

The Bridge with a WOW!! Factor



The Glenfinnan Viaduct stretches 416 yards along an elegant curve rising 100 feet above the head of the River Finnan Valley in Inverness-shire. It was built in the late 1890s as part of the West Highland Railway (the “Iron road to the Isles”). One of a number of structures built along this section of the line, it stands above the Glenfinnan Valley at the head of Loch Shiel, close to where Bonnie Prince Charlie raised his standard of rebellion in 1745.

A turn-of-the-20th-Century engineering marvel – the “Harry Potter Bridge” as it has become known – was the first concrete viaduct to be built at this scale in Britain. It remains the longest concrete viaduct in Scotland.

The actual building of the Glenfinnan Viaduct was undertaken by Robert McAlpine & Sons. “Concrete Bob” himself took a lead role in the works. The firm which bears his name is still seen across the land on construction sites and building projects.

The Glenfinnan Viaduct remains in use to this day. Its continued viability is due to its groundbreaking construction. Along with a regular ScotRail rail service a steam locomotive train service known as the Jacobite Express (seen in the picture) runs over the 21 arch viaducts daily from Good Friday until the end of October each year.

The jaw-dropping panorama, framed by the Highlands, takes in Loch Shiel and the iconic Glenfinnan monument, erected in 1815 as a tribute to the Jacobite uprising which rallied behind Bonnie Prince Charlie in his doomed bid for the throne.