

Any Woman Defecating in a Railway Tunnel Just Might Have Her Bum Smacked

Shôn Ellerton, January 2, 2026

A very amusing and true story of what happened to some unfortunate woman who caught crapping in a railway tunnel.



My 10-year-old son coerced me to write about this crazy story which involved my crazed and late father.

Here's a quick background of the story.

My father, in a drunken state of affairs, bought the [Fairbourne Railway](#), a once dilapidated tourist narrow gauge steam railway in Wales back in 1983.

Let's face it, we are sometimes at our most creative *and* stupid when we're drunk, are we not?

Anyway, the railway is very popular with kids with its open carriages running along the shores of quite a beautiful beach near Barmouth. After all, there's nothing like going to the beach on a summer's day in an otherwise mostly overcast, windy and rainy place like Wales.

Everyone seems to like steam trains. The smell, the sound, the workings of the machinery. Tourists flock to them, and as a steam loco driver, one feels like being a real celebrity. I've had so many pictures as a loco driver posing with kids who think seventh heaven is to be in charge of steam train. All the kids want to have a ride on the footplate, of course! And in those days, those wishes were often granted before the advent of strict health and safety policies enacted by Kevins and Karens of today's politically correct world of uber-safetyism.

I've had hundreds of hours experience driving steam locos up and down this 3-mile stretch of line ever since I was a teenager. First thing I *ever* drove solo of significant size was a half-sized replica of the Darjeeling and Himalayas steam loco called *France*, now called [*Sherpa*](#) at the age of 10 in which my father, then, had a railway running in Brittany in France called the [*Réseau Guerlédan*](#) in the late 70s.

By the way, steam locomotives are crazy difficult to learn to drive in case you're wondering.

Seriously, they are!

My father injected new life in the railway altering it considerably building a new station, new rolling stock, regauging the track, building two restaurants, building a rather long and dark tunnel, and re-routing the railway at the end of the line which was a lonely and windswept peninsula in the middle of an estuary with the lovely town of Barmouth opposite tantalisingly close separated by a rather nasty narrow strait of water riddled with vicious whirlpools due to the tides.

The problem was the long dark tunnel, which we christened as the *Jack Steele Tunnel*, which has now been greatly shortened and opened up with lots of little holes to let light through.

Anyone who has driven a noisy, smoky and steamy locomotive through a tunnel with no lights will instantly recollect that unearthly experience of utter helplessness praying that someone or something isn't in the way. You can't stop a loco with a train of ten to twelve loaded carriages very quickly! It's kind of frightening. Every time!

Naturally, any driver will whistle and whistle and whistle in the high hopes that anyone stupid enough to venture inside the tunnel will make a hasty retreat.

In all the hundreds of trips I've made through the tunnel, I've never come across any unwanted obstructions, which, to be said, statistically, is verging on being near-miraculous.

The worst fear of all is being derailed in the tunnel by some hooligan kid pretending to be Lawrence of Arabia. And, by the way, we actually *did* catch some young teenager doing just that, although, not in the tunnel. We told him off but him being so apologetic, he pleaded if he could help us out with any work that needed doing. My father thought he was quite a nice kid, so he became one

of our volunteers. However, he was always known by Lawrence, from the movie [*Lawrence of Arabia*](#), in which the main character tried to derail an Ottoman train in order to ambush it.

Nicknames were very much of the patter in these work environments and, in those days, if you were offended by them. Tough! I've had my share, believe me!

As for that long tunnel, my father had, of course, experienced many journeys through it with a variety of steam locos.

We had four operational steam locomotives during this time, which was around the late-80s or so. Our largest steam loco weighed in at around seven tonnes, being a half-sized replica of an American style steam locomotive based on the locos at the [*Sandy River and Rangeley Lakes Railroad*](#) in Maine. You know, those big black, daunting looking steam locos you see in so many movies! We gave it the, somewhat uninspiring, name of [*Number 24*](#).

My father had a memorable occasion in that long dark tunnel.

On one of his trips, as he approached the exit of the tunnel, he caught the silhouette of a rather plumpish looking woman squatting and defecating in the middle of the tracks. My father, being quite alarmed and not quite knowing whether to apply the brakes on hard as he could, whistled frantically. I will say, for the point of technicality, that there was enough room between the train and the sides of the tunnel if you pressed up against the wall, however, this woman could have been in competition with the Michelin Man.

As for my father, he was not well-known for his congeniality. He *meant* to make an example of this!

The woman, now getting precariously close, began to panic a bit, and in a fit of flurry was trying to pull up her drawers whilst running towards the opening of the tunnel to safety. Running may not be the right description as she still had her knickers around her ankles at the time, so, in essence, she was quickly hobnobbing like a toddler trying to run with nappies down to the ankles.

Imagine the spectacle.

A loud, hissing, sulphurous, black and ominous seven-tonne steam locomotive with a fully laden train bearing down on a fat woman taking a little secretive crap on the railway line.

Thankfully, exhausted and wide-eyed, she emerged out of the tunnel in time, but *not before* my father gave her one enormous smack on her big bare wobbling behind.

Obviously, there couldn't have been any time for the woman to wipe but at least, she got away with it, although she must have had a bit of red bum to remember the incident!

I doubt she would venture into any more railway tunnels to do her business!

Is this story exaggerated or hyperbole?

Well, if anyone who reads this *and* knew my father would say definitely not.

He was quite the character. He may have been a bad influence in social ways, however, he taught me *so many* practical skills which most fathers would even struggle to begin with.

As for this story, it is one of many timeless stories I remember during my father's very unorthodox running of a popular seaside narrow gauge tourist steam railway in Wales.