

Tuesday 4 July 2023

RAILWAY 82

The Jolly Joint

Duffield		0838
Nottingham	0924	0955
	via Allington West and Allington North Junctions (Grantham avoiding line)	
Skegness	1151	1215
	via Grantham	
Nottingham	1417	1435
Lincoln Central	1530	1543
	via Sleaford, and dive under from Marholm Junction to Glinton Junction	
Peterborough	1653	1724
Nottingham	1831	1856
Duffield	1942	

Duffield to Nottingham, anytime day return
 with Railcard £6.65
 Lincolnshire Day Ranger, with Railcard £23.00

Dave and I needed a railtour. I wanted to do the Grantham avoiding line, the Sleaford non-avoiding line (I've done the avoiding line), and the new dive-under at Peterborough (Marholm Junction to Glinton Junction).

A Railtour needs a silly name. "The Jolly Fisherman" and the Joint Line south of Lincoln, featuring the new dive-under. "Jolly Joint" also pays tribute to the number of drugs the Barham Boys have taken in recent years. Alternative names were The Jolly Crabmen, the crab being the symbol for cancer - or "Lincolnshire non-Yellowbellies" on tour. As only Harry is a real Lincolnshire Yellowbelly, and I've had too much of my belly removed, this name was not appropriate.

I drove to Duffield and trained through to Nottingham. I like the bug hotel at Attenborough. Then a very long walk back to the ticket office to buy a ranger - you can't buy those on line. Little brother



arrived and we got supplies before joining the Skeggie train. It is a very long way to Skeggie, but there was plenty of space on this train. This is the one train that does not go into Grantham, so we got that bit ticked off. Allington has a modern box.



On through Ancaster and Rauceby, then Sleaford station itself. All these signal boxes are still in place, and there are various proper white gates. Heckington looks lovely, but the windmill and tea room were closed today. Then on towards Boston, where it looks as if



(occasionally) freight goes down the docks, and there several boxes. I should have visited the Stump, and the locks on the Witham look worth an explore. Then north through Sibsey, Bellwater Junction (opened 1913, line from Woodhall Junction closed 1970) still exists, but you can't see any remains of the old junction at Firsby.

Thorpe Culvert still has its box, and we finally arrive at Skegness - fully signalled.



I had had various plans to do doughnuts on the beach, or Church Farm Museum, or even catch the bus to Lincoln - but the same train back was required to go via Grantham. It is even further via the station! At Nottingham we went up to Lincoln direct, a slow journey behind an oil train, but we were there before the Peterborough train arrived. David photoed Newark Castle box and the flat crossing over the ECML. Memories of an afternoon in Saxilby 'box while at Lincoln - and a wish for more time to explore Lincoln properly. I didn't record who took this photo of an Azuma the other day.





We travelled south in de-classified First, and did what the Welsh told us to do. All the boxes and gates on the Joint Line have now gone as the line was re-signalled for the containers avoiding the ECML. There is some interesting architecture at Sleaford - one set of buildings by the station has been nicely made into flats, but the Maltings itself stand derelict. They are grade II* and there seem to have been discussions for years about what to do with them. You would have thought that with such a shortage of homes, it wouldn't be beyond the wit of man to use them. Boxes through Sleaford itself - I had done the avoiding line on an East Coast diversion - then south through Spalding. Most of the Lincoln trains still use the east side of Peterborough station, but this one (and its

return working) go through the dive-under, under the ECML and up onto the slow lines into platform 5. A useful connection ticked off. Dave then travelled back to Ely, and I got the next one to Nottingham via Grantham. Time for a Magnum at Nottingham before joining the already-waiting Matlock train. Great day!