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READING BETWEEN THE LINES

THE NEWSLETTER OF LANCASHIRE'S COMMUNITY RAILWAYS



ISSUE 9

SUMMER 2010

MEET ME AT THE STATION



The Meet Me at the Station exhibition, in the Platform Gallery in Clitheroe, was the culmination of a six week project which saw Ribble Valley & Blackburn Primary schools working with local artist Alastair Nicholson to create a huge number of 'mini-me' models and the five stations along the line between Blackburn and Clitheroe out of Plasticine. The 'mini-me' models and the stations have also been made into a short animation by Alastair and this was shown as part of the display. Children were encouraged to get involved when they visited the exhibition by making their own 'mini-me' model and adding it to the outside 'platforms' below a specially created vinyl banner.

The project was funded by the Aggregates Levy and Ribble Valley Borough Council and was supported by the Clitheroe Line & East Lancashire CRPs, Ribble Valley Rail and the Platform Gallery. See page 4 for more details.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Richard's Ramblings, Accrington Eco Station, Friends of Stations, Padiham Greenway and much, much more!!

RICHARD'S RAMBLINGS

2009/10 was a good year for Community Rail in Lancashire despite the recession. Overall patronage grew by 4% with some stations doing exceptionally well. So who were the winners and losers and why? Here are just a few of the winners:

East Lancashire:

Colne up 14%, Nelson up 21%, Burnley Central up 8%, Burnley Barracks up a staggering 159%, Hapton up 14% and Huncoat up 17%.

It is never easy to identify why an increase has taken place but the major change on the East Lancashire Line has been the opening of the new Burnley College which is close to Burnley Central station. This has led to a large increase in students using the line and explains the popularity of the CRP stand at last years Fresher's Day, something that is being repeated this year.

South Fylde:

Blackpool South up 13% and Pleasure Beach up 28% and Lytham up 8%. Despite the very average summer Blackpool remained a popular destination for day trips from East Lancashire.

Clitheroe Line

Clitheroe up 4%, Whalley up 9%, Langho up 22%, Ramsgreave & Wilpshire up 14%, Bromley Cross up 4% and Hall I' Th' Wood up 12%.

The Clitheroe Line saw a slight decline at the onset of the recession but has quickly recovered its position. Forecast patronage growth for this year (2010/11) is 8% which will take passenger journeys to a record high of 1,710,000 – that is why we need more carriages on the line!!

Now for the losers!!!

The bad news is mainly reserved for the **West Lancashire Lines**. All three intermediate stations on the Preston to Ormskirk line saw a fall in patronage with Croston down 10%, Rufford down 16% and Burscough Junction down 8%.

There is no simple reason for this but it shows that doing nothing on this line is not an option and that Community Rail designation must be one of the solutions for taking this line forward along with an improved timetable.

The other significant losers were the small stations on the Wigan to Southport line with Hoscar down 17%, New Lane down 14% and Bescar Lane just holding its own. Why is this? The only thought I have is that the timetable

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

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The National Community Rail Awards ceremony will be taking place on Friday 24th September 2010 in Westcliff-on-Sea. The Lancashire CRPs have been short listed in a number of categories and is hoping for another successful year following on from Brian the Bull in September 2009.

A new programme of the East Lancashire & Clitheroe Line CRP Guided Walks starts in October and will include a number of short walks aimed at those on 'Stepping Out' schemes but still linked to the railway. A brochure will be published shortly and details will be available on the Community Rail Lancashire website.

The South Fylde Line CRP is planning to run a music train between Blackpool South and Kirkham or Preston during November and more details will be advertised locally and the website when plans are finalised.

Ribble Valley Rail's Santa Services are once again running in 2010. The dates are Saturdays 11th & 18th and as usual Santa will be giving every child a goody bag and a drink – mums and dads don't miss out as they are invited to have a glass of sherry and a mince pie.

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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
www.dalesrail.com
www.northernrail.org
www.ribblevalleyrail.co.uk

www.railramblers.com
www.lancashirebus.co.uk
www.nationalrail.co.uk
www.merseytravel.gov.uk

BRIAN THE BULL PROJECT

As part of the Brian the Bull programme St. Anne's Primary School in Blackburn and Whalley Primary School worked together to organise an authentic World War II evacuation. The children from St. Anne's were busy in morning lessons when an evacuation siren was sounded and much to their amazement a uniformed soldier appeared in their classroom and informed them that they were to be evacuated.

The children were then marched to Blackburn station to board a Clitheroe Train. Their destination was Whalley - but at this moment in time the children had no idea where they were going. On arrival at Whalley station the children were marched to Whalley Primary School.

Here they were met by children they had never seen before dressed in period clothes who chose which evacuee they would look after. The two sets of children were then split into groups to carry out pre-planned set work both written and in discussion groups. The following week saw a reversal in travel as the children from Whalley travelled to St Anne's school for a VE Day party.

In between the celebrations the children played war time games such as hopscotch and skipping. This was certainly a different angle to the Brian the Bull project although the information in the DVD regarding the Military Hospital was a source of questions from the children in particular those from Whalley. Northern Rail and in particular Kathryn O'Brien are thanked for their help in providing free tickets for both classes.



St. Anne's School Blackburn

THE GREAT BRITISH R & B FESTIVAL



The East Lancashire CRP is once again supporting the Great British Rhythm & Blues Festival in Colne over the August bank holiday weekend. A promotional event was held at Manchester Victoria station and pictured left is Charlie White in full flow on the concourse.

Friday 27th August sees the annual Blues Music Train running from Preston to Colne on board will be Living Bluesman, Tom Attah singing strong acoustic blues. Thanks to Moorhouse's Brewery there will once again be real ale available for the journey.

RICHARD'S RAMBLINGS

adjustment made earlier in the year upset the travel patterns of the (few) regular users of these stations.

There is plenty to celebrate and the Lancashire Community rail lines are playing an ever increasing part in delivering a more sustainable transport system. In no small part the result of the hard work of the two community rail officers, the excellent partnerships that are in place and the support received from Northern Rail and Network Rail.

It is therefore disappointing but fully understandable that the DfT has put on hold the Community Rail designation of the Preston to Ormskirk line. This is a line that needs its friends to work together for its future as there is much to do. Let's hope that the DfT can be persuaded to reconsider their view.

ACCRINGTON ECO STATION

For those who have been watching the development of the new station on the Community Rail Lancashire website, the wait for its completion is over. By the time you read this Practical Completion will have been issued and Lancashire County Council will be the proud owner of the UK's first true Eco Station.

What happens next? – Well Lancashire CC is leasing the station to Northern Rail and they will be moving in to install ticket machines and generally get the building ready for their staff to move into. We hope all this will be completed by late August/early September with the station opening to the public around that time.

The station hosted a visit on the 27th July of UK rail professionals including representatives from the DfT, Network Rail, Northern Rail and Translink (the bus and train operator for Northern Ireland). Other visits are in the pipeline.

The newly completed Accrington Eco Station



NATIONAL COMMUNITY RAIL AWARDS

September sees the annual Community Rail Awards ceremony, this year in Westcliff-on-Sea. The Lancashire CRPs put in ten entries this year and have had five short listed.

- Involving Young People – **Meet Me at the Station Project**
- Community Art Schemes – **Great Wall of Daisyfield**
- Best Station/Train Retail Outlet – **Carnforth Refreshment Room**
- Station Development – **Ormskirk Station Regeneration**
- The Local Station Environment Award (CRP Lines) – **Clitheroe Station**

The partnerships are hopeful that they will be able to follow up last year's win for Brian the Bull with some more prizes.

MEET ME AT THE STATION



The Meet Me at the Station project was officially opened by Ribble Valley Mayor, Lois Rimmer on Saturday 22nd May 2010. The Mayor opened the display by making a 'mini-me' out of *Plasticine* which was then placed on one of the outside 'platforms' at the gallery.

The Meet Me at the Station exhibition also included a photographic exhibition with the same theme. Two schools that have been involved in the 'Brian the Bull' project have

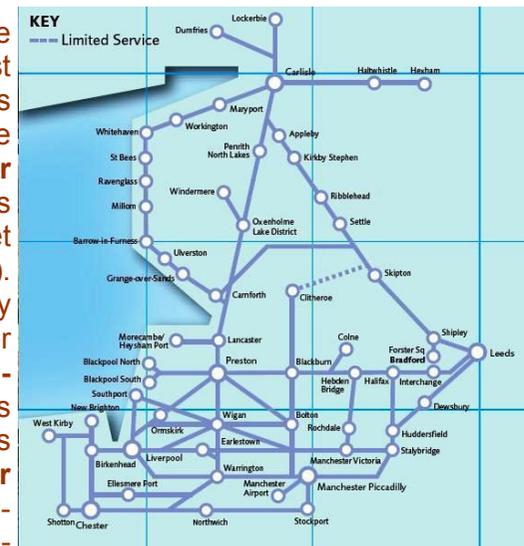
written railway themed poetry as feedback and these were displayed on the fence, at the rear of the gallery, close to the railway as a 'poetry ribbon'. Inside the gallery a large amount of children's artwork including charcoal sketches of the pieces of railwayana excavated from the disused Great Harwood Loop Line close to Padiham Green Primary School.

The children from St. Mary's RC Primary, in Langho, and Padiham Green Primary Schools also visited a professional recording studio to record their poetry thanks to links with The Grand in Clitheroe. The recordings were played both inside and outside at the Gallery over the three weeks of the exhibition.



FARES FARE

There is still opportunity before the long winter nights to make the most of a day out over the various lines covered by the five Lancashire CRPs. The **North West Rail Rover** allows travel over **all** the lines and is available as a 4 out of 8 day ticket (£57) and a 7 day ticket (£70). There are also a number of Day Ranger tickets available that cover different parts of the area. The **Lancashire Day Ranger** (£18) covers the whole of Lancashire whereas the **East Lancashire Day Ranger** (£10) covers the lines between Preston and Colne and Bolton to Clitheroe but allows bus travel as well!



The **Cumbria Day Ranger** (£35) covers the whole of Cumbria and over the border to Lockerbie and Dumfries and the **Lakes Day Ranger** (£18.50) is available from Morecambe and Lancaster and is available on buses and gives discounts on the Ravenglass & Eskdale and Lakeside & Haverthwaite railways. The **North West Round Robin** (£30) covers the Preston to Leeds, Leeds to Carlisle and the West Coast Mainline routes.

For the more adventurous CRP collector (around 60 to visit) there is always the **All Line Rail Rover** which allows travel on most national rail services and is available for both standard and first class travel. More detail about all these tickets can be found at www.northernrail.org/offers/dayrangers.

AWARDS, AWARDS & MORE AWARDS

At a recent awards dinner in Leeds **Craig Richardson**, a Customer Service Assistant at Blackburn station was awarded a 'Northern Star' for his timely intervention in an attempted suicide at the station.

Also from Blackburn, **Jason Townsend** who along with **Wayne Smith**, Station Manager Fylde, have both been nominated for the 2010 Rail Staff Awards taking place in Birmingham on 23rd October. Off the Lancashire CRP area, but familiar to many of us are a number of other members of Northern Staff who have also been nominated for the awards; **Carol Iddon**, Adlington station, **Veronica Williams**, Chorley station and **Chris Benson**, Station Manager Teeside. Good luck to them all!

BRIERFIELD INITIATIVE

Friends of Brierfield Station have become the first of our local station partnership groups to work with young people who have been placed on Community Reparation Orders. Members of the friends group worked alongside the young people on Wednesday 18th August 2010 helping to maintain the garden areas at Brierfield Station.



Brierfield station 18.08.10

The day went very well and we will look at taking this scheme forward at other local stations. More details of the community reparation scheme can be found below.

COMMUNITY REPARATION

Community reparation is unpaid work which benefits charities and the community as a whole. It has to be work that would not otherwise be done, as the aim - as well as being a means of punishment - is to give young people a chance to give back to the community. Ideally, the young people should be involved in activities from which they can take pride in a job well done.

Projects can range from clearing public spaces to decorating community centres or helping with local charitable groups. Community Reparation is an opportunity for young people who have offended to:

- Resolve conflict and repair harm
- Give victim satisfaction
- Engages the young person
- Raises public confidence
- Prevent re-offending
- Re-integrate back into the community
- Raise self-esteem

Reparation is also a good way for communities and other agencies to work together to reduce offending behaviour.

Photographs and images in this issue are by kind permission of:
Simon Clarke, Brian Haworth, Richard Watts, LCC, and Northern Rail.

Other photographs can be seen at www.communityraillancashire.co.uk

PADIHAM GREENWAY



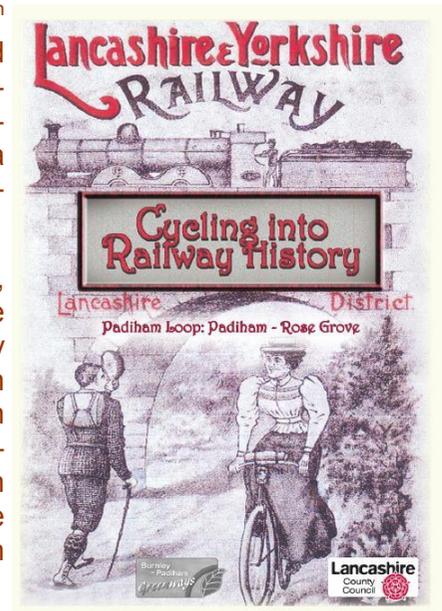
Cyclists on the Greenway on launch day

Community Rail Officer Brian Haworth has been working with local schools in Padiham introducing them to local railway history and promoting existing railway lines. The work has been developed round the Padiham Greenway Project which has involved creating a green route along the old Padiham loop line.

As part of this initiative a circular cycle route was developed by Brian along with an informative leaflet titled Cycling into Railway History. The ride links the River Calder Greenway and the Leeds Liverpool canal tow path to form a circular route. The route was designed to create as far as possible an off road route for cyclists and pedestrians. The Greenway also links to East Lancashire Line stations at Hapton, Rose Grove and Burnley Barracks and to highlight this, the East Lancashire CRP working with funding from the Designated Line Community Rail Development Fund (DLCRDF), is in the process of installing signage and information boards at the stations to highlight the Greenway as an alternative route to these stations from Padiham and surrounding areas.

The cycle ride was launched on the 24th June when Brian led the ride and talked about the history of the line and the surviving structures. The launch was well attended with over thirty riders including a number of pupils from Shuttleworth College getting involved.

The colourful leaflet, shown alongside, contains a map and description of the route and a number of photographs many reflecting the evocative days of steam around the Padiham area. The leaflet can be obtained from local libraries and information centres or by contacting Brian on 01772 533196. The leaflet can also be downloaded from the publicity section on www.communityraillancashire.co.uk.



THE FRIENDS OF

Spread out over the five Lancashire CRPs are a number of stations that have been adopted by Friends of Stations groups. The groups work closely with the Community Rail Development Officers and are recognised by Northern Rail and Network Rail. Currently the stations with friends groups are: Ansdell & Fairhaven, Bentham, Bescar Lane, Blackburn, Brierfield, Burscough Bridge & Junction, Church & Oswaldtwistle, Clitheroe, Colne, Crompton, Darwen, Entwistle, Huncoat, Langho, Meols Cop, Nelson, Ramsgreave & Wilshire, Rishton, St. Annes-on-the-Sea, Squires Gate & Whalley.



Huncoat Station - August 2010

The groups are all different; some are members of Rail User Groups, some are from the town's 'In Bloom' organisations or Prospects Panel, whilst others are retired railwaymen and others from the local community. Whatever their background the groups have the same aim – to improve the look of their local station.

The most recent group to start up is Friends of Huncoat and in a very short time have already lifted the station with the removal of huge amounts of weeds, foliage and litter. They have also cleaned up the cobbled station name signs and have secured funding for recycled plastic planters.

The group at Nelson continues to do work cleaning up the station environment and are supported by staff from the Interchange. At Burscough Junction the group has seen a resurgence and work has commenced again on the disused platform helped by a group from the Community Payback scheme. Clitheroe has also had work done by the same type of group and Brierfield is also to benefit in a similar way with young people from the Burnley & Pendle Youth Offending Team carrying out Community Reparation work at the station.



Colne Station - July 2010

STATIONS GROUPS

The stations along the Clitheroe Line and the West Lancs lines and those at Colne and Rishton continue to have superb flower displays and in some areas Parish Councils have helped with funds for the purchase of bedding plants and compost. The groups are also happy to help publicise nurseries that have supplied plants. All this is tempered though, by the continuing struggle against vandalism and litter louts at such places as Darwen and Entwistle.



Clitheroe Station - July 2010

The three stations towards the end of the South Fylde Line are looked after by the smallest group, just three volunteers. They work tirelessly to keep the stations looking spick and span even to the extent of painting fences and car park kerb stones at St. Annes.

A few of the stations have been helped recently with refurbishment work carried out either by the train operating companies or Lancashire County Council. Rishton has seen a new car park opened and Meols Cop has had cycle storage racks installed, shelters refurbished and new sleeper style flower beds on the platform.

As well as getting involved with their local station many of the groups also help with events such as Big Green Days Out, Eco Festivals and Community Rail events such as Meet Me at the Station.

The five Lancashire Community Rail Partnerships have around 120 regular volunteers working at 22 stations. Based on the figures used by ACoRP in its 'Value of Community Rail Volunteering' report (national minimum wage + 20%) and allowing that each volunteer spends around 1.5 hours a week on the station, this equates to well over £66,000 of support.



Bentham station - August 2010

This figure can be used when bidding for grants as part of the matched funding and many groups have levered in quite large amounts of money this way.