Saturday 24 June 2023		RAILWAY 81	
Kings Cross		1018	Victoria
Walthamstow Central	1032	1107	Victoria
Blackhorse Road	1111	1126	Overgnd
Barking	1151	1159	Overgnd
Barking Riverside	1207	1219	Overgnd
Barking	1231	1247	c2c
Stratford	1255	1305	Central
Epping	1331	1350	Central
Woodford	1405	1430	Central
Hainault	1439	1446	Central
Ealing Broadway	1553	1615	Eliz Line
Liverpool Street	1637	1641	Eliz Line
Stratford	1649	1653	Eliz Line
Farringdon	1703	1709	Met
Kings Cross	1712		

Julie had booked a place at "Bodies from the Library" at the BL, and our plan had been to train down. Then I realized that the ECML is shut so the MML will be heaving. We drove! Left about 7, and the M1 was an easy drive. Easily into London and all was fine until I was trying to find a parking space by the BL. I had found there are disabled spaces on Ossulston Street, but the sat nav route to it did not agree with road closures, cycle lanes, etc. on the ground. In the end we found spaces by Edith Neville Primary School on Charrington Street, and she arrived at her conference just in time for an 0955 start. (Apparently Edith Neville was a local reformer known for her work with the St Pancras Housing Association). Michael (my nephew) was waiting for me at the BL, and we went off to find trains.



My original plan for doing London was to start at the Thames and work round anti-clockwise. This is still a good plan, even though my chances of finishing it are probably zero! I have done the Victoria Line south of KX, so now it was time to head north. This was built in the 1960s, and open in 1968. (This might be an excuse to re-watch the British Transport Films made about its construction). I must have done it all in about 1978 when Phil Wieland and I did all the Underground over three days. I have also done the link to Northumberland Park depot on a CURC visit.



You can tell Walthamstow Central is a 1960s station - odd steps just impede easy access, though there are now lifts and a

fancy new entrance - there is not a lot of space. Indicator boards were helpful too.



We walked out through the bus station onto the main drag and found Copperfields café very nice poached eggs on toast. It would have been quicker to have walked to Queens Road station on the Overground, but for some reason

we tubed back to Blackhorse Road, and just missed an Overground train Barking t o Riverside. photoed the black horse on the underground platform, but didn't go outside to find the original mural.





I remember when this line, the GOBLIN line (Gospel Oak to Barking) was decrepit. Open in 1894 as the Tottenham and Forest Gate Railway, it was a joint line of the MR and LTSR. When I first did it, it had an hourly dmu service and semaphore signals - now there should be an electric train every 15 minutes. However we faced delays as c2c services are using it as the link between Stratford and Barking today, so our Overground train was terminated in the northbound bay platform at Barking and we had to walk across to catch the next one onto Riverside from platform 7. (We could have had a same platform change at Woodgrange Park, but we weren't told of the change before then).

I hadn't done the extension to Barking Riverside as this was only opened last summer.







It has been built to serve the huge housing developments that are going in. Part of me is impressed we have the foresight to build in advance, another part of me is furious that London gets all the investment! It will be fascinating to come back in 10 years time. For now we stayed the shortest time possible!





We changed at Barking for a loo, and then for Stratford (a useful connection we hadn't planned for), then started to attack the Central Line. All the way to Epping, out into darkest Essex (though, sadly, no more as far as Ongar). Most of the main line (as far as Loughton) was open by the Eastern Counties Railway in 1856, and this was extended to Ongar in 1865. Epping to Ongar was closed in 1994 (unbelievable that that is almost 30 years ago), although much of it has been preserved - they were running a connecting Routemaster today. There is an excellent refreshment "van" outside Epping station - superb bacon butty.





Back to Woodford for Hainault. The Hainault shuttle runs every 20 minutes, and we missed one while buying tea. It was part of my plan so I could rest on a GER bench. This bit of the line was the Fairlop loop, open from Ilford to Woodford by the GER in 1903. If I remember right, the automatic train control for the Victoria Line was tested here.





A change at Hainault, then we settled down to ride through London as far as one of the western termini at Ealing Broadway. Fairlop loop to Newbury Park, then the tunnels constructed pre-War, used as factories, open for the tube in 1947. Back through Stratford and onto the 1946 line to Liverpool Street. Central London Railway (mainly 1900) on to Shepherd's Bush, link on to Ealing 1911. I think I stayed awake as we made the journey.

Time for a Starbucks at Ealing Broadway, which meant we just missed the 1611 direct to Stratford. We caught the next one, an Abbey Wood train, and changed at Liverpool Street. Hundreds of trains, all full and standing. Build it and they will use it. In an ideal world we would have stopped and explored and photographed - in reality, it was a long, hot day. The Elizabeth Line is a lot quicker through Central London than the Central Line! This iaunt means I have now done it all - including the links from the GWR onto the central London section, and from the new section out onto the GE main line. Back from Stratford to Farringdon. It is a long walk from the Liz Line platform to the Underground, and you have to go out and in between the two halves of the station. Onto Kings Cross, and back to the BL. J finished at 5.30 - she was buzzing after a superb day.

Michael went north to travel back to Richmond via the old North London Line. We managed to extract the car and hit the motorway. A Macdonalds at Watford Gap, and home about 9.30. I slept well!