

**Statfold Barn
Road, Rail & Ale Event
6-8 September 2019**



I'm at Statfold Barn for the new 3-day Autumn event billed as Road, Rail and Ale. The event publicity promises:

The award winning Statfold Barn Railway will also be operating throughout the weekend. An intensive train service featuring passenger trains and goods trains will be operate on Saturday and Sunday, with Friday being a less intensive service with only a single passenger train operating. All trains rides are included with the entrance price. As well as this there will be: –

- Tram Rides (Saturday and Sunday only)
- Engineering Workshops open (Saturday only)
- Road Steam
- Land Rovers
- Steam Saw Bench & Steam Navvy in operation
- American Trucks
- Vintage Cars & Motorbikes
- Vintage Tractors
- Stalls
- Bubble Man (Saturday Only 11am-3pm)
- Live Music & Entertainment throughout
- The Roundhouse Museum open
- And much much more...

I decided the best way (and perhaps the only practical way) for me to see the whole 3-day event was to take up the SBR offer to camp there without electric

hook up or a shower block. We'll have to see how my batteries and personal hygiene survive.

Friday

I arrived to some organised chaos around 16:30 but was shown a large pitch in a field near the SBR museum building and given my wristband for the event. This field is new to me and not where I camped previously but has the beer tent (with 36 beers on tap), food stalls, the road steam, the giant rigs, the steam sawing and steam excavating demonstrations and I assume that the centre of the field will see working traction engines and rollers during the event.



Ryam Sugar Company 1 (Davenport) and other locos ready for Saturday

After a meal heated in the back of my van which lacked 'something' and a couple of good beers from the beer tent (Thornbridge, Burton Bridge), I rode a couple of trains topped and tailed by Fowler steam loco Saccharine and a beefy Plymouth diesel between Statfold Junction and Oak Tree with steam leading up the hill back to Statfold. Trains continued until late on a 30 minute schedule.

There was music in the beer tent and although some of the live music was pleasant when that finished and they started playing records, I put my earphones in and retired for the night.

Saturday

The day started off reasonably sunny but clouded over and remained dark and unattractive for photography for quite a lot of the day. I was pleased that I'm staying over for Sunday in a hope of better weather.



One of the highlights was Graham Lee who built up the railway and loco collection operating an Erie steam shovel moving a pile of gravel. The steam operated wood saw was also in action but difficult to photograph.



At 5 pm when there would normally be a 'whistle up' and a cavalcade nothing happened. Instead a shuttle service was operated roughly half hourly from Statfold to Oak Tree to bring any local visitors from the car park to the beer and entertainment at Oak Tree. This experiment didn't seem that successful and there were few riding the trains or using the top car park.

The atmosphere at the beer tent in the evening was good with a showman's engine lit up and some reasonable cover bands playing. The best band was kept to last, of course, and woke me up when I was already asleep. They played a mercifully short set and then it was quiet until a car alarm sounded around 7:30 am.

Locos in use on Saturday

Fiji	Saccharine	Trangkil No. 4	Roger (garden railway)
Rishra (garden railway)	Kidbrooke	Howard	Isibutu
Harrogate No. 1	Alpha	Statfold	Jack Lane
Ryam Sugar Company	CSR & Co 19	Jack (18 inch gauge)	

The best shots from Saturday



Saccharine on a train on the high line.



Rishra working the Garden Railway



Isibutu makes a smokey departure with Kidbrooke and SCR No 19 on the left.



View from the bridge with Jack Lane and Statfold (the two new-build) Hunslets in front and Howard behind.



Saturday evening outside the beer tent.

Sunday

The morning started well with full sun until around 12:00. A limited train service was run with trains passing at Oak Tree and the loop signal box unstaffed. Only the low line was used to start but then a short topped and tailed freight was running between Statfold and Oak Tree on the high level tracks. The garden railway was not in use.

Locos in use:

Alpha	CSR 19	Isibutu	Jack Lane
Harrogate	Rishra	Kidbrooke	Statfold

The tram was also in use but not the 18 inch loco.

I walk around the loop and photographed the passive points that are still in use despite the 2ft 6in line having been removed.

The bright sunshine and deep shadows on the track in many places made photography a challenge but the smaller crowds (compared to Saturday) meant the people were not obscuring the locos at Oak Tree.

With fewer trains than on Saturday, the ones that ran were reasonably full. I called it a day around 12:00 and had lunch before driving home. The trains were due to run until 15:00 only anyway. The clouds were building and there was a forecast of rain overnight and on Monday so it didn't make sense to hang on longer.

I had a smooth ride home with not much traffic and only a few Sunday drivers to slow me down on the narrow roads of Lincolnshire.

The best shots from Sunday



Statfold and Jack Lane on the first train round the loop.



Alpha on the second train.



The passive points once needed to operate the dual gauge train round the loop but still used with the 2ft gauge only track.



Isibutu coming round the loop.



Burton & Ashby Tram in use.



Alpha and CSR No. 19 pass Statfold and Jack Lane at Oak Tree Halt.



Kidbrooke and Rishra operating a freight on the high line.



Diminutive Rishra at Oak Tree.



Harrogate on a passenger train at Oak Tree.

Overall

It felt like the established September Enthusiasts' Open Day had been spread over 3 days and had morphed into a Road, Rail and Ale event for the general public and I'm fairly sure enthusiasts would prefer the one-day event it used to be. However the Statfold Narrow Gauge Museum Trust is trying to appeal to the non-rail enthusiast general public to fund its operation and needs to open more often to justify its museum charity status so it's unlikely that the direction will change. Moving the non-rail attractions of the September event (beer tent, live music, road steam, classic cars) from a field near the car park

to a field near the Oak Tree museum (which doesn't have road access for the public) emphasises the need to catch a narrow gauge train to enjoy the attractions. That works in the day time but I would say it was much less successful in the evening when locals were encouraged to park their cars in the main car park and then catch a train to the beer tent and the live music.

I hope this illustrated report is useful. It hope it helps some of you decide whether to visit Statfold Barn in the future.

John Raby
September 2019

ps: the museum holds a collection of locos including those in working order and some museum pieces. One loco in working order that I was hoping to see in action was Liassic, sister to Jurassic on the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway.

