

# Railholiday News 2024



What a year 2023 has been! We've held an open day, celebrated our silver jubilee, cleaned beaches, planted trees, written articles, arranged flowers, waved at steam trains, been on TV, fitted a heat pump, moved snowdrops around, painted carriages, donated holidays to the Railway Children, St Petrocs and the London Transport Museum and even done a bit of work on the royal coach.



**The new air-source heating system in Harvey is complete.** Lizzy's brother Richard came to lend a hand to install the heat-pump. Harvey is now beautifully warm, so we're pleased Dave's months of hard work has paid off.

As usual there's a recycled element; the hot water tank shelter is constructed with panels from a redundant coldstore in Saltash that was being demolished. The green roof is bordered with slate from our station roof, taken off when we had the solar panels installed. We'll also be planting a green roof over the newly erected heat-pump shelter. All we need now is some cold weather.

**We've got a new green blog page! Visit [railholiday.uk](http://railholiday.uk) to see Lizzy's musings on all things environmental.**





### **We started the year with an open day.**

This was a great success. As well as looking around the carriages and our photo displays, visitors were able to enjoy our woodland snowdrop walk.

A fine array of refreshments were served up by our friends Donna and Kelly, which, along with donations for books and plants, raised over £500 for good causes, including St Germans youth club, Cornwall Wildlife Trust and our local public transport group.

As well as being a great village day out, we had visitors from far and wide. Among our special guests was Lil and Glad's dad Fred, seen here with Dave. Sadly Fred died a few months later, so it was a great honour to us that he came. He has been a good friend and support to us over the years, and is greatly missed.



**Who's who?** Dave and Lizzy directors, with Dave on finance, restoration and maintenance and Lizzy marketing, flowers and gardens. In St Germans Lil, aka Hodgekins, is head gardener, Nic puts her hand to just about everything, and also manages the cleaning team of Glad (Lil's twin sister) and Michelle. Dave's dad John is a champion paint stripper, as well as cheerfully undertaking any other tasks put his way. Sarah is in charge of the amenities area, while Kath, aka Dobby, is chief painter and curtain maker and Emily has been helping us to work towards net zero. In Hayle our caretaker Bob is something of a hero - he's been managing changeovers and coming to the rescue if there are any problems during our guests' stay for over 22 years.

*We are now officially a living wage employer! We have been paying over the living wage for as long as we've been operating, but have finally gone for the certification.*







**On June 20th 1998, we welcomed our first guests into the Old Luggage Van.** Our journey into holiday letting happened by serendipity; after finding a siding in our garden we decided to look for a carriage to use as a spare room for visiting friends. The OLV came from a builders yard in Liskeard. In our quest to recoup our investment we put an ad in Railways Illustrated. Within a year or so we'd appeared on BBC News and had a full calendar of bookings. When we started Lizzy was a few months pregnant with Walter. Poppy was on her way when our second carriage, Harvey, was moved to Hayle in July 2001. Walter is now doing a Phd in solar technology and Poppy is in her final year of a Fashion, Media and Marketing degree. How time flies.

Many of our regular guests have become good friends over the years. We've been lucky to have the support of our community too. We celebrated our jubilee by having a party with staff past and present, and other key people who've helped us along the way. Our lovely staff presented us with a beautiful glass trophy. And of course there was cake!



**We've had some stories over the years,** from the OLV being cordoned off by the bomb squad when a neighbour found a WW2 shell in their cellar, to a slug short-circuiting the electrics on the day of our Visit England judge's visit. (Amazingly we still won gold; our local electrician Richard came up trumps and had it fixed in less than an hour). Lizzy is writing a book, so if you have any stories, we'd love to hear from you.



From this... to this. Do you have any stories you can share for the book Lizzy is writing? If so, do please email Lizzy on [office@railholiday.co.uk](mailto:office@railholiday.co.uk) with the message heading *Railholiday book*





**Dave and Nic have built a deck extension on Mevy,** which we hope will be enjoyed. Recently the diseased ash have been taken down, opening the view of the rolling countryside and of our beautiful fruiting hedge, which is now well established and a riot of colour and wildlife habitat all year.

**We were lucky in 2023 to have lots of special steam trains whooshing past,** including the Flying Scotsman. Not sure what's planned for 2024, but we always try and post any gen we get on Instagram and Facebook, so do please follow us on @Railholiday.

**Railholiday on TV.** Watch Lizzy choose an item of furniture for the TPO on *The Great Antiques Challenge*, episode 8 on Discovery Channel

***We know rail strikes have been disruptive.*** If you are coming by train and your journey is affected by strikes, we will do our best to move your holiday.

**We love to volunteer;** community building is strengthening for the soul, as well as building resilience for the future. This year Lizzy has started helping at Livewire youth music, Dave continues his role as treasurer for the May Tree Fair, while Nic assists with art sessions at Torpoint library and volunteers in the Liskeard vaccination centre. We take part in regular beach cleans and Lizzy is the environmental correspondent for the Cornish Voice and the local parish magazine; articles from which can be read on [www.Railholiday.uk](http://www.Railholiday.uk).



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Thank you tree champions. Your donations have paid for nut trees at Loveland Community Orchard in Penryn. And thank you to everyone who rinsed and returned our apple juice bottles. We managed to fill 537 bottles this year. without a single new bottle or top.