Virtual DalesRail – The Dufton Chicken Race

By Richard Watts

DalesRail may not be operating in 2020 but that doesn't stop us sharing our many interesting experiences about our journeys. We hope you will share your interesting stories, favourite walk, fascinating anecdotes and pictures about DalesRail. Please send them to Richard Watts at communityraillancashire1@gmail.com or simon.clarke.crl@gmail.com.

It was Easter Sunday 24th April, 2011 that saw myself and Alison escape the City of Preston to enjoy a favourite walk from Appleby. The walk itself was not exceptional along Stank Lane, passing Flakebridge Woods eventually ending up at the lovely village of Dufton for a break and some surprising entertainment. Well it was surprising to us as we had never experienced anything quite like it. You see Easter Sunday at Dufton is the excuse for the Easter Chicken Race.

Under starters orders and the chickens and their handlers prepare for the big race. What an event! The chickens had no idea what they were supposed to do and went off in all directions with their handlers valiantly trying to get them to run in a straight line.

Dufton Chicken Race – under starters orders and already the hens have lots of ideas but they are not straight line ones!

As the next picture shows chaos quite soon took over and I don't think I can ever recall something as odd or as hilarious as a chicken race.

Dufton Chicken Race and quite quickly chaos took over.

Try as I might I can't recall if there was a winner but it was certainly very different. I am hoping there is someone amongst our DalesRail travellers who will know the origin of this strange and fascinating race as I have not been able to track down anything.

The walk back was quite tame by comparison just some stepping stones to cross close to the village of Brampton!!

Want to find out more?
You can find out more about Dufton Village and the unusual Easter Sunday Chicken Race 2011 by clicking the attached link:
http://duftonvillage.info/dufton-village/