



Press Release

Release date: 5th July 2016

Steam & Beer Success

Last weekend was the busiest at Sittingbourne's Steam Railway since Easter and the most poignant too.

On Friday, in commemoration of the start of the Battle of the Somme one years to the day, steam locomotive 'Leader' (built in 1905) ran to Sittingbourne Viaduct station to take part in the service at the War Memorial in Central Avenue. At 07.30am, the locomotive's driver started a whistle that lasted about two minutes and could be heard across much of Sittingbourne and Milton Regis. This was live streamed on Facebook and has been viewed over a thousand times.

On Saturday and Sunday, Steam & Beer drew in the crowds to sample the 36 real ales from across the UK, from 'Merry Maidens Mild' by the Coastal Brewery in Cornwall to 'Hiphopoptamus' by the Ayr Brewery of Ayrshire as well as eight Kent-brewed beers.

The live music on Saturday and Captain Jack Sparrow lookalike on Sunday entertained the crowds with passenger numbers up on both days compared with last year.

This event was also the debut for new Footplate Café tables funded by Swale Borough Council and picnic tables from the Rotary Club.

For more information on the Railway visit www.SKLR.net or call the Talking Timetable on 01795 424899, email info@SKLR.net, follow @SandKLR on Twitter or see our Facebook Group at www.Facebook.com/groups/SandKLR

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Information for the media:

1. The Railway is rare in the preservation world as it was donated by the then mill owners, Bowater's United Kingdom Paper Co Ltd, in 1969 for preservation and still uses original locomotives, equipment and buildings. The SKLR is now the longest continuous operator of the railway and is operated and maintained entirely by volunteers.
2. Following a fire in June 2014, the last of the Railway's usable buildings was destroyed at Sittingbourne Viaduct, prompting the relaunch of the Railway's SOS Campaign - this time to Sort Out Sittingbourne - with the aim of raising £75,000 to improve visitor and staff facilities at Sittingbourne Viaduct station.
3. The SKLR is a registered charity, number 1057079. Postal address: SKLR, PO Box 300, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 2DZ.
4. Photographs of the Railway can be found on the Press Officer's website: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/stopem/> . To download images – click on the photo, click on 'ALL SIZES', 'Original' and then 'Download the Original size'.
Feel free to use them without a fee but please credit 'SKLR'.

5. Press releases can be downloaded from the Railway's website: [http://
www.sklr.net/latest-news/press-releases/](http://www.sklr.net/latest-news/press-releases/)
6. The Press Officer is available for interviews and recording sessions at the Railway or studios. Other members may be requested for interview through the Press Officer.
7. [Media enquiries to Paul Best, Press Officer, telephone 07973 192938 or email stopem@stopem.net](mailto:stopem@stopem.net)