

# Volunteers Newsletter

July 2017

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## Virginia joins the Steering Group

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We're very grateful to Virginia Lowe for agreeing to represent NLW volunteers on the volunteering scheme's Steering Group. Virginia has volunteered at the Library for over a year, her main role on the Steering Group is to be an independent voice to express views on your behalf.

Please feel free to contact Virginia if you have any comments, suggestions or concerns relating to the volunteering scheme that you'd like her to present to the Steering Group.

Virginia is happy to receive your messages by e-mail:

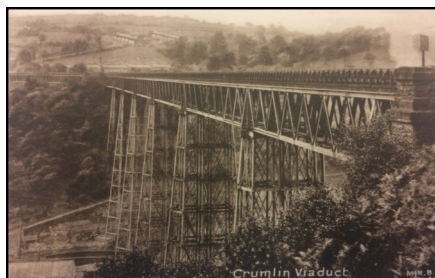
**[viriniaclowe@gmail.com](mailto:viriniaclowe@gmail.com)**

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The **'Railways of Wales'** project has revealed some gems, including this remarkable story of the opening of the Crumlin railway viaduct:

### **'MAD JACK' JENKINS:**

*In May 1857 the new Crumlin Viaduct was completed. Built to open up the South Wales Coalfield, it was the tallest railway viaduct in Britain, carrying the Taff Vale Extension Railway two hundred feet above the valley of the River Ebbw on seven wrought iron spans. When the time came for the first test-train to be driven across the bridge, only one driver volunteered - John 'Mad Jack' Jenkins of Pontypool. According to accounts, Mad Jack visited every pub in Crumlin on the day of the test to partake of liquid courage, before driving six coupled and weighted engines across the viaduct at full speed. When asked why he charged the bridge instead of easing across slowly as instructed, Mad Jack replied: "When Eternity looks you in the face, you might as well go hell for leather to meet it."*



(Article by Rhys Davies)

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## ‘Living Memory’

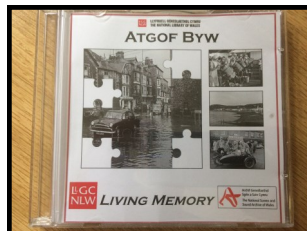
A pilot project in partnership with the Dementia Ward of Bronglais Hospital trialling the use of the Library’s visual collections for reminiscence therapy with patients.

Volunteers, with the support of our Education Officer, have researched suitable images and created DVD’s, an i-book and an album of copy photos for use on the ward, while staff from the National Screen and Sound Archive have supported the pilot by compiling films under various themes.

Initial feedback has been positive, with evidence of the images leading to:

- ◆ more effective engagement;
- ◆ less restless behaviour;
- ◆ patients being stimulated to remember and describe episodes from their past.

If successful, we hope that this approach can be rolled out to other organisations and groups throughout Wales.



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## Meet & Greet !

A new volunteering role has been created with a view to enriching the experience of visitors to the Library.

Volunteers will converse with and direct people visiting the Library building, as well as conducting relevant surveys and consultations to establish visitors’ views of our services.

Four volunteers have been trained and are managed by the External Relations unit.

They’ve already helped out with several public events and guided tours.

Thank you! .... Keep up the good work!

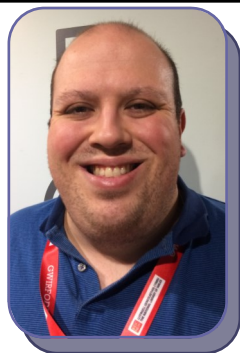
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## Meet a NLW Volunteer

Here are some interesting facts about **Rhys Davies**

### **1. Why did you become a volunteer and for how long have you been volunteering at the Library?**

I've been looking to volunteer at the library for some time, in order to develop my skills and CV, and in January of this year, thanks to a friend who already volunteers (Dave Malinsky), was pointed in the direction of the perfect project for my passions .



### **2. What type of volunteering tasks are you involved with?**

As a railway enthusiast, I consider myself lucky to be working on listing the photographs in the Railways of Wales collection, but I've also had the chance to help out on at least one guided tour, and hope to contribute more in the future.

### **3. What, in your opinion, are the benefits of volunteering at the Library?**

Being able to channel my passions in a productive and helpful way is rewarding in itself, but helping in the library and mixing and mingling with other volunteers are great side-benefits, as is breakfast in Pen Dinas.

### **4. Favourite place and why?**

Aberystwyth of course – it's the best place to be, and every beautiful sunset I watch from the seafront reminds me how much I love living here.

### **5. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time? (Hobbies/interests)**

I think it's safe to say that I like trains, and I've volunteered on several heritage railways. But I also enjoy writing and creating, and have been dabbling in graphic design and audio editing.

### **6. Your Favourite time in history?**

Ha, would it be cliché to say The Age of Steam? I'm particularly interested in the early 20th century, when the seeds of the modern world were sown. On a random tangent, one of my favourite historical events is the Apollo Moon Landings (not a hoax, they really happened!)

### **7. Favourite TV Programme/film and why?**

I've always enjoyed stories that successfully mix and merge genres, so my current favourite is HBO's 'Westworld', a brilliant fusion of Cowboy Western and speculative Science Fiction.

### **8. An interesting fact about you .....**

I've e-published a time-travel/alternate-history novel 'Timewreck Titanic'.

## Meet a member of the NLW Staff:

### What is your role at the Library?

I've been working at the Library since Sept 2013 as an Education Officer

### What School and University did you attend?

Ysgol Brynhyfryd, Rhuthun and Aberystwyth University

### Best Memory of School ?

Difficult to choose one, but winning the male voice choir

competition with

Aelwyd Rhuthun in the Urdd Eisteddfod, 2007 was special (even though I can't sing!)



**Owain Dafydd**

### Welcome

We are pleased to welcome the following volunteers who have joined us during the last few months :

Gaynor, Thomas, Joshua.

### Interesting facts:

During this quarter :

56 volunteers came to the Library on a weekly basis.

1,845 volunteering hours were completed.

**To view details of some of our current projects please visit the NLW website:**

**[www.llgc.org.uk/](http://www.llgc.org.uk/)**

**select 'About NLW' and choose the 'Volunteer' page to read about the scheme.**

### Interests?

Anything to do with sports - watching or playing rugby or football and the occasional game of golf.

### Favourite TV programme/Film ?

'The Bridge' or 'Game of Thrones'.

### Favourite Food?.

Pizza (from a woodfired oven) and a good Lager!

### An interesting fact about yourself?

I was on the pitch during the Rugby World Cup Final in 1999... as a mascot holding the Samoan flag.

### Your Favourite time in history?

I studied a lot of modern history at University; the Middle Ages in Wales is also a very interesting period.

### Name 3 things that you'd take to a stranded island?

- Sun cream!
- A box of matches;
- A fishing net.



If you wish to take part in our volunteering scheme please contact us :

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E-mail: [volunteering@llgc.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@llgc.org.uk)



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