

ON THE STREET WHERE YOU LIVE

News & Views issue thirteen June 2006

GREAT LINFORD STATION

The first suggestion of building branch line from the main line at Wolverton to Newport Pagnell came in 1845 but the venture failed to attract sufficient capital.

The Newport Pagnell Railway Act was passed in 1863 and in 1864 the Newport Railway Company bought the short - one and a quarter mile - Newport Pagnell branch of the Grand Junction Canal opened 1817 closed 1863 - *see news & views issue no 7 Sept 2004* -, with the intention of using part of the route for their new railway. The Company intended to continue the line on to Olney and powers were granted for this extension in 1865 with a further extension to join the Northampton-Peterborough line at Wellingborough. The lines beyond Newport Pagnell were never built and powers lapsed in 1871.

The line was complete by 30th September 1865 when the first locomotive used the line. The next year on Monday 23rd July 1866 the railway opened for goods, cattle and parcel traffic and on Monday 2nd September 1867, there was a ceremonial opening of the line for passengers.

There were intermediate stations at Bradwell and Linford - it was originally called Linford - the Great was added in March 1884. The lines main regular passengers were employees of the Railway Works at Wolverton.

In 1875 the line was taken over by the London & North Western Railway who had provided the service from the opening.

As with many rural lines the development of road transport gradually began to erode passenger numbers. The first motor bus service in the country was introduced between Newport Pagnell and Olney in 1898 and the popularity of the motor car through the 20th century eventually spelled the end for the line.

The 2-4-2 former LMS tank engine No.1222 ran for the last time for passenger traffic on 7th September 1964. Goods traffic continued for three years until final closure on 22nd May 1967. The track was lifted later the same year.

The route through Great Linford parish is now part of the Milton Keynes 'Redway' cycle way network. The platforms at Bradwell and Great Linford survive. Great Linford station is east of the bridge off Marsh Drive just before Station Terrace.

You can see a fuller history of the line, with old photographs of Great Linford station and hear an archive recording from a resident of Station Terrace at The Branch Line, Newport Nobby web site @ <http://clutch.open.ac.uk/schools/giffard99/home.html>

Source ; -The CLUTCH Club Millennium Awards Scheme
@ <http://clutch.open.ac.uk/parentsweb/mtframe.htm>

Councillor David Stabler