

MID CHESHIRE RAIL REPORT

No. 77

SUMMER 2009

ON-LINE EDITION

The Newsletter of the Mid-Cheshire Rail Users Association, the Voice for Users of the Manchester-Stockport-Altrincham-Knutsford-Northwich-Chester and Crewe-Winsford-Hartford-Liverpool Lines.

Visit our website at www.mcrua.org.uk.

COME TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This year's Annual General Meeting will again take place in the Tatton Room, Knutsford Civic Centre adjacent to Knutsford station on Thursday 16th July, commencing at 7.45pm. Please try to attend as this is your opportunity to put questions to your Committee and to hear first hand what has been happening over the last year. After the formal business of the meeting members of the committee including David Miller and Harry Boardman will give a presentation of interesting views taken on the mid-Cheshire line.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS by John Oates

I wrote my previous column last November. Since then we have had a very significant timetable change and now here we are in spring.....

Train running performance is currently very good (touch wood!) and has been since mid-January. Indeed performance is currently better than at any stage since we started keeping records back in 1998. Well done Northern and Network Rail! The few problems we have seem to relate to the trains themselves breaking down, called "unit failures" on the railway. We know Northern have by far the oldest diesel fleet on National Rail by average age, so it is harder to keep it working reliably. We know they are working hard at this and are getting much better performance out of the units than First North Western did. Well done, but this is still work in progress. Meanwhile, the occasional **replacement buses** we have also appear to be running well. Well done to Northern and their supplier First Rail Support. Long may this continue!

I wrote a lot last time about the expected effects of the **new timetable last December** and how we expected this to be seen as far less attractive by Manchester and Stockport commuters. Sadly our predictions have come true. Based on our passenger counts, by February after we had recovered from the period of poor performance from November to early January, Manchester and Stockport commuter patronage has steadied at around **22% down**, and the Knutsford scholars around **15% down**. This is very sad given patronage had been growing at around 10% a year for the last 6 years. We hope the Government is satisfied with its more and faster trains on the routes from Manchester to/from London and Birmingham. It is a shame that this has been done in such a way as to force many commuters from mid-Cheshire to have to resort to road transport and further clog up the already congested A556 and M56.

Northern asked us in January if we would like to suggest **potential timetable tweaks**, though nothing dramatic. We responded and have received their comments back. These are provided separately below for your information. I previously mentioned that we had asked for **tickets to be made inter-available** between Altrincham and Manchester between the trains and the trams. We had hoped this would be in place for last December. I am sorry to state this is still being looked at. We understand that GMPTE asked Northern to

provide some further information about train loadings and that Northern provided this 2-3 months ago. However, GMPTE has yet to make a decision on this. We will continue to push for a decision, one we had been led to believe would have been taken such that the arrangements would have been on place by last December. I do sometimes wonder whether GMPTE realises that the Manchester City Region is not just about what happens within the boundaries of Greater Manchester!

A couple of further points. We are aware that there are regularly problems with **lighting at stations** along the line. We met with senior Northern personnel about this earlier this year and action is promised. We have a new line manager from Northern, Stephen Bradley and he does seem to be getting stuck in sorting the backlog. Lastly, do have a look **our new web site** if you can. We really proud of it! www.mcrua.org.uk There is all sorts of information on it and you can even renew your membership (I know most of you already have, thanks for this!) and book for railtours. Many thanks to John Hulme and his son, Ian, for setting this up for us.

OUR SUGGESTED TIMETABLE TWEAKS AND COMMENTS RECEIVED BACK by John Oates

I mentioned in my Chairman's Comments that Northern had asked us for our suggested timetable tweaks to the new timetable. We have had a constructive dialogue with Northern over this. Those of you who use the train service regularly may find this of interest.

0605 Chester - Piccadilly. Unlike its predecessor, this service does not connect into the fast London service at Stockport meaning the earliest arrival into Euston from the line is now 0923 (previously 0910). The fast service (non-stop to Euston) used to leave Stockport at 0714 but now leaves at 0707 arriving at 0858, meaning for our train to connect the 0605 would have to become an 0549 and run seriously ahead of pattern. We know people from Hale & Knutsford who are annoyed that the new faster Very High Frequency (VHF) service is now no faster than it was before (unless they drive to Stockport) and arrives 13 minutes later into Euston than it used to. However, a change would disrupt the line's service pattern.

(Northern Rail comments: "Although the 0605 Chester - Piccadilly misses the headline train, it does provide a 5 minute connection into the 0715 Piccadilly - Euston, so the journey time is only actually extended by 5 minutes compared with pre-December. Part of the benefit of the VHF timetable is the frequency with a regular interval service which completes the journey to London in a time which is only a couple of minutes longer than the previous headline train, so the time gain from using the fast train is less (9 minutes). The thinking is that to come at least 15 minutes (and possibly more) earlier with the train from Chester would not be the right answer overall, as it would increase the gap to the next service and be less useful for commuters.")

0635 & 0735 Chester - Stockport. Reduce the significant waiting time these services have at Edgeley Junction (just before Stockport station) - around 10 minutes. Also, the 0735 now arrives at Stockport at 0856, too late for scholars and commuters starting at 0900, whereas its predecessor arrived at the convenient time of 0845.

Northern Rail comments: "The 0635 and 0735 services from Chester have to wait for the TransPennine Express Cleethorpes - Manchester Airport service to use platform 4 at Stockport (at 53 minutes past) before they can arrive into the platform and terminate (at 56 minutes past). Alternatives would involve coming considerably earlier from Chester (between 5 and 10 minutes), creating clashes on the single line which would extend the journey times of the 0717 and 0817 Piccadilly - Chester services by up to 10 minutes (they cannot depart from Manchester any later and would have to wait for trains coming the other way on the single line sections). We will continue to review whether we can get the trains into Stockport any earlier in a future timetable, but this is unlikely to be possible without something else changing).

2107 Monday – Friday, Chester - Piccadilly. Run this at the Saturday times of 2133 from Chester throughout the week to give better spacing between the evening departures and better connections from the North Wales Coast (2115) and Wrexham (2119).

(Northern Rail comments: "There are various pathing issues which prevent us standardising the 2107 Saturday excepted and 2133 Saturdays only departures from Chester into the 2133 slot, but we will investigate this for a future timetable [possibly December 2009].")

1709 Monday - Friday Piccadilly - Chester. We have had a lot of complaints about this train both from those who want a direct service from Piccadilly after 1700, but not so soon after 1700, and from people at Altrincham & Knutsford who complain they miss it because it runs ahead of standard pattern. Ideally they would like it to be 1717 or as soon after 1717 as possible. The following direct service from Piccadilly is 68 minutes later at 1817.

(Northern Rail comments: "The 1709 Piccadilly - Chester is off pattern because the 1717 slot has to be used for the peak Stoke service (to keep it out of the way of faster London and Birmingham services). This is the only opportunity to get an extra train through to Macclesfield and Stoke in addition to the hourly 48 minutes past departure. The Chester service is then constrained by the slots available to get over Edgeley Junction, crossing all the Manchester-bound services. After the slot used by the 1709 departure, the next available is that used by the 1758 Stockport - Chester, but that has no path to get from Piccadilly to Stockport. The 1709 departure time also represents efficient use of capacity as at Edgeley Junction there is a parallel move with the train from Chester to Manchester. All this means that we are stuck with the 1709 departure time from Piccadilly.")

We also had a discussion about putting an extra train in between the 0717 and 0817 from Piccadilly to Chester, say an 0758 starting from Stockport, so as to provide the convenient service previously provided for scholars from Stockport to Altrincham and Hale, and from Navigation Road, Altrincham and Hale to Knutsford and Greenbank. Northern state that they cannot now provide this service as they do not have enough rolling stock.

MARK WILLCOX

Mark Willcox has left the position of Community Rail Officer for the mid-Cheshire line with effect from 21st May. We thank him for the work, which he did during his two years in the job, most notably the improvements at Knutsford station and we wish him well in his career in the future. The Community Rail Partnership is trying to fill the post as quickly as it can and interim arrangements are in position – please contact the email address railofficer@midcheshirerail.org.uk.

MCRUA SPECIAL TRAINS

The Great Eastern Express, MCRUA's special train from Chester to Peterborough, Ely and Cambridge on Saturday 9th May was a great success, helped enormously by fine weather, which showed the mountains of the Hope Valley at their best. Motive power was 67028 on the outward journey and 67029 *Royal Diamond* on the return leg (the train was topped and tailed). £110 was raised for the Railway Children charity in an on-board raffle. Around 450 people travelled on the train, which made a small profit for the association. There will not be a MCRUA special train in the autumn; the next one is scheduled for spring 2010.

FARES NEWS

Most Northern fares outside the GMPTE area increased by 10p or 20p from 17th May. Virgin Trains fares are unaltered. There have been changes to the minimum fares for tickets purchased with 16-25 and HM Forces

railcards before 10.00 on Monday to Friday. These were previously £8 for singles and £16 for returns. From 17th May this becomes £12 for any fare. The **Cheshire Day Ranger** ticket went up in price to £18 for adults and £9 for children from January but the area covered by the ticket has been extended considerably to include Crewe-Whitchurch, Manchester-Hadfield and Buxton and Bidston-Shotton. The **GM Rail Ranger** and **Evening Ranger** tickets increased in price to £4 and £2 respectively in January. The Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways no longer accept the all-zones North Wales Rover day ticket (the replacement for the North and Mid-Wales Day Ranger).

0800 NUMBER IS NO MORE

Northern has abruptly withdrawn the freephone number 0800 528 0200 which enabled passengers to enquire about train running at no cost to themselves from a landline. Another number is available, National Rail Enquiries' TrainTracker service on 0871 200 49 15 but this is not free and it is not answered by someone in Northern's Control Room in Manchester!

NEWS FROM THE LINE

A number of very welcome improvements are to be carried out at **Altrincham** station in the near future. A Costa Coffee is to be opened where the buffet used to be on platform 1 (adjacent to the booking hall) and work is well under way. Also a partition is to be installed in the booking hall so that the area in front of the booking office can be locked at night. Seating is to be installed in the area. Enclosed waiting shelters are to be installed on platforms 3 and 4 and new CCTV cameras are to be installed. The enhanced CCTV will be linked to the GMPTE headquarters in Manchester and is to be operational by the end of August. Facilities Management at the station is to be more co-ordinated between the three bodies involved (GMPTE, Stagecoach Metrolink and Northern). "Section 106" funding is now available from the Lostock Triangle development. Section 106 is where a developer pays to improve public transport as a condition of planning consent. A scheme has been developed to provide new shelters, a car park and step-free access to the Manchester-bound platform at **Lostock Gralam** station. The only remaining stumbling block is a land ownership issue. There were two special trains on the mid-Cheshire line on Saturday 2nd May. Two Black Five steam locomotives, 45231 and 45407, travelled along the line on their way from Bury to Llandudno Junction to work a special train to Blaenau Ffestiniog. The pair were routed via Altrincham (pass 07.15) with their two support coaches as the Chat Moss line was closed for engineering work. Also the same day a wedding special travelled along the line as part of a circular tour from Huddersfield via Crewe and Chester. Nicol Broughton and Mark Irwin had hired the *Northern Belle* 10-coach train for their 74 guests (at a cost of £28,000!) and the class 67-hauled train had a photographic stop at **Plumley** on its way back to Huddersfield.

METROLINK NEWS

Since 6th April the Altrincham and Eccles lines have terminated and started at St Peter's Square station while work continues on the replacement of the track in the city centre, scheduled for completion in mid-September. Double trams are scheduled to leave Altrincham at 09, 21, 33, 45 and 57 minutes past each hour (seven days a week) and departures from St Peter's Square are at 01, 13, 25, 37 and 49 minutes past each hour. The Bury line is terminating at Victoria for the duration of the works. As from Monday 18th May a single replacement bus route operates from St Peter's Square (Princess Street outside the Art Gallery) via Piccadilly Station (stand D on Fairfield Street) and Piccadilly Gardens (stand R near Wetherspoons) to Victoria (Corporation Street outside the CIS building). There is also the free Metroshuttle bus no.2 from outside Deansgate station to Victoria and vice versa (this finishes at 19.00). There is to be a **complete closure** of the Altrincham and Eccles lines from 1st August to 1st September so that a number of jobs can be carried out:

- The replacement of the overhead wires between Cornbrook and Altrincham (the present wires were installed by British Rail in 1969-70). Some overhead supports (which mainly date from the original electrification in 1931) will also be replaced.
- Remodelling of the track at Cornbrook to cater for the Cornbrook - Media City shuttle, which is due to begin in 2010.
- Installation of the points for the junction with the East Didsbury line at Trafford Bar and also the points for the connections into and out of the new depot at Old Trafford.
- Installation of the points for the branch to Media City (the new BBC complex) between Harbour City and Broadway stations.

The opportunity will also be taken during the closure to carry out a number of improvements at stations. The new yellow house colour will be applied including new station signs. The Metrolink platform at Altrincham will also be resurfaced (long overdue – Ed) and the car park at Navigation Road is to be extended. Buses will replace the tram service during the closure and it will also help enormously if the peak hour mid-Cheshire line service can be strengthened to four vehicles, as happened when the Metrolink Altrincham line was closed in summer 2007. At the time of writing it is not clear whether this will happen. Metrolink introduced a new £100 standard fare for passengers who travel without a valid ticket as from Monday 11th May. A £50 payment is accepted if paid within 14 days. It would surely have been better to have waited until the planned new ticket machines were in use before introducing such a draconian penalty. Also Northern could help by explaining the rules for through ticketing to and from Metrolink in the line's pocket timetable. On 13th May it was announced that the Government had approved £244 million of funding to fast track the extension of Metrolink from St Werburgh's Road (Chorlton) to East Didsbury and from Droylsden to Ashton under Lyne. Work on these two extensions could start in late 2009. The £244 million also includes funding for larger car parks at certain Metrolink and heavy rail stations in Greater Manchester. Funding has also been earmarked by AGMA (the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities) for a raft of other schemes including a rebuilt Altrincham Interchange but these schemes have not yet received Government approval.

FREIGHT NEWS

DB Schenker (the new name for EWS) experimented with using Class 66 and Class 59 locomotives on the Tunstead-Northwich "hopper" trains in late February and March but the experiment was obviously not a success as the trains reverted to Class 60 haulage. One problem with the Class 66s is that they can only pull 22 loaded wagons whereas a Class 60 can pull 24. Using class 66s entailed the operation of one extra train per week. Two new cranes were installed at Freightliner's Trafford Park terminal over Easter at a cost of £4 million. Still with Freightliner, Freightliner Heavy Haul has signed a 25-year contract to move 25% of Greater Manchester's waste in the form of RDF (refuse-derived fuel) to a new £300 million power station at the Ineos Chlor site in Runcorn. This traffic will almost certainly use the mid-Cheshire line to access Runcorn via the Hartford curve. The Ineos Chlor site is served by a branch from Runcorn station on the Crewe-Liverpool line and the 100 MegaWatt power station is planned to begin operations in 2011. It was announced on 26th February that the highly unpopular incinerator proposed for a site at Lostock, Northwich would not go ahead.

NEWS FROM THE CAMPAIGN TO OPEN A STATION AT WYTHENSHAW by Eugene Ring

Since the congestion charge referendum No vote, GMITA are carrying out a review of funding and priorities. At the time of going to press, WRAG awaits the outcome of the GMITA review and, in view of the increasing road congestion and pollution in the Wythenshawe area, continues to see the only sensible way ahead as being the opening up of Wythenshawe to the national rail network by means of the Baguley Halt. The WRAG campaign has the ongoing support of Sir Richard Leese, Leader of Manchester City Council, local MP Paul Goggins and local Councillors.

MUSIC ON THE MID-CHESHIRE LINE by Michael Ross

Sunday 31 May - Mid Cheshire Line Festival

Music on the daytime trains and at Delamere Forest and Plumley. The following bands feature: Halfe Pannikin, Full House, Saxafaction, Dr Butler's Hatstand Medicine Band, Nelson Peach and The Cowboy Outfit.

Summer Evening Music Trains from Chester and Manchester to the Golden Pheasant at Plumley:

17 June (Root Chords) from Chester, 8 July (Gus Glynn and Friends) from Chester,
22 July from Manchester, 19 August (Accoustak) from Chester and 23 September from Chester

See www.midcheshirerail.org.uk or email musictrains@midcheshirerail.org.uk

The programme

The first train of the season on 22 April, arranged at the request of the Chester Folk Festival and with music from three of their groups, went well with 32 people getting off the train at Plumley in addition to the musicians - a few more joined us in the pub. Since April, thanks to a lot of work by John Hulme in particular, we have got the website info about Music Trains up-to-date and presented in a slicker way. Music Trains now have an email address, too. Marketing is now based around the one page A4 flyer which goes out electronically and is put up on station noticeboards (thanks to Peter Davies and others) and displayed on the website where there is extra information and detail. The advert at the top of this item has gone into the programme for the Chester Folk Festival. The music trains programme is now

20 May	Manchester-Plumley (Smokey Terrain)
31 May	Mid Cheshire Line Festival – daytime
17 June	Chester-Plumley (Root Chords)
July	Altrincham-Chester - to Alexander's Wine Bar (package deal - train, meal, taxis and music) (provisional - date tbc)
8 July	Chester-Plumley (Gus Glynn and friends) (Chester Summer Music Festival fringe event)
22 July	Manchester-Plumley
19 August	Chester-Plumley (Accoustak)
23 September	Chester-Plumley

All on Wednesday evenings to Golden Pheasant, Plumley, except 31 May (daytime Line Festival to Golden Pheasant and Delamere Forest) and Alexander's Music Train in July. The Alexander's Music Train is an idea from Alexander's in Chester involving a package deal of train, music, taxi to and from the station in Chester and an evening at Alexander's.

Train times

Chester-Plumley

Dep	Chester	19:07
Arr	Plumley	19:43

(2 hrs 20 minutes at Plumley)

Dep	Plumley	22:03
Arr	Chester	22:45

Manchester-Plumley

Dep	Manchester Picc	18:17
Dep	Altrincham	18:46
Arr	Plumley	19:03

(2 hrs 40 minutes at Plumley)

Dep	Plumley	21:43
Arr	Altrincham	22:04
Arr	Manchester Picc	22:35

WHAT IS A TRAM-TRAIN?

In recent years there has been talk of tram-train vehicles being used on the mid-Cheshire line to provide a link to Manchester via the Metrolink line through Sale (now there's an idea...). What is a tram-train? Is it a tram? Is it a train? Can it be both? The answer is yes, well sort of. Trams can run on streets. Trains run on railways. So a 'tram-train' is a tram that can run on railways, or a train that can run on street tramways. The concept behind tram-trains is that they can run on tramways and heavy rail lines and thus open up all sorts of possibilities for expanding a light rail network way beyond the tramway limits, and at greatly reduced costs. What about all the overhead wires you need for trams? The clever thing about tram-trains is that they come with different traction options. There are dual-voltage tram-trains for operating on city tramways and electrified inter-city railways (as in Karlsruhe), and diesel-electric tram-trains that can operate on city tramways or on diesel power like a diesel multiple-unit train. So tram-train services from the mid-Cheshire line would run with diesel power to Altrincham, and then switch to electric to use the 750 volt dc overhead line on Metrolink into Manchester. This already happens at Kassel in Germany. Tram-trains are proven technology now operating also in France and Holland. So why not here?

The above article is an abridged and slightly edited version of an article, which appeared in the Eye of the STORM, the newsletter of STORM (Support the Oldham Rochdale Manchester line) and is reproduced with thanks.

LOCAL RAIL NEWS

Common sense has prevailed and from the start of the May 2009 timetable on 17th May all of the Manchester-Bristol Cross Country trains call at Stockport in both directions with the exception of the 17.06 from Manchester Piccadilly. **Styal** station gained a two-hourly Sunday service at the May timetable change. Also the Sunday service on the **Marple** line became hourly from 17th May. The plan to order a fourth vehicle to lengthen Trans-Pennine Express's Class 185 diesel trains has been cancelled. **Stone** station in Staffordshire (south of Stoke) reopened to trains amid much razzmatazz on 14th December 2008. Rail replacement bus provider Fraser Eagle has gone into administration.

MCRUA NEWSLETTER

This newsletter is also available by email. Please contact us at enquiries@mcrua.org.uk if you would like it sent in this form. You may need to have a broadband connection to be able to download it.

SUNDAY AND LATE EVENING TRAVEL

Sunday and late evening travel is sometimes affected by engineering work. If you are travelling on a Sunday or in the late evening it is always advisable to either ring National Rail Enquiries in advance or to check the Journey Planner on their website at www.nationalrail.co.uk.

FORTHCOMING SPECIAL TRAINS

Past-Time Rail continues to operate its popular “Cotton Mill Express” circular steam excursions from Manchester Victoria. Forthcoming dates are Sunday 21st June (Father’s Day) and Saturdays 18th July, 22nd August, 12th September, 31st October, 21st November and 12th December. Bookings can be made by phoning 01543-411971 or at www.past-timerail.co.uk. Past-Time Rail is also running special trains from Manchester Piccadilly, Stockport, Wilmslow and Crewe to Ascot on Tuesday 16th and on Ladies Day, Thursday 18th June. Compass Tours run a regular programme of rail excursions from the North West. For a brochure please call 01704-840573. Spitfire Railtours also has a regular programme and they can be reached on 0870 879 3675.

COACH TRIP TO THE NORTH YORKSHIRE MOORS RAILWAY

The Manchester Locomotive Society is running a coach trip from Knutsford (07.30 on Northwich Road by the Conservative Club), Altrincham (07.50 from outside the library opposite the clock tower), Sale (08.00 from outside the former Odeon) and Stockport station (08.30 on the Edgeley side) to Pickering for a trip on the highly scenic NYMR to Whitby on Saturday 6th June. Please contact Mike Hayward (0161-439-8709) or Andrew Macfarlane (contact details on back page) for a booking form.

MOSI TRANSPORT FESTIVAL

The Museum of Science and Industry on Liverpool Road in Manchester is holding a Transport Festival from 8th to 16th August. The 8th to 14th is a “Roaring Road Rally” with classic road vehicles and from 14th to 16th there is the “Great Garratt Gathering” celebrating 100 years since the building of the first Garratt locomotive at Beyer Peacock at Gorton in Manchester. The first Garratt locomotive will be on display, on loan from the Ffestiniog Railway. The number 3 Metroshuttle free bus will take you from outside Manchester Piccadilly station to Quay Street near its junction with Lower Byrom Street, very near to the museum.

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

The following people and organisation have joined since the last issue of the newsletter and we welcome them to the association:

A Justice	Lostock Gralam	C Farrow	Cranage, Holmes Chapel
Mrs J M Rees	Barnton, Northwich	Middlewich Town Council	
B.Owen	Timperley	M E Battman	Timperley
D C Kendall	Sandiway	T Carlisle	Romiley
C A Cowan	Runcorn	I M Nickson	Timperley
R B Cook	Little Sutton, Ellesmere Port	R V Chambres	Hartford
K A Wright	Westhoughton, Bolton	Mrs J Wood	Wincham, Northwich
S & K Langston	Winsford	Mrs J Warburton	Cuddington
J Bone	Hartford	M E McNamee	Northwich
J & P Boardman	Sale	C A Haywood	Kingstanding, Birmingham
B James	Knutsford	D. Roberts	Knutsford
G Wood	Anderton, Northwich	R E Atkinson	Hale

We regret to record the death of MCRUA member **Frank Capper** from Plumley on 9th May. Frank worked on the mid-Cheshire line for many years including working in Altrincham, Hale, Plumley and Lostock Gralam

booking offices and in the TOPS (Train Operations Processing System) offices at Northwich and Warrington Arpley. He had suffered with MS for around 15 years and died from a stroke.

PAYMENT OF SUBSCRIPTIONS

Members may be interested to know that it is now possible to pay their subscription by PayPal using a credit or debit card on the MCRUA website www.mcrua.org.uk.

ARTHUR SANCTO

We very much regret to report the sudden death of MCRUA Committee member Arthur Sancto from Knutsford on 3rd March and we send our deepest condolences to his widow Elaine. Arthur was born in the Swindon area and he was an apprentice at Swindon Works prior to pursuing a career in the nuclear industry. He had a near-lifelong association with the Talyllyn Railway as a volunteer. Arthur's memorial service at St Johns Church in Knutsford on 12th March was very well attended and the following MCRUA members were present: John Hill, Andrew Macfarlane, Paul Kennedy, Peter Davies, John Hanson and David Miller.

MID-CESHIRE LINE PEOPLE

Apologies to **Lee Wasnidge**, Northern's Area Director (West), whose surname we spelt incorrectly in the last issue. We welcome **Stephen Bradley** as the new Line Manager for the mid-Cheshire line. **Adrian Barkley** remains with Northern but now covers a different area. We say farewell to **Bob Barlow**, who retired from Hale station booking office in November and we welcome **Adam** to the job. We also say farewell to Northern manager **Andy Day**, who has left the company. A plaque was unveiled on Friday 8th May on platform 4 at Stockport station in memory of **Jim Renshaw**, whose death was recorded in the last issue.

DISCLAIMER

Opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the MCRUA committee.

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

National Rail Enquiries	08457 48 49 50 or 01709-768621
The Trainline (bookings by telephone)	08457 222 333
Freephone number to report crime on the railway	0800 40 50 40
Network Rail (to report infrastructure faults)	08457 11 41 41
Train Running Information - TrainTracker	0871 200 49 15
Northern Rail Customer Relations	0845 0000 125
Passenger Focus (complaints appeals)	08453 022 022
Helpline for Manchester Piccadilly station	0845 0000 033
GMPTE Bus, Rail and Metrolink Enquiries	0161 228 7811 (08.00 to 20.00)
Metrolink Enquiries	0161 205 2000
Cheshire Traveline (bus and rail enquiries)	01244 602666 (08.00 to 20.00)
Merseyside PTE Public Transport Enquiry Line	0871 200 2233 (08.00 to 20.00)
National Public Transport Enquiry Line	0871 200 2233

YOUR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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SUB-COMMITTEES

Middlewich & West Cheshire Sub-Committee. Chairman: Dave Roberts, 5 Whitley
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Email: stationcampaign@aol.com

Hartford & Winsford Sub-Committee. Please contact David Miller (for contact details
see above).

MID-CHESHIRE COMMUNITY RAIL OFFICER – Position currently vacant.

Please contact the email address railofficer@midcheshirerail.org.uk.

FRIENDS OF ALTRINCHAM INTERCHANGE – Please contact Andrew Macfarlane (see above for
contact details).

Membership of the association costs £2 for younger persons (under 21), £6 for individuals, £8 for families,
£14 for voluntary bodies and £25 for corporate bodies. If you wish to join please return the form below to
MCRUA, 53 Acacia Avenue, Hale, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA15 8QY. Please make cheques payable to “Mid
Cheshire Rail Users Association”. Please also send any subscription renewals to the same address. MCRUA is
affiliated to Railfuture, the national, voluntary body for rail users.

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Email address (if any) _____

Family/Individual*

New Member/Renewal*

* Please delete
as appropriate

05/09