

The End of the Line – Tim, Dave and Chris talking about the last days of the Nicky Line and the removal of the viaduct across the Marlowes.

Tim:

The first part of the Nicky Line removal of the embankments was along Cotterells. Cos Cos I can remember this big Ruston Bucyrus excavator, with a face shovel on it. I can remember that digging all the embankment away up to what would be Station, near Heath Park, the Station Road bridge? And then, they removed that and put a drag line on it, and then it dug all the embankments away, across the moors. With still a little bit left in..I can never remember the meadows, and, and then they started taking .. the embankment away going up towards Marlowes and the viaduct. and once they'd dug all the, the chalk away, the viaduct was demolished on the first of July which I think was a Sunday. A Sunday morning, about one o'clock in the morning.

Dave:

Yes, I can remember, being out, watching it, and it didn't work. They had a big ball on a crane

Tim:

that's right

Dave:

and, I think it was about 11 o'clock actually. They closed, closed the road, and there there was ooh two or three hundred people there outside the Waggon and Horses. Watching it. And this, they kept swinging this ball, and it didn't work. How they got it down I don't know but, I know we were there for a couple of hours. It was much stronger than they thought.

Tim:

You can see there, th...there...that dragline there just coming up to the viaduct

Dave:

Yes

Tim:

And. And that's how they dug it all away with that dragline.

Chris:

I can remember being taken...down there by my parents to watch the last train come through. Puffing Annie.

Dave:

Yes

Chris:

And I can remember it quite clearly, coming across the Halt, and ..going off into the distance. And er

Dave:

Was that to the Gas Works?

Chris:

Towards the gas works, yeh, yeh

Tim:

But then there was the, the time, I can't remember when this was now, but it'd be..just at the point they obviously were closing the line. But I can remember that that train coming with some..carriages.. on it and it, and it, and they backed it into Cotterells, and there was some sort of ceremony, wasn't there? and I think you were there as well, you were saying, I can remember we all put, sort of pennies, the old pennies on the line so when it went across it crushed them.

Chris:

Well I lived in Highfield... I used to go up to the bridge, there's a bridge over Queensway

Tim:

Yes

Chris:

And then a bit further along there was a wooden bridge. And I used to go to by that wooden bridge and we used to go down on to the track, and put our pennies (laugh) and halfpennies on the line to get em squashed. Because that was when... they were taking the waste, up to Hemelite.

Tim:

Yes, Yes.Yes