

PRESERVED STEAM IN DERBYSHIRE

Robert Falconer

There is something romantic and magical about steam trains. The atmosphere created by steam, smoke and the nostalgia of a bygone age attracts thousands of people who want to ride behind a steam locomotive, take photographs or just experience the unique aroma they create.

Back in the 1960s the future of steam locomotives looked very bleak as British Rail sent them to the scrap yard and replaced them with more modern diesel and electric locomotives. Yet you don't have to go far in the UK today to have your own steam experience, and Derbyshire is no exception.

Through recent decades there is hardly any part of Derbyshire that has not witnessed the sight of a steam train, from the once railway Mecca of Derby, to Chesterfield and through the dramatic scenery of the Peak District on the Hope Valley line. Buxton and Matlock have also seen occasional trains. And away from the national network there are a number of preserved lines and centres in Derbyshire.

Derbyshire-based Robert Falconer has been photographing steam engines in action in his home county for more than a quarter of a century. Through many different styles of railway photography, and in more than 140 superb images, he captures a large variety of locomotives from the small industrials to large express engines. The steam locomotives are undoubtedly the stars of the show but Derbyshire's often spectacular landscape sets them off to their very best advantage in this supremely colourful and evocative collection.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

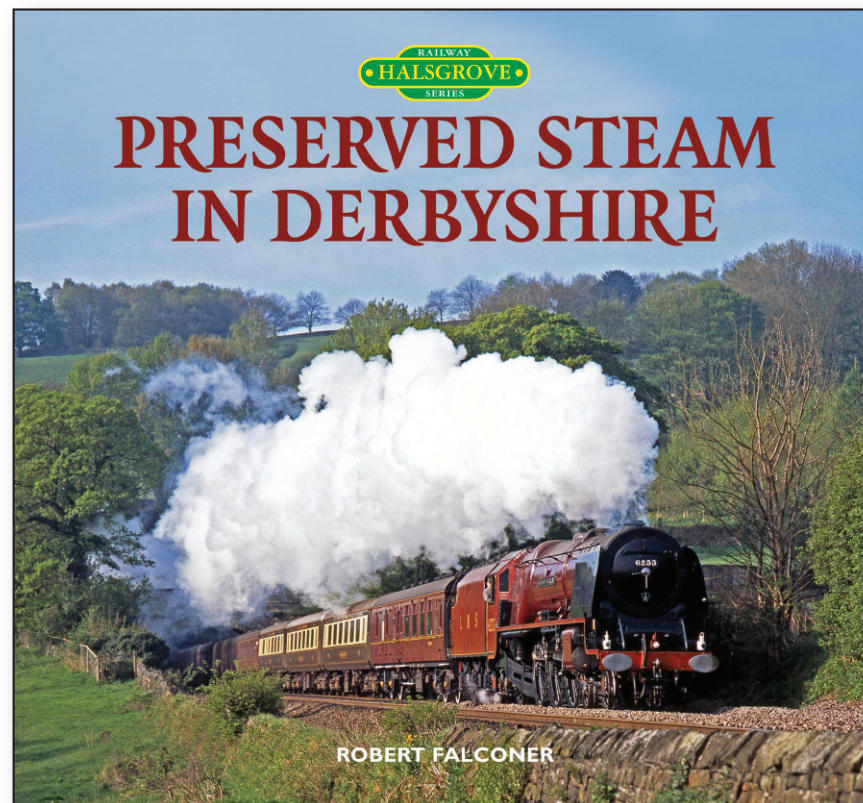
Robert Falconer first picked up an SLR camera at the age of 12 to capture on film steam trains on days out with his father. He soon developed a love of photography and it was not long before he started to aim his camera at landscapes as well as steam locomotives. After leaving school he went on to study photography for 4 years, achieving a National Diploma at Norton College, Sheffield and a Higher National Diploma at the Blackpool and Fylde College. Since then Robert has had pictures published in numerous magazines, calendars and on cards. He now has a collection of over 20,000 images of many places and subjects but it is images of the Peak District which dominate. His previous book for Halsgrove *The Peak District: A Winter's Tale* was published in 2009.

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HALSGROVE TITLE INFORMATION



Format: Hardback, 144 pages, 214x230mm, profusely illustrated in colour throughout.
Price: £14.99
ISBN: 978 0 85704 116 6
Imprint: Halsgrove
Published: September 2011



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Above: 'Tornado', 'Blue Peter' and 'Sir Nigel Gresley' are bathed in spring sunshine in their early British Rail liveries in April 2009.

Left: No.76079 and No.45407 climb towards Chinley with a train for Buxton in October 2007.

Below: Example of a double-page spread.



No.60009 'Union of South Africa' at Hasland, Chesterfield in October 1996.



No.71000 'Duke of Gloucester' powers south from Derby with its very first mainline steam special in preservation, with a train bound for Dorking, in April 1990.

No.71000 'Duke of Gloucester' makes a spectacular departure from Derby Station with its second train for Dorking in April 1990.



A tree at the side of Butterley Reservoir frames No.47327 in December 2001.