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**THE GREAT BRITISH  
R&B  
FESTIVAL**  
COLNE • LANCS  
26 - 29 AUGUST 2011

**The Great British  
Rhythm & Blues Festival**  
Friday 26 - Monday 29 August 2011

Confirmed artists include:

- Jack Bruce
- Steve Cropper
- Robin Trower
- Sherman Robertson
- Mavis Staples
- Sharrie Williams
- Mud Morganfield
- James Hunter
- Wilko Johnson
- Buddy Whittington

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Log on for listings of all the artists  
and bands appearing at Colne's 22nd  
Great British Rhythm & Blues Festival

The Festival organisers reserve the right to alter the programme at any time



# READING BETWEEN THE LINES

THE NEWSLETTER OF LANCASHIRE'S COMMUNITY RAILWAYS



ISSUE 12

SUMMER 2011

## ACCRINGTON AWARDS SUCCESS



Accrington Eco Station has been successful in winning a number of awards for its environmental sustainability. Pictured above is Richard Watts, Rail Projects Manager for Lancashire County Council with the Modern Railways Award along with Theresa Villiers, Minister of State for Transport. Also in the picture (l - r) are: Haydn Abbot, Chair of the Judging Panel, Peter Marshall, SBS Architects, Simon Clarke & Brian Haworth, Community Rail Development Officers.

The Modern Railways Awards was just one of a number that the new eco station at Accrington has won and more details can be found inside this issue.

### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

**Richard's Ramblings, Friends of Stations, Station flowers, Schools in the Bunker, Inspiring children, Awards, Rhythm & Blues, Blackburn Platform 4 and much, much more!!**

## RICHARD'S RAMBLINGS

It seems that every railway magazine you pick up is extolling the virtues of a branch line in the West Country. Rail, Modern Railways, Today's Railways and many more have carried lavish features on these lines. It has to be agreed that the lines are very attractive and First Great Western are clearly on a mission with the Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership to make sure we all hear about them. Well the noise is a little deafening. Before anyone thinks this is sour grapes then you would be wrong; I admire the work of the D&C Rail Partnership and celebrated their many successes at the ACoRP Community Rail Awards last year. There has been some truly amazing growth on these lines, many of which Beeching and others would have liked to close.

However, there are other lines in the UK every bit as interesting and deserving of attention not least those in Lancashire. We too have seen tremendous growth in recent years and our Cinderella line from Colne to Preston has been best of all. Paul Salvesson described it as a Sleeping Princess; well Paul, she is waking up and I hope others have noticed how much busier the trains are today. This is not surprising as the route has seen growth of 12.5% per annum for the last two years and this is continuing. Soon we shall need better and longer trains than the ageing Pacers which are becoming less reliable and cannot cope with the peak numbers trying to use them. It is not seasonal traffic we have to contend with, but all year round traffic in fact the sort of traffic the railways are here to deal with.

Then there is the Manchester to Clitheroe line which carries over 1.65m passengers per annum and growing. This is actually more passengers than are carried on all the West Country branch lines put together. It is also a very attractive route. Just think about the West Pennine Moors and for me the best moment is coming out of Wilpshire Tunnel as you head north and suddenly the Ribble Valley opens out before you. Pity the trains don't let you get a better view as that sense of space is quite uplifting after coming through the suburbs of Blackburn. There are endless possibilities for walks in the Ribble Valley and from Clitheroe Interchange there are connecting buses to Downham, Pendleside and Slaidburn all good starting points for walks. The beauty of Downham, Twiston, Pendleside is magnificent so why don't the railway magazines and journals take more interest in them? Perhaps Northern Rail needs to take a leaf out of the FGW book and self promote itself and its scenic routes a bit more and before I hear a deafening chorus of yes we do, I don't just mean the Settle Carlisle and Esk Valley lines to name two, but all those other ones like the Ribble Valley and East Lancashire Lines that seem to get overlooked.

*(Richard's Ramblings does not necessarily reflect either the official policy of Lancashire County Council or of any Community Rail Partnership.)*

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The Clitheroe Line and East Lancashire CRPs will be holding their usual Community Rail Exhibition in the Platform Gallery in Clitheroe starting on Saturday 20th August 2011. Running for two weeks the exhibition will feature art work with a railway theme from local schools on both lines.

The 22nd Annual Rhythm & Blues Festival will take place in Colne over the August bank holiday weekend. The Eats Lancs CRP will be running it's music train for the sixth year with Tom Attah performing live and real ale available, thanks to Moorhouse's Brewery in Burnley.

The 7th Annual Community Rail Awards will be taking place in Sheffield this year. The Gala Dinner and Awards ceremony is being held in the Ballroom at Sheffield City Hall on Friday 23rd September 2011. The Lancashire CRPS have three shortlisted entries.

The annual Ribble Valley Rail Santa Services will be on Saturdays 10th & 17th December 2011. Santa will be on the 11.52 & 14.52 trains from Blackburn to Clitheroe with goody bags for the children under 12. Parents & other passengers will be offered a glass of sherry and a mince pie.

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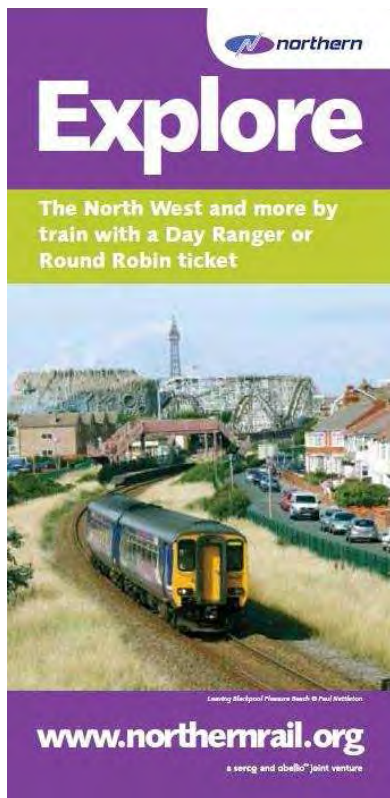
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### WEBSITES

For information on Lancashire's Community Rail partnerships and for a host of other useful information please visit the following websites:

[www.communityraillancashire.co.uk](http://www.communityraillancashire.co.uk)  
[www.dalesrail.com](http://www.dalesrail.com)  
[www.northernrail.org](http://www.northernrail.org)  
[www.ribbonvalleyrail.co.uk](http://www.ribbonvalleyrail.co.uk)

[www.railramblers.com](http://www.railramblers.com)  
[www.lancashirebus.co.uk](http://www.lancashirebus.co.uk)  
[www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk)  
[www.merseytravel.gov.uk](http://www.merseytravel.gov.uk)



## FARES FAIR

You will be asking yourselves - what shall we do with the rest of our summer (if we get one!) holidays. Well what about treating yourselves to a great day out?

Northern Rail have a host of excellent offers on Day Rangers and Round Robin tickets that cover the Lancashire and Cumbria (and bits of North Yorkshire) community rail areas.

For those who want to spend more than a day out on the iron road, there are a number of 4 in 8 and 7 day Rail Rovers available, including the All Line Rail Rover which allows travel throughout the national rail network.

Ticket prices start from as little as £10 for a Lancashire Day Ranger right the way through to £990 for a 14 day First Class All Line Rail Rover. Full details of all the above and tickets covering other areas of the Northern Rail empire visit [www.northernrail.org](http://www.northernrail.org) or any of the Community Rail Lancashire websites via the main site [www.communityraillancashire.co.uk](http://www.communityraillancashire.co.uk).

## ACCRINGTON AWARDS

Accrington Eco Station has been winning awards for its environmental sustainability. The station has won outright in the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (NW), Modern Railways and Network Rail Partnership Awards and has been Highly Commended in the Local Authority Building Control Excellence Awards and also in the Municipal Journal Awards.

The station has also been shortlisted in the *Station Development* category in the 2011 National Community Rail Awards to be held in Sheffield on September 23rd. Also short listed for Community Rail Awards is the Greening the East Lancashire Line DVD (*Involving Young People*) and Marjorie Birch (*Outstanding Volunteer Contribution*).

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Simon Clarke, Brian Haworth, Other photographs can be seen at  
[www.communityraillancashire.co.uk](http://www.communityraillancashire.co.uk)

## RICHARD'S RAMBLINGS

### Preston to Ormskirk

Turning to the West Lancashire Line, it is good to report that the Preston to Ormskirk line is on its way to being a fully designated line and it is hoped the announcement will be made in September with the Community Rail Awards hotly tipped as the likely time. By the time this is issued the West of Lancashire CRP will have endorsed (for the second time) the designation of the line.

With designation comes the opportunity to bid for funding through the Community Rail Development Fund (CRDF) which is only available to designated lines. It is hoped to mount a bid to help fund a marketing initiative for the line to coincide with the improved timetable from the start of the December timetable.

With designation also comes the chance to really get down to examining the possibility of an hourly service on the line and it is good that Network Rail is taking a hard look at the option set out in the Lancashire & Cumbria Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS) for this.

I think it is fair to say that the Route Prospectus drafted by the CRP and the DfT is the first that truly gets to grip with trying to reduce the costs of operating a community rail line whilst simultaneously looking at improving the service frequency. If it can be pulled off it may show the way for other lines?

### New Network Rail RUS

It is also interesting to note that Network Rail is also planning to launch a RUS later this year which is looking at ways to reduce the cost of the railway. Community rail lines feature in this especially as the original Community Rail Development Strategy had as one of its three aims the managing of costs downwards. I look forward to seeing a draft of this as anything that helps reduce the cost of the railway and looks at appropriate standards for the regional and secondary networks is to be welcomed.

That's it from me I hope you all find some sunshine. As I write this at the start of August the sun is being decidedly shy!!!! I hope you have a good holiday wherever you go and remember European Railways are excellent and often a better way to enjoy travelling than flying. This year my holiday took me to France and I travelled on some excellent French rural routes and they have trains I would die for in Lancashire. Loco hauled corridor trains plying on secondary lines in between brand new diesel and bi mode trains.....!! The renaissance of the French secondary network continues apace and largely thanks to the influence of the pro-active and pro rail Regional Councils.

## COMPOST CORNER

The eco vegetable garden at Accrington Eco Station, a joint venture between the East Lancashire Community Rail Partnership and Accrington's Prospects Group is blooming.

With potatoes, cabbage and rhubarb almost ready for harvesting it has been a good first crop. Unfortunately the local mice population made off with the pea seeds so this was the only failure. There were a number of fruit bushes planted and hopefully next year these should see fruit being produced.



The wild flower areas around the station have been rather disappointing but the plants which have flowered have quickly started to attract insects such as bees, butterflies and moths. It is hoped to sow more wild flower seeds next spring.

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## FRIENDS OF STATIONS UPDATE

This is a colourful time of year for our Friends of Stations groups with brilliant flower displays evident on lots of our local stations (see centre spread). Planters are showing fine displays on all stations on the Ribble Valley Line thanks to the Friends of Station groups. On the East Lancashire Line friends groups at Nelson, Brierfield, Colne, Huncoat and Rishton have worked very hard to produce fine floral displays.

At Accrington we have worked with the local Prospects panel and have created a vegetable patch with potatoes, peas, cabbage and rhubarb all growing. Hopefully an initiative currently being worked up with Burnley UCLAN Horticulture Department will see volunteer involvement from students at Burnley Central station. Watch this space!!

On West Lancashire lines Friends groups at Burscough Junction, Burscough Bridge, Meols Cop, New Lane, Gathurst, Appley Bridge and in particular at Croston have produced colourful flower displays. To the west on the Blackpool South branch groups at Lytham, Kirkham, St. Annes-on-the-Sea and Squires Gate have also lovely displays of colour. Further north Bentham's flower tubs and station garden are a blaze of colour.

As well as creating a very pleasant atmosphere for the travelling public all these groups also work very hard keeping their stations clean and tidy.

## COLNE RHYTHM & BLUES FESTIVAL

For the sixth year running the East Lancashire CRP is sponsoring the annual Rhythm & Blues Festival in Colne over the August bank holiday weekend. To help get the festival underway in fine style the CRP will be running a music train from Preston to Colne on the Friday evening, due to depart at 18.24 from Preston and calling at all stations to Colne. The train will have live music from Tom Attah (The Living Bluesman) and an opportunity to sample some real ale provided by Moorhouse's Brewery in Burnley.



As well as the music train and in partnership with Northern Rail the CRP is running some late trains to get festival goers safely home. The trains will call at all stations to Blackburn and depart Colne at the following times: **Friday 26th - 00.15 (Sat am), Saturday 27th - 23.40 & Sunday 28th - 23.45.** As well as these additional trains there will be the normal full service running over the weekend to get people to and from the festival.

## BLACKBURN PLATFORM 4

The works on Blackburn's platform 4 to improve disabled access and upgrade the waiting area are on schedule. A lift from the subway to the platform level is being provided via 'Access for All' funding and an overall canopy and waiting shelter is being provided by Network Rail's National Station Improvement Programme. A contribution has also been made by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council.

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> August saw the first steelwork positioned as part of the work to create the canopy and the building to house the lift is well under way. All this work has unfortunately coincided with the British 'rainy season' (the summer!). The work is scheduled to be completed by autumn 2011 so passengers can look forward to improved access and much better waiting conditions this winter at Blackburn.



## INSPIRING CHILDREN

East Lancashire Community Rail Partnership has been sharing its experience on winning new generations of rail users to the network. The CRP found that a substantial minority of primary school children (aged 5-11) never travel by train and may never have done so without the Partnership's school engagement activities. This is the very group of children who tend to gain most confidence and get most out of community rail partnership activities.

This was one of the findings of a recent workshop hosted by Translink in Belfast, Northern Ireland, on 9 June, involving communications specialists from Translink and ProRail and community practitioners from Lancashire. The aim of the event was to exchange experience and good practice across the different partner organisations.

The Lancashire Community Rail Partnerships targets primary age children (Key Stage 2). A key difference is that Brian Haworth and Marjorie Birch work directly with schools, alongside teachers. They offer national curriculum related activities, the 'Greening the East Lancashire Line with Brian the Bull' DVD and related activities and outings. Resources, also available as free downloads, are available on the community rail website: <http://www.communityrailancashire.co.uk/learning-zone>.

By working directly with schools Brian and Marjorie have firsthand experience of how sustainable travel messages are received.

Resulting from the workshop, there is interest in sharing each others' material, but perhaps more excitingly, both ProRail and Translink staff want to come to Lancashire to see how working directly with schools happens in practice. We'll let you know how this transnational collaboration takes its course.

## WEBSITE NEWS

The Lancashire Community Rail websites, including DalesRail, are going from strength to strength with an average of just over 3900 unique visits per month. DalesRail has done particularly well with a peak of 1534 visits in May 2011. Take a look at the websites to find out what is going on: [www.communityrailancashire.co.uk](http://www.communityrailancashire.co.uk).



## BLACKBURN'S PLATFORM GALLERY

To celebrate the start of the work to upgrade Platform 4 at Blackburn Station, Daisyfield Primary School was asked to produce a piece of artwork using recycled materials for display at the station. Class teacher Shabnum Talib and classroom assistant Zainab Dudha worked with their class and the Clitheroe Line Community Rail Partnership to design and create what is a very colourful and eye catching piece of artwork featuring a Northern Train. Recycled material was obtained from SAMS (Scrap Art Material Store) in Blackburn and the children started the project by drawing out their design on wallpaper backing paper.

Once the drawing was complete the class started to fill in their design using all manner of recycled materials. The class really enjoyed this work and were very enthusiastic about the whole project. The start of works ceremony was carried out by Jack Straw MP and the children were very excited as he unveiled their major piece of artwork in the waiting room at Blackburn Station in front of invited guests as you can see from the photograph.



## RAILWAYS IN THE COMMUNITY

The Clitheroe Line and East Lancashire CRPs working with the Platform Gallery in Clitheroe are holding an exhibition showcasing children's art work inspired by railway connected themes and based on their experiences of rail travel.



The exhibition will take place in one of the display spaces at the Platform Gallery starting on Saturday 20th August and running until Saturday 3rd September. Come along and have a look, and bring your children, as they will be given an opportunity to build a train out of junk and other recycled materials other and environmentally linked activities.

# COMMUNITY RAIL STATIONS IN BLOOM

