

Mid-Suffolk de-stress

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It was a different day out - and I needed the long weekend to recharge batteries.

We went with Thomas (yes, the videographer son) to the [Mid-Suffolk Light Railway](#) in, unsurprisingly, mid-Suffolk today.

I have been a railway enthusiast since the age of 13. My interest in economics, accounting, social anthropology, and more is rooted in my fascination with railway history and how railways transformed nearly every aspect of life in the UK during the nineteenth century and beyond.

I have studied the subject in depth for as long as I have been interested in it. I had read just about everything available in Ipswich libraries on the subject by the time I was 16 or 17, and was then doing inter-library loans. My railway history collection contains more than 1,000 volumes.

The [Mid-Suffolk line](#) would have terminated within a mile of my home if it had ever reached its destination near Ipswich - but it did not. In fact, it never really reached anywhere and closed in 1952, but that is part of its enigma. A small part is now reopened, and we had a great time there.

I continued taking photos in black and white. The loco in use today was Sir Berkeley. Built in 1891, it was constructed by Manning Wardle, a company for whose products I have a great affection, even though it ceased trading in 1926. The loco is in largely original condition. It did not work the Mid-Suffolk of old, although products from an adjacent company in Hunslet in Leeds (Hudswell Clarke) did.



The train was made up of 1880s coaches built by the [Great Eastern Railway](#), which served this area from 1862 (as a result of a grand merger of other companies) to 1923.



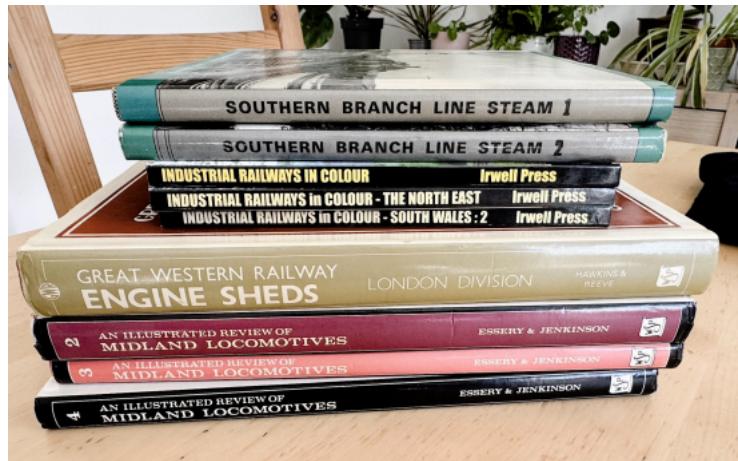
The new extension of the line through some lovely open countryside - which no one but us seemed bothered to walk to visit - and which is very attractive:



I am not sure three footplate crew were needed (two seen here), but I think they were having fun, as well as getting very hot:



And before we left, I paid a visit to the line's excellent second-hand bookshop and added nine more books to the collection, all for under £50:



All will be read. They are perfect end-of-the-day de-stressing material for me, and in fact, de-stressing material if ever stress arises. Jacqueline reckons she can quite accurately monitor my stress levels by the number of railway books open in the house.