

# ECCLES STATION

## NEWS

JUNE 2012

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

**News section,**                      **Articles.**      **Trip of the Month**                      **Bargain fare**  
**Book review.**

*Once again there are bags of news and very few views. The Trip of the Month is a great little walk out but this has loads of views of course! Our bargain fare is for travel to that area too.*

*We hope you all enjoy the **Queen's Diamond Jubilee** events. Imagine being head of state of this odd country and its people for 60 years – and not allowed to retire! The associated Bank Holidays are good for a day or two out. Preston? Hadfield? Glossop?*

**The Editor.**

### NEWS

The Office of Rail Regulation recently published the **station usage data** for financial year 2010 to 2011 showing that passenger entries to and exits from stations increased by 8.6% nationally. This is quite a growth rate. **At Eccles passengers went up by 8.5% to just over 120,000 per annum**, and at Patricroft there was a huge 15.8% increase to about 39,000 passengers. This is good news for both stations –As they say 'use it or lose it!'

***At the May gardening day about 20 volunteers (including some new faces) turned out to help. This was much appreciated as it helps make light work of the tasks.***



*Freccles members did the garden again on Sunday June 3<sup>rd</sup> and will be out again on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> July*

Work is well underway at **Salford Crescent station** to build a new ticket hall and booking office. These will be linked to the platform by a covered bridge.



The work on foundations (leading up to the A6 Bridge) viewed from the current station bridge. Salford University buildings are among the trees in the background.

Photo: courtesy of J E Rayner.

*The new timetable in May contained **no alterations to the local train services.** As usual the train services continue to run as **normal on the Bank Holidays** in June – very handy for day trips out.*

Do you remember the popular Michelin **I-Spy books**? If you were a child in the 1950s and 60s the answer will probably be yes. **Well they are back!** A member of ESN's roving reporting team found them on sale in Ironbridge recently! The books encourage children of all ages to get out and explore the world around them. Created by Charles Warrell in 1948 the pocket-sized picture books were designed to develop children's curiosity, powers of observation and sense of discovery.

They cost £2.50 each and there is a railway one too!

See: <http://www.ispymichelin.com/collection.htm>

*Northern Rail's **train punctuality for the first quarter of 2012 was 93.8%** - an improvement on the 92.5% achieved last year, and better than the 93.3% national average of all the operators.*

During the last year (March to April) there were 49 people killed accidentally while trespassing on the railway and 445 near misses were reported by drivers. Nearly 90% of those killed are male (and of course young). Network Rail has used world champion hurdler Dai Greene to produce a hard hitting video as part of a campaign to reduce this hazardous behaviour. It would be good if this could be played in school assemblies, please!

To see the one and three quarter minute video go to:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=f-gx-feDmII](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=f-gx-feDmII)

*During May, Merseyrail advertised for a **Project Director – Rolling Stock Replacement**. This post is to oversee a £300,000,000 gradual replacement of the old electric rolling stock that operates between Ditton, Liverpool Central and Southport, and also onto the Wirral and Chester lines from Lime Street underground station. The post offers ‘Attractive Salary & Benefits, Liverpool’. At one time we could have offered a good joke about this list, but the city has improved by leaps and bounds in the last 15years!*

***Merseyrail Electrics has a 25 year franchise** awarded in 2003 and has consistently been **one of the UK’s best performing train operating companies**. Many attribute this to the fact that unlike other franchises it operates its own lines and rolling stock as well as timetables and fares.*

**Also recruiting in May was HS2**, the company set up by the government to implement the high speed line from London to Birmingham, and possibly beyond. The posts were **to establish a public relations department** to work with all aspects of the media (including Twitter and Facebook), and also to deal with the public, councils, MPs in specific areas affected by the route. This will be important work in these early stages of establishing the project.

Following these posts, in June HS2 will need to make two key appointments. These are:

**A Technical Director** to be responsible for the technical specifications of the entire network covering rail and civil engineering, operations, assurance and management systems, and the environment.

**A Commercial Director**. This post will cover Land/Property, Strategy/Analysis, Contracts and Procurement, and also Cost and Investment Planning.

In addition **engineers will be sought** to work on the specifications of the route and of works in set areas along the line.

*There was good news from British Transport Police during May in that **crime on the rail network fell by 9.3%** in the preceding twelve months. This is the eighth year in a row that crime has reduced and Chief Constable Andy Trotter attributes this to the hard work of BTP and good working partnerships with the franchise operators. To further the fight against crime on the railways a CCTV hub is to open in London. This will take monitor images from 33,000 cameras around the entire network.*

## **An Invitation from Freccles.**

### **Gardening with Freccles**

The Friends of Eccles Station (Freccles) aim to improve the environment and passenger services at Eccles Station and put the station back into the heart of the community.

We have transformed the platform wastelands into award winning gardens.

The future looks good - the line will be electrified by 2014-bringing a more frequent train service.

You are invited to learn more at our

## **Coffee Morning**

**Saturday 16th June**

**Smiths Restaurant at the top of Church Street**

**10am to 2pm**

Also:

Light lunches

Guided tours of the gardens

*There will be a huge railway event at The National Railway Museum, York between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of June. It is called “NRM Railfest 2012.” The scale of the event has been driven by Steve Davies, the museum’s director, who was once a volunteer on the railway at Liverpool Road Station (Manchester) and later a director at MOSI. There will be over sixty large visiting exhibits (locomotives and rolling stock), a locomotive naming ceremony with RAF fly pasts and much more. Tickets are available in cheaper in advance by phone or online at £13 adult, £8 children for individual tickets. 1 adult +2 children is £25, 2 adults + 2 children is £30, and 2 adults + 2 children is £35.*

***You can travel quickly to York from Eccles station*** changing at Stalybridge (about 2 hours). The adult fare is £27.20 return with reductions for children and railcard holders.

For full details see: <http://www.nrm.org.uk/railfest2012>

**Friends of Heaton Chapel Station**, which was established as a community group last year, has unveiled a striking reminder for the 2012 Olympic legacy in the North West. Northern Rail passengers passing through the station will now spot “**The Running Man**”, which has been installed on the Manchester-bound platform at Heaton Chapel station. The original artwork has been designed and produced by local artist Karen Allerton. Pupils from Broadstone Hall, St Thomas' Church of England and Norris Bank schools helped Karen create the bespoke piece and their efforts were applauded by Head of Stations at Northern Rail, Natasha Wilding.

Since August last year the group, which is drawn from all four Heaton, has also introduced a popular travellers’ library, planted flowers and added personal touches to the station platforms.

*Passengers using **Darwen** station will benefit from the £400,000 refurbishment scheme which was completed at the end of May. Work has included improving the access to and shelters on platforms as well as station-wide Customer Information Screens and CCTV. The platforms have also been resurfaced with the addition of new signage, information boards and fencing. **Areas around the station have been landscaped** to provide customers with a more appealing entrance.*

*The project has been funded by the **Department for Transport's National Station Improvement Programme**, delivered in partnership by Northern Rail, Network Rail and Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council.*

Another key step towards revitalising Altrincham town centre was taken at the beginning of May, as preliminary works to prepare for **the redevelopment of Altrincham Interchange** get under way. The work started with the demolition of the disused footbridge over Stamford New Road, which connected the Stamford Quarter to the current interchange.

The new interchange will provide local people with **a safer, fully integrated transport hub with much improved facilities, which will be accessible to all**. It will also be an impressive new gateway for visitors arriving in Altrincham, and will play a key role in shaping the vision for the town centre being driven by Trafford Council, and will improve pedestrian crossings across Stamford New Road significantly. It should combine the best of the original station building with the most up to date design and services.

The £19 million project should be complete in 2014.

*On the 29<sup>th</sup> May, the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) told Network Rail to deliver better levels of punctuality for passengers on long distance train services, in 2012 – 2013, or face a substantial penalty. Network Rail must also achieve its*

*committed punctuality target of 92% in 2013-14. If the company fails it will face a penalty that increases by £1.5 million per 0.1 percentage point it drops below the 92% punctuality target.*

*While levels of punctuality are good by historical standards – currently 89.2% for long distance services - Network Rail committed to achieving more, and taxpayers and customers have paid the company to deliver. The rail regulator, while recognising the impact of issues such as cable theft, concluded that many of the difficulties Network Rail has encountered, including problems with timetable planning and predicting and spotting equipment failures, are of the company's own making. More trains are running on the network but the company could have done more to deal with the risks to performance.*

The new diesel- electric hybrid buses are appearing more and more on Greater Manchester bus services – they are supposed to release far less carbon dioxide and diesel particulates (PM10s) than conventional buses. First experience of riding on one is a little disconcerting as the diesel engine seems to ‘conk out’ on a regular basis, but of course this is automatic switch off when stopped or at very low speed. The electric engine then takes over using power from the accumulators. The diesel engine restarts as the bus reaches a speed of a few miles per hour.



One of the new diesel electric hybrids passes through Eccles recently. Setting off using the electric motor gives them a quiet and rapid acceleration.

Photo courtesy J E Rayner.



## ARTICLES



# 2012 PRESTON GUILD YEAR

There is a large range of events this month in Preston so we can only give a few of them here. For more detail do 'control click' on the heading of each of the following events.

### **Global Threads**

14 May 2012 to 30 Jun 2012

Global Threads is a ground-breaking new fashion exhibition co-curated by young people from Lancashire. It mixes historic South Asian textiles with today's catwalk, high street and student fashion

### **Green Preston Exhibition**

27 May 2012 to 15 Jul 2012

A themed exhibition by Preston Art Society members at the Museum of Lancashire.

### **Photographic Guild Event**

28 May 2012 to 31 Jul 2012

Preston Photographic Society are turning back the clock 20 years with an exhibition of Guild related photographs from the 1992 Guild.

## **Annual Whit Fair**

02 Jun 2012 to 05 Jun 2012

Annual fair held on the Flag Market, with traditional family fairground rides.

## **Preston Caribbean Carnival 2012**

03 Jun 2012

Preston Caribbean Carnival brings the streets of Preston alive with non-stop dancing, thumping music and outrageously colourfully costumes for the 2012 parade.

## **Incoming Mayor's Service**

10 Jun 2012

This is an annual tradition with added significance in Guild year as the new Guild Mayor leads a civic procession from Preston's Guild Hall to the beautiful Minster for a service of dedication for the forthcoming Mayoral year.

## **View Photography Exhibition –UCLan 2012 BA(Hons) Photography Degree Show**

15 Jun 2012 to 22 Jun 2012

The University of Central Lancashire presents a week long exhibition of photography as part of the annual UCLan graduate art and design week.

## **The Sky Ride Preston**

17 Jun 2012

This is a free British Cycling mass participation recreational event on an 8k closed road and parkland circuit taking in parts of the Guild Wheel.

## **Methodist Church Collection of Modern Christian Art**

22 Jun 2012 to 20 Jul 2012

This unique collection of Christian art includes more than 40 works by Graham Sutherland, Elizabeth Frink and many other renowned artists. Call in for a chance to see these wonderful works on display.

For full events list see the website <http://www.prestonguild2012.com/whats-on>

**\*As well as listing events we shall be doing some articles about Preston in coming issues.**

## **RAIL STATION IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY.**

Transport for Greater Manchester has a Rail Stations Improvement Strategy (RSIS) which will gradually bring better facilities to our stations. The Rail Station Improvement Strategy (RSIS) was established by TfGM to improve existing passenger security and information systems at 51 smaller rail stations across Greater Manchester. Tranches 1 to 4 of the programme have delivered passenger help points, CCTV, real time information screens and public announcement systems, at 35 stations in Greater Manchester.

Recently work was completed at Ashton-under-Lyne, Bramhall, Brinnington, Marple, Rose Hill, Reddish North, Westhoughton and Walkden stations, and this work brings the total of stations improved under the scheme to 35 since 2007 at a cost of £3 million to date. TfGM has also recently been successful in securing further RSIS enhancement funding for at Irlam and Flowery Flowery Field, from Northern Rail's 2012/13 Access for All Small Scheme. It is intended these enhancements will be completed this year.

Eccles rail station is one of the 14 remaining stations, and delivery will be subject to confirmation of funding. The complete list of the remaining stations is provided below.

1. Newton for Hyde
2. Hale
3. Smithy Bridge
4. Castleton
5. Broadbottom
6. Eccles
7. Flixton
8. Gathurst

9. Hall I' Th' Wood

10. Ashburys

11. Pemberton

12. Hattersley

13. Ince

14. Strines

TfGM is currently exploring alternative funding opportunities for delivering the remaining 14 stations within the RSIS Programme with Network Rail, Northern Rail and the Department for Transport. The latter has a National Station Improvement Programme with a pot of money, but unfortunately not to date agreed to fund the desired improvements at Eccles.

## **Changing trains 16**

The last few of our Changing trains articles will deal with stopping services available from Manchester Piccadilly starting with departures eastwards.

The first service then is the electrified line to Glossop and Hadfield. This was once a heavily used main line whose early electric engines whisked passengers from Manchester to Sheffield in 40 minutes or to Barnsley in 30 minutes! Unfortunately the line was closed beyond Hadfield in the 1960s.

Interestingly, though Ardwick is shown on the route map for the timetable there are no trains listed to stop there on this service. The stations served on the remaining stopping service are Ashburys, Gorton, Guide Bridge, Flowery Field, Newton for Hyde, Godley, Hattersley, Broadbottom, Dinting, Glossop, **Hadfield**. Trains are half hourly during the day (including Sundays) and hourly in the evenings.

This little line reaches out to the Dark Peak area of Derbyshire and thus is very handy for some splendid walks not that far from Manchester, and very handy on Sundays because the train from Eccles goes into Piccadilly to meet this

service. Glossop is a stone built town that shows the estate influence of the Duke of Norfolk whose shooting lodge is nearby. Our trip of the month is a lovely walk starting at Hadfield that includes some of the track bed of the old express route past the Longdendale Reservoirs and our bargain fare is chosen to cover travel to Hadfield for this purpose.

On Sundays the trains from Eccles usually run direct to Piccadilly and on to the airport (but check – electrification will alter this on some Sundays). On weekdays take the train from Eccles to Victoria and transfer by tram to Manchester Piccadilly. From the tram platforms you can ascend to the main concourse for your train.

## **TRIP OF THE MONTH.**

**This month the chosen trip is number thirty:**

### **HADFIELD –TINTWISTLE & RESERVOIRS.**

This short trip to the western edge of the Pennines includes great views and a feeling of remoteness – but you're only a mile or two from Hadfield station. You see some of the important Longdendale reservoirs.

Take the train to Manchester Victoria and from there a tram to Manchester Piccadilly Station. On Sunday take the train direct to Piccadilly from Eccles. From here catch the train (usually platform two) to Hadfield.

Alight at Hadfield. Outside the station door go straight ahead and you will see the library and war memorial on your left. Keep going down cross the road and down to the river bridge.

Cross the bridge and go immediately right onto Bank Lane. *On your right you will see the Manchester Corporation Water Works 1879 and also a rather large (aerating?) fountain.*

Ascend to the main road and cross. Then go up the setted path and you will see another war memorial. *This is Tintwistle.*

Bear right past the Bull's Head. *Notice the 1820 Jubilee Day and Sunday School on your left.*

Later bear left at the Ebenezer Chapel. *An 1830 Wesleyan Methodist with gothic windows.*

The track trails down onto Manchester Road – go ahead a short distance. At the national speed limit sign there is a building with the appearance of a tollhouse.

Immediately fork left onto a rising track. Go up between the walls and later keep going with a single wall on your right. Descend before woodland to the main road.

Here cross the road and go left then turn right down a track with a gate at the warning sign. Cross the dam. *Valewood reservoir is on your right and Rhodeswood on your left. Enjoy the views up and down the Longendale valley.*

Follow the reservoir road to the right at the end of the dam, through a farm and at a fork go left and up to a stone bridge. *This is over the once extremely busy Woodhead line to Sheffield – the first main line to be electrified!*

Cross the bridge and take the footpath on the right through the bottom of the fields. Keep going ahead until you join a track that takes you into the stone hamlet of Padfield.

Turn right down to the curve on road. *The Reeds Arms is on Temple Street on your left.*

Go left at Wayside Cottage bed and breakfast and walk down to the bottom of the street. Then turn right to go past the mill, meander under a railway bridge.

At the library, go left to the railway station.

CLASSIFICATION: SHORT to MEDIUM LENGTH, MODERATE.

## OLD HOUSES, COUNTRYSIDE, HILLS,

RAIL FARE – category ONE

Maps:

OS 1:50 000 sheet 110



Two of the wonderful views to be had on the Tintwistle walk commencing at Hadfield station.

Photos courtesy of J E Rayner.

### BARGAIN FARE

Our bargain fare recommendation this month is **the off peak return to Hadfield at only £3.90** allowing you to go on our trip of the month and have a belting walk, or for the same fare have a more leisurely stroll around Glossop which is the stop before.

### FARE TIP

Children and railcard holders pay even less than this. Holders of the Greater Manchester pensioner pass can go for free **-and please mention this to locals at Glossop or Hadfield.** They will be delighted to hear it as they are no longer allowed to use the trains without paying! Holders of GM County Cards are also covered for the day out.

## BOOK REVIEW:

### **'LOST RAILWAY JOURNEYS – rediscover Britain's forgotten railway routes'**

by Paul Atterbury ISBN 9781446300954. David & Charles  
£15.99 Available at Eccles Library.

The name of the author will be familiar to those who have watched the BBC 'Antiques Roadshow' – he is one of the expert valuers on that programme. He has combined historic photographs with old postcards, tickets and handbills to produce this lavishly illustrated book. Each section includes a brief account of the traces left on the landscape by the lines and the selected railways are grouped into chapters by region.

Now believe it or not (anything is possible in the world of railways!) there are groups dedicated to exploring these old routes, and OTHER groups that try to bring them back into use as footpaths, bridleways or cycle tracks. These groups such as [www.railwayramblers.org.uk](http://www.railwayramblers.org.uk) and [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk) are recognised in the last short chapter of the book.

**Why not join Freccles?** It is only £5 a year and this contribution helps us to improve the gardens and tubs at the station as well as to campaign for a better station and services.

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)

