

EAST LANCASHIRE'S HISTORICAL COMMUNITY STATIONS

BLACKBURN



Pre war train announcements
Blackburn station - photo courtesy LYRS

Blackburn's first station was built by Stone and Nephew who were awarded the contract to build the station for the East Lancashire Railway Company on 14th November 1845. The station was described in the Blackburn Standard as a building of two storeys flanked by two wings and with a facade in the Italian style of architecture.

The Blackburn, Darwen and Bolton Railway Company built a second Blackburn station off Bolton Road which opened in 1848.

The Blackburn Company amalgamated with the East Lancashire Railway and the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway on the 1st January 1858 and around this date the Bolton Road station closed, all work being transferred to the former East Lancs station. In 1860/61 the station was enlarged to cope with increasing passenger and freight traffic. Following a major accident in 1881 it was decided to re build and enlarge the station.



Blackburn station circa 1959 - Photo courtesy LYRS

The accident which happened involved an L&YR 0-4-4T no 74 and 0-6-0 no 682 'Vesuvius' which collided in the station killing eight people and which was one of the L&YR's worst accidents.

After this disaster the L&YR engineer Hunt drew up plans for a new station in November 1883 and on 18th February 1885 Robert Neill and Sons were awarded the contract to build it. Work commenced on the 2nd June 1885 and part of the station opened for use on 12th September 1886. The station opened fully on the 28th March 1888. The main booking hall was 77 feet long and 70 feet wide and entrance to the platforms was by subway and inclined ramps.

Blackburn station has always dealt with freight traffic initially for the local cotton mills and engineering works and it also had its own Fish dock. By 1904 the station was listed as dealing with passengers, goods, parcels, furniture vans, live stock, horse boxes and prize cattle vans. Several local companies had private sidings. Ten ton cranes were to be found at Blackburn goods yard with a forty ton crane at Daisyfield sidings.



Steam special Blackburn 1968 - Photographer unknown

The former L&YR platform level buildings and train shed were demolished in 2000 as part of a £5 million regeneration project. However, the grade 2 listed facade was retained and refurbished. At platform level a new overall roof, booking office, waiting room and staff facility were constructed on the island platform. To compliment this, a new platform canopy, waiting room and lift was built on platform 4 and was officially opened by the Right Honourable Jack Straw MP on October 21st 2011.



Blackburn Station 1989 - Photo Brian Haworth

The current station is served by trains running between Clitheroe and Manchester Victoria, Colne and Blackpool South and York to Blackpool North. The popular DalesRail service to Carlisle over the scenic Settle & Carlisle line also operates every Sunday from Easter to October.

In the future it is hoped that the frequency of rail services between Blackburn and Manchester will be improved and trains will also operate via the Todmorden Curve to Rochdale and Manchester.

