

Spirit of the SEVERN VALLEY RAILWAY

Mike Heath

The Severn Valley Railway of today follows the meandering course of the River Severn from the Shropshire town of Bridgnorth in the north, through the villages of Hampton Loade, Higley and Arley to the Worcestershire town of Bewdley where it leaves the river and heads east to terminate in Kidderminster.

The journey along the line is fascinating; passing as it does through varied and mostly unspoilt landscapes between a number of beautifully restored country stations each of which retains its own unique timeless charm. The scenery on offer is only really available to rail passengers, walkers (and photographers) as there is limited road access to the area.

The line is a major tourist attraction carrying around 250,000 passengers a year and provides a wide range of facilities from corporate hospitality to a schools education service in addition to the many enthusiast targeted events.

In this all new pocket sized photographic portrait Mike Heath takes us on a personal journey from Bridgnorth to Kidderminster and back. Through over 60 glorious colour photographs he captures the real spirit of this busy railway revealing it to be, truly, 'a line for all seasons'.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

For well over 25 years **Mike Heath** has enjoyed combining his hobbies of photography and visiting preserved railways all over Britain. In that time he has amassed a vast collection of stunning photographs covering all aspects of the railways across all four seasons, day and night. Having already produced nine titles in the Halsgrove Railway Series including *The Severn Valley Railway*, published in 2005 Mike has selected over 60 superb new photographs for this pocket-format book.

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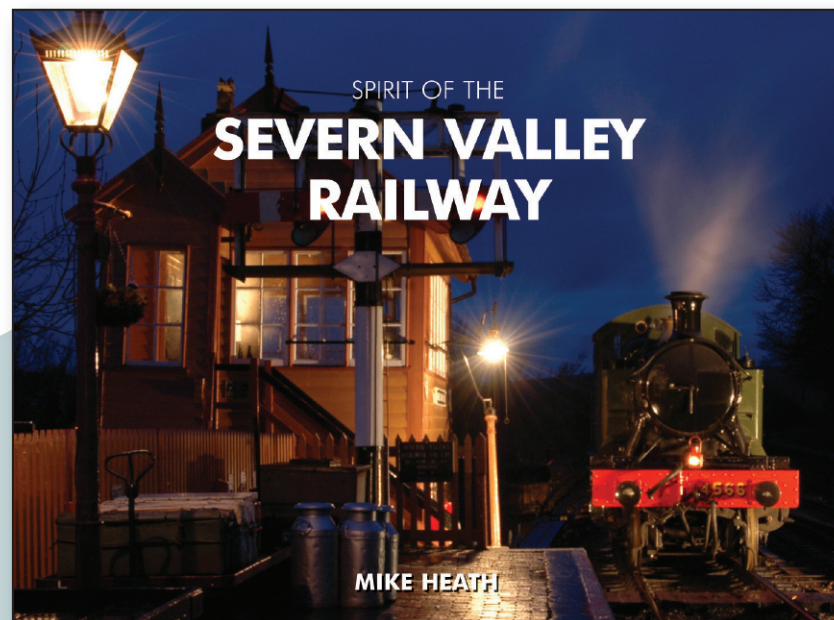
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Glinting in the afternoon sunshine is LMS Ivatt Class 2-6-0 No. 46443.



Crossing the five arch Oldbury Viaduct, during a charter on 29 September 2008, is visiting GWR Prairie No. 5526 complete with auto-coach. Both are normally based on the South Devon Railway at Buckfastleigh.



When steam services from Bridgnorth restarted in 1970, Hampton Loade was the southern terminus for passenger services. A footplate experience train in the hands of No. 42968 starts back towards Bridgnorth on a bright October 2008 morning.



Arley is one of the most attractive stations on the line serving the village of Upper Arley on the opposite river bank. It dates from the opening of the line in 1862.

Example of a double-page spread.



On 7 March 2009 Great Western Railway 2-6-2T No. 5164 climbs away from Bridgnorth with a morning train.



Having crossed over the Bridgnorth By-Pass 'small Prairie' GWR 2-6-2T No. 4566 powers through Oldbury Cutting back in February 2007.



This splendid signal gantry controls all access to Kidderminster Station.



On 19 November 2004 a late afternoon 'local' in the hands of No. 5164 takes it at a more leisurely pace.