

Saturday 2 September

RAILWAY 89

South Tynedale Railway

Alston	1300
Slaggyford	1335 1400
Alston	1435

Dave and Trish are on holiday near Kirkby Stephen, so we arranged to meet at Alston. It is only half an hour's drive, and it was a gorgeous drive. We arrived about the same time, then Trish and Tim went off to the Dr Who museum in Allendale. Dave and I would have liked a pasty or something from the café (run by a business), but it was heaving and doesn't do takeaways - so we got tea and a (large) muffin each. "Barber" was hauling three coaches, but all the punters could have got into one. Nice ride up and down the line. Slaggyford is manned with a signal man and a couple in the refreshment coach - nice chat to the staff, they've had an OK summer, but not particularly busy. Roughly the same number of passengers on the 1500 train. We went to the café and had tea and more cake - the wait time for hot food was 45 minutes. They had obviously had a very busy day with cyclists and passers-by, but not too many rail passengers. No volunteers busy in the engine or carriage shed - so it feels a bit like a railway that is hanging on. The trouble is that Alston is a long way from everywhere, so you have to make an effort to visit, and being a volunteer costs money. But it is a lovely line, the scenery is stunning. I enjoyed my visit, and the drive home.





