

DalesRail2008

Sunday 23 March • Sunday 4 May
Sundays 18 May until 29 June
and then Sundays 27 July until 19 October



Great value day out for 2 Adults & 2 Children from just **£15.00**



READING BETWEEN THE LINES

THE NEWSLETTER OF LANCASHIRE'S COMMUNITY RAILWAYS



Including the South Fylde Line

Issue 3

Spring 2008

RIDE, RELAX, RAMBLE & ROAM



Wednesday 23rd January 2008 saw the official launch of the latest Lancashire Partnership leaflet, 'Ride, Relax, Ramble & Roam'. The launch was celebrated by a walk from the leaflet that took seventeen intrepid walkers up the old railway line to Baxenden and after a detour to take a look at the old disused station, on via the golf

course, Warmden Clough and High Riley to the Coppice, high above Accrington and then back through Accrington town centre to the station. The picture above shows Partnership Development Officers Brian Haworth and Simon Clarke at the start of the walk, posing with the group of walkers by the old railway bridge piers. Along with Brian and Simon are a number of the regular guided walk leaders including Howard Hammersley, Keith Thomson and Marion Strahan. The leaders are members of the Rail Ramblers and helped with the detail of the leaflet. The leaflet covers a series of five walks from stations on both the East Lancashire and Clitheroe lines with starting points at Entwistle, Darwen, Langho & Whalley along with Accrington. The walks are all graded moderately easy and are on average between 5 and 7 miles long. The leaflet gives guidance regarding appropriate clothing, the Country Code and has a small map and description of the route but also gives the appropriate Ordnance Survey map to carry. We hope that people will enjoy these walks and will also want to join the partnership's programme of guided walks, which take place on one Wednesday and Saturday each month.

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PARTNERSHIP NEWS

The **Annual National Community Rail Festival** is fast approaching and this year will be over the weekend of 16th – 18th May. Events are planned over four of the five partnership areas but the **West of Lancs CRP** will be holding a separate **Community Gala** over the weekend of 5th & 6th July. It is looking increasingly likely that we will be able to run a special service on Sunday 6th between Preston and Ormskirk. Timings have been approved by Northern Rail and a bid is to go into Network Rail.

Lytham station will see the launch of the **South Fylde Line CRP** and also the announcement that the line has been awarded Community Rail Designation for the throughout service and for the line between Kirkham and Blackpool South. The celebrations will take place on Saturday 17th May 2008 with speeches by local dignitaries and the movers and shakers of the industry.

Hellifield is another new venue in 2008 for Community Rail Weekend



and events at the station will include a presence by the various rail groups including Ribble Valley Rail and the Leeds and Skipton Rail User Group. There will also be a Craft Fair and railway bazaar organised by the Friends of the Settle Carlisle Line.

Clitheroe will also be hosting a

number of events coordinated by Clitheroe the Future. These will include a beer festival, vintage cars and a steam bus, which will be giving tours around the Ribble Valley and the Army are bringing their **'Death Slide'** as well as paint balling and an obstacle course to the castle grounds.

Partnership publicity material was well represented at a recent **Eco Festival** at **Martin Mere** along with visuals of the new Eco Station at **Accrington**. Brian Haworth and WoLCRP's Roger Bell were on hand to set up the stall and Roger also helped to man the stall over the weekend. This proved a successful way of promoting community rail and we hope to repeat this at other events around the five partnerships.



Friday 29th March saw cement traffic return to Lancashire with the first train load leaving the works at Clitheroe to be moved north to Scotland. Photos can be seen at www.ribbonvalleyrail.co.uk/gallery.html

FRIENDS OF CROSTON

The very pro-active station adoption group at Croston on the Preston to Ormskirk line have worked very hard over the last twelve months to raise the profile of the station for both existing passengers and within the wider community.

Over the summer half-barrels were planted up on the platform, and hanging baskets fixed to the lampposts. At the end of last year the group decided to carry out work to improve the untidy banking alongside the car park. Cobbles were obtained and concreted along the edge of the banking, acting as a retainer and



preventing soil washing down on to the car park. The group has now started to plant out the large area with a variety of plants, many of which have been given by the local community.

For their efforts in a **'best station'** competition the group were awarded **first prize**, jointly funded by Lancashire County Council and Northern Rail. They decided to use the prize money to purchase a seat, which has been placed at the entrance to the car park.

The community notice board installed in 2007 was damaged by a recycling lorry and has now been repaired for the group, at no



cost, by Lyndhurst Engineering of Chorley.

The group meets every **third Sunday** in the month at **11.00**, and would welcome anyone who would like to spend an hour or so doing a bit of gardening, sweeping up and generally having a laugh while improving their environment. If you would like get involved with this group or a group at another station contact either **Brian Haworth** on 01772 533196 or **Simon Clarke** on 01772 530144.

RETAIL RAMBLINGS



Explore Lancashire by train... with a Lancashire Day Ranger ticket 2008 Edition

Hop on and off all day for only

£16.00 Adult
£8.00 Child

Another great offer is the Clitheroe Bus ticket which is an add on to your normal train ticket and allows you to join the Bowland Transit bus services from Clitheroe. The cost of the add on ticket is £1.25 single and £2.50 return – ask for it when you buy your Clitheroe ticket.

MTA WINNERS Public Transport Operator of the Year 2007 www.northernrail.org

Northern Rail has re-launched its **Lancashire Day Ranger** ticket for 2008 with this colourful leaflet. The ticket priced at £16 for adults with the normal child and railcard discounts is available after 08.45 and all day at weekends and on bank holidays. The ticket covers the whole of Lancashire and also includes Liverpool, Southport and the Greater Manchester areas. The flexibility of the ticket allows customers to hop on and off at will and is a great way of visiting those forgotten about destinations. The leaflets are available from booking offices and tourist information offices and more detail can be found at www.northernrail.org/offers

Another great offer is the **Clitheroe Bus** ticket which is an add on to your normal train ticket and allows you to join the Bowland Transit bus services from Clitheroe. The cost of the add on ticket is £1.25 single and £2.50 return – ask for it when you buy your Clitheroe ticket.

WEBSITES

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

www.elcrp.org
www.lancscg.gov.uk
www.dalesrail.com
www.northernrail.org
www.ribblevalleyrail.co.uk

www.llmr.co.uk
www.railramblers.com

SANTA SERVICES 2007

Despite poor weather on the first Saturday the Santa Services once again proved to be huge success. Over the two Saturdays in excess of 500 goody bags were given out to children by Santa and equal amount of sherry and mince pies to accompanying adults. Santa was again helped by his team of elves and by volunteers from Ribble Valley Rail. The organisers would like to thank their main sponsors, Northern Rail, Booths, Byrne's Wines, Dawsons and Abbey Biscuits, whose invaluable support makes this wonderful start to the Christmas season possible.



The pictures above show Santa at rest, having just arrived at Clitheroe. Also on the platform at Clitheroe are the two elves that help Santa with his hectic distribution of presents to the children.

SURF & SNACK AT THE CYBER CAFÉ



The **Transit Lounge** sited on the lower station concourse at Blackburn Station has recently opened a cyber café as part of its retail outlet. Four networked PCs have been sited in a newly refurbished area adjacent to the entrance from the concourse. Customers can surf the internet at a

cost of £1.50 for half an hour and £2.00 for an hour whilst they wait for their train or bus. Transit Lounge proprietors Amjad & Nighat Anwar say that the cyber café has started well with a few regular users and they are hoping that this will increase with time. For other customers the Transit Lounge sells hot and cold snacks, sandwiches, drinks, newspapers and magazines and a large selection of confectionery. We wish them all the best with their new technological enterprise.

STATION PARTNERSHIPS

With a successful batch of Santa Services a distant memory **Ribble Valley Rail** have turned their focus from winter to summer. New flower tubs made of recycled materials by a local company Prospects of Accrington have been purchased for **Ramsgreave and Wilpshire, Langho, Whalley and Clitheroe** stations. The tubs, already proven,



at **Rishton** station, are to replace the original wooden planters supplied when the stations first re-opened. The group are also closely involved with planning for this year's Community Rail Day. The group will man the platform Gallery, which will house the photographic competition exhibition and railway themed work from local schools.

The group also hope to have a presence at **Hellifield** Station along with a number of other rail user groups. The Clitheroe festival also runs alongside the Community Rail Day events and offers entertainment for all the family with many events planned.



Station improvement work at **Brierfield** is almost finished with a new inner shelter, complete with embossed partnership logos on the window panels. The barrel vaulting to the shelter roof has also been replaced and a new seat is to be installed on the platform. Coupled with new signage, including a totem,

the station is looking very smart. An area of disused and litter infested land adjacent to the car park has been reclaimed by the group and this has been turned into a new garden and seating area. The garden has been planted with suitable groundcover plants. The sitting area has seating and a picnic table made from recycled materials and the group hope the local community will use and respect the garden. A community notice board also been installed and the group, along with the partnership officers, will ensure a good supply of information for the board. Leaflets and other publicity for the board can be left with Sara Mumby, Community Development Manager, at the Cyber Café at the top of Railway Street in the centre of the town.

INFRASTRUCTURE NEWS

The big news in this issue is the start of works on the disused buildings on **Bentham** station. The rather austere concrete and brick structure built in the 1950s has fallen into disrepair and suffered from vandalism in recent times. The Bentham Development Trust has taken on the lease of the building and has ambitious plans to bring it back into use



as their base in Bentham. The Trust is a community based organisation working closely with the Town Council and Craven District Council and also is involved with the Bentham Community Transport project, the Craven partner of the Little Red Bus network. It is also hoped that local youth organisations will have

a drop in centre with refreshment facilities in part of the building.

Northern Rail and Network Rail have been involved with the change to the lease and the Leeds, Lancaster & Morecambe CRP are involved through Simon Clarke, the Community Rail Development Officer.

Work has also started on the new Interchange building at **Nelson**. This will see a brand new bus station on land adjacent to the railway station. There will be an office similar to ones at Clitheroe and Burscough Bridge for travel enquiries and tickets and there will also be a new lift installed to allow easier access to the rail side of the project.



There has been a lot of work carried out by Network Rail in our area to lift temporary speed restrictions in the Blackburn and Clitheroe areas. There has also been work going on with the replacement of two over bridges, one close to **Rishton** station and one at **Holgates** on the Clitheroe line. The bridge at Rishton has been renovated using traditional methods but the one at Holgates has seen new technology used to completely replace a rotten wooden bridge.

Network Rail tree surgeons have also been hard at work in the **Entwistle** and **Turton** areas to clear track side vegetation before the main growing season. This will help with performance issues during the autumn leaf fall season.

DAISYFIELD SCHOOL

The partnership with Daisyfield School continues and the project using the excellent ELCRP railway history leaflet is being used to create a curriculum based project for the year 6 pupils. The Partnership has just commissioned **Tinlegs**, a local company to produce a DVD with on train footage and also shots of local landmarks.

The school has also seen some activity by Network Rail who have built a retaining wall along the length of the school yard to cover the existing sleeper fence. This work was carried out over the February half term holiday and it is now hoped that a linear art project can be painted on the school playground side of the wall.



CYCLING INTO RAILWAY HISTORY

Brian Haworth has been involved in a project with Caroline Holden, LCC's Cycling Officer to devise a cycle route that will take in some of the important sights described in the ELCRP Railway History leaflet. The route starts at Eanam Wharf and follows the canal tow path to Rishton and so will also cover the history of the canals in East Lancashire. The ride will be included in a Programme of Cycle Rides to be published shortly by LCC. Brian will be making some guidance notes that will explain the history of the railway & canal that the cyclists pass on the trip between Blackburn & Whalley.



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STATION PARTNERSHIPS

Similar work to that at **Brierfield** has been carried out at **Hapton**, with new inner boxes being fitted to the shelters on both platforms. New signage has also been installed as well as a community notice board. Unfortunately vandalism has seen ten of the inner shelter's embossed glass windows smashed. There is no doubt that an active station partnership discourages vandalism and it is both frustrating and disappointing that the parish council has not followed up on its early promise to help at the station.

The long awaited installation of help points on stations on the **Preston/Ormskirk** line is almost complete. Commissioning of the system will take place shortly and information regarding the use of the system will follow. The system has emergency and information buttons which when pressed are programmed to auto dial Northern Rail's Retail Control desk in Manchester. This desk is manned 24/7 excluding Christmas Day and Boxing Day.



Work has now started on the renovation of **Bamber Bridge** Station. The original 1846 East Lancashire Railway's building is being sympathetically restored to its former glory and will be occupied by The South Ribble Pensioners Association as their offices and as a function room.

This will bring a much-needed presence to the station, and there will be more on this innovative project in the next issue of Reading Between the Lines.

At **Rishton** the final detailed plan for the station car park development is currently being drawn up and the station adoption group is looking at ways to tidy and develop an area of 'no mans' land behind the station fence. Last autumn's bulb planting is about to prove its worth with daffodils, crocus and tulips noted bursting through on a recent visit. The station should look really bright and colourful in the warm spring days to come.

ART AT COMMUNITY RAIL STATIONS



This piece of work can be seen from the Clitheroe bound platform at Whalley station – nearly 10 years old and looking good



4 of the 6 panels at Burscough Bridge installed in 2000 and funded by Grove Community Association, WLDC, Burscough PC & Rural Action



These two boards were designed by children from Edisford Primary School and have graced the platforms at Clitheroe since October 2006