DERWENT & WYE VALLEY RAILWAY TRUST

Tracking Our Heritage

Sharing stories about the former railway between Matlock and Rowsley

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www.dwvrt.co.uk



The Midland line through the Peak District connected London to Manchester and was one of the most scenic routes in the country, cutting through this part of Derbyshire. Operating for over 120 years, the railway was once a busy line with freight and passenger traffic until it closed in 1968.

Today, part of the line is still in operation for a distance of 3.5 miles between Rowsley South Station and Matlock Platform 2 run by Peak Rail. Alongside the track, there is a multi user trail for walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

This booklet is a collation of stories and memories of those who worked on, lived by and travelled on the railway between Matlock and Rowsley. The Derwent and Wye Valley Railway Trust (DWVRT) started in 2004. Its purpose is to obtain, restore, preserve and operate a collection of heritage railway buildings, structures, rolling stock and artefacts between Ambergate and Buxton.

Projects undertaken by the Trust include the purchase and restoration of a former Midland Railway signal box which now stands at Matlock Riverside as well as regular renovation and maintenance work at Darley Dale station.

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Withdrawal of Derby - Manchester locals

STATION CLOSURES

PASSENGER TRAIN ALTERATIONS AND WITHDRAWALS

MONDAY 6th MARCH 1967

The local services between:

MANCHESTER Central and DERBY Midland

MANCHESTER Central and BUXTON Midland (Table 115-London Midland Region Timetable)

BUXTON Midland and MILLERS DALE (Table 119-London Midland Region Timetable)

will be withdrawn and a new service introduced between: MATLOCK and DERBY

The following stations will be closed :CHAPEL-EN-LE-FRITH CentralBAKEWELLPEAK FORESTROWSLEYBUXTON MidlandDARLEY DALEMILLERS DALEMATLOCK BATH

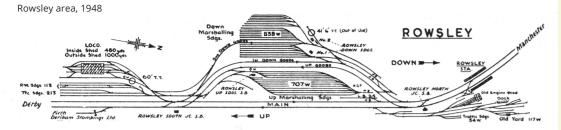
DERBY Nottingham Road

From the same date, certain additional alternative Road services will be provided.



Railway timeline snapshot

1846 Incorporation of the "Manchester, Buxton Matlock and & Midland Junction Railway"	1849 Line from Amb to Rowsley (ori ds station) opened June.	ergate ginal d on 4th	a compan	Master's cottages, and y office at n 10th August.	1862 The first stage of the Midland Railway's extension to Buxton opens from a new passenger station at Rowsley as far as Hassop on 1st August. The old station at Rowsley became part of the goods yard in 1863.	1863 The line was extended from Hassop to Buxton opening on 1st June.	1866 The line opened as a through route to Manchester London Road (now Piccadilly) in October.	1873 A new enlarged station opened at Darley in the Spring. It was officially renamed Darley Dale on 1st October 1890.	1877 Rowsley Sidings opened on 19th March
Contract let for I 25 cottages on s	1905 Matlock Bridge station renamed Matlock on 1st July.	1910 27th Febru Matlock No South signa closed and replaced by elevated sig which staye until 1969.	orth and alboxes y the gnalbox	1911 Footbridges at Darley Dale Stat and Church Lar Crossing erecte	e Railway employs	1918 End of the WW1 in November. 2,833 Midland Railway employees killed, including 8 based at Rowsley, 3 based at Darley Dale, and 3 based at Matlock.	1926 New engine shed opens at Rowsley on 26th June, replacing the old one near to the original station.	1933 Express Dairy loading premises officially opened at Rowsley Station.	1939 and throughout the war Additional posts created for footplate staff and goods guards. Many drivers and firemen transferred from depots in the Manchester area. Female staff employed as Cleaners and Shed Labourers.
1940 6.35am Darley Dale to Derby stopping service introduced. The passenger guard for this train and two othe posts were created at Darley Dale.	employed at th	luced howed e were he engine ber vider vas 550.	service fro Central to Pancras st July. This p luxury trav speeds an introduced a first class while the l Manchest	provided vel and high d was in part d to provide s service ine from er Piccadilly Euston was	1964 Darley Dale goods yard closed on 6th April. Rowsley Sidings closed on 27th April. Rowsley Shed lost its allocation of locomotives; with staff numbers reduced. These closures made over 200 people redundant.	1966 Remaining clerical work at Rowsley station transferred to the new Station Manager's organisation at Matlock and the post withdrawn on 12th September.	1966 Rowsley shed and Guard's signing on point in the former Sidings closed completely. Rowsley South Junction signal box also closed. Around 140 staff made redundant.	1967 Local passenger services north of Matlock to Buxton and Chinley ceased on 6th March. Darley Dale and Rowsley stations closed.	1968 Last steam working took place on 9th June when Britannia pacific 70013 Oliver Cromwell hauled an excursion over the route. The last trains actually ran on 29th June. Goods trains to Rowsley Old Yard continued for a few more days to remove empty wagons and then the line closed completely.



The stations

Matlock station was originally called "Matlock Bridge" and was opened in 1849, renamed Matlock on 1st July 1905. The station buildings were designed by Sir Joseph Paxton, who also designed other stations along the line from Ambergate. The station was busy with Victorian and Edwardian visitors coming to Matlock as tourists and for its famous water treatments at the numerous 'hydros' on Matlock Bank.

The Darley Dale station you see today is actually the second station to be built there. In 1873 the impressive neo-gothic style station was built on the down platform and a smaller matching waiting room on up side. There was once a footbridge over the line to connect each platform and provide access from Station Road.

The original station in Rowsley was opened in 1849 and formed a terminus for the Manchester, Buxton, Matlock and Midlands Junction Railway line from Ambergate. Goods facilities were provided in the same area from this date. A new passenger station was built on the Buxton extension, and opened to Hassop on 1st August 1862. The new route took the line over the present day A6 road and the River Derwent, then into the Duke of Rutland's estate and on towards Bakewell and Buxton.



Working on the railway

From cleaners to drivers and porters, generations of families worked on the railway or were associated with it.

Many railway workers started their careers when they left school at 15 or 16. Locomotive crew started out as 'cleaners' and then onto being 'bar lads' – that was someone who cleaned the fireboxes in the locomotives. Then promotion was to 'passed cleaner' onto 'fireman' and Passed Fireman, with the ultimate aim of becoming a driver.

There were all sorts of jobs associated with the railway. One job was a 'knocker up', someone who had the duty of getting the drivers up ready for the early shifts. They would knock on windows of the railway workers' houses with poles until a light came on. Not an enviable job.

Many of the railwaymen remember their journeys, not always local. They would drive the trains down to London and would have to stay over in lodgings. Other locations included Birmingham, Derby and Manchester.

Many of the jobs on the railway were male dominated but in the early 1960s, there was a female booking clerk at Rowsley who recalled what her job entailed. This included invoicing for the goods yard; issuing tickets, collecting the rents from the workers who lived in the railway cottages in Rowsley as well as doing all the wages. Women clerks were also employed at Darley Dale and Matlock stations. During WW2, women were employed on the railway to replace the men who joined the Forces. Jobs included porters and engine cleaners.









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Railway community

Around Matlock, Darley Dale and Rowsley there was a real sense of a railway community. The railway created a lot of jobs and with this meant the workers and their families needed housing.

The main areas around Rowsley were three blocks of railway workers cottages on land partly owned by the Duke of Rutland at

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Chatsworth Road, Rowsley. Cottages were built in phases from 1886 to 1897 to meet demand. These developments almost doubled the housing stock in Rowsley village in less than 12 years. To this day, the Chatsworth Road developments are known as the "Klondike Cottages"; possibly a reference to the better pay of railway workers. Gradually railway workers spread to housing in other parts of the valley, and being in relatively secure and well respected jobs; some had little trouble getting mortgages for house purchases. New houses were built in Northwood Lane, close to Rowsley, in the 1930's. To accommodate the growth, workers also spread to Broadwalk in Darley Dale, and the Darley House and Hooley estates nearer Matlock.

The railway also stimulated pursuits outside of work. Sports featured prominently with football, bowls, cricket teams and tennis, mostly played on a sports ground which was on land eventually used to build Firth-Derihon during WW2. Use was also made of local venues like the Northwood Club and the Whitworth Institute for social and musical events. The railway workers also talked about football games in the sidings at lunchtime. Games of cricket with unconventional balls and bats (brake sticks) were played.

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Railway employees Living on Derwent Avenue and Northwood Avenue Broad Walk, Darley Dale 3 Named 1 2 5 7 6 Named Δ Haynes house Allwood **George Parks** house Fletcher (ash pit labourer) (fireman) (sidings shunter) (driver) Clements Dennis Parks (sidings inspector) (fireman) **DERWENT AVENUE** 9 13 14 8 11 12 Named 10 Named house house Frank Jackson loe Thraves **Dennis Plant** (driver) Bark (driver) (driver) **Ralph Jackson** (goods guard) **Bob Thraves Malcolm Plant** (fireman) (fireman) (fireman) **NORTHWOOD AVENUE**

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A busy line

Rowsley Sidings was very important to the line. It was a busy marshalling yard with goods such as coal, limestone, iron ore and livestock all passing through. Milk was always conveyed on passenger trains, initially in churns in the guard's van, and later in tanks attached to the rear of specific stopping trains.

One person remembered her grandparent's laundry on Darley Hillside in the 1920s where her grandfather collected and returned laundry from London to Darley Dale station. Laundry was transported to the station in a little horse and cart. She recalled the hard work involved ironing with flat irons.

Express trains between London and Manchester passed over the line, many of which called at Matlock (and earlier at Matlock Bath). Many people travelled from stations on the railway to work in Derby and other locations on the line.

Days out and holidays

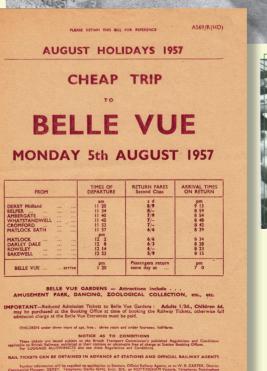
Lots of people have fond memories of travelling on the railway on days out as well as going on holiday to places such as North Wales, the Lancashire coast and New Brighton.

There were regular day trips to Manchester's Belle Vue, which was a zoo, gardens and amusement park.

Visitors used the line to come to Matlock for days out, enjoying Hall Leys Park as well as the Lido.

Holiday makers visited Darley Dale station to stay in a camping coach. A memory of such a holiday came from someone, who at 8 years old, recalls a Whitsun week's holiday in Darley Dale Camping coach in 1957. The family's journey started from Sale then Manchester Central and on to Darley Dale via Millers Dale. Luggage was sent in advance of the passengers and delivered to the camping coach. British Railways provided everything (apart from the food) and was seen as 'excellent value'.





ravel in Rail Comfo

St Helens Sunday school excursion to Belle Vue loading at Darley Dale, 1950s *Eric Mayall*



Far left: Camping Coaches advertisement, 1958

Left: Belle Vue handbill, 1957

Above: John and Gerte Fearn leave Matlock for honeymoon, 1935 David Fearn

SIX L.M.S. WORKERS GAOLED FOR SERIES OF RAILWAY THEFTS

Derby Daily Telegraph | Friday 11 August 1944

Six L.M.S. employees were at Bakewell Police Court to-day sent to prison for six months with hard labour, another was fined £20, and three more were each fined £10, for a series of thefts from the railway company at Rowsley.

The prosecution said it appeared that there had been collusion between engine drivers and firemen, and that cigarettes stolen were so marked that the men "must have known that they were whittling troops out of their rations."

Nine employees of the company were charged with stealing property from L.M.S., and against two of these and two others (one a woman) there were charges of receiving goods, the property of the company, knowing them to have been stolen.

The date of the alleged offences was between October 1 last year and August 1 this year.

Runaway trains and Rowsley's 'Whisky Galore'!

Not everything ran smoothly on the railway. There are stories of incidents including runaway trains, one whose wheels locked in Haddon Tunnel. The crew had to wind in reverse gear to slow the train, approaching Rowsley station the train picked up speed, but thankfully the crew regained control into Rowsley Sidings. In 1944, there was theft of cigarettes at Rowsley Sidings destined as Navy rations. This was a serious crime and involved Railway Police Special Branch operating undercover to investigate who was taking the cigarettes. It resulted in six LMS workers gaoled for the thefts, in fact six month hard labour.

Railway children

The railway sparked many memories from childhood. People remember standing on the footbridge at Darley Dale station waiting for the express train to thunder through. Children even went to school with black faces from the smoke!

Many recall their train spotting days as children and there were fond memories of putting pennies on the track only to be flattened by the trains. Many remember footplate rides, which drivers would do taking their children on the train without the authorities knowing.

Many memories are of catching the 13.06 train down to Derby to watch Derby County play football at The Baseball Ground. Supporters would join at all the stations on the line making it a great atmosphere.



LEAGUE FOOTBALL MATCH

Whatever the weather, the trains always seemed to get through. Getting to Buxton was always a challenge in snow. Snowploughs were used on the front of the trains.

With the floods in 1960 and 1965, people recall how Matlock, in particular, was under water. However, the trains suffered minimal disruption even through heavy flooding. They did not run for part of the day on Friday 10th December 1965 due to the height of the water under Bridge 35 on the Darley side of Cawdor Quarry.

4F 44172 fitted with snowplough, undated, Rowsley shed *Keith Miles collection*



tation or Sidings	Points unworkable from Signal Box and Signals not workable at 9.0a.m.	Time put right.
Thatstandwell)	All connections	2/45p.m.
High Peak Junction)	Up Distant Signal	11.45a.m.
romford Sidings	Down Distant Signal	1/ 6p.m.
arley Dale	Up Slow Line	2/ Op.m.
	Down Slow Line	2/ Op.m.
	Down Distant Signal	12/ 5p.m.
" Church Lane	All connections	2/ Op.m.
owsley South Jct.	Up Distant Signals	9.40a.m.
lowsley South Jct.	No.19 Dwarf Signal	3/ Op.m.
owsley North Jct.	Up Distant Signal	3/ Op.m.
	Down Distant Signal	3/30p.m.
	Connections to Rowsley Sdgs.	3 Opeme
owsley Down Sidings	No.8 points	3/ Op.m.
"	No.1 Slot on No.12 North Jct.	3/ Op.m.
Bakewell Station	Up Distant Signal	3/30p.m.
Bakewell Haddon	Up Distant Signal	8/50p.m.
lassop	Up Sidings Blocked	3/ OD.m.
llers Dale Junction	Facing points	10.35a.m.
illers Dale Jct.	Up Distants	4/ 0p.m.
	Down Distants	4/ 0p.m. 5/30p.m.
illers Dele P.Fst.Jct.	Sidings connections	5/30p.m.
	Distant Signals	5/30p.m.
illers Dale Buxton Jct.		3/30p.m.
4	Distant Signals	11. Oa.m.
	Up Home Signal	11. Oa.m.
skwood Dale	All connections	2/30p.m.
	Up Starting Signal	11. Oa.m.
	Up Distant Signal	7.30a.m. 31/1
uxton Gas Sidings)		
" East Jct.		
" Station }		1 /20
No.1	Connections	4/30p.m.
M No.2		

WAITING ROOM

Closure and loss of jobs

LADIES ROOM

After operating for almost 120 years, the railway finally closed in 1968. Most people think it was due to the Beeching Report, published in 1963, but in fact British Railways' finances were not in great shape and road networks were rapidly being developed, especially with the advent of the motorways.

However, under the 1962 Transport Act only cases of hardship could be considered as valid reasons for objections to closure, and this could not be proved north of Matlock.

The Peak Line had high operating costs especially with the use of banking engines as a safety requirement over the mainly 1 in 90 gradient between Rowsley and Buxton and Peak Forest. The Hope Valley line was an alternative route from Sheffield to Manchester for freight traffic and became the preferred line.

For those whose lives depended on the railway, closure was a heavy blow. There was a significant loss of jobs; people took redundancy, others who thought a career on the railway was for life, had to find other work. The community hub once based on the railway dispersed as some people left the area to find work. Some stayed on the railway but moved to other places. Oliver Cromwell - last steam train before line closed north of Matlock at Matlock Bill Hudson Henry Marsden collection P M Smith



They've handed in their passes . . .

THE redundant railmen of both sections and their womenfolk met their retired counterparts at an "end of the line" social on October 7th in Northwood Institute, the vell-appointed community centre which has been largely built and equipped by voluntary rail labour. The indonitable spirit with which they faced the redundancy problems is vell-

The indomitable spirit with which they faced the redundancy problems is wellexpressed in the words of the following ditty; composed by Mrs. June Tecce, a railway guard's daughter. The item, which foroagth the house down, is being presented in the picture above by an all-rail quartette.

- Traveller (J. Smedley) I'm a traveller, I'm a traveller on the British Rail And when they closed the stations I began to wail. But one good thing about all this I couldn' give a cuss I've handed in my passes and now I go by bus.
 - Join the railway my father said to me, Join the railway and live in luxury, So I joined the railway and worked quite willingly. Now all I've got to show for it, is my redundancy.
- Driver (Mrs. Clarice Doxy) I'm a driver. I'm a driver on a diesel train, To drive an electric has always been my aim, But now I've got my notice-it's really got my goat The only thing that I can do is drive an old milk float,
- Fireman (Mrs. June Teece) I'm a fireman. I'm a fireman shovelling coal all day, I'm a fireman, shovelling coal all the way. But now I ve got my noise, it's really done no harm---Con now I'm showeling something cited down on Dakin's fa
- Guard (D. Ganada mand Line a good annud citing in an hole
- Guard (D. Gamicott) I'm a goods guard, I'm a goods guard sitting in my brake, Watching all the signals to see if they're a' rait, But now I've got my notice I couldn't give a damn, So, good luck, Dr. Beeching and all your ruddy clan.

Press clipping



Today's railway

Peak Rail started in 1975, the brainchild of Paul Tomlinson and a number of other people from the Derby area. Peak Rail's aim has always been to reopen the line from Matlock to Buxton to provide heritage rail services through the Peak District National Park.

Its first presence was in Matlock station where parts of the site have been leased since 1977. A base was established on the former Midland Railway goods shed in Buxton in 1980 and this site operated as a steam centre until 1989 when some of the land was sold off to finance the development of the line from Darley Dale to Matlock. Peak Rail still owns a small site at Buxton and hopes in the long term to return there. The rebuilding of the line from Darley Dale to Matlock started in August 1987 and the first section for a mile south of Darley Dale was reopened in December 1991. The line through to Matlock Riverside reopened in April 1992. Further extensions to Rowsley South opened in March 1997 and into the national network station at Matlock in July 2011.

The Peak Railway Association is the membership organisation for Peak Rail and has supported the Tracking our Heritage project. It has about 1,400 members of whom about 100 are active volunteers at any one time.



PEAK RAILWAY ASSOCIATION LTD

DERWENT & WYE VALLEY RAILWAY TRUST

This booklet is the culmination of a heritage project that has collected stories and memories from those who worked on, lived by or travelled on the Midland route between Matlock and Rowsley until it closed in 1968.

It is the result of months of research; gathering oral history recordings, photographs, stories and memories from those who remembered the railway.

The booklet documents the railway's history as told by those who experienced it 'first hand'. From childhood memories to those who worked on the railway, the personal history and stories are revealed through the memories of how the railway played a huge part in everyday life in Matlock, Darley Dale and Rowsley.

This booklet has been compiled by the Derwent and Wye Valley Railway Trust with the help of a myriad of people and this is a testament to their love of the former railway. It is with great thanks to all those who have contributed that their memories can now be shared.

Further information about the project as well as audio clips of people's memories are available on our website: **www.dwvrt.co.uk**

The work has been part-funded by a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund with support from Peak Railway Association, Matlock Town Council, Darley Dale Town Council, Derbyshire Dales District Council.

Thanks to Ros Bashforth, Mick Beigg, Tony Brook, Ethne Dawson, Peter Else, John David Fearn, Stuart Graves, Ralph & Alma Jackson, David Nevell, Sheila Rayson, Paul Tomlinson, Dorothy Webster, Trevor Whelbourn, Stuart Woodhouse for sharing their memories.

With thanks to Peak Railway Association and special thanks to Glynn Waite of the Rowsley Association for their valuable input and supply of photos.

PEAK RAILWAY ASSOCIATION LTD









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