## Passing Through







We were there for a few hours gardening on the bank at Kidder station. We were not just rushing through as usual; and we really saw life.

There were hen parties, all glitter, make-up, pinkness and froth with little shrieks of excitement as each friend arrived, then an "OMG" as the stretch limo came to collect them and whisk them into Brum for the day.
One day it was the young Harriers footballers, so smart and cool, sign-ing autographs for the children and giving away free tickets for the match. Such lovely ambassadors for the sport.
Such awestruck but happy children.

We saw lots of reunions and farewells… Parents greeting their student sons and daughters for a weekend of being pampered at home again.
A little four-year-old running along the pavement yelling "daddy daddy" and then being caught and thrown up in the air….What joy for them …and what joy for us on-lookers.
There was sadness too, as people struggled to walk from the taxi to the platform with their sticks: it's 20 yards.

And sadder still, the young man creating a shrine to his friend, the young woman who died nearby. He brought lots of bright flowers, the books she loved, photographs, feathers, a dreamcatcher and her favourite poems. I think he was trying to tell us about the very essence of her.
It's still there if you look carefully and it's still beautifully tended.

Then a pony and trap drew up, all beribboned and decked with flowers, its passenger the birthday girl and her family off for a day's fun.
A mainline train pulled in and people moved from the pure air-conditioned atmosphere of the modern carriage and headed for the smell of smoke and grease at the Severn Valley Railway. Much more exciting.
We gardeners heard the hiss and the hoots of the steam engines …
so evocative for our generation.

And suddenly I realised that all life passes through a station; it is just that usually we don't notice, because usually we are passing through too.

**Julia Stanfield Wyre Forest & District u3a Station Adopter – gardening**