

From Dianne.....

We started from Stonepit field - where stones were probably quarried for building much of Great Linford and Stantonbury Park Farm buildings opposite the car park.

The stone is unusual for the area and the underlying soil supports many unusual plants for this area - Jim M knows more about that.

We followed some of the railway walk which was the branch line that ran from Wolverton to Newport stopping at Bradwell and Great Linford. The train was affectionately known by locals as "Nobby Newport".

We waited for a train on Bradwell Station - the last train ran on the first Saturday in September 1964.

We passed Bradwell windmill - currently undergoing refurbishment - keep a lookout for open days once work is completed.

We walked beside the canal across a road! The 20th century aquaduct, a fantastic piece of civil engineering when they encased the canal in concrete in the early '80s and then dug down below it to allow Grafton Street to go under the canal.

Walking alongside the canal we passed through the Secret Garden, where there had been houses for important people from the railway works to live.

We then walked through the refurbished railway workshops, now housing, and saw the sculptures, one with a train in his hand, the other with cycles because the modern housing beside the canal is on the site of Wolverton Park where there was a velodrome, and where Wolverton (now Marshall Milton Keynes) Athletic Club was born. Football was played in the Park, Wolverton Town appearing there in the FA cup on a number of occasions.

Continuing along the towpath we passed under the "Christmas Day" Bridge - the railway company, building their line from London to Birmingham needed to cross the canal at Wolverton. The canal company, fearing loss of trade from a railway wouldn't give permission to build a bridge and employed security guards to stop it happening. But Stephenson paid his workmen to work on Christmas Day, when there were no security guards as no-one worked on Christmas Day in those days, and by morning the canal had been bridged.

We left the canal and passed Holy Trinity church and the motte of Wolverton Castle, associated with the Longueville family also of Newton Longville, and crossed the site of Wolverton medieval village to stop for a coffee break at the early 19th century "Iron Trunk" aquaduct built to take the canal over the river Ouse between Wolverton and Cosgrove.

As we passed through New Bradwell we had a look at Spencer Street, the remaining company houses built for workers in the Works. The terrace has three storey houses at each end, for the foremen, the rest two storey for the ordinary workers. There were more of these terraces in

Bradwell but they were torn down to be replaced with modern housing.

After lunch we walked down what's left of one of the old lanes that ran from Great Linford village green down to Willen and Woolstone, past the village pond.

Climbing up through Campbell Park we stopped for tea at the new MK Rose and finished our journey walking through Linford Wood.

and from Brian

Nobby Newport was also called the "Newport Nobby. Wolverton Park - opened in 1885, the cycling track was really an outdoor velodrome.

and from Mike

This is a picture of the last passenger train to depart Newport Pagnell at 6.01 pm Saturday 5 September 1964. The 10 year old boy with dark hair (adjacent to the right shoulder of the man with glasses next to the coaches) is me in my train spotting days!

The interpretation panel has been placed on the recently restored signal post at Newport Pagnell.



The final day of the service was overlaid with some sardonic humour, crowds and bunting did, at least show that 'Newport Nobby' was genuinely regarded with some affection and some impromptu 'Mrs Mops' ensured that she went into history cleanly.

Ray Bailey.

The Wolverton to Newport Pagnell Railway

In 1867 the Newport Pagnell to Wolverton branch line opened. Travelling 4 miles; the line stopped at Great Linford and New Bradwell stations, terminating at Wolverton. At the height of its popularity there were over thirty passenger trains a day. The train engines were affectionately known as 'Nobby Newport'.



The branch was included in the Beeching report of 1962 which concluded that much of the railway network should close. This signal post is the only remaining feature of the Newport Pagnell station. The line completely closed in 1967 and latter became part of the Milton Keynes Redway system of footpaths and cycle ways

OH DR BEECHING!

Oh, Dr Beeching, you've made your mark
We used to go to Wolverton, via New Brad'll and Giffard Park
Take me back to Newport, Great Linford's on the way
Oh, Nobby Newport, I wish you were here today!
Annon

This signal post was restored in March 2013 by Milton Keynes Council - the signal arms are replicas of the originals.