

# TALLYLYNN JUNCTION



TALLYLYNN, BRECON

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Talyllyn Junction was a railway junction located 4 mi (6.4 km) east of Brecon, Powys, opened in 1863. The junction was triangular, with north, east and west chords, station platforms being sited at the western junction and also, until 1878, at the eastern junction. The Junction took its name from the adjacent tiny hamlet.

The junction was created where the Brecon and Merthyr Railway from the south met the Mid-Wales Railway from the north-east. Both railways were to serve Brecon, and to achieve this the latter had running powers over the former from Talyllyn into Brecon. The eastern spur of the triangle permitted through running from South Wales to mid-Wales and also to Hereford.

The northern side of the triangle followed the course of the 1816 Hay Railway, a tram-road worked by horses connecting the town of Hay with the Brecknock and Abergavenny Canal at Brecon. At the western end lay a tunnel which required widening and deepening for use by standard gauge trains.

The Villige of Talyllyn exists only because of the railway. Prior to the railway, just Brynderwen Farm existed in this area



## THE LONGEST RAILWAY IN THE WORLD !

Talylyn's history goes right back to the early days of railways, 200 years ago. It lay on the route of the Hay tramway - a horse-drawn tramroad which was a state of the art transport system back then!

The Hay tramway ran from a canal wharf in Brecon to Hay-on-Wye and on into Herefordshire. It connected with the Kington Railway - their combined length of 36 miles making this the longest railway network in the world at that time.



Although the World's first steam locomotive ran on the Penydarren Tramway in Merthyr in 1804, steam was slow to catch on.

So, when the Hay tramway opened in 1816 it relied on horse power. In the following decades steam was perfected and the slow, horse-drawn trams became obsolete.

The Hay tramway closed in 1860, but it represents a fascinating first step towards the world of high-speed, global communications we live in today.

### PLATEWAY OR RAILWAY?

The Hay tramway was built as a plateway — an early form of railway.

The wagons had flat wheels which ran on 'L' section rails known as plates.



Modern trains have flanged wheels running on flat topped rails.

## WHAT WAS IT FOR'?

The Brecknock and Abergavenny Canal linked Brecon to the industrial valleys of south Wales and the docks at Newport. The Hay tramway was built to carry freight from the canal across country. The trams were operated by independent carriers. They paid tolls to the tramway company according to what they were carrying and how far they were going. Some of the main cargoes were:

Coal for heating and cooking. The canal and tramway could carry far more than packhorses and brought the price of coal down throughout the area.

Limestone and lime. Limestone was burnt in limekilns to produce lime for fertilizer, whitewash and building mortar.

Farm produce, timber and barrels of beer were among the many other loads carried.



## WALKING THE LINE

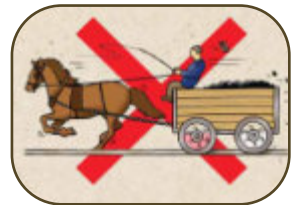
The tramway operated like a toll road. Anybody could operate their own trams and paid tolls for use of the route. The tramway company had strict rules. A 20 shilling fine would be worth about £500 these days. Half of each fine went to the informant - so you found out who your enemies were!

Here are a few of the rules and fines:

Riding on the wagons - 10 shillings

Driving a train outside hours\* - 20 shillings  
\*(6am-6pm in winter, 4am - 9pm in summer)

Driving a train on a Sunday - 20 shillings



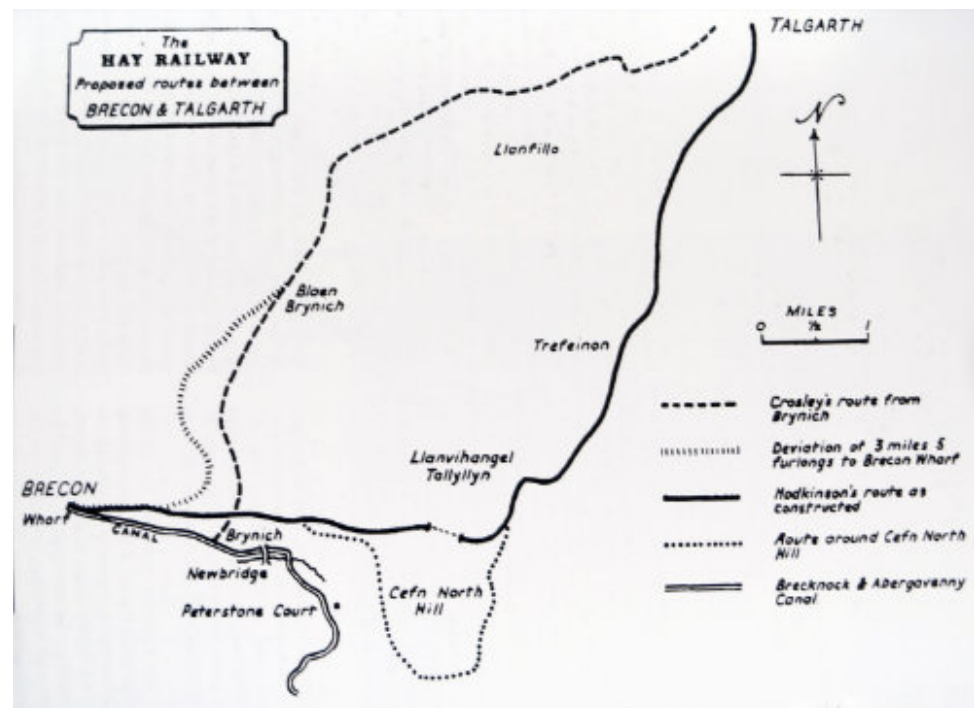
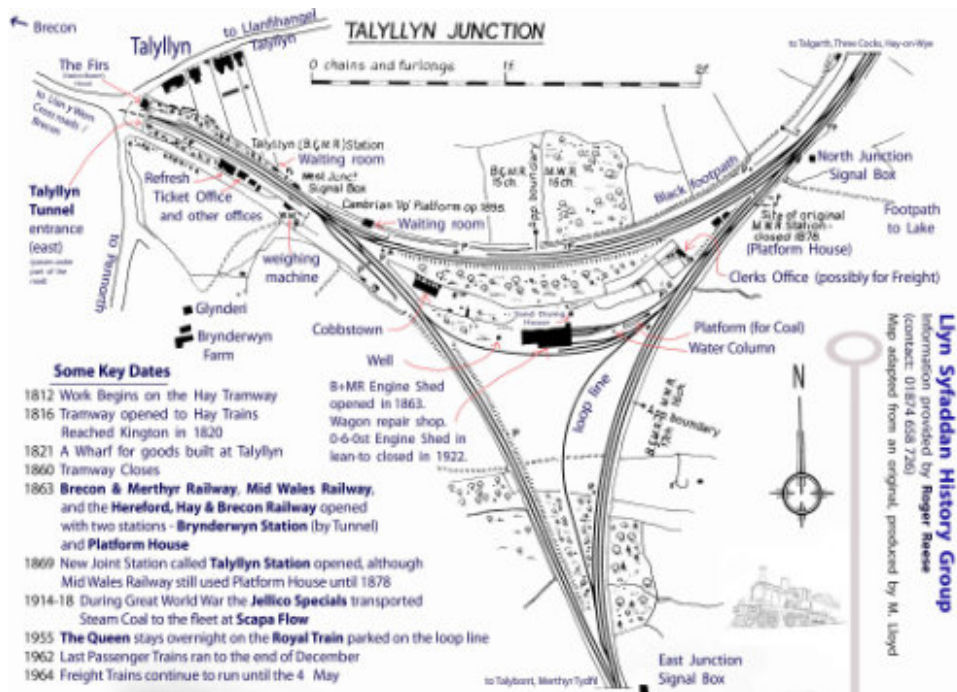
## EXPLORING THE TRAMWAY TODAY

Much of the route of the Hay tramway disappeared beneath the new railways in the 1860s. But in some places the steam trains had to use a different alignment, with smoother curves and gentler slopes.

Two embankment: can be seen running through the fields south east of Llanfihangel. A public footpath follows the old Hay tramway route whilst the wider steam railway earthwork runs parallel.

Along Heol Hemley the route of the steam railway can be seen on the western side of the road. On the other side of the road a shallow cutting shows the route of the tramway. Where the road drops down to cross the Afon Llynfi you can see the substantial tramway embankment through the trees.







# HAY TRAMWAY

Kington – Hay-on-Wye – Brecon



# BRECON & MERTHYR RAILWAY

Brecon – Merthyr – Newport

## Talyllyn Tunnel

674 yards

Opened 7th May 1816

## Anniversary Walk

Sunday 8th May 2016



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A train from the Mid Wales line waits to depart for Brecon on 9th November 1957. The Mid Wales Railway and the Hereford, Hay & Brecon Railway met the Brecon & Merthyr Railway at Talyllyn and shared the B&MR route, through the tunnel to Brecon.

Photo from 'Brecon to Newtown - The Mid Wales Line', courtesy of Middleton Press.

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