

THE BLUEBELL RAILWAY REVISITED

Matt Allen

In 2008, Matt Allen produced an exceptional portrait of the magnificent Bluebell Railway in rural Sussex. In this new volume he makes a return visit to see the line's many exciting developments, especially the huge achievement of the completion of the "Northern Extension" project taking the railway back to East Grinstead and reconnecting the Bluebell Railway back to the National Rail network.

The Bluebell Railway was originally a part of the former Lewes to East Grinstead line and when closure by British Railways loomed, a keen band of volunteers worked hard to prevent the line being consigned to history. In 1960 when the Bluebell Railway was formed, railway preservation was a new concept, making the band of volunteers pioneers of their time.

Here premier railway photographer Matt Allen, one of the most active in the UK, takes a photographic journey along the 11 mile Bluebell Railway, showing all the railway has to offer and – of course – the new extension to East Grinstead. In more than 140 evocative images he captures the essence of this magnificent jewel in the British heritage crown.

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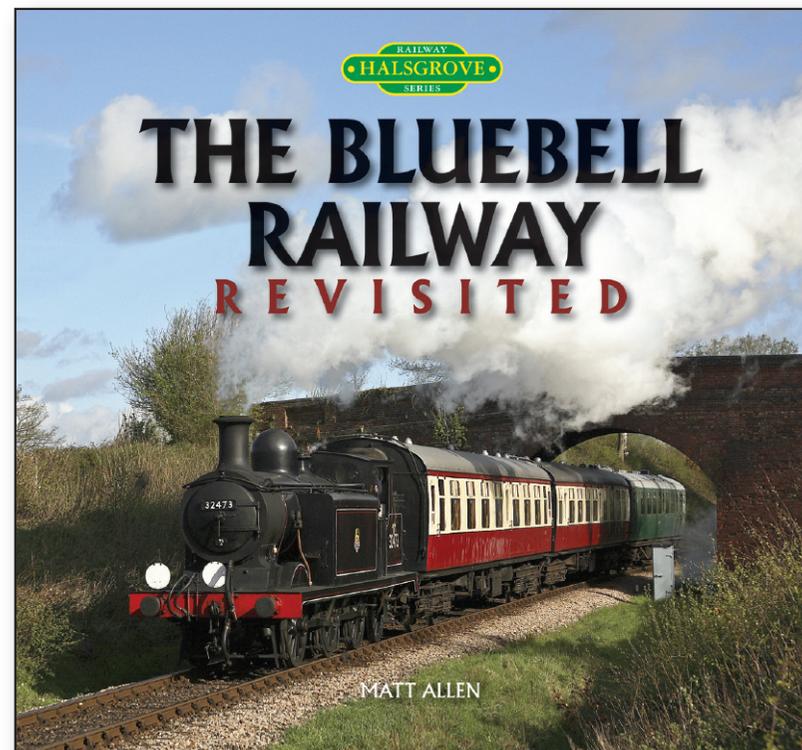
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Matt Allen has been interested in railways for as long as he can remember. His father was a fireman in the steam days and latterly a driver for British Rail, so an interest in railways may appear to be in the bloodline. Matt's first job was in a camera shop and was one that he greatly enjoyed; so it seemed inevitable these interests would someday collide. However, his interest in railway photography wasn't ignited until the new "digital photography" revolution. It provided what he had always craved, instant results from the camera.

He is a regular contributor to the railway media, organises railway photography events and has also written other books in this series including his first book on the Bluebell Railway, to which this title is the follow on. Every autumn also sees the launch of his annual "Steam Railway Calendars" showcasing his best pictures from the year. Most weekends will find him photographing steam trains somewhere, covering many miles all over the country in the process. Holidays tend to revolve around strategic locations for Heritage Railways, so if you are sitting on a steam train and see someone standing in the middle of a field pointing a camera, it might just be Matt.

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THE BLUEBELL RAILWAY REVISITED



A driver's eye view!



Seen heading south at Monteswood Lane is P class 323 with the late evening sun illuminating the train.



Sitting between platforms 4 and 5, 80151 awaits its next duty.



Right: Heading southbound towards Sheffield Park the E4 locomotive is silhouetted against the sky.



Example of a double-page spread.



H class locomotive number 263 provides proof that steam has made it to East Grinstead.