

## **“Alice” Comes Home.**

“Alice”, the last steam engine to leave Dinorwic Quarry will be returning to her spiritual home in Llanberis for the first time in over 40 years for a gala weekend on the 30<sup>th</sup> June and 1<sup>st</sup> July.

When the vast Dinorwic Quarry in Llanberis closed in 1969, several hundred feet up in the quarry in what was known as the Australia level, the little quarry Hunslet engine “Alice” stood abandoned, robbed of many parts to keep its sister engines going.

Many of the other engines had been sold off as they became surplus to requirements or were finally sold at the auction once the quarry closed. But “Alice” was bereft of most of her useful parts and stranded in her shed. What remained were bought as spares by the owner of sister locomotive “Holy War” and in 1972 moves were eventually made to bring her down from her shed via the old quarry inclines.

She was originally moved to Quanton Road in Buckinghamshire, before arriving at the Bala Lake Railway in 1977. Little happened until she was purchased by Chris Scott in 1987, and by 1994 she was restored to working order with the help of the Ffestiniog Railway and Leighton Buzzard Railway.

As part of the deal to restore the locomotive she worked at the Leighton Buzzard Railway between 1994 and 2003 when she returned once again to Bala.

Since then she has visited many other railways, but until now has never returned home to Llanberis.

Over the weekend of the 30<sup>th</sup> June and 1<sup>st</sup> July 2012 she will be the star attraction on the Llanberis Lake Railway. She will be hauling passenger trains on her own and double heading with her old stable mates, the Llanberis Lake Railway’s own quarry Hunslet locomotives, as well as shunting slate waggons around the railway, in what promises to be a very busy timetable.

The slate waggons have been re-built by Julian Birley, “Alice’s” current owner from parts recovered from Dinorwic Quarry, and together with “Alice” will recreate a portrait of the Dinorwic Quarry not seen for over 40 years.



**“Alice” with re-built Dinorwic slate waggons on the Bala Lake Railway earlier this year. (photo courtesy of Julian Birley)**



**"Alice" working at Dinorwic Quarry in the 1950's**

### **Stop Press:**

### **Now Available With Added Quarry!**

The Llanberis Lake Railway timetable for 2012 includes a gala event to coincide with the visit of "Alice" on June 30<sup>th</sup>/ July 1<sup>st</sup>. It is 40 years since "Alice" last graced Gilfach Ddu and the event promises to be memorable. Only in Llanberis do you get quarry engines with added quarry and by teaming up for the weekend with the National Slate Museum (NSM), itself celebrating 40 years this year, the event offers manpower and gravity power as well as steam power.

The terraces and inclines of the Vivian Quarry dominate the backscene to Gilfach Ddu station at Llanberis, where the NSM restored V2 incline is a prominent feature. Normally the incline is operated 3 days a week by the museum. Its set up of supporting infrastructure, includes two traversers, a series of spur sidings and a fleet of Dinorwic quarry wagons, which have never seen action since restoration. All you need to make it work is two teams of men in flat caps and scruffy overcoats and some traditional Welsh weather. While the wet weather is not guaranteed, the manpower is available to provide the necessary grunt to the operation.

With the NSM providing further Dinorwic slate wagons for use in freight trains on the Llanberis Lake Railway, the weekend promises a unique opportunity to see steam, slate and sweat in action.

Further information is available from:

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Just a taster: V2 Incline and drumhouse during re-commissioning and testing, April / May 2012 (photos courtesy of David High)



Wild Aster (aka Thomas Bach) passing the V2 incline at Gilfach Ddu (photo: David Jones, LLR)

Imagine this with a hustle of activity on the incline, and a quarry Hunslet shunting a rake of slate waggons in the foreground... tempting?

ENDS.