

# ECCLES STATION

# NEWS

DECEMBER 2012

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

**News section,    Articles.    Trip of the month.    Book review.**

*The Season's greetings from the editor.*

*On our railway line from Eccles there is no shortage of Christmas shopping opportunities with Manchester at one end, and the new Liverpool One at the other (see: <http://www.freccles.org.uk/pdf/Railway%20trips%2089.pdf> if interested), but decided to suggest something a bit different. So our trip of the month is a great architectural and shopping experience in Leeds.*

## NEWS



It wouldn't fool the enemy, Bernard!

Volunteer Bernard Marron helping clear up after shrub trimming on November's garden day.

**The next session is on Sunday,  
December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 11.00**

*Photo: JER*

# CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

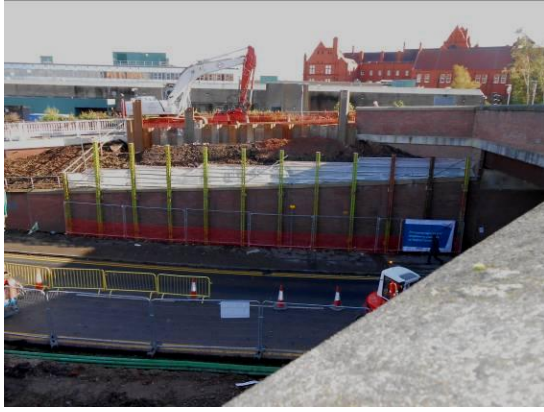
To all our readers



*From all the Freccles Members*

**Trains to Stalybridge have resumed** now that most of the work at the station is complete, and the station bar has reopened under new ownership, but we are not sure if it is new management! There is still a break of journey at Victoria on the return journey, but we await the new timetable on December 9th with interest. (See the article on Stalybridge track work).

*The **work to improve passenger facilities at Salford Crescent** stopped for a long time, having created a new flight of steps and a bus stop on the road down from the A6. It **has now resumed** as photo documented below:*



*In preparation for **construction of the new booking hall and waiting area** by The Crescent, girders are being driven into the ground on the university side of the tracks. A link bridge will go from this new building to the platforms.*

*Photos: JER*

The new timetable commences on Sunday December 9<sup>th</sup>, so **check your journey times** in the first week so you are not caught out by any possible changes. A quick scan by ESN of Network Rail's journey planner showed that **direct trains to and from Stalybridge will resume**, and the Sunday trains will be to and from Manchester Piccadilly and Oxford Road.

*ESN was planning to select for our readers a few different **activities in Manchester over Christmas**, but was **overwhelmed by the choice!** So you will need to take a look for yourself. There are loads of **concerts** at the Bridgewater Hall, Etihad Stadium, and MEN arena; the **Christmas offerings** at Manchester Cathedral (try the superb Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols on 22<sup>nd</sup> December) or St Anne's church; the Royal Exchange has, in addition to its Christmas play, the annual Dazzle **Exhibition of hand crafted jewellery**, and there are also the European Christmas Markets on Albert Square, St Anne's Square and Exchange Square. **Take a ride up on the train to see for yourself!***



The work at Stalybridge revealed a new (to ESN at least) technique. Instead of using long wooden sleepers on the points, **standard concrete ones are having extra lengths bolted to them** by means of steel plates with eight bolt - holes. You can see this in a stack of point work that was waiting to be used.

*Photo J E Rayner*

*Transport for Greater Manchester has already published the details of bus train and tram travel changes over the festive season. ESN is pleased that these were ready to include in this December issue (well done TFGM!). Below are the details for the **local trains** (The changes are in bold):*

Date	Service information
Monday 24 December <i>Christmas Eve</i>	Weekday services <b>with early finish from 8pm onwards.</b>
Tuesday 25 December <i>Christmas Day</i>	<b>No services.</b>
Wednesday 26 December <i>Boxing Day</i>	<b>No services.</b>
Thursday 27 December	Weekday services. <b>Salford Crescent station closed</b> for improvement work with services disrupted.
Friday 28 December	Weekday services. <b>Salford Crescent station closed</b> for improvement work with services disrupted.
Saturday 29 December	Saturday services.
Sunday 30 December	Sunday services.
Monday 31 December <i>New Year's Eve</i>	Weekday services <b>with early finish from 8pm onwards.</b>
Tuesday 1 January <i>New Year's Day</i>	Normal weekday services.
Wednesday 2 January	Normal services.

*Space precludes the inclusion of the extensive bus and travel shop arrangements but you can see for yourself by control, click on this link:*  
[http://www.tfgm.com/journey\\_planning/Pages/Christmas-services.aspx](http://www.tfgm.com/journey_planning/Pages/Christmas-services.aspx)

## **OUT AND ABOUT...**

This forlorn looking place is on the north side of Edge Hill station. The rubbish has come from behind the camera - The Friends group removed it to form a garden between the two walls. On the left are gates into the arches that used to stable the early locomotives and tenders (they entered from the other side!). In the right background is the tunnel entrance once used by Boat Trains connecting with trans-Atlantic liners down at Pier Head.

*Photo JER*



**...By TRAIN from ECCLES STATION.**

### **ARTICLES**

## **HS2 consultation.**

The Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce held an HS2 consultation meeting at the Midland Hotel, Manchester on Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> November. In the chair was Lucy James, from Westbourne. There were two speakers. One was Douglas Oakervee, a highly experienced civil engineer who is now non executive chairman of HS2 Ltd., and the other Clinton Leeks, who acts as parliamentary liaison officer for HS2, and has responsibility for community relations. After a brief exposition from these gentlemen, questions were taken from the audience which included council representatives from many northern cities, some having travelled from Scotland. There were also influential business people from the North West and representatives from railway trades unions.

HS2 is the proposed high speed rail link from London to Birmingham and hopefully north to Manchester and to Leeds, and the feeling of the meeting was very positive towards the project, wishing strongly for it to proceed

beyond Birmingham (Phase one). In fact the feeling was expressed that construction should have started from the north towards the south! The Phase two works would be two lines from Birmingham onwards, one to Leeds and one to Manchester - preliminary planning of these lines is underway. Douglas Oakervee was reasonably confident that this would be done because the business case becomes stronger as the HS2 network grows. Of course the Scottish members of the audience want it to reach Glasgow and Edinburgh too! It seems the Scottish government is willing to start on works between Glasgow and Edinburgh to speed up the project's arrival in Scotland.

ESN hopes to run a fuller article about the project early next year, and then will keep a watching brief on progress.

## ***Stalybridge Station.***

After a nine day closure of the station, track work and resignalling is complete. The normal timetable has resumed. The new layout allows for far more trains to call at or go through Stalybridge station and there are more platforms. At the time of writing there is still some platform surfacing and edging to be done at the east end of the Manchester through platform.

The old goods lines on the south of the station have gone to create a new platform face (to be numbered platform 1) for trains to Manchester Victoria or Piccadilly. The old bay remains and becomes platform 2, for trains to both Manchester stations. The former Manchester through platform is now a bidirectional platform 3 for trains to Manchester or Huddersfield (rather than put a new through line in the centre as ESN thought was going to happen). This has been achieved by new point work and signalling throughout the layout. The track through the station has been renewed, and the platform with the famous buffet bar has become platform 4 for trains to Huddersfield and beyond. At its Manchester end a new long bay platform has been made and numbered 5. It is in this platform that the Eccles trains will terminate and start. Although all platforms are accessible by the two ramps, two lifts are to be constructed one at each end of the station underpass.





A large number of 'orange men' were employed on the work. They became convinced that the sun never shines in Stalybridge! In the foreground is a modern wagon for handling ready assembled sections of track.

A substantial new signal gantry has been constructed across the viaduct at the East end of the station.



This is a view from the East of the station, taken from above the tunnel mouth. The new gantry is in the background, and a long ballast train provides the stone needed for the new track.



The large crane was hired for the point work and erecting the gantry at the east end of the station. It becomes very compact for travelling and packs itself away very rapidly.



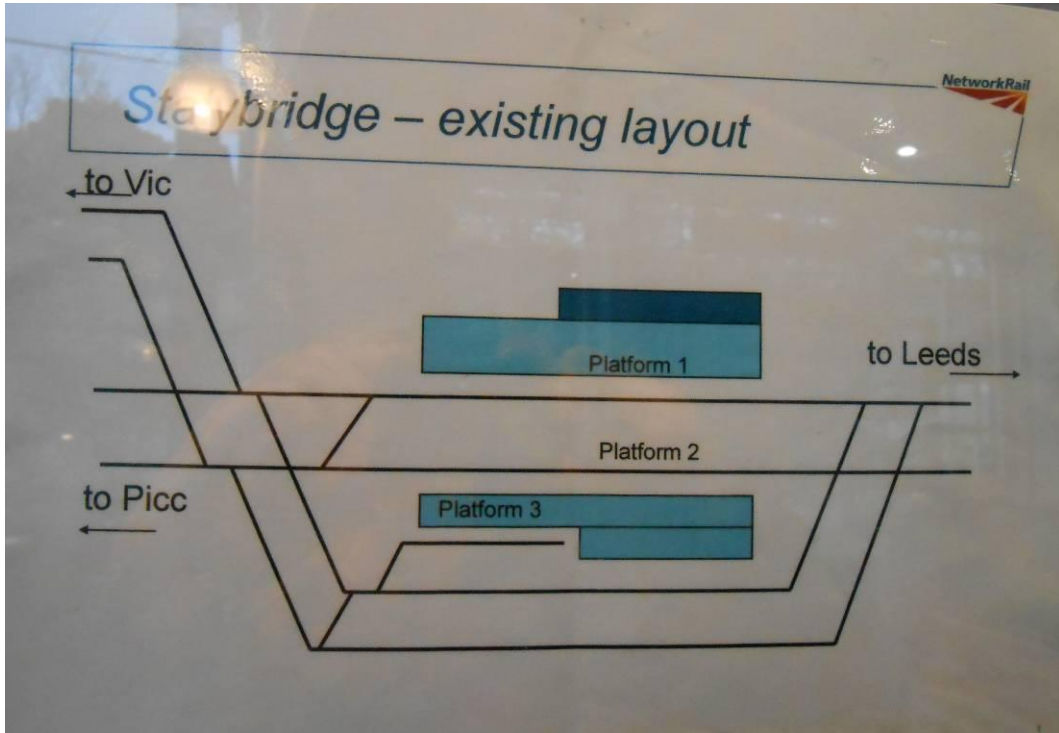
One of the first trains from Eccles to use the new platform 5 on the day of reopening, and it **can be sunny** in Stalybridge – but most of the orange men have now gone, along with their formed opinions.

The station bar was not quite ready on the Monday – there was a huge amount left to do – and Sylvia and co were still there doing the necessary work!

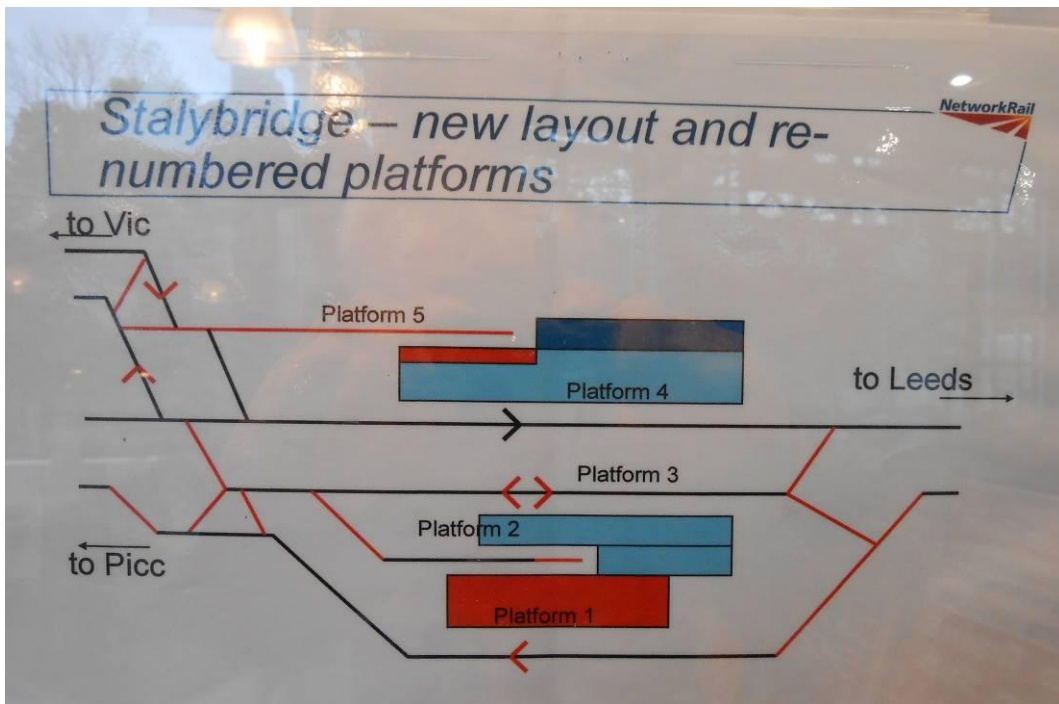
*All photos in this article courtesy of JER*







The layouts compared. New areas of platform and new track are in red on the bottom diagram.



## **TRIP OF THE MONTH.**

**This month the chosen trip is number Sixty one:**

### **LEEDS – MARKETS & ARCADES**

Kirkgate Market is huge. The arcades across the road are upmarket jewels. For wonderful shopping with fantastic architecture be forever grateful that neither the Luftwaffe nor the post war planners and architects wrecked this fine city centre.

**Either:** catch a train from Eccles to Manchester Victoria and change there to a Leeds train via Rochdale.

**Or:** catch a train from Eccles to Stalybridge. Change there onto a Leeds train. Alight at Leeds. On leaving the platforms go straight through the shopping concourse and out.

Turn right along the approach road and when it comes to the main road (Boar Lane) turn right along it. *On the left is a large church building, and as you cross Briggate look right to see Balls Buildings.*

As you continue along Boar Lane, The Leeds Corn Exchange of 1862 fills the view ahead. *The cut of its stones gives it a reptilian ruggedness - a giant tortoise of a building with scales and shell!*

Go inside. *The trading floor is in a fine elliptical hall –a special roof design was needed to cover this. At one end of the major axis of the roof there is the Leeds coat of arms - three amusing owls, three stars on black and a suspended sheep with motto 'Pro lege et rege'. At the other end is the clock supported by sheaves of corn. There is a good café in the basement. A few classy shops are now needed for the trading offices.*

Leave the Corn Exchange (*Notice Dackawell House opposite*) and go to your right up the wide main road (Vicar's Lane) -ignoring the roads that go right down the side of the exchange.

About a hundred and fifty yards along enter the Kirkgate Market Hall by its corner door. *It is open 08.00 –17.30 except Wednesday & Sunday. Wow! This*

*original hall has a most marvellous iron and glass roof, and the balcony is supported by red wyverns all round.*

Aisles off the side of this hall lead into the functional modern extension that is even bigger and doorways from this lead into the large outdoor market. *From the far end of the open market, look back at the spires of the Victorian market hall.*

Leave the market by the corner where you came in. Cross the road outside (Vicar's Lane). *Briefly look back at the fanciful exterior of the Market Hall with all its spires. You are leaving one fantasy and about to enter another!*

Go half way along King Edward Street *with all its fine red and pink stonework.*

Turn right into Cross Arcade. *Wow! This could be Knightsbridge – have you brought plenty of money or a Coutts cheque book?*

Keeping in the same direction cross a fine street that has been more recently glazed in - *excellent tea and coffee stall on right – serves biscuits that are more like cakes!*

You will then enter County Arcade. *Again - Wow! Fine tiled interior and posh shops.* Go to the left and exit onto Briggate.

Cross over and slightly to the right is Queen's Arcade. Go through this and turn right at the other end and then right to come back through Thornton's Arcade. *(1877 – look behind you at the clock).*

Turn right down Briggate. *On the right is The Ship – look along the alleyway called Ship Alley. There are a number of pubs like this in Leeds.* Continue down Briggate.

Turn right along Albion Place. *Notice the buildings with blue plaques on the right and the building behind you called 'Longford' (neo-Jacobean based on nearby Temple Newsam Hall).*

Go left onto Albion Street. At the corner with Commercial Street is The Leeds Shopping Plaza. *Back to 20<sup>th</sup> century design with a jolt here!* Continue down Albion Street.

Cross Boar Lane and go up Station Approach. Enter the station on the left for trains back to Manchester.

CLASSIFICATION:

SHORT, EASY

VARIED SHOPPING, PUBS, CAFES, FOOD &  
ARCHITECTURE.

RAIL FARE: category four

MAP:

Leeds A-Z

Philip's Street Atlas West Yorkshire.



An image of one of the grand shopping  
arcades to be found in Leeds city centre.

*Photo JERayner.*

**ADVERTISEMENT.**

# **INVITATION**

*To attend*

## **THE UNVEILING OF A MURAL**

*By the Mayor of Salford, Councillor Bernard Lea,*

*Accompanied by the Mayoress, Ms Ann Cox.*

## **AT PATRICROFT STATION**

*on*

**SATURDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER**

**10.30 A.M.**

*The Friends of Patricroft Station invite you to the unveiling of the mural, a project by students of St Patrick's RC High School, Winton. The students have worked with their teacher, Charles Magee, and the school's artist in residence, Jack Doyle, to create the mural reflecting local industrial and railway history - it features historic figures and images of Patricroft's rich industrial past. The project has been supported by the City Council through the Eccles Community Committee and by Northern Rail, Transport for Greater Manchester and the Association of Community Rail Partnerships.*

We hope that you will come to the event to support the work of the students. Please forward this message to anyone you know who may be interested in what should be an important event for the community of Eccles and Patricroft.



## **BOOK REVIEW:**

### **‘GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY A History ‘** by Andrew Roden.

ISBN 9781845135805. Aurum Press £18.99.

Known to many devotees as **God’s Wonderful Railway**, the GWR was indeed a fine company with a strong brand identity that to some extent endures even now. However its history has been narrated and analysed over and over already. One could ask therefore why we need another book on the topic. In reality though, none but a transport historian or railway enthusiast is going to read, say, O.S.Nock’s exhaustive three volume history.

This book in contrast is light in touch, and accessible to a more general reader: the story is told with affection and enthusiasm, but including due criticism. (Roden is a railway journalist who campaigned to save the Cornish sleeper service). It concludes modern times with the story of the Great Western Society collection at Didcot engine shed.

It is an old fashioned book – the pictures, limited in number, are confined to a black and white section in the centre. Could not a new presentation of the history have benefitted from a more modern approach, with profuse illustration interwoven with the text?

**The book is available at Eccles Library.**

To find out more about **FRECCLES** or to make contact see our **website:** [www.freccles.org](http://www.freccles.org) or e mail us at [info@freccles.org.uk](mailto:info@freccles.org.uk)

