

Barnstorming...

Andrew Charman reports from another narrow gauge overload at the second 2012 Statfold Barn Railway open day.

Narrow gauge enthusiasts across the UK are coming to regard Statfold Barn as *the* narrow gauge mecca. The man behind Statfold, Graham Lee is a leading player in the business of seed oils, and has rapidly become a leading player in the narrow gauge market by turning his Staffordshire farm into an amazing railway complex.

A long railway, of 2ft/2ft 6in mixed gauge runs out and back across the fields, while there are several display sheds and a huge workshop complex with enough machine tools to make any heritage railway Chief Mechanical Engineer weep. Statfold needs the hardware as the Hunslet Engine Company is now based here – you can now order a brand new Quarry Hunslet should you wish...

Most of the extensive and continually-growing collection of locomotives are in working order (with more being returned to steam all the time). On one of three open days each year, they are exercised on the running line – I counted a dozen this time, constantly swapping between trains.

Regular visitors to Statfold's open days know that there is always something new. This time the highlight was the return to action of the 2ft-gauge Corpet 0-4-0 featured on our cover and the news pages, along with the latest arrival, a Hudswell Clarke 0-4-0ST built in 1914 for the Lautoka sugar mill on Fiji. And more is to come – Penrhyn Avonside 'Marchlyn', repatriated by Martyn Ashworth last year and at the September 2011 open day riding around on a wagon, is rapidly approaching completion – possibly ready for the September open day?

That day will be on 15th September. Numbers are strictly limited and if you want to go you need to pre-book a ticket – there's a booking form on the website, www.statfoldbarnrailway.co.uk – I would highly recommend it... **NGW**





Main picture: A locomotive cavalcade always finishes the open days on a high note – here the Corpet leads the way.

Left upper: Bagnall 2-4-0 'Isibutu' of 1945 attacks the grade.

Left lower: 1914-built Fowler 0-4-2T 'Saccharine' on the curve into the station.

Top right: Statfold is also a home to the unusual...

Above: Statfold – narrow gauge heaven... Quarry Hunslet 'Statfold', built in the workshops in 2005, to the fore.

Above right: Orenstein & Koppel 'Pakis Baku no 5', a Mallet 0-4-4-0T of 1905, shows its paces.

Right: Ever-busy shed scene at Statfold, with to the fore Penrhyn Hudswell-Clarke 'Bronlwyd', purchased by Statfold from Bressingham museum and returned to its original 1930 condition when it was delivered to Surrey County Council.

All photos taken by Andrew Charman on 2nd June 2012.