



**Price:** £14.99

**Publication Date:** July 2007

**ISBN:** ISBN 978 184114 604 1

**Format:** Hardback, 144 pages,  
230x214mm,  
profusely illustrated in full  
colour throughout

**Imprint:** Halsgrove

## RAILWAY MOODS THE MID HANTS RAILWAY

THE WATERCRESS LINE

*Matt Allen*

The scenic Mid Hants Railway, 'The Watercress Line', is one of the leading heritage railways in England, with its mainline connection at Alton and its position as an ideal base to service 'mainline' steam locomotives working specials in the South. It is also one of Hampshire's biggest tourist attractions – with its steep gradients it is one of the best places in preservation to see steam locomotives working really hard.

The 10-mile-long line was originally part of a route from Winchester to London opened in 1865, which soon became a key means of transporting the locally grown watercress to market in the capital. Closed by British Rail in 1973, eager volunteers partially reopened the line from Alresford to Ropley in 1977, and on to Medstead in 1983 and Alton in 1985. Today the railway is mostly volunteer run, with regular steam and diesel-hauled trains, hosting special events including dining trains, Gala Weekends, Thomas Weekends and Santa Specials.

This magnificent book by local photographer Matt Allen, follows the course of the line from Alresford to Alton, depicting a variety of engines and events along the way. In over 140 full-colour images he captures the life of the railway through the seasons, its buildings, locomotives, rolling stock and the stalwarts whose dedication enables the line to flourish.



Matt Allen has been interested in railways for as long as he can remember. His father was a fireman in steam days and latterly a driver for British Rail. He is a regular contributor to the railway media, especially *Railway Magazine* and *Railway Illustrated*. He also provides material for the *Mid Hants News* (the Mid Hants Railway's own magazine) and every autumn launches a Steam Railway Calendar showcasing his best pictures from the year.



Halsgrove House, Ryelands Farm Industrial Estate, Bagley Green, Wellington, Somerset TA21 9PZ

Tel: 01823 653777 Fax: 01823 216796

[www.halsgrove.com](http://www.halsgrove.com) e-mail: [sales@halsgrove.com](mailto:sales@halsgrove.com)



Example of a double page spread.



Early Spring can produce some stunning light, here 35005 Canadian Pacific is illuminated to great affect.



The Fireman of 73096 awaits the signal to depart, the fire from the firebox can be seen reflecting on the cab.



A train departing Alton and the start of the passing loop just outside the signal box is just visible.



An amazing sight at Alresford. 71000 Duke of Gloucester is waiting to leave with the Cathedrals Express mainline steam special to Waterloo.



Halsgrove House, Ryelands Farm Industrial Estate, Bagley Green, Wellington, Somerset TA21 9PZ  
 Tel: 01823 653777 Fax: 01823 216796  
[www.halsgrove.com](http://www.halsgrove.com) e-mail: [sales@halsgrove.com](mailto:sales@halsgrove.com)