

## County Donegal commissions special badge for 60th anniversary

COUNTY Donegal Railway Restoration Limited has commissioned a special badge to mark the 60th anniversary of the closure of the County Donegal Railways (CDR), which falls on December 31. The last trains ran on the 3ft-gauge system on December 31, 1959.

The badge uses the colourful crest of the County Donegal Railways Joint Committee, which was designed in 1906, to mark the joint purchase of the Donegal Railway Company by the Great Northern Railway of Ireland and the Midland Railway of England. The number 60 has been incorporated to mark the anniversary.

The CDR crest incorporates the arms of the O'Donnell clan, and was used on steam locomotives, railcars and trailers until the closure of the railway in 1959, and remained proudly in use on the company's replacement buses until *Córas Iompair Éireann* took over the CDR road services in 1971. Three shamrocks, situated at the base of the original, have been replaced with the number 60, with two of the shamrocks moved to the side of the number to create the anniversary badge artwork.

County Donegal Railway Heritage Centre manager Niall McCaughan said: "The badges are being made as a limited edition venture, and cost £5 plus post and package. We are considering producing special, County Donegal Railway-themed badges every year, as collectors' items, and we hope that railway enthusiasts will support the 60 badge which

represents one of the ways in which we will be marking the 60th anniversary of the railway's closure this year." → Details of the badges and how to purchase them are at [www.donegalrailway.com](http://www.donegalrailway.com)



**Above:** The 60th anniversary badge and the County Donegal Railways original.

# Bala extension pushes ahead – but must raise £300,000

By Robin Jones

THE Bala Lake Railway (BLR) has taken three major steps in its bid to join the growing number of heritage lines that can boast a town centre presence.

As it is continuing to forge ahead with extending the railway into down-town Bala, the Llangollen Railway, the other line to have revived a section of the GWR Ruabon to Barmouth route, is completing its long-awaited extension into Corwen town centre.

For the extension, two more land purchases have almost been completed, and matters are well in hand for agreeing a deal to have running rights over the flood defences at the north end of Bala Lake.

Natural Resources Wales (NRW), the government body responsible

for the management of the lake, is set to embark on a significant upgrade to the flood defences that protect the town from flooding from the lake. These upgrades coincide with over a quarter of the route of the extension and, with close collaboration with NRW, the civil works required for the extension will be carried out by them.

### Stakeholder support

The railway will have to contribute for the additional work required to create the formation for the laying of track, but because of the economies of scale, by being part of a much larger project, the savings will be considerable. For this part of the project, the railway has to raise £300,000. Magnox, the nuclear energy company, owner of the nearby decommissioned power station at Trawsfynydd, has awarded a grant of

£23,000 to cover the additional design work required.

BLR trust chairman Julian Birley said: "I have been involved with capital projects for heritage railways for nearly 25 years, but in that time, I have never come across such universal support for a heritage railway.

"NRW could not be more supportive or helpful in what we are trying to achieve. Matt Jenkins, who is heading up the project for NRW, is going the extra mile to ensure the railway gets what it wants while managing the much larger £6million project for upgrading the flood defences all around the town.

"Support continues in the much wider community, from the county council, the town council, local businesses and residents.

"They all see the huge commercial



**Passing trains:** Quarry Hunslet 0-4-0STs No. 680 of 1898 *George B* and No. 822 of 1904 *Maid Marian* in action during the gala. With help from *Heritage Railway* readers, £300,000 could soon be raised to allow them to run into Bala town centre. FRED KERR



**An aerial visualisation of the Bala Lake Railway's extension into the town centre.** BLR



**Demonstration freight trains,** comprised of slate quarry wagons taken from the line's extensive collection, were run between Llanuwchllyn and Llangower during the gala, in addition to passenger services. Hunslet 0-4-0ST No. 780 of 1902 *Alice* is seen shunting a goods train at Llangower on June 16, while sister Hunslet *Maid Marian* waits with a passenger train. FRED KERR