



200 years of the modern

1825 railway 2025



We hope you have seen our timeline poster as you entered. Now's the time to see if you can find some of the objects in and around the museum. Here are 13 items that you might find.



Prior to steam engines, wagons were pulled along rails by horses. In 1807 the Swansea and Mumbles swapped cargo for paying passengers. We have a hat badge in our curios.

In 1829 Robert Stevenson's 'Rocket' won the Rainham Trial, proving the viability of the steam locomotive. Our version is made from Darlington ply.



In 1842 a stationmaster designed the classic Edmondson style railway ticket we have many on show, can you find one dated 13.09.1959.

By 1855 most of the country ran on 'Railway Time' As Greenwich Mean Time standardised time across Britain, to enable the railways to run safely and on time. A good, reliable watch was essential.



An accident in 1872 led to improvements in signalling. Danger is now the default signal setting.

In 1886 Mr Tuff of York developed the shunters pole a long hooked pole which enabled wagons to be coupled together in a place of safety rather than between them.



In 1892 the tracks were changed to a standard gauge connecting up all the railways. This took place over one weekend!



Track Level gauge

1893-1894 The Wellingborough to Higham Ferrers Midland Railways branch line opened first for the movement of goods and then for transporting passengers.



In 1923 the many railway companies were amalgamated into four companies. Midland Railway joined with others to become London, Midland and Scottish Railway.



Kettering Station Staff 1940's

During the war years 1939-1945 the railways played a crucial role transporting goods troops and evacuees.

In 1948 the railways were nationalised and British Railways was formed.



1959 saw the end of passenger services in Higham ferrers and Rushden. Ten years later in 1969 goods traffic ceased and the stations closed.

1970's onwards groups of enthusiasts formed the heritage railways that are enjoyed by millions. The RHTS bought the station in 1996 and on the 13th June 2009 trains were once again running at Rushden station.

Become a member and volunteer or donate to keep the heritage of our railways alive.