

# ECCLES STATION

## NEWS

NOVEMBER 2010

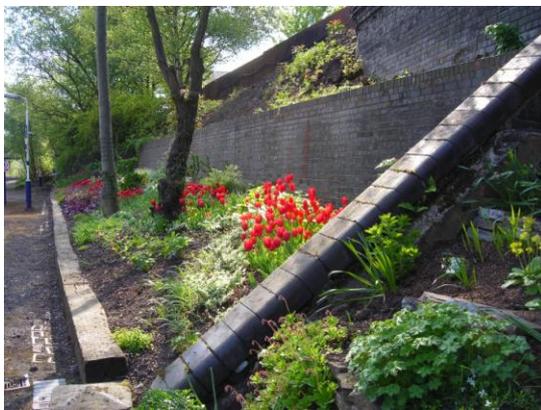
The contents of this month's e issue are as follows:

**News section, Book review Bargain fares, Fare tip, FRECCLES 'Trip of the Month' itinerary.**

### NEWS

*The November recommended day out is covered by the GM rail ranger ticket. If you have a GM bus pass then it is free! It's a short ride to Ashton then a look at the canal between there and Stalybridge. The itinerary is given at the end of the newsletter.*

Our next station tidy up day will be on Sunday November 7th at 11.00 and finishing when you've had enough! Here's a chance to do some light work gardening in our award winning station garden!



The station gardens in May. This recess is where the old waiting rooms and offices used to stand. A huge amount of demolition rubble was cleared by the group before planting could take place. *Courtesy of J E Rayner*

*Our fare bargain and fare tip articles cover an offer from FirstGroup trains. It's for those over 55 and starts at £15 for a month's ticket! It's not as simple as the current Arriva offer (covered last month) but it is very good value.*

**WHY WE ARE CALLED FRECCLES?** Well, it is short for ‘Friends of Eccles Station’ of course and quite a nice contraction. Sometimes I think it is so that the undemocratic spell checker can get one over on me! Very often it alters the spelling to “freckles” without any notice or consultation. I have to be on my guard against this.

However the railways use acronyms as a standard practice and so we found we would be referred to as **‘FOES’** rather than Friends..... so we felt we had to change the name. Members of another local group would be **FOPS** had they not escaped from fashion-mongery by taking on the far more serious name of **FrOPS**.

### **BOOK REVIEW:**

**‘THE METROPOLITAN LINE – London’s first underground railway’** by Clive Foxell. ISBN 9780752453965. The History Press £16.99. Available at Eccles Library.

Built in 1863, the Metropolitan Line ended up trying to be all things: part goods, part branch line, part main line, suburban line and city underground – a microcosm of Britain’s railways.

It was viewed by the Manchester entrepreneur Sir Edward Watkin as a link in his desired rail route from Manchester to Paris. The abundant land acquired as part of this unsuccessful scheme (thwarted by the military) was developed and promoted as ‘Metroland’. (Railways are not just timetables and engineering but need inspired marketing and real estate development as part of the recipe.)

Attractively presented, well written, and with a profusion of illustration this book’s thorough coverage might appeal to more than just railway enthusiasts and social historians.

## NOVEMBER FARE BARGAIN:

### **FIRSTGROUP TRAINS – Club 55**

**With proof that you are 55 or over you can travel anywhere on First trains from £15 upwards for a return ticket that is valid for up to one month!**

This offer is valid from 20<sup>th</sup> September until 30<sup>th</sup> November – the tickets are valid for one month from purchase. First class return starts at £25 and there is 20% off these prices if you have a senior rail pass!

You can travel on the following lines:

Manchester, Sheffield, Doncaster, Grimsby & Cleethorpes.

Manchester, Leeds & Hull.

Manchester, York, Scarborough.

Manchester, York, Darlington, Durham, Newcastle & Middlesbrough

Manchester, Lancaster, Oxenholme, Kendal, Windermere & Barrow.

Manchester, Penrith & Carlisle.

**For an extra £10 (£15 first class) you can travel beyond Carlisle to Glasgow or Edinburgh.**

The tickets are not valid for travel on some peak time trains. Various supplements that will take you to the South and West of the country can be paid when buying the ticket. (If I've understood this properly it looks as if Devon and Cornwall are £35 return or less! Check this!) See [www.club55.co.uk](http://www.club55.co.uk) for details or ask Stuart at Eccles station booking office.

### **FARE TIP!!**

For longer journeys or if treating someone to a trip out, consider paying the first class supplement. Not only do you get more leg room but you also get your tea or coffee, sandwiches or cake/biscuits free on the train.

# A DAY OUT BY TRAIN!

## OCTOBER

### No. 6

## **ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE PORTLAND BASIN and CANAL**

This walk passes some fine buildings, and includes a library with an art gallery above it and the industrial museum at the Portland Basin of the Huddersfield Canal.

MEDIUM LENGTH, EASY,

SHOPS, MUSEUMS,

ARCHITECTURE, PUBS,

**RAIL FARE: £3.00 day return**

*Get a copy of the itinerary, and a ticket at Eccles station and off you go.*

## ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE – PORTLAND BASIN & CANAL

This walk passes some fine buildings, and includes a library with an art gallery above it and the industrial museum at the Portland Basin of the Huddersfield Canal.

Take the train from Eccles Station to Ashton-under-Lyne.

Outside the railway station cross the minor road, then go through the small garden.

Turn left along the main road. After a short distance use the pelican crossing to go to the front of the Tameside MBC Offices. *There is a tourist information office inside.*

Go left and then right down the side of the building to come onto the Market Square. *On your left is the historic market building being rebuilt following arson.*

Next take the opportunity to browse the Market Square. *The market is held there seven days a week and the last Sunday of each month includes a farmers' market.*

Leave the square at the diagonal corner from the Town Hall building and go a short distance down Warrington Street to where it is crossed by Old Street. *The National Westminster Bank has a large lion and key carved in its broken pediment and bears the Ashton motto 'labor omnia vincit' (work overcomes all). This was once the local Trustee Bank.*

At this point turn right onto Old Street. *You pass the fine white tiled cinema building on the left.*

At Oldham Road see the tiled 'Forester's Call' on your left. *This is a free house with real ales.*

Cross Oldham Road to 'The Heginbotham Technical School and Free Library' building. Go in – it's a must! Go through to the back room of the library. *Notice the Assheton family coat of arms and motto later adopted by the town. Beyond this room is the local history and documents library.*

Go upstairs from the foyer to see the small art gallery. *This is open Tuesday to Saturday but p.m. only on the Thursday.*

Outside the building turn right past 'The King's and Manchester Regiment' building. Keep going ahead. On your right you pass 'The Witchwood'.

*This is a free house offering real ales and music evenings.*

Continue into and across St Petersfield Square. *This is an attractive modern development.*

At the far end of the square to the left is a distinctive large building. *This was the Ashton Public Baths. English Heritage is preventing its decay but a sympathetic use needs to be found for it.*

At the main Stockport Road there are trees straight ahead. Go over two crossings taking you slightly left. Then turn right following the main road. *There are some large houses/offices on your left (one with an impressive portico) and a fine church behind the trees on your right.*

At the end of the row of houses/offices there is a stone sign pointing left to Portland Basin. Follow this sign. Go along Park Street to the end then turn right to go to the large chimney with a crowned top at the bottom of Margaret Street.

Cross the canal bridge and go left along the canal towpath. *You are now between the Huddersfield Canal and the River Tame.*

Go over the towpath bridge above the Macclesfield Branch Canal.

Go left over the footbridge to visit the Portland Basin Museum. The entrance is on the front of the warehouse. *This is open 10.00 to 17.00 Tuesday to Thursday, admission free. It houses period rooms and industrial exhibits including machine tools from the old Globe Ironworks at Stalybridge. There is also a café.*

On leaving the museum, cross the footbridge again and turn left along the towpath. There is a mill building with combined tower and chimney by the canal. The towpath is blocked.

At this point go up to the main road and cross it at the lights towards Asda. *If you wish to shop you can end the walk here then go back straight into the town and market.*

To continue the walk follow the green painted path along the right hand side of ASDA then between this and a viaduct to rejoin the towpath. *Notice the mix of surviving small industry and lost large industrial sites by the canal.*

Continue up a flight of locks. There is a gurgling gully at Oldham's Bridge then ascend the steps onto Armentieres Square in the centre of Stalybridge.

U-turn right and back above the canal to join Melbourne Street.

Turn right and go to the bottom where you turn left. Follow this road and go under the railway bridge. The entrance to Stalybridge Station is on the left.

CLASSIFICATION:            MEDIUM LENGTH, EASY,  
                                     SHOPS, MUSEUMS, ARCHITECTURE, PUBS,  
                                     RAIL FARE – category one

Maps:            Manchester A-Z            PHILIPS STREET ATLAS Greater  
Manchester.

***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.uk](http://www.freccles.org.uk) or e mail us at [info@freccles.org.uk](mailto:info@freccles.org.uk)

