

NORFOLK'S RAILWAY HERITAGE

GRAHAM KENWORTHY
AND RICHARD ADDERSON
with aerial photographs by MIKE PAGE

From the earliest days of rail travel, Norfolk's geography and its flat landscape offered the great railway companies the ideal conditions for expanding their empires. Lines were opened criss-crossing the county and at one time it seemed almost every town and village had access to a nearby station. Then the Beeching Axe fell and much of what had been part and parcel of the way of life in Norfolk, sleepy little stations and plumes of smoke following well-worn rural routes, began to disappear forever. Only through aerial views can the full extent of Norfolk's railway heritage be clearly seen, and in the photographs included in this book what remains of these old stations, signal boxes, cuttings and sidings is fascinatingly revealed. It also shows how recent developments on the outskirts of settlements have been affected in their layout by the original rail infrastructure.

For many years it has been Mike Page's ambition to produce a book featuring his photographs of Norfolk's railways from the air, and expert authors Graham Kenworthy and Richard Adderson were delighted to have the opportunity of working with Mike and his fine pictures to help him achieve this aim. Their text provides additional and fascinating information regarding the historic significance of the locations shown in the images. All the photographs were taken by Mike Page between 2001 and 2009 and range from pictures of today's 100 mph electric trains and preserved steam locomotives in action, to fading traces of railways abandoned in the 1950s. The selection is wide enough to satisfy the most critical of readers and where necessary the book strays briefly over the border into adjacent counties in order to complete the story.

This unique book is aimed at both the rail enthusiast and for anyone with an interest in the Norfolk landscape. The aerial images alone are intriguing and remarkably compelling.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Mike Page has for many years been able to combine his love of flying with his interest in photography, and has produced several books featuring aerial views of his native East Anglia. Pictures from his collection have also appeared regularly in newspapers and magazines.

Graham Kenworthy's railway interest dates from his teenage years in the mid-1950s, assisted by the fact that his secondary school was enlightened enough to support its own railway society. He joined British Rail as a Student Civil Engineer in 1960, and, in 1965, transferred to the Divisional Office in Norwich, remaining there until early retirement in 1996.

Richard Adderson's interest goes back to his childhood in the 1950s. Despite the drastic changes over the years, he has continued to follow the contemporary railway scene, as well as researching the past. His particular interest is in East Anglia, where he has lived and worked all his life.

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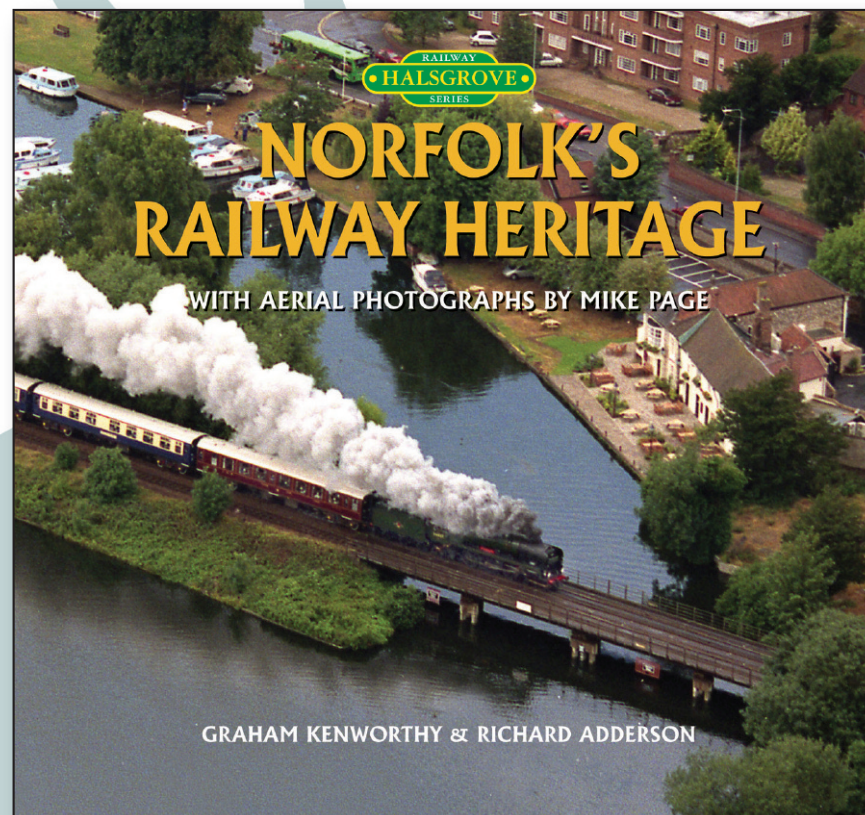
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Piggs Grave. The railway ran diagonally from bottom left to top right past Gunthorpe gatehouse with its small cabin from which protecting signals were operated. It lies at the highest point on the M&GN system, known as Piggs' Grave summit.



Hindolvestone. The old station building has been renovated and extended, displaying an abundance of gables and dormer windows.



Buxton. A train from Wroxham crosses the River Bure as it approaches Buxton. The bridge has been adapted to carry both the railway and footpath over the river.



Lakenham. The railway is keeping company with the River Tas as "Duchess of Sutherland" passes under the Stoke Holy Cross Road.



Reedham. The majority of the village, with its extensive river frontage, can be seen in the background as this special train negotiates the sharp curve on the south side of the swing bridge, heading for Lowestoft. There is also a sharp curve on the north side and the line on which the train had approached Reedham can be seen in the top centre of the view.



East Reedham →
The station buildings, complete with slate roofs and typical barge boards on the gable ends, have received superb restoration. The new entrance at the north-eastern end is in keeping with the original design, even the awning, which is a recent addition, looks as though it has been there since steam-hauled trains chugged through.



← **Raynham Park**
The one feature obviously absent from this location fifty years after closure is the track. Most railway buildings, including the level crossing gate, have survived virtually unscathed; the nearest building and the coach on the platform are the only additions to the site.



Walsingham. Many of the features of the historic and compact little town can be seen in this picture. Continuing with our railway theme though, the old line still marks the western extremity of the town, where the goods shed is the last building before we reach the fields at the top of the picture.

Example of a double-page spread.