

Railway conjures up 1940's spirit

September 2, 2022



The North Norfolk Railway's popular Steam Back to The Forties weekend is set to return on Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 September with a host of activities on and off the tracks that recall the atmosphere of the turbulent decade.

The weekend will feature live music, classic vehicles, vintage trade stands, historical displays, and wartime fashions, all accompanied by an intensive train service.

The main exhibition site will be adjacent to Holt station where over 85 military vehicles, a full-size replica Spitfire and an array of vintage cars will be on show.

Visitors will be able to get a flavour of the decade through historical displays including military camps, period firefighting and Scouts' demonstrations. The distinctive music of the era will also feature The Knightingales, the Skyliner Big Band and Sarah Mai amongst the line-up on the main stage which sees performances from 1000 – 1600 on both days.

The exhibition field will also house a wide range of trade stalls selling vintage clothing, homewares, accessories, jewellery and ephemera as well as a selection of food & drink stands.

A half-hourly train service will operate between Sheringham and Holt with rover tickets allowing passengers to hop on and off all day to travel behind the four steam locomotives scheduled to be in action.

Visiting Great Western Railway engine No 4270 is amongst those scheduled to be working at the weekend. The engine was built in 1919 to work heavy goods trains and currently sports the characteristic green livery carried by many GWR locomotives in the 1940s. War Department "Austerity" locomotive dating from 1943 and one of a type designed to be built cheaply during wartime is also likely to be running. The engine was originally shipped to Egypt and later worked in Greece before being repatriated and in the 1980s and restored.

The activities extend the length of the line with Weybourne station hosting further historical displays including military camps depicting the Royal Armoured Corps, Long Range Desert Group, Special Air Service and Airborne activities, as well as displays detailing the roles of allied women throughout the Second World War. There will be live music from The Swingtones and Three Bits of Rhythm and a variety of food and drink.

At Sheringham station, musical entertainment will include Mailman, Ashlea Lauren and Miss Nina Taylor and passengers will also be able to see displays about American air forces many of which were stationed in East Anglia. Bygone buses will run to Holt to supplement the train service.

Commercial manager, Graham Hukins, said: "We're looking forward to transporting visitors back eight decades and recreating the distinctive sights and sounds of the 1940s. Many of our exhibitors and re-enactors are in period costume and many visitors join in by dressing in the style of the era so it really is a great spectacle."

Fully inclusive tickets, valid for unlimited travel on the trains, entry to all three stations and the main exhibition field at Holt are £25 for adults in advance (or £30 on the day). Family, child and two-day tickets are also available see www.nnrailway.co.uk/steam-back-to-the-forties/

Those wishing to visit the exhibition field at Holt only will be able purchase £10 exhibition only tickets on the day (£5 for children aged 3 – 15).

These tickets are not valid for train travel and do not include access to any of the stations. Access to the exhibition field is covered by the fully inclusive tickets, so passengers holding those will not need to purchase a separate ticket for the show field.

Parking for the event will be available close to Holt station at Gresham School in return for a donation to Holt Youth Project or at Cookies' Field near Sheringham from where a park and ride service organised by Sheringham Carnival Committee will convey visitors into the town. Parking here will be £5 per car plus the bus fare.

Many of the shops and other businesses in Sheringham will join in the spirit of the event with 1940's window displays and other activities including music in some of the pubs and further details can be found via the Experience Sheringham website. Parades organised by the Carnival Committee are scheduled to

take place in the late afternoon/early evening each day.

Full details of the events and activities arranged by the railway, including train times, can be found at www.nnrailway.co.uk. Passengers booking in advance via the website enjoy a generous discount on train fares and event admission.

Following the event, the NNR's daily services continue with a steam locomotive and one diesel train scheduled to be in action each day until 30 October – full details can be found at www.nnrailway.co.uk.