



(Chaos at Sowerby Bridge Station – 5th October, 1840)

The painting shown above, by our Group member and local artist, Joy Edwards was specially commissioned as part of the recent weekend event to commemorate the 175th anniversary of the opening of a railway station in Sowerby Bridge on 5th October, 1840.

It depicts a scene of excitement and chaos as the first train arrives at 10.30am, as described in great detail in the newspapers at the time. See inside front cover for more related articles.

The painting has now been framed and is on display in the Jubilee Refreshment Rooms at Sowerby Bridge Railway Station for all to view.

Sowerby Bridge 175 event (3rd-5th October, 2015)

We can report a highly successful weekend event, held from 3rd-5th October 2015, which commemorated the 175th anniversary of the station opening on 5th October, 1840.

The event was made possible through funding provided from Calderdale Council's Festivals and Events Fund, "in-kind" contributions and help from Northern Rail, Trans-Pennine Express and our local Tesco store, as well as the efforts of our dedicated volunteers. Thanks also to the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress for officiating and "cutting the ribbon", and to our members who contributed to the atmosphere of the event by dressing in Victorian costume.

Pupils of Tuel Lane Infants, and others, joined the guided tours of the station and gardens, and pupils from Bolton Brow Primary Academy submitted entries to the poster competition, with winning entries from **Sophie, Rebecca and Evie**.

The musical entertainment (by Breakaway Brass) and the excellent catering (by Christine Denham of Hubberton) were greatly appreciated and received many complimentary comments.

The event also included the official "unveiling" of the recently installed defibrillator on the Manchester platform, made possible through fund-raising by Sowerby Bridge Rotary Club.

Newspaper extract 'Further opening of The Manchester and Leeds Railway – Extraordinary scene (from the West Kent Guardian, 17th October 1840)

".....Considerable danger arose at some points from the eagerness of multitudes to travel by the carriages on the first day.

At Sowerby Bridge especially, the crowd of people was so great, and the rush of those who had taken places to the carriages so alarming that, after a brief stay of four minutes, it was thought absolutely necessary to cause the train to move on. There being no room in the carriages, the adventurous travellers mounted the tops of the carriages, where already as many persons were sitting as could be accommodated; but those who could not sit *stood upright*, until the whole of the carriages were covered with a crowd of standers, and in that fearful position did they remain all the way to Hebden Bridge, stooping down as they passed under the tunnel, and the numerous bridges on the line, then rising and cheering, like a crew of sailors, to the astonished spectators. We have seldom witnessed a more alarming scene. The train proceeded at the rate of 20 miles per hour, and if a single individual had failed to stoop at the moment of passing under the arches, his brains must have been dashed out, and the fall of one person must have thrown many others off the carriages to their almost inevitable destruction..."

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Other News...

ACoRP Community Rail Awards 2015

ACoRP (Association of Community Rail Partnerships) organise annual national rail awards in a range of various categories. In August 2015 we were informed that our entry in the “Best Station Garden and Floral Displays” category (which featured the Bronte Garden) was one of nine entries shortlisted for the award.

At the Awards Ceremony, held at Torquay on 1st October, it was announced that our entry had won second prize. A major achievement in this prestigious competition. A special plaque has been awarded to us to in recognition of our success, which we are arranging to put on display in the Bronte Garden.

Additional Information Boards

With 50% funding from ACoRP, a further six Information Boards have been researched and will be fixed to the wooden fencing at the west end of the Manchester platform in the next few weeks. This increases the total number of Boards to 36. The subjects of these new boards are as follows:-

Doctor Ernest Faber Fookes – Sowerby Bridge, Yorkshire, and England Rugby Union Player.

Walter Robinson – The Tram Conductor in the Pye Nest Tram Disaster.

Timothy Bates and Company – The District’s first Engineering Company.

Peter Brook – Teacher and Artist

Eric Platt – Geologist, Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey, Antarctica.

Colonel Robert Stansfeld – Military Officer and Local Benefactor.

Remembrance Service

Our Remembrance Service on Sunday, 8th November was appreciated and well-attended. We thank the Rev. Ben Gordon-Taylor for conducting the service and Breakaway Brass for providing the music. Wreaths were laid by Jim Robinson (on behalf of FofSBRs) and by Pete Myers (on behalf of Northern Rail). We hope to make this an annual event for the future.

Leonard Ayres... former passenger guard and booking clerk at Sowerby Bridge Station on a visit to the Jubilee Refreshment Rooms on 11th October 2015 – the day before his 92nd birthday. Our Hon. President John King on the left, Leonard on the right.



Christmas Hamper Raffle

The raffle was drawn on 18th December and was won by Barbara Moseley. The raffle prize was donated by Mr & Mrs Jim Robinson, to whom we say a big ‘thank you’.

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John Lord

We are saddened to learn of the death of our member John Lord, of Otley, who passed away on 10th October, 2015. John had been a member since March 2014. Our condolences go to his family. We also wish to thank John's family for the donation of items from his railway collection of books, DVDs, framed pictures, and other items, the sale of which will raise funds for the benefit of our activities.

Calendar of Upcoming Events.....

Date	Event
Tue 12 Jan	Open 'Committee' Meeting. 7.30-8.30pm. Meet at JRR*
Sat 16 Jan	Work Together session. 9am- 12noon. Meet at JRR*
Tue 9 Feb	Open 'Committee' Meeting. 7.30-8.30pm. Meet at JRR*
Sat 20 Feb	Work Together session. 9am-12noon. Meet at JRR*
Tue 8 Mar	Open 'Committee' Meeting. 7.30-8.30pm. Meet at JRR*
Sat 19 Mar	Work Together session. 9am-12noon. Meet at JRR*
Tue 12 April	Open 'Committee' Meeting. 7.30-8.30pm. Meet at JRR*

*Venue: JRR = Jubilee Refreshment Rooms at Sowerby Bridge Railway Station

Work Together Days vary and may involve weeding, tidying up the station, planting or watering the flower boxes etc. If you enjoy a bit of cultivating and have a few hours to spare, please join us. Just ask for Chris at the Jubilee Rooms on the station.

Open 'Committee' Meetings are held monthly and the group discusses general updates on its activities and progress. Why not come and see what we're all about. You'll receive a warm welcome. Just ask for Chris.

Acknowledgements...

THANKS to everyone who has supported us throughout 2015. A special thank you to the Huddersfield Railway Circle for their donation in memory of their member the late Brian Kilner. **ALSO** for the anonymous donation covering our entry into the Y-I-B competition for 2016. Bob Webb and Robert Booth, and others, for donations of books, videos and photographs. We wish all our supporters and readers a happy and prosperous New Year for 2016.

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