

Media Release: 19 February 2018



## Railway Museum honoured at National Heritage Awards Ceremony

The [Ravenglass Railway Museum](#) is celebrating after receiving a prestigious award from the Heritage Railway Association revealed at their annual awards ceremony held at the Burlington Hotel in Birmingham on Saturday 10 February.

The museum scooped the award for Large Groups in recognition of its comprehensive re-development and extension project which opened in June 2017. This prestigious award is given annually for outstanding achievement by a member body of the Heritage Railway Association.



***L-R Brian Simpson Chairman Heritage Railway Association with the team from the Ravenglass Railway Museum - Peter van Zeller (Curator), David Rounce (Manager), Stuart Harrison (Trustee), Mungo Stacy (Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway Preservation Society), Peter Brendling (General Manager) and Bob Tebb (Trustee)***

David Rounce, Project Manager at the Museum, said:

*“It’s a tremendous honour to receive this award – we’re extremely proud of our new museum and the award is a testament to the combined efforts of our staff, volunteers and funders over the last few years. To use a pun – we’re all chuffed to bits.”*

The Museum, which opened in 1978, was extensively re-developed between 2015-2017 with assistance from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), Copeland Community Fund, Arts Council England, Fisheries Local Action Group, Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway and Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway Preservation Society.

Peter Van Zeller, Curator at the Ravenglass Railway Museum, said:

*“It is a great honour to receive the Heritage Railways Association award on behalf of Ravenglass Railway Museum. 40 years after first opening, our aspirations to tell the fascinating story of La'al Ratty have been revitalised, through the efforts of our project team, volunteers, the support of Heritage Lottery Fund, Copeland Community Fund, the partnership of the Railway Company and the Preservation Society with other donors. It is grand to see visitors, young and young at heart involved with the history we all share with this little railway and the people who have kept it running against all odds for approaching 150 years. David Moore, Chair of Copeland Community Fund said:*

*“We are immensely proud that one of our most recent grant recipients, Ravenglass Railway Museum, has won this national Heritage Railways Association Award. It is a fantastic recognition of the effort, commitment and enthusiasm of staff and volunteers.”*

A spokesperson for the Heritage Railway Association said:

*“This new state of the art museum is a credit to all those involved. It not only shows the history of the railway through both large and small exhibits, but also the life, and social aspects of Ravenglass and the Eskdale Valley.”*

Nathan Lee, Head of HLF North West said:

*“As the first public narrow-gauge railway in England Ravenglass really is a special place and one of Cumbria’s major visitor attractions. Thanks to National Lottery players a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £490k has enabled some fantastic improvements at the museum and now this well deserved award. Well done!”*

The Museum houses a collection of artefacts ranging from steam locomotives and carriages right down to tickets, uniforms and models. Through exciting displays and hands-on interactive features, visitors can experience 150 years of the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway as well as the origins of the historic Roman port of Ravenglass and iron-ore mining in Eskdale. At regular special events visitors have opportunities to ride behind and even drive some of the locomotive collection. A new archive space protects the Museum’s collections and is available for research by appointment – and can be hired as a quirky meeting/conference venue. Also possible through National Lottery funding has been the creation of a schools programme for Key Stage 1-2 students covering key STEAM curriculum topics such as the science and technology behind operating the railway as well as the social history of the line and local industries, the workforce, and the Railway’s place in the Eskdale community

## **ENDS**

### **Notes to Editors:**

For further information please contact Sarah Jones on 01539 825052 or e-mail [sjones@cumbriatourism.org](mailto:sjones@cumbriatourism.org)

### **About the Museum:**

Located in Ravenglass on the Cumbrian coast, the current museum opened in 1978 in one of the former Furness Railway platform buildings housing a collection of artefacts which had been accumulated around the centenary of the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway ('La'al Ratty') in 1976. The museum is run by the Ravenglass Railway Museum Trust in partnership with the R&ER and RERPS (Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway Preservation Society), and the collection consists of more than 6,000 items, ranging from the 15" gauge Bassett-Lowke loco 'Synolda' through to models, tools and remnants of one of the original 3' gauge coaches, plus an extensive archive of photographs (c5,000), tickets, timetables and other ephemera

### **About the Heritage Lottery Fund**

Thanks to National Lottery players, we invest money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about - from the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife. [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk). Follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) and use #HLFsupported