

ECCLES STATION

NEWS

APRIL 2013

The contents of this month's e issue are as follows:

News section, Articles. Trip of the month. Book Review.

*The April newsletter is out a few days early to give notice of the important **Freccles AGM**. This will be held at the newly refurbished **Old Town Hall** and you are all invited to attend.*

*Early publication also allows us to highlight the **engineering work** that will take place over the **EASTER WEEKEND**, plus there are the usual articles about what has happened, or is about to happen, on your local railway.*

*The Trip of the Month is a **much improved** revamp of the original Rochdale Town Centre walk. It makes **a really good, good value day out**. Do give it a try!*
Editor

NEWS

Come along and help us at the station on Sunday 7th April, 11.00. Up to twenty people now come along to help garden and keep the place tidy, and we know the work is appreciated by the passengers.



Demolition work has started on the old **Manchester Mayfield Station** which has not been used by trains for several decades. There are big changes due in the area – ESN has heard of the possibility of a new civil service building, and **the South Junction side of Piccadilly Station (platforms 13 & 14) is to be replaced with four through platforms** as part of the Northern Hub project to increase capacity.



Mayfield was built to relieve pressure on Manchester London Road Station (now Piccadilly). It handled rush hour commuter trains, specials, mail and parcels traffic. The platform level **used to be linked to London Road concourse** by a long wood and glass pedestrian bridge over Fairfield Street. A concrete and glass bridge went across the departure end of Piccadilly linking to the GPO building which now houses Network Rail offices.

Metrolink tram services commenced to Rochdale via Oldham (Mumps) almost as soon as the last edition of ESN went out. There was the not unexpected first day calamity on the Friday afternoon, but **then services operated normally from Saturday** onwards. This extension brings **Shaw, Newhey and Milnrow** back into the rail linked fold. Trams currently terminate in front of the railway station, but **the line is being extended** down Drake Street to a **new tram and bus station** in the centre.



Seen at Piccadilly on the 1st January 2013, this Pendolino marks their conversion from nine to eleven carriage sets.

Northern Rail has received planning permission for the **proposed new ticket office at Eccles** and subject to receiving the required highway approvals, plans to start and complete the works in spring/summer 2013. The revamped forecourt will give **better pedestrian access to the station**, and will include a secure cycle **store for 50 bicycles**.

Engineering work will take place at Salford Crescent on Saturday 30th and Easter Sunday 31st March 2013 as part of the provision of a new booking hall at road level, and new bridge to a longer, more spacious platform. For these two days Northern and First TransPennine Express will only be able to operate revised timetables with some trains diverted, some trains starting and terminating at Bolton. Trains will not call at Salford Crescent and Salford Central stations.

Northern will run an hourly non-stop train service between Bolton and Manchester Victoria and TransPennine Express will operate a train between Blackpool North and Manchester Airport that will run non-stop between Bolton and Deansgate / Manchester Oxford Road.

*A rail replacement bus service will operate between Bolton and Manchester Victoria calling at Moses Gate, Farnworth, Kearsley, Salford Crescent and Salford Central. Buses will run hourly throughout the day and the journey time between Bolton and Manchester Victoria is an hour. The revised temporary timetable can be found on this link: **Bolton and Manchester here***

On 14 March 2013, The Office of Rail Regulation released statistics showing a **record number of passenger journeys and revenue** on UK railways. Over 385 million passenger journeys took place on Great Britain's railways in Q3 2012-13 (1 October to 31 December 2012) – 14 million more than the same period last year.

The number of passenger journeys grew in all sectors compared to the same quarter last year. There were 262.0 million journeys on London and South East services, a 5.1% increase; 32.6 million journeys on long distance services, a 1.8% increase, and on regional services, there were 90.4 million journeys, a 1.1% increase. The total number of kilometres travelled by rail passengers in Q3 2012-13 was 14.6 billion kilometres; this is an increase of 2.8%. Total franchised passenger **revenue reached the highest recorded level ever** at £1.96billion, an 8.3% increase. Non-franchised passenger revenue rose to a record high of £12.7million, a 16.1% increase. To view these statistics, visit ORR's National Rail Trends (NRT) Portal at: <http://dataportal.orr.gov.uk>

The apparently piecemeal electrification of the Manchester to Parkside section continues. Wires are up from Kenyon Junction to Parkside East Junction, and the portals have been installed over the running lines at Eccles Station. On a trip along the line passengers will see lots of orange men busy on this project, and a number of work and equipment compounds (e.g. Cross Lane and Kenyon Junction). It may be taking a while but there has been very little disruption to daytime services.



NOTICE

THE
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
OF
FRECCLES

will be held on

Wednesday 3rd April 2013 7pm

at the

Old Town Hall
Eccles

You are invited to browse our displays and marvel at the sight of the newly refurbished community hall prior to the commencement of the meeting (doors open from 6.45pm)

Speakers:

Councillor Lisa Stone (Assistant Mayor): "FRECCLES & Eccles"

Simon Geller (Sustrans): Eccles Station Cycle Hub.

There will be reports from action subgroups, and the business will be to elect the auditor and officers of Freccles.

OUT AND ABOUT...



ESN's editor visited Conwy for a few days, making last minute use of the Arriva Trains Wales Club 55 offer. The weather there, though not perfect, was much better than in Manchester.

Above and right, two views on a short walk from Conwy over the Sychnant Pass. It can still impress!
All photos: J E Rayner.



A good view of Conwy Castle and the Stephenson tubular bridge can be had from the south west. This bridge for the railway was built as an exercise piece in advance of construction of the great and very elegant Menai Straits tubular bridge

...By TRAIN from ECCLES STATION.

ARTICLES

APPRENTICES REQUIRED

Around 240 Apprenticeships are up for grabs on the 2013 Network Rail Advanced Apprenticeship Scheme. Network Rail Chief Executive David Higgins wants parents, educators and young people alike to realise the future career opportunities that an apprenticeship can bring, including a university education at work.

In the first year, apprentices will be paid £8,400 + £1,150 when they successfully finish the year; the salary will rise to £11,750 in the second; and £14,000 in the third.

In the first year, Network Rail will also feed, pay for accommodation and provide the clothing and personal protective equipment that they need – including safety boots, cargo trousers and a fleece. There are plenty of holidays: 28 days plus bank holidays in total. Network Rail will pay for apprentices to travel home for long weekends and Christmas, Easter and summer holidays.

Visit www.facebook.com/ontrack to apply for the scheme and find out more.



Network Rail Apprentices learning the practical way, and getting paid as well!

Photo: Network Rail.

Network Rail apprentices spend a year training alongside the Royal Navy at Europe's largest engineering training facility at HMS Sultan in Hampshire. There they learn both the technical skills required to work on the railway and develop leadership and teamwork behaviour to make them more effective in their roles. For the next two years they learn their trade, working within an experienced team, continuing to return to HMS Sultan regularly for additional courses and training.

*Employees who undertake the two-year HNC part-time course carry out their roles within maintenance depots and elsewhere in the business. Network Rail pays for the university fees, accommodation and gives them time off to attend classes and examinations. It now offers up to 40 places a year to both those who have come through the apprentice scheme as well as those who have taken a different route.

HS2 Court Ruling.

The decision of the judicial review of the HS2 phase one (London to Birmingham) scheme was delivered on 15 March 2013. This was one of the biggest judicial reviews ever faced by a government. At the High Court, the Hon Mr Justice Ouseley ruled categorically in the government's favour on nine of the ten points raised by four sets of claimants. This means that work on a new high speed railway from London to Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds can continue.

The judge agreed it was lawful for the government to rule out upgrading the existing network as a credible alternative to HS2 – noting that a patch and mend approach fails to meet the government's objectives of providing a long term boost to capacity and economic growth.

He also found that the government's approach to consultation on the HS2 strategy/phase one route, environmental assessment and consideration of the impact on habitats and protected species, had all been carried out fairly and

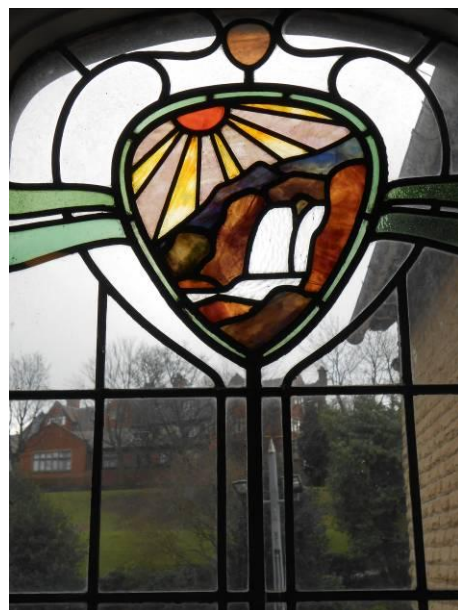
lawfully. The government will be seeking to recoup legal costs from the claimants.

The one challenge that was upheld concerned the way in which the property compensation consultation had been carried out, not the merits of the policies. To save time and public money and to limit the impact on residents affected, the Secretary of State will not appeal this decision but will re-run this consultation in line with the judge's finding that further consideration should have been given to other potential compensation models. This re-run property compensation consultation will not affect the HS2 construction timetable in any way.

TRIP OF THE MONTH

The FRECCLES trips are often reviewed for minor alterations. However this revamp is radical, inspired by the opening of **The Rochdale Pioneers Museum** in 2012, and the Award of '**Pub of the Year 2013**' by the Campaign for Real Ale, to **The Baum**, say '*Borm*', on Toad Lane. The result is a rich, rewarding itinerary that it would be a shame to miss out on. In addition it only takes about 45 mins to get there and costs £4.10 adult day return!

The Touchstone is a fine little museum and art gallery. The BLOOMS display covers flora in art, and two other art exhibitions open at the beginning of April. *Photos: J E Rayner.*



This month the chosen trip is number Thirty One:

ROCHDALE TOWN CENTRE

In addition to a good art gallery, a great little museum, and a superb gothic town hall, there is a little gem of preservation called The Baum where the birth of the Co-operative Movement is commemorated.

Take the train from Eccles Station to Manchester Victoria. Change onto a train that stops at Rochdale (there are plenty). Alight at Rochdale.

Leave the front entrance of the station and cross the road towards the tram stop. *On the left is the impressive basilica church of St John and on the right the fire station. Both are notable brick buildings. Notice the firemen's houses just beyond.*

[**OPTION:** To visit the Greater Manchester Fire Service Museum at the rear of the fire station yard, walk down between the Church and the fire station. Turn right along Hampden Street and right along Richard Street. Go right at Fire Station Yard and the museum is on your left. *Admission is free, and it is open 10.00 to 16.00 every Friday (BHX) and every first Sunday.* On leaving the fire station yard, turn right and then right again along Station Road to end up at the tram stop.]

Proceed along Lower Tweedale Street by the right hand side of Haji Cash & Carry. *This gives a hint of the next stage of the itinerary!* At the end of Tweedale Street you enter a distinct immigrant community area - *notice to your left the amazing shop window display of Indian sweets.*

Turn right along Durham Street between the plethora of little cooked food shops. *When you come to Drake Street Notice the row of old cottages opposite that is now business premises.* Cross the road. Continue ahead along Church Stile, or through the grave yard running parallel to it.

You are now opposite St Chad's Church and vicarage. *A very fine parish church and an elegant vicarage are both worth a close look.*

Go left and enter the gates of Broadfield Park. *It is a fine spacious park.* Continue ahead, descend a small flight of steps and turn right. Cross Sparrow Hill. *Notice the building of the Broadfield Park Hotel. This was a small nurse training hospital of 1905. As a hotel it has a plush lounge with a small bar selling one cask conditioned beer on hand pump.*

Continue ahead down between the rocky walls. A red footbridge goes over the path. Take the curved path right up to it and cross it. Walk along the terrace. *Here there is a monument to four Rochdale Dialect writers, and to the social reformer John Bright.*

Descend to the park gates ahead and turn right along the Esplanade. Cross over at the little traffic island and you are facing the Touchstone Museum and Art Gallery. *It houses a very good museum and art gallery with changing displays. Notice the themes of the windows. Admission is free and it is open Tuesday to Saturday 10.00 to 17.00.* <http://www.link4life.org/centres/touchstones-rochdale>

Leaving the Touchstone, walk along The Esplanade in the direction of the Town Hall. *Notice the River Roach down below and the Memorial Gardens on your left. This walk is in fact on a great bridge over the River Roach.*

On your right is Rochdale Town Hall. Cross over to visit it. *Opened in 1871 and designed by William Crossley, this is a superb example of Northern gothic revival architecture. At the very least go in to look at the reception area! You can take a guided tour of the building at 14.15 on the last Friday of each month for £3.50. However there is a public bistro in the building – go to the back of the reception area and left.*

http://www.rochdale.gov.uk/leisure_and_culture/tourism_and_travel/rochdale_town_hall.aspx

Cross back over the road in front of the town hall and go right in front of the elegant Post Office building. Cross at the circle and walk towards the Regal Moon, *a large and well done conversion of a cinema to a Wetherspoon's public house – worth a look in for the decor and the local history on the walls.*

You come to face the Royal Bank of Scotland Building. Go left up The Butts Avenue *by the attractive smaller Victorian bank building.* Fork right onto Bull Brow *(and look above you).* Then go left.

At Yorkshire Street go right uphill. *This is the main shopping street of Rochdale. The market is in the Wheatsheaf centre, with bronze sheep outside.*

At the top of Yorkshire Street you come to the ring road – *which cuts off the rest of the street and demonstrates really well the disastrous effects of the motor car on our town centres.*

Double back down Yorkshire Street and keep an eye open on your right for an *obscure little* entry called The Baum (say ‘Borm’). Go down it and cross the road. Go left a short way and on the right is Toad Lane.

The church on your right is St Mary in the Baum. Take a look round the other side – it is an unusual concoction of styles having reused parts of an earlier church. Are the walls of glass or brick? The Toad Lane classical music concerts take place here on Wednesdays at 12.30-13.30 –admission £3.50.

<http://www.rochdalepioneersmuseum.coop/event/toad-lane-concerts-11>

Across Toad Lane from the church is The Baum public house. This pub is the CAMRA national pub of the year for 2013. Behind the Victorian shop style frontage it purveys fine cask conditioned ales and some very good food at reasonable prices. <http://www.thebaum.co.uk/>

On the same side as The Baum is the Rochdale Pioneers Museum. This is a small museum to a very big idea! Admission is free. The building is the original shop of the co-operators. Open Monday to Saturday – 10.00 to 17.00.

Sunday & Bank Holidays - Noon to 16.00. <http://www.rochdalepioneersmuseum.coop/>

Return to Yorkshire Street and go right to descend to South Parade. Cross South Parade towards the Town Hall.

[OPTION: If you do not like steps follow the tram lines up Drake Street (opposite The Regal Moon) back to Rochdale Railway Station. *On the left you pass the Cask and Feather (real ales).*

Go left on Town Hall Square and you pass on your left The Empire Hall, and The Flying Horse Hotel *which sells a range of cask conditioned beers.*

Ascend the flights of stone steps (*sorry*) towards St Chad’s Church. Take a look at the gardens on the cliff side. *The fountain is Packer Spout, a natural spring*

from the hill side. Look behind you to see the rear of the Gothic Hall and its coach house.

Head for the lych gate and cross Sparrowhill to go along Church Stile. Cross onto Durham Street and left along Lower Tweedale Street to return to the railway station for your train to Manchester.

CLASSIFICATION: MEDIUM LENGTH, EASY,
 PARK, ARCHITECTURE, SHOPS, MUSEUM, PUBS
 RAIL FARE – category one (£4.10)

Maps: OS 1:50 000 sheet 109 Manchester A-Z

Philip's Street Atlas Greater Manchester

BOOK REVIEW:

'BRITAIN'S LOST RAILWAYS (the twentieth-century destruction of our finest railway architecture)'

by John Minnis. ISBN 9781 84513 4501. Aurum Press £25.
Available at Eccles Library.

A lavishly illustrated, large format black and white book about what is not.

It can be read with nostalgia or regret, and occasional anger at the philistine destruction of a great heritage. Also it can be read with joy: firstly at the rich pictorial record that has survived; secondly at the creative imagination of the architects and engineers in responding to what were the new demands of rail transport. Eccles station finds a place in this list of lost treasures.

There is a knowledgeable introduction concerning the rather late adoption of railway architecture as a respectable subject for study – perhaps the book will help us to deal more kindly with our remaining heritage.

To find out more about **FRECCLES** or to make contact see our **website:** www.freccles.org or e mail us at info@freccles.org.uk

