

'ECCLES STATION NEWS

AUGUST 2013

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

ESN continues its look at the Beeching Report with extracts from the lists of proposed closures and 'modifications'.

There is a lovely summer stroll with canal side pubs for Trip Of the Month.

Editor

NEWS



Despite the dry weather the garden is looking well! It is taking a lot of watering by the garden team to keep it this way.

The new booking hall has opened at Salford Crescent Station. A new bridge leads across to the island platform. The lift down to the platform should be in service as this issue of ESN goes to press.

Photo: J E Rayner



The **West Coast Main Line was closed** between Warrington and Preston for nine days of work up to the morning of 22nd July. The nine day complete possession of the line allowed work to be done that would otherwise have been spread over 16 months of occasional closures and diversions. **Four life-expired junctions were replaced** (Golbourne Junction, Bamfurlong, Wigan Springs Branch, and Balshaw Lane). In addition three miles of track were re-laid to help **increase line speeds and make journeys more reliable and punctual** for passengers. The work needed 6,600 new railway sleepers and 21,500 tonnes of ballast. The materials were delivered by 61 trains in 865 wagons.



Photos courtesy of Network Rail



This work was done during one of the hottest weeks of the year with a team of 720 men and women were on site 24 hours a day to deliver this significant investment. Over 900 barrels of water were consumed and **3,000 bottles of sun cream** used as track temperatures rose as high as 46C!

Work is well underway to remove the old roof over the bay platforms and concourse at Manchester Victoria. At ground level business continues as normal, under a protective shell of scaffolding as the great girders and pillars are taken away to make room for the new polymer roof. (Photos J E Rayner)



Network Rail

Transforming Manchester Victoria station

Station works programme

Spring 2013	Summer 2013	Autumn 2013	Winter 2013/14	Spring 2014	Summer 2014	Autumn/Winter 2014/15
Installation of new platform edge						
Installation of new platform edge						

NR Helpline 08457 11 41 41

Network Rail is working together with

MORGAN SINDALL

northern

Transport for Greater Manchester

Network Rail

Upgrading the station roof

Roof works programme

Spring 2013	Summer 2013	Autumn 2013	Winter 2013/14	Spring 2014	Summer 2014
Installation of new roof structure					

NR Helpline 08457 11 41 41

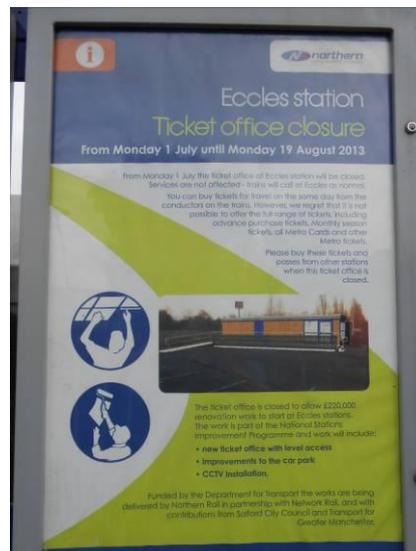
Network Rail is working together with

MORGAN SINDALL

northern

Transport for Greater Manchester

The **Portakabin** booking office ('temporarily' installed for over 40 years) has been removed from the front of Eccles Station, and the forecourt is fenced off ready for the work to replace it. As we go to press, the foundations have been laid and work is progressing. *(Photos J E Rayner)*



Minor improvements at Eccles are the new **'Mind the Step'** signs and the provision of new perches for the birds.



*However **ESN remains puzzled** by Network Rail's announcement of **completion of phase one** of electrification when so many **pieces of wire are still needed**..... . (Photos J E Rayner)*

Arriva Trains Wales will be hosting the **2013 Community Rail Festival** on Saturday 28th September in association with the **Conwy Valley Rail Initiative**. An exciting day is planned with station galas both at Llandudno and at the opposite end of the line at Blaenau Ffestiniog. There will be exhibitions and stalls on both stations. A '**Special**' train has been organised between **Arriva Trains Wales and Ffestiniog Rail**. This will take passengers on a special trip along the scenic Conwy Valley line, changing trains at Blaenau Ffestiniog and then on to Porthmadoc, returning to Llandudno early evening.

Expressions of interest for having a **stall on either station, or for tickets** for the 'Special' train should be sent to Ben.Davies@arrivatw.co.uk

***First TransPennine** have been running **driver training specials** – two a day - on the line in recent weeks. This has been in preparation for their trains diverting onto the L&M line after electrification.*

The government has announced that a **driverless car** will be tested on the public roads later this year. University of Oxford researchers have modified a Nissan Leaf car for the trials, during which there will be a driver in the front, but they hope **the driver will have nothing to do**. The Department of Transport expects autonomous road vehicles to be commonplace by 2040, and hopes that **electronically linked platoons of autonomous lorries** will make the roads safer by then. (**Perhaps goods trains might not be a bad idea? Ed.**)

Journeys to railway stations by bicycle reached 39,000,000 this year. This is a 40% increase on 2009 numbers. In that time the number of parking spaces for bicycles at railway stations has doubled to 53,000. By 2015 there should be an

additional 16,000 spaces provided under a £25,000,000 station improvement scheme.

Rail union bosses have denounced the **lavish pay arrangements** that Network Rail has approved for its executives, pointing out that this is funded by taxpayers. They stand to **double their pay** if targets are met by 2015 **as well as receiving up to a 60% annual bonus**. Here are the current salaries:

Sir David Higgins	Chief Executive	£570,000pa
Patrick Boucher	Finance Director	£394,000pa
Robin Gisby	Operations Director	£371,000pa
Simon Kirby	Projects Director	£371,000pa

(Are they running a railway or a gravy train? Ed.)

*July turned out to **be a bad month for railway accidents, with** three significant accidents during the month – one each in Canada, France, and Spain.*

*On July 6th a rake of **72 railway wagons of oil ran downhill** then derailed and set on fire at Lac-Megantic in Quebec. **Five wagons exploded** killing at least 20 people and destroying 40 buildings including a crowded bar.*

*On July 12th **a crowded passenger train derailed and hit the platform** at Bretigny-sur-Orge just south of Paris. Six people were killed, and 22 seriously injured.*

*In Spain **79 people died and 131 were injured** on 24th July when **a high speed train derailed on a curve** approaching Santiago de Compostela.*

Our sympathy goes out to those injured and bereaved by these three tragedies which cut short many lives, but it is best to remember that rail remains the safest form of land transport.

OUT AND ABOUT...

The hot weather has caused some **problems on the tracks**. The expansion of the cross-bars linking the blades of a switched diamond west of Victoria caused the detection system to register the blades as improperly positioned and put the **signals at red**.



The solution required a lot of hosepipe and a rotary garden sprinkler. This eventually washed the grease off the switches leading them to jam – so an extra greasing was needed as well.

Photo courtesy of Mark Charnley

A similar problem occurred with a point on the Metrolink Tram system at Bury Station. Here an oscillating garden sprinkler was used!



...By TRAIN from ECCLES STATION.

ARTICLES

SECRETARY OF STATE VISITS ECCLES

The Secretary of State for Transport, The Right Honourable Patrick McLoughlin MP, visited Eccles Station on Wednesday 17th July. The purpose of the visit was to mark the first phase of the electrification of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway line by the unveiling of a plaque that will be placed on the bridge wall above the platforms.



The Secretary of State for Transport arrives at Eccles on the 12.39 train from Victoria. Of course he is accompanied by a civil service 'minder' to keep him on schedule.

There was an impressive attendance by the good and the great from TfGM, Network Rail, Northern, TransPennine Express and Salford City Council. We even had the national manager of the Lancashire Eccles Cake Company!

FRECCLES Chairman David Yates admitted to being completely taken aback by the high profile that we got in the speeches from Northern Rail, the Secretary of State for Transport and Ian Stewart. Everyone clearly acknowledged that

without the work that FRECCLES had put in to the gardens they would not have chosen our station for the unveiling ceremony.



Jane Simpson, Network Rail's director of route asset management gave the introductory speech. The Mayor of Salford was also present.

Jane Simpson explained the benefits of electrification: "Electrification helps us to boost capacity, reduce carbon emissions and cut the cost of running the railway. Electric trains are also quieter, more reliable and have more seats, which is good news for passengers."

Chris Nutton, First TransPennine Express programme director, said: that a £60m fleet of new trains will start to come into service from December this year for a 30% increase in capacity.





In his speech, the Secretary of State said “The Government is committing record amounts of investment into transforming the rail network and it is great to see this work happening right now. Electrification of these routes will significantly improve connections between our major towns and cities, boosting the economy and providing passengers with quicker, cleaner and more frequent services.” He also observed that people were now choosing to use the railways so government investment would follow that.

Chairman David Yates said after the event “We were able to network very extensively and certainly got our message across about the interchange potential of Eccles. I gave interviews to BBC Radio 4 NW and Salford on Line. The ‘20% of commuters who use Eccles station are going to Media City’ message was driven home to a wide and influential audience.”



Freccles chairman David Yates joins the photo-shoot. He said “A senior executive from TPE admitted that there was logic in our objective to make Eccles the "Stockport of the west" and that his trains should stop here just as Virgin stop their London trains at Stockport.”



Refreshments were provided by Paula and Matt of Quadrant creative Event Production.



Steve Clapham guards the FRECCLES stall with the goody bags** for the main guests
All photos in this article J E Rayner

*In case you were not a **goody bag recipient and feel deprived or that FRECCLES was squandering its funds, the contents were as follows: A copy of 'Caked in History', an Eccles Station postcard, a twin pack of "Cake Hole Histories" Eccles Cakes and an introduction/information leaflet about FRECCLES.*

A Bash at Beeching (2)

In the early 1960s, The Department of Roads, under Minister Ernest Marples, was erroneously titled 'The Department of Transport'. To be fair the ministry which had 1700 civil servants working on road matters did employ a total of 70 civil servants to work on all other forms of transport put together, and was merely continuing with an already established short sighted sectional approach to transport needs in the UK.

As a result, on March 27, 1963 "The Reshaping of British Railways" report was published. This report, better known as the "Beeching Report", was the high water mark of politicians' and civil servants' efforts to truncate the railways in favour of the road industry. This was to be on top of many 1950s closures.



A quiet word in the ear from Marples, and the offer of a bag of swag for Beeching to come up with the right sort of report. This cartoon is part of a small exhibition about post war UK railways at The National Railway Museum, York.

Famous for axing so many railway lines across the country, the report contained great lists of services and stations to be closed. From the lists we note the withdrawal of all local services in North Wales, and the closure of the electrified Liverpool Exchange – Formby – Southport and the Southport - Crossens Line. Many commuter lines to large towns and cities were recommended for closure. Many holiday makers from Eccles would lose train their train services and access to the countryside for rail borne ramblers would be greatly reduced.

Fortunately the lists provoked a public response that was hard to ignore, and there was some limited backtracking, and some of the lines were saved. However The Department of Roads concluded that the public was mistaken in its views – rather than that its policy was wrong. In fact some 20 years later they managed the Serpell report recommending more of the same.

Appended are extracts of the tables covering roughly North West England and North Wales only. Do not forget though that the railway is a network, and someone from Eccles could be affected by a distant closure –say if your parents lived in Thurso, or you holidayed in Sidmouth. Multiply what is below by a factor of about 5 to 10 to appreciate the nationwide dis-investment proposed.

Rail Services to be discontinued:

Crewe – Warrington – Preston - Carlisle (local)

Crewe – Shrewsbury (local)

Crewe – Chester General (local)

Manchester Exchange – Warrington – Chester General (local)

Bangor – Afonwen

Chester General – Holyhead/Caernarvon (local)

Manchester Piccadilly – Buxton

Stockport Edgeley – Stalybridge (local)

Liverpool Lime Street – Tyldesley – Patricroft – Manchester Exchange (local)

St Helens Shaw Street – Earlestown – Warrington Bank Quay

Manchester Exchange – Huddersfield (local)

Wigan Wallgate – Fazakerley – Liverpool Exchange

Wigan Central – Glazebrook

Glazebrook – Stockport Tiviot Dale

Blackpool North – Fleetwood

Southport Chapel Street – Preston

Earby – Barnoldswick

Rose Grove – Todmorden

Ulverston – Lakeside

Barrow – Whitehaven

Carlisle – Penrith – Workington

Oxenholme – Windermere (local)

Manchester Victoria – Bury – Bacup

Manchester Victoria – Bury – Accrington – Colne

Liverpool Exchange – Southport Chapel Street

Lancaster Castle – Lancaster Green Ayre - Heysham
Manchester Central – Chinley – Derby Midland (local)
Buxton – Millers Dale.
Carnforth – Wennington
Carlisle - Skipton
Manchester Central – Chinley – Hope – Sheffield Midland
Manchester Exchange – Tyldesley – Wigan North Western (local)
Manchester Exchange – Stalybridge – Greenfield
Manchester Victoria – Newton Heath – Middleton
Manchester Victoria – Horwich
Manchester Victoria – Bury Bolton Street
Royton – Royton Junction
Southport Chapel Street - Crossens
Manchester Piccadilly – Hadfield/Glossop
Manchester Piccadilly – Romiley – Hayfield/Macclesfield

Passenger Services to be modified:

Wrexham General – Chester General – Birkenhead Woodside
Manchester Piccadilly – Macclesfield – Stoke on Trent
Crewe – Derby Midland
Manchester Victoria – Rochdale – Todmorden
Bolton Trinity Street – Bury Knowsley Street – Rochdale
Manchester Victoria – Wigan Wallgate – Southport Chapel Street
Liverpool Central – Manchester Central

Liverpool Central – Gateacre – Warrington Central

Blackpool Central – Manchester/East Lancashire

Liverpool Exchange – Ormskirk - Blackpool Central

Carnforth – Barrow

Manchester Oxford Road – Crewe

Manchester Victoria – Oldham - Rochdale

Rail Stations to be closed:

Appley Bridge	Ardwick	Ashburys for Belle Vue
Ashton Charlestown	Bacup	Baguley
Balshaw Lane and Euxton	Bank Hall	Barnoldswick
Bassenthwaite Lake	Beeston Castle & Tarporley	Blackrod
Bamford	Besses-o'th'-Barn	Birch Vale
Birkenhead Woodside	Blackpool North	Blundellsands and Crosby
Bollington	Bootle (Cumberland)	Bootle Oriel Road
Broadbottom	Bryn	Bury Bolton Street
Buxton	Birch Vale	Cadishead
Culcheth	Chapel-en-le-Frith Central	Chapel-en-le-Frith South
Cheadle (Cheshire)	Cheadle Heath	Chester Northgate
Churchtown	Chorlton-cum-Hardy	Cromford
Crumpsall	Denton	Didsbury
Diggle	Dinting	Disley
Dore and Totley	Dove Holes	Droylsden
Earlestown	Eccles	Edale
Edge Hill	Ellesmere Port	Entwistle
Fairfield for Droylsden	Fleetwood	Formby

Foxfield	Freshfield	Frodsham
Furness Vale	Gargrave	Garsdale
Giggleswick	Glossop Central	Godley Junction
Gorton and Openshaw	Greenfield	Grindleford
Hathersage	Hayfield	Hazel Grove
Haigh	Hathersage	Heaton Park
Hellifield	Helmshore	Helsby
Hesketh Bank	Hest Bank	Higher Poynton
Hightown	High Lane	Hindley South
Hope	Horton in Ribblesdale	Horwich
Huyton	Hyde Central	Hyde North
Ince & Elton	Keswick	Kirkby
Lancaster Green Ayre	Langwathby	Layton
Lazonby and Kirk Oswald	Leek	Leigh (Lancs)
Liverpool Central	Long Preston	Lower Ince
Marsden	Matlock Bath	Middleton (Lancs)
Middlewood Lower	Miles Platting	Millers Dale (for Tideswell)
Mill Hill (Lancs)	Milnthorpe	Monton Green
Mossley (Lancs)	Nantwich	Newton Heath
Northenden	Orrell	Park (Manchester)
Partington	Patricroft	Peak Forest for Peak Dale
Pemberton	Pendleton	Penruddock
Prestwich	Radcliffe Central (Lancs)	Rainford Junction
Rainhill	Ramsbottom	Ravenglass
Rawtenstall	Reddish South	Roby
Rose Hill Marple	Royton	Saddleworth
Slaithwaite	St Bees	St Helens Shaw Street

Scorton	Seaforth & Litherland	Seascale
Sellafield	Settle	Shap
Silecroft	Slaithwaite	Stacksteads
Stockport Tiviot Dale	Strines	Stubbins
Tebay	Thatto Heath	Threlkeld
Troutbeck	Tyldesley	Upton
Vulcan Halt	Waterfoot for Newchurch	Waterloo (Lancs)
Wem	Wennington	West Leigh and Bedford
West Timperley	Whaley Bridge	Widnes Central
Whitefield	Wigan Central	Woodlands Road
Woodley	Worsley	Wrenbury
Yorton		

There follow lists for Scotland and Wales. From North Wales:

Abergele	Acrefair	Amlwch
Bagillt	Bala	Bala Junction
Blaenau Ffestiniog	Bodorgan	Bontnewydd
Brynkir	Caernarvon	Chwilog
Connah's Quay	Conway	Corwen
Deganwy	Dolgarrog	Dolgellau
Dolwyddelan	Flint	Gaerwen
Glan Conway	Groeslon	Hawarden
Hawarden Bridge	Holywell Junction	Llanfairfechan
Llangollen	Llangybi	Llanrwst & Trefriw
Llanwnda	Menai Bridge	Mostyn
Penmaenmawr	Penygroes	Prestatyn
Queensferry	Rhosneiger	Roman Bridge

Shotton High Level

Shotton Low Level

Talacre

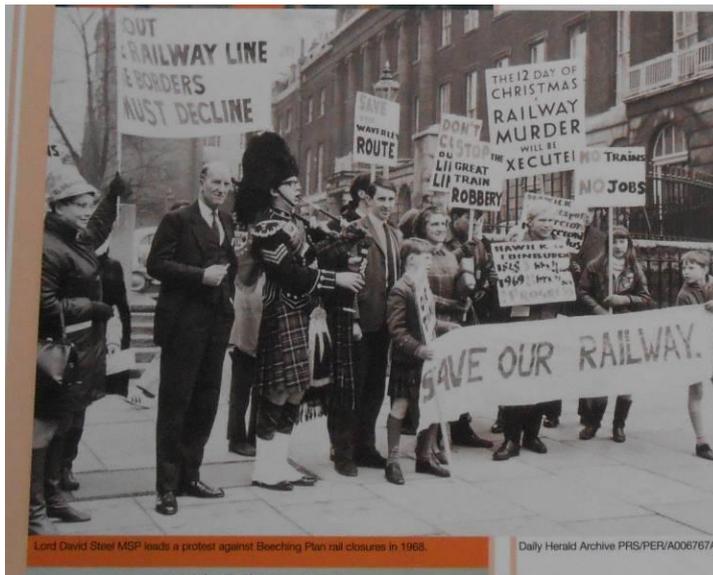
Tal y Cafn & Eglwysbach

Ty Croes

Valley

Ynys.

There is then a long list of lines and stations already referred for closure before the production of this report. Although substantial they are not in the north west.



Lord David Steel MSP leads a protest against Beeching Plan rail closures in 1968.

Daily Herald Archive PRS/PER/A006/67A

Under Beeching, a third of the network was closed and the railway stopped trying to provide a universal service. Passengers and freight customers were left to seek alternatives in the form of buses, cars and lorries.

One of the many demonstrations mounted to oppose the life changing railway closures. These were largely civilised affairs (but not all stayed so well behaved).

How do these demos fit in to the history of citizen activism in the UK?

TRIP OF THE MONTH.

This walk has been chosen with hot summer days in mind. Part of the joy is what is absent: traffic, bustle, steep hills, suburbia, and any sense of a challenge. Enjoy the lush summer flora, the sun, the easy stroll, and the canal side hostelryes!

The trip is Number **Twenty six**:

MILLS HILL – CASTLETON via Rochdale Canal.

This is a pleasant, rural stretch of the Rochdale Canal with a number of locks, farms and at least three public houses selling real ales by John Willie Lees' brewery.

Take the train from Eccles Station to Manchester Victoria.

At Victoria board a stopping train to Rochdale, and alight at Mills Hill station. *Note the Lees brewery on the left as the train passes the site of Middleton Junction.*

Go down the station steps and turn right under the railway.

Cross the canal bridge, then U-turn to your right to go down the steps by the side of the bridge.

On the canal bank turn right and follow the towpath for the remainder of the walk. *The first public house is The Rose of Lancaster up the steps. It provides a variety of food.*

Next, notice the original railway bridge which carried Stephenson's Manchester and Leeds Railway over the canal. The line was opened in 1848 and goes via the Calder Valley.

At lock 55 is The Ship Inn. *You can enjoy a Lees' beer and watch the boats go by.*

At lock 53 go left over the bridge and then right to continue on the towpath.

Next you cross a bridge right and then left. *New Barratt homes are being built on the site of the Whipp and Bourne Switchgear factory.*

At lock 52 again go left over the bridge and then right to continue on the towpath.

At lock 51 U-turn back to your left to go towards The Blue Pits Inn, Castleton. *(Again Lees!)*

At the main road U-turn right to go down the station approach. This brings you onto the Manchester Platform of Castleton station.

CLASSIFICATION: AN EASY WALK OF MEDIUM LENGTH (Please note that the towpath can be rather muddy following a rainy period)

COUNTRYSIDE, GOOD VIEWS, PUBS, FOOD, CANAL.

RAIL FARE: £4.10 adult. NB book a day return to Castleton.

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

Philips Street Atlas: Greater Manchester.

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

