

ECCLES STATION

NEWS

JANUARY 2013

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

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

***BEST WISHES TO YOU ALL for the New Year.** ESN will continue to bring you the best of the railway and local news. Our trip of the month is a lovely Pennine market town.*

NEWS

Freccles **tidy up day** will be Sunday January 6th from 11.00 for a couple of hours. Do come along to help.



This board recognises the efforts, by the former owner and manage, that have left us the wonderful heritage that is Stalybridge station buffet bar.

Twenty five of the hundred stations in the Greater Manchester area now have Station Friends Groups (Groups with designated websites are marked with an asterisk): Altrincham, Blackrod, Broadbottom, Castleton, Davenport*, Denton, Dinting, **Eccles***, Glossop*, Hadfield, Heaton Chapel*, Hattersley, Hindley*, Irlam, Levenshulme, Littleborough*, Mills Hill, Mossley, **Patricroft***, Reddish North, Reddish South, Rose Hill, Marple*, Smithy Bridge, Walkden*, Westhoughton. In addition, Gathurst and Appley Bridge are adopted by Shevington Parish Council.

Station Friends Groups are **voluntary community based organisations**, having a formal committee structure, constitution, and bank account. They are eligible to receive grant funding from both public and private sector funds. Typically groups carry out litter picking, vegetation clearance, gardening projects, painting and public art often including local schools.

*The **National Rail Heritage Awards** ceremony was held at Merchant Taylors Hall in London on Wednesday 5 December and **Glossop station was highly commended by judges in the Conservation Award category**. The Northern Rail station was applauded for the restoration and conservation of its buildings, platforms and facilities. Recent work funded by Northern Rail, Network Rail and Derbyshire County Council included:*

relocation of the ticket office

new waiting facilities

DDA compliant toilet and ticket counter

additional CCTV and seating

*Passengers are also benefit from a new station canopy installed by Network Rail. Volunteers from the **Friends of Glossop Station** added their own personal touch to the station with tasteful baskets of flowers and pictures throughout.*

Irlam station has had £76,000 spent on it. The work, jointly funded by Northern Rail and the Department for Transport's Access for All programme, was also supported by Transport for Greater Manchester and Salford City Council. Both platforms have had **new shelters** installed and the station has had **CCTV and passenger Help Points** fitted. These additional facilities add to the **Customer Information Screens and Ticket Vending Machine** put in place at the beginning of the year.

Lee Wasnidge, Area Director for Northern Rail, comments: "Irlam is one of our busiest unstaffed stations in Greater Manchester and we have worked closely

with Salford City Council, Transport for Greater Manchester and local stakeholders in a Station Partnership Group to develop these improvement plans.” **Councillor Roger Jones**, Salford City Council’s Assistant Mayor for Transport and Chair of the Transport for Greater Manchester Committee’s Capital Projects and Policy Sub Committee said: “The improvements will make a significant difference to passengers at Irlam station by increasing safety and comfort throughout. With greater amenities for the public and a safer station to wait in, this popular station will attract more passengers as **Salford residents increasingly look to public transport** to get around. Passengers can also look forward to a new free 60-space park and ride car park at Irlam station. It is scheduled for completion by 2014 with CCTV to be included as part of the facility.”

*Northern Rail passengers travelling on routes in the North West, particularly around Liverpool and Manchester, are benefitting from the **revamp work being carried out on 18 trains of the operator’s fleet of Class 156 trains**. Instantly recognisable by the vibrant purple and blue upholstery, the refreshed trains feature pale purple wall panelling and improved lighting, replaced carpets, repainted interiors and vestibule ends, seat repairs, priority seating and improved toilet facilities. Both **disabled customers and cyclists** will also benefit from improved accessibility features incorporated in the project. The work commenced in May 2010 and is being carried out at Northern’s Newton Heath depot, each refit of two carriages taking an average of three weeks.*

There is a short stop motion clip on Northern Rail’s YouTube channel:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CARcWEXJ9aA&feature=channel&list=UL>

Work continued at **Salford Crescent** over the Christmas period with closure of the station from Christmas Eve until 05.00 Saturday 29th December. Limited train services ran through the station and there were rail replacement buses between Victoria and Bolton, and Victoria and Wigan. Apparently there was severe overcrowding on some of the Bolton trains from Manchester Piccadilly on the Friday.

The closure was to allow piling, and resignalling work to allow the **platforms to be lengthened** to accommodate six-carriage trains. By early 2014 there will be a **new ticket office** at road level, linked to the platforms with a new footbridge, staircase and **passenger operated lift**. The existing ramp to the platforms

which is not wheelchair friendly and causes a bottleneck where it meets the ticket office will be removed. As a result Network Rail will be able **de-clutter the platforms**, creating much more space for passengers.



There is a splendid, **free exhibition on at Manchester City Art Gallery until 27th January**. It is called **'THE FIRST CUT'** - 31 international contemporary artists have cut, sculpted and manipulated **paper into fantastical works of art** especially for this show. (ESN liked the video of a train journey!). The Costume Gallery at Platt Fields is running an associated exhibition of paper dresses.



Photo JER

This show is well worth a visit! **Take a train up to Manchester** and have a cultural interlude between January bargain hunting. Some of the artworks are for sale.

Manchester Art Gallery, Mosley Street, open 10.00 – 17.00 Monday to Sunday, and till 21.00 on Thursday.

Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, open Monday to Friday 13.00 – 17.00, and 10.00 to 17.00 on Saturday and Sunday.

OUT AND ABOUT...

A recent visit by train to Blackburn prompted ESN to think that it would be well worth writing an itinerary for the town centre.

Here are some of the biologically inspired sculptures. The one on the right is a strange biomechanical form, perhaps reflecting that mechanical principles play an important part in the development of living forms.

Photos JER



...By TRAIN from ECCLES STATION.

ARTICLES

Passenger Information.

Here is a good catch for ESN. We can take the motto at face value but might be prompted to ask "How quickly?"

Photo JER



It is now generally accepted that the provision of correct and up to date travel information is an essential part of organising a travel network. Such information must also be provided to the customers so that they can make informed decisions about their journeys.

In recent years the provision of bus and train timetables has improved dramatically. What a strange idea British Rail had that you must buy their timetable if you wanted to plan a journey. Equally bizarre was the idea of bus stops without any travel information! Local knowledge was needed to fathom the bus services, thus making things difficult for the general traveller, who of course is **not** local. There are now timetable leaflets aplenty at main stations, bus stations and TFGM travel shops, and the internet gives easy access to the same information. Network diagrams, travel information numbers and the mobile telephone also help to overcome the information barrier.

However there are areas where the traveller should be able to expect further improvements. We are now decades into the GPS technology era but ESN is not aware of any Greater Manchester bus stops with real time information displays. There was a start made many years ago but the chosen provider went out of business. Sporadically "system under test" appears on the few bus stops with the necessary screens, but there still appears to be no net progress.

On the railway Eccles and Patricroft stations still lack real time train displays. These do not depend on GPS technology as they are linked into the signalling system, but TFGM states that government funding is not available to do the work.

Progress towards the Ordsall Chord.

Network Rail's plans for improved rail travel in the North were revealed at an event in the Museum of Science and Industry during December, ahead of the public consultation. Councillors and business leaders from across Manchester and Salford were able to view the new Ordsall Chord scheme to connect Manchester's Piccadilly, Oxford Road and Victoria stations.

This, the first part of the Northern Hub, will help ease a rail bottleneck to the south of Piccadilly station and enable more trains to travel through Manchester Victoria. This will help free up space on the network to deliver faster, more frequent services, including:

- Two new fast trains per hour between Manchester Victoria and Liverpool
- Six fast trains, instead of four, an hour between Leeds and Manchester
- Faster journeys between Manchester, Leeds and Liverpool
- A new direct service through Manchester city centre to Manchester Airport
- Faster journey times to Hull, Newcastle and the North East

Two potential bridge options have been unveiled for consultation, including a bow string railway arch and an alternative flat bridge. The feedback from the public will be passed onto to the design panel and used to inform the plans.

Dyan Crowther, Network Rail's route managing director, said: "Britain relies on rail and with demand for rail travel increasing it's essential we invest in the railway to provide a better service for passengers with more trains, additional seats and fewer delays. We thank those who have already made a valuable contribution to the development of this vital project. Feedback from last year's

consultation suggests that the overwhelming majority of people support our plans to deliver faster, more frequent services across the North and helping stimulate low carbon economic growth.”

The plans were first released for consultation last year and this showed around 84% of respondents felt it was important to connect Manchester’s key railway stations. Network Rail has now developed more detailed plans and is asking for feedback before submitting an application to the Planning Inspectorate next summer. The plans are available to view on www.networkrail.co.uk/ordsall. If the scheme is approved, work will start in late 2014 and is expected to be completed in late 2016.



A visualisation of what the Ordsall Chord might look like has been released by Network Rail. Note that the height of this new route will determine whether a rail link into the Museum of Science and Industry is retained, and could affect the operation of the museum’s internal railway system

TRIP OF THE MONTH.

This month the chosen trip is number Forty one:

TODMORDEN – A LOOK AT THE TOWN.

Todmorden is an attractive stone built town in the Calder Valley providing great variety in this short walk round. The many cafes, old fashioned shops and the market hall make shopping and browsing a pleasure.

Catch the train from Eccles to Manchester Victoria and change onto a Leeds or Bradford train via Rochdale.

Alight at Todmorden. Go via the underpass to leave the station. *The Friends' group has improved this station. There is now an art gallery on platform one and name signs based on the old British Transport badge.*

Outside the station go left. *On your left is where the coal staithes were sited.*

Curve left onto Ridge Road and under the viaduct. Follow the steeply rising S bend of the road then turn right along Mount Pleasant. *There is a fine view of the valley here.*

Go left along Well Lane. At the fork take the left-hand path upwards so that you have a wall and fence on your right. *There are also good views from here.*

In the woodland a setted footpath that comes down the hillside crosses the path. Turn sharp right onto this to descend steeply. Then go down the steps ahead of you. *The attractive stone vicarage is on your right, and the lych gate of St John's Church is on your left.* Continue onwards with the graveyard on your left. *Notice the sharp pinnacles on the Victorian church school building.*

Cross the main road to the shops and go right towards the town. *The river is underneath you!*

Go through the Patmos gardens on your left and then back onto the road you were on. Follow this between the shops, with the cinema and college on your right.

Go under the viaduct and there is a lovely little Victorian market hall on the left. *Do go in! There is an excellent tea and coffee bar plus the usual range of market stalls. It is open on Monday, Tuesday is a half-day, but the full town market is on from Wednesday to Saturday inclusive.*

Outside the Market Hall front door turn left along Brook Street and cross the main road.

Go left then right onto Union Street South to join the Rochdale Canal. Go right up the lock and follow the canal along.

Go through a short pedestrian tunnel then U-turn right to join the main road. *Golden Lion Square is on the right with a fine church building.*

Go left into the town. *On the right notice the Todmorden Industrial Co-operative Society shop, and Wibley, Claydon Solicitors.*

Cross the road and fork right along Water Street with its little shops. *Ahead of you is the front of Todmorden Town Hall. This is an extremely grand classical building. Unfortunately it is not routinely open but there is a free tea dance 14.00-16.00 every Monday (except bank Holidays).*

Cross to the town hall and go along the left-hand side of it on Burnley Road. *There is a very attractive church on your left.*

Cross Burnley Road and go towards the White Hart (*real ale*) and in front of it. Then U-turn left behind it onto the station approach.

CLASSIFICATION: SHORT MODERATELY EASY (*BUT ONE STEEP UP AND ONE STEEP DOWN – THIS COULD BE SLIPPERY WHEN WET or ICY!**). COUNTRYSIDE, VIEWS, ARCHITECTURE, MARKET, SHOPS, CANAL, CAFES AND TEASHOPS.

RAIL FARE: category two.

** If snowy or icy you should drop straight down into town and go under the viaduct first to take up the route.*

MAP OS 1:50 000 sheet 103
ATLAS – WEST YORKS.

PHILIPS STREET

BOOK REVIEW:

'MAP of a NATION (a biography of the ordnance survey)'

by Rachel Hewitt. ISBN 9781 84708 0981. Granta Press £25.
Available at Eccles Library.

An Ordnance Survey would have been invaluable for early railway promoters had it been completed sooner. It is interesting that the ordnance's surveyors encountered suspicion and hostility in the same way as those working for the railways.

This new book presents a lively story of the origins of our one inch series of Ordnance Survey maps. It is both scholarly and readable; telling of the characters, costs, conflicts and the distractions involved in the process. These distractions (Ireland, Sinai, Board of Health, Poor Law, and others) meant that it took till January 1st 1870 for a full series of England and Wales to be published. Sheet 100 Isle of Man did not come out till 1873.

The book is available at Eccles Library.

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

