long time and had done very well but stocks were almost exhausted, hence the re-imagining and reprint (via Solopress with a 15% discount, 2000 printed).

I have also refreshed the BLRS membership card as stocks were low, an order having been placed for new stock just days ago.

Still to come in 2021...

LE No.171 (November issue) is under development and progressing well.

A poster has been designed for 'Diesel Running Day' and it is hoped that it will be launched for purchase via the BLR website, remaining copies - if there are any - being available at the BLR shop on Diesel Running Day itself. It will be very limited print - if I get it that far!

Maybe, just maybe, a *very* short print run LE-SE on the recent mini-gala, gathering together many of the excellent images I have received since the end of August event.

Coming in 2022...

The LE has a policy of 'no spoilers' as I desire always to bring fresh, original content and images that have not been seen before. However, since you have all been so kind as to attend the AGM I think it is only fair to slip you the following insights....

All being well 2022 will bring:

Four quarterly copies of the journal in the new updated format.

LE-SE: 2021 In Retrospect - quite possibly with an enhanced purchase option with additional content. Launch target: Mid February 2022

LE - Calendar 2023. Launch target: Summer 2022

And a very limited, very hush-hush artwork project. Launch target: St David's Day, 2022. Fingers crossed!

What do I need from our members?

Original photos, news, letters, articles.... Please send anything, any time!

SPECIAL AGM DEAL

In order to clear stocks I have asked Tim Williams to simplify and discount the LE-SE3 options in the BLR online shop. Hurry there smartly to get a copy of the LE-SE3 journal AND Newsletter No.3 reprint AND the five historic photo cards at just £6. If you've not yet got a copy, now is the time! I only have 14 copies left in stock.

Nick Talbot, Editor, Llanuwchllyn Express, Journal of the Bala Lake Railway Society.