

Railholiday News 2025-26



What a year 2025 has been! Dave has been putting all his focus onto the Royal Carriage, we've held two open days, helped create another community orchard and won the top prize at the **Cornwall Tourism Awards** for Regenerative Tourism.

We moved **thousands of snowdrops** in the spring, filling our carriage gardens and extending their coverage in the woods. We've also funded another community orchard, and planted trees on our own land.

On a personal note, it's been a tricky year as our much-loved head of house-keeping, Lizzy's sister Nic, has been bravely battling breast cancer. Nic is worth her weight in gold, so it's certainly been challenging juggling changeovers without her. Our staff have been brilliant at pulling out all the stops. Nic's treatment ended in November, so we are hoping she'll soon be back to full strength.

Our newest member of staff Julie started in June and has been proving invaluable in helping the team while Nic has been away, as well as assisting Lizzy in the office. Some of the team are pictured here at criptime. Left to right, John, Dave, Lil, Nic, Ella, Kath, Sarah and Julie.



Our woods in autumn



Our focus in the first half of the year was preparing our gardens in St Germans for the first of our open days, as part of **St Germans Open Gardens**, run by the local gardening club.

We had the pleasure of giving tours around Millpool and the Royal Carriage, as well as our own private garden and the carriages site. A friend offered refreshments in aid of **Doctors For Nepal**, a charity that aims to improve healthcare in rural Nepal. Our thanks go to everyone who came. We had over 200 visitors, some of whom came from as far afield as Taunton and Penzance.



In the summer the trackside of the Old Luggage Van had a refurb, followed by a complete repaint. Dave made GRP panels to replace the rotten wood, Kath sanded and scraped and finally our talented friends Phil and Mark Ogden did a magnificent job of repainting the whole carriage.

The main project of the moment is one we expect to occupy us for many years to come; restoring a royal saloon made for Queen Victoria in 1897 by the GWR for her South-Western tour. It's a beautiful carriage. This year Dave has completed the roof, as well as creating moulds to replace rotten roof vents, side panels and window surrounds.

Dave has become something of a DIY influencer through the videos we've been posting on **Instagram** and **Facebook**. Do find us @Railholiday if you would like to follow our progress.



*Printed on recycled paper by Cornish printers ARRC Print - arrcprint.co.uk.
www.railholiday.co.uk - Dave and Lizzy Stroud, Haparanda Station, St Germans,
 Saltash, PL12 5LU - 01503 230783/ 07776 261192.*



Thank you tree champions! This year the carbon-offset tree fund has helped to create a community orchard in Millbrook, on the Rame Peninsula.

If you would like to know more about our plant-a-tree scheme, please visit our tree champions page at www.railholiday.co.uk/carbon_offset.htm.



Our home village of St Germans has gone from strength to strength. **The Stables has lengthened their opening hours** and now offer an excellent breakfast for all dietary requirements, as well as a fine selection of cakes, teas and coffees. This makes a great stop both before and after a tour of **Port Eliot House and Gardens**, which is now open all year. On weekend evenings the Stables becomes a cocktail bar called **The Elephant**, with live blues and roots music most Saturdays. Our village pub, **The Eliot Arms** currently offers a Thursday night acoustic jam, Sunday roast, and curry and quiz on Tuesdays.

You can also treat your pet at **Chloe's Dog Grooming** service, next door to the Stables. Chole's number is 07503 534212

We've been as busy as ever in our local community, helping with various committees, volunteering and beach-cleans. We were proud of the 92kg of ghost net that we and our friends cut from the rocks and carried up the cliffs. It took all day, but it was fun, and the sense of acheivement definitely made it worthwhile.



Railholiday gift vouchers make great presents. They come with a gift card, are fully transferable with no use-by date and can be cashed in for a £30 admin fee.



In September we took part in the Rail 200 celebrations. As well as opening Harvey for visitors, the garden was used for print making by the talented Kiwi Print. Helston Railway had a stall; they have ambitious plans to restore their viaduct (visit www.helstonrailway.co.uk to find out more.) Creative pioneers Steam Co were in attendance, as was a full-sized replica of the Murdoch Flyer in steam, which is now housed in the Moseley Heritage Museum in Redruth. The day was organised by Mayes Creative and funded by GWR and Hayle council. It was lovely to meet local residents, many of whom remembered the day we moved in. **In 2026 we'll celebrate 25 years of Harvey, 20 years of the TPO and 20 years of the Luggage Van in its current location!**



We've got a new Substack account. This will echo the blogs on our blog page at Railholiday.uk, covering green musings and a hefty dose of Railholiday history. Find us at <https://substack.com/@railholiday>

It's 15 years since Dave helped set up St Germans Community shop. It shows that if you believe in something enough, it can happen. Our well-stocked shop and post office continues to provide an excellent service for us, our guests and the village as a whole. **Our top tip for going green; bank ethically** (we use the Co-operative bank and Triodos). Check your bank's credentials here: <https://bank.green>.



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