

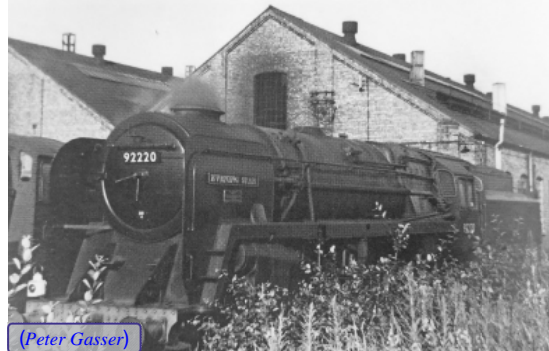
HAVE I GOT OLD NEWS QUIZ FOR YOU

Below are four photographs showing incidents that have disrupted Stourbridge line services in this century. Can you remember the location of each incident, and when the incident happened?



A FAMOUS VISITOR by John Warren

Stourbridge shed had a famous visitor in late 1962 when the last steam locomotive built by British Railways, *92220 Evening Star*, was photographed on shed. The actual date is unknown but it is thought that it was after the engine moved to Cardiff Canton shed in September after a stint on express services on the Somerset & Dorset Railway between Bath Green park and Bournemouth West which culminated when it operated the last-ever Pines Express over the line on 8 September.



WHERE ARE WE ? - No 2 ANSWERS

Here are the answers to Where Are We? No 2 which featured in the previous issue.

1 - Approaching Worcester Shrub Hill, 2 - Approaching Rowley Regis, 3 - Approaching Kidderminster, 4 - Approaching Lye, 5 - North of Worcester Shrub Hill, 6 - Between Rowley Regis and Langley Green,

PLATFORM 2



Issue 14

December 2018



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DUDLEY'S RAILWAYS

4. DUDLEY TO SWAN VILLAGE AND BIRMINGHAM by Roger Davis

The opening of the chord from Sedgeley Junction to Dudley Port High Level in 1854, to provide the London & North Western Railway (LNWR) with through services between Dudley and Birmingham, left the Great Western Railway (GWR) at a disadvantage as passengers had to travel either via Priestfield or via Stourbridge Junction to change onto Birmingham bound services.

Swan Village station. The Dudley line is on the left and the Wolverhampton line on the right.



In 1846 the GWR had undertaken not to expand from Dudley towards Birmingham but, in the early 1860s it gained an Act of Parliament to gain running powers over the LNWR from Dudley to a new junction about ½ mile east of Dudley Port Low Level at Horseley Heath, whence a new line would be constructed to the GWR main line from Birmingham Snow Hill to Wolverhampton at Swan Village. Swan

Village gained two extra platforms on the new line while an intermediate station was built at Great Bridge, closer to the town centre than the LNWR station. The new line opened in 1866 and reduced the mileage from Dudley to Birmingham Snow Hill to 9¼ miles. Although the line passed through Dudley Port Low Level, the GWR did not have the authority to stop there.

Great Bridge (South) station



A second direct route from Dudley to Birmingham Snow Hill was opened by the GWR on 1 March 1878, operating via the Bumble Hole line and Old Hill and this line was described in *Platform 2* issue 5. Although the opening of this second line afforded the possibility of a Birmingham Snow Hill – Swan Village – Dudley – Old Hill - Birmingham Snow Hill circular service, this never happened.

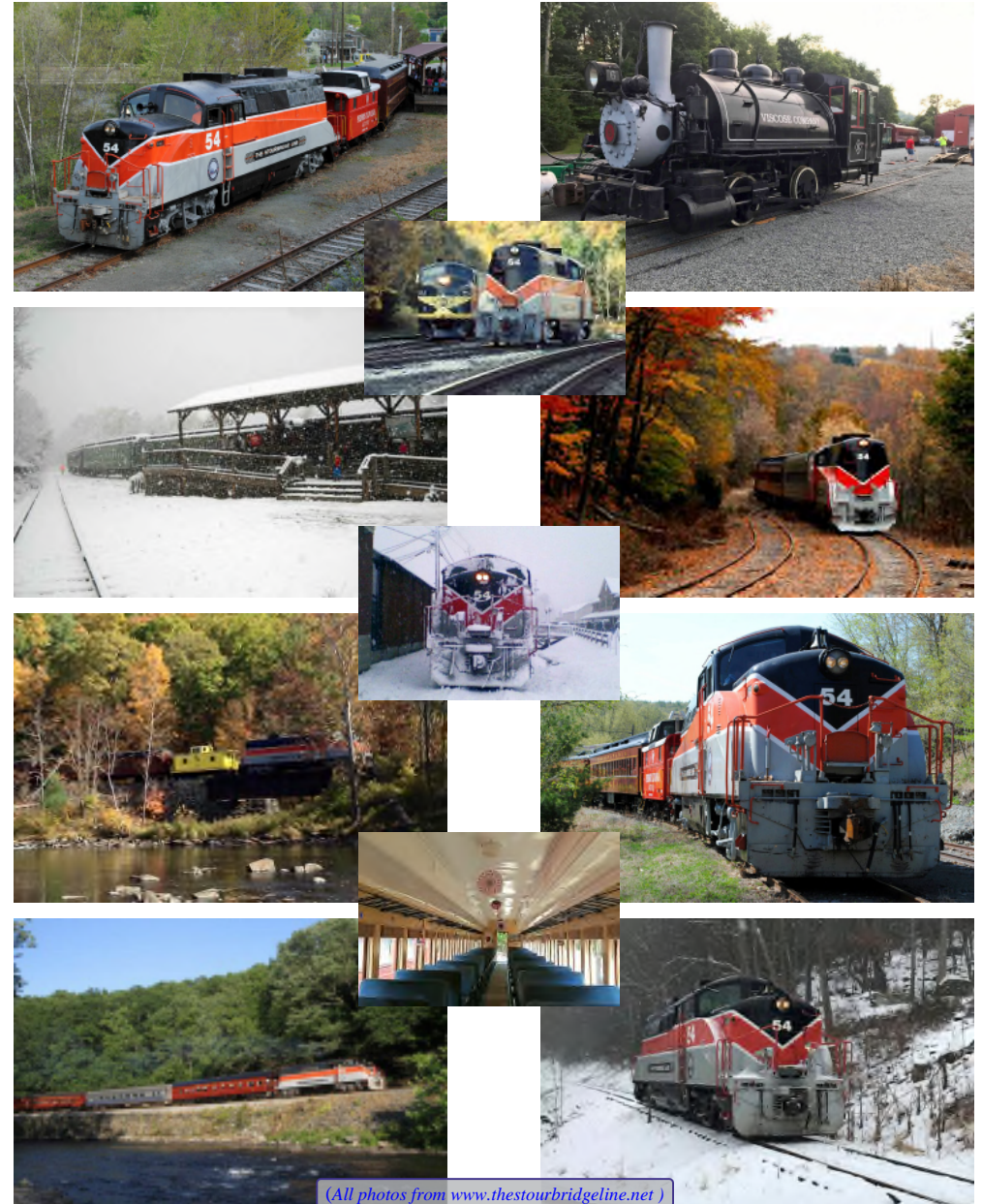
The 1895 Bradshaw's Timetable Guide shows the following level of service along the line.

MONDAY TO SATURDAY

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Dudley | 0803 | 0920 | 1035 | 1140 | 1310 | 1430 | 1605 | 1658 | 1835 |
| Great Bridge | 0810 | 0927 | 1042 | 1146 | 1317 | 1437 | 1612 | 1705 | 1842 |
| Swan Village | 0814 | 0931 | 1046 | 1150 | 1321 | 1441 | 1616 | 1709 | 1846 |
| West Bromwich | 0819 | 0937 | 1051 | 1154 | 1326 | 1446 | 1621 | 1714 | 1851 |
| Handsworth | 0824 | 0945 | 1056 | ✓ | 1331 | 1451 | 1626 | 1719 | 1856 |
| Soho & Winson Green | 0827 | ✓ | 1059 | ✓ | 1334 | 1454 | 1629 | 1722 | ✓ |
| Hockley | 0830 | ✓ | 1102 | 1201 | 1337 | 1458 | 1632 | 1725 | ✓ |
| Birmingham Snow Hill | 0835 | 0952 | 1107 | 1206 | 1342 | 1503 | 1637 | 1730 | 1901 |

THE OTHER STOURBRIDGE LINE ... IN PHOTOGRAPHS

The following photographs are taken from the Stourbridge Line website. As can be seen from these photos, the US line is nowhere near as picturesque as the section of our own Stourbridge line through Handsworth, Smethwick and Langley Green.



The full line from Honesdale to Lackawaxen was completed in 1868 and was used primarily for coal traffic. Although coal traffic declined in the 1930s, new local business took its place, warranting a five-day-a-week operation. In 1960, a merger saw the line transfer to the Erie Lackawanna Railroad, which unfortunately filed for bankruptcy on 26 June 1972, after Hurricane Agnes had caused damage amounting to \$2 million to another part of its network. To avoid abandonment of the line, Wayne County made plans to purchase the line, and in 1979 launched seasonal passenger excursions.

However, after a number of setbacks which included the destruction of a bridge by flood water in 2005, it was announced in December 2011 that the excursion services had ceased indefinitely.

Service was resumed by the Delaware Lackawaxen & Stourbridge Railroad Company on 9 May 2015, marketed as the Stourbridge line. The following is its mission statement as posted on its website at <https://www.thestourbridgeline.net/home.html>.

The Stourbridge Line is operated by the Delaware Lackawaxen & Stourbridge Railroad Company (DL&S), offering a seasonal schedule with limited weekday & weekend service as well as community related event trains from President's Day through the Fall Foliage Season. Enjoy twenty five miles of historic railroad winding through Northeastern Pennsylvania along the Lackawaxen River Valley. Experience the history & beauty of this ride on The Stourbridge Line.



So, if you are ever in the area and want to compare this Stourbridge Line with the real one, you know where to go. You never know, they might even have their own Stourbridge Line User Group!

| MONDAY TO SATURDAY | | |
|----------------------|------|------|
| Dudley | 2110 | 2305 |
| Great Bridge | 2117 | 2312 |
| Swan Village | 2121 | 2316 |
| West Bromwich | 2126 | 2321 |
| Handsworth | 2131 | 2326 |
| Soho & Winson Green | 2134 | ▼ |
| Hockley | 2137 | 2330 |
| Birmingham Snow Hill | 2142 | 2335 |

| SUNDAY | | | | | |
|--------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 0935 | 1135 | 1442 | 1620 | 2020 | 2205 |
| 0942 | 1142 | 1449 | 1627 | 2027 | 2212 |
| 0946 | 1146 | 1453 | 1631 | 2031 | 2216 |
| 0951 | 1151 | 1458 | 1636 | 2036 | 2221 |
| 0956 | 1156 | 1503 | 1641 | 2041 | 2226 |
| ▼ | 1159 | 1506 | 1644 | 2044 | 2229 |
| 1000 | 1202 | 1509 | 1647 | 2050 | 2235 |
| 1005 | 1207 | 1514 | 1652 | 2055 | 2240 |

| MONDAY TO SATURDAY | | |
|----------------------|------|-------------|
| Birmingham Snow Hill | 0705 | 0855 1015 |
| Hockley | 0709 | 0859 1019 |
| Soho & Winson Green | 0712 | 0902 1022 ▼ |
| Handsworth | 0716 | 0907 1027 |
| West Bromwich | 0722 | 0912 1033 |
| Swan Village | 0726 | 0916 1037 |
| Great Bridge | 0733 | 0923 1043 |
| Dudley | 0742 | 0930 1050 |

| SUNDAY | | | | | |
|--------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1100 | 1350 | 1500 | 1615 | 1735 | 1940 |
| 1104 | 1354 | 1504 | 1619 | 1739 | 1944 |
| ▼ | 1357 | ▼ | ▼ | 1742 | 1947 |
| 1109 | 1402 | 1510 | 1624 | 1746 | 1952 |
| 1114 | 1407 | 1515 | 1629 | 1751 | 1957 |
| 1118 | 1411 | 1519 | 1633 | 1755 | 2001 |
| 1123 | 1416 | 1525 | 1638 | 1800 | 2006 |
| 1130 | 1423 | 1532 | 1645 | 1806 | 2013 |

| MONDAY TO SATURDAY | | |
|----------------------|------|------|
| Birmingham Snow Hill | 2030 | 2325 |
| Hockley | 2034 | 2329 |
| Soho & Winson Green | 2037 | 2332 |
| Handsworth | 2042 | 2337 |
| West Bromwich | 2047 | 2343 |
| Swan Village | 2051 | 2347 |
| Great Bridge | 2056 | 2352 |
| Dudley | 2103 | 2400 |

| SUNDAY | | | | | |
|--------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 0800 | 1030 | 1355 | 1515 | 1900 | 2120 |
| 0804 | 1034 | 1359 | 1519 | 1904 | 2124 |
| 0807 | 1037 | 1402 | 1522 | 1907 | 2127 |
| 0812 | 1042 | 1407 | 1527 | 1912 | 2132 |
| 0817 | 1048 | 1412 | 1533 | 1918 | 2137 |
| 0821 | 1053 | 1416 | 1538 | 1923 | 2141 |
| 0826 | 1058 | 1422 | 1543 | 1928 | 2146 |
| 0833 | 1105 | 1430 | 1550 | 1935 | 2153 |

By 1922, the Monday to Saturday service remained largely the same with 13 trains from Dudley and 12 from Birmingham Snow Hill. However, Sunday services had been withdrawn. By 1932, the Monday to Saturday service had been drastically reduced with only 5 trains from Dudley (at 0703, 0727, 0905, 1300 and 1810) and 4 trains from Birmingham Snow Hill (at 1216, 1817, 1900 and 2301).

An ex-GWR "Flying Banana" railcar arrives at Swan Village with a service from Dudley



(T J Edgington)

After the second World War, service levels were improved and Sunday services restored. The 1950 timetable shows 13 trains from Dudley and 12 from Birmingham Snow Hill on Mondays to Saturdays, with 6 in each direction on Sundays. The same year saw Great Bridge station renamed to Great Bridge South to distinguish it from Great Bridge North station on the Walsall line.



West Bromwich station

(Michael Mensing)

Clockface hourly services, particularly at off-peak, were introduced in 1955 initially using ex-GWR "Flying Banana" railcars and later using first generation DMU railcars. From the late 1950s, a few services, mainly at peaks, stopped at Dudley Port Low Level and services at the station were improved from 1961 when nearly all services stopped there. By that time, 6 trains in each direction operated on Sundays, running non-stop between

Dudley and West Bromwich. However, by 1963, the service was cut back to run on Summer Sundays only – presumably for visits to Dudley Zoo. The final timetable operating from 9 September 1963 to 14 June 1964 was as follows :-

| MONDAY TO SATURDAY | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--|
| Dudley | 0659 | 0726 | 0815 | 0900 | 1000 | 1100 | 1210 | 1300 | 1400 | |
| Dudley Port Low Level | ▼ | ▼ | 0819 | 0905 | 1005 | ▼ | 1214 | 1305 | 1405 | |
| Great Bridge South | 0706 | 0733 | 0821 | 0907 | 1007 | 1104 | 1217 | 1307 | 1407 | |
| Swan Village | 0711 | 0738 | 0824 | 0910 | 1010 | 1108 | 1221 | 1310 | 1410 | |
| West Bromwich | 0716 | 0742 | 0828 | 0914 | 1014 | 1112 | 1224 | 1314 | 1414 | |
| Handsworth & Smethwick | 0721 | 0747 | 0832 | 0919 | 1019 | 1116 | 1228 | 1319 | 1419 | |
| Soho & Winson Green | 0724 | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | |
| Hockley | 0731 | 0751 | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | |
| Birmingham Snow Hill | 0736 | 0754 | 0838 | 0925 | 1025 | 1122 | 1234 | 1325 | 1425 | |

| MONDAY TO SATURDAY | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--|--|
| Dudley | 1500 | 1600 | 1706 | 1800 | 1900 | 2000 | 2100 | 2200 | | |
| Dudley Port Low Level | 1505 | 1605 | ▼ | 1805 | 1905 | 2005 | 2105 | 2205 | | |
| Great Bridge South | 1507 | 1607 | 1713 | 1807 | 1907 | 2007 | 2107 | 2207 | | |
| Swan Village | 1510 | 1610 | 1716 | 1810 | 1910 | 2010 | 2110 | 2210 | | |
| West Bromwich | 1514 | 1614 | 1720 | 1814 | 1914 | 2014 | 2114 | 2214 | | |
| Handsworth & Smethwick | 1519 | 1619 | 1725 | 1819 | 1919 | 2019 | 2119 | 2219 | | |
| Soho & Winson Green | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | | |
| Hockley | ▼ | ▼ | 1729 | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | | |
| Birmingham Snow Hill | 1525 | 1625 | 1734 | 1826 | 1925 | 2025 | 2125 | 2225 | | |

| SUNDAY (from 29 March 1964) | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Dudley | 1235 | 1400 | 1525 | 1700 | 1830 | 2010 |
| Dudley Port Low Level | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ |
| Great Bridge South | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ |
| Swan Village | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ |
| West Bromwich | 1246 | 1411 | 1537 | 1711 | 1841 | 2021 |
| Handsworth & Smethwick | 1250 | 1415 | 1541 | 1715 | 1845 | 2025 |
| Soho & Winson Green | 1253 | 1418 | 1545 | 1718 | 1848 | 2028 |
| Hockley | 1256 | 1421 | 1547 | 1721 | 1851 | 2031 |
| Birmingham Snow Hill | 1259 | 1424 | 1550 | 1724 | 1854 | 2034 |

THE OTHER STOURBRIDGE LINE

by Roger Davis

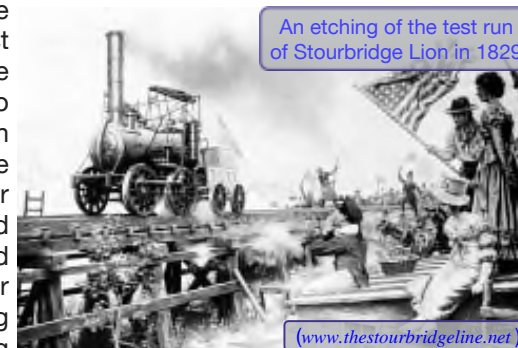


The town of Honesdale, Pennsylvania (population 4,480) is situated 106 miles from New York City and 3,376 miles from the town of Stourbridge, West Midlands. It is known as the Birthplace of America's Commercial Railroad and is now the headquarters of a tourist railway that operates over 25 miles of track from Honesdale to Lackawaxen, Pennsylvania along the valley of the Lackawaxen River.

This line is known as the Stourbridge Line despite its obvious remoteness from the town of the same name, and this is due to its original steam locomotive. The

Stourbridge Lion was manufactured in Bradley Road, Stourbridge by the firm Foster, Rastrick and Company in 1829. It was obtained by the Delaware & Hudson Canal Company, shipped in parts to New York in May 1829 and assembled at the West Point Foundry. It arrived in Honesdale in July 1829 for testing on the company's newly built track of about 3 miles. The locomotive performed well in its first test run on 8 August 1829, despite the scepticism of the huge crowd who witnessed the event in the expectation that anybody foolhardy to ride the contraption would surely meet their doom, but its 7.5 tons weight was found to be far too heavy for a line designed to carry 4 tons. Therefore, it was never used for its intended purpose of hauling coal wagons and, over the coming

decades, a number of parts were removed from the abandoned locomotive until only the boiler and a few other components remained. These were acquired by the Smithsonian Institution in 1890 and are currently on display at the B&O Railroad Museum in Baltimore.



An etching of the test run of Stourbridge Lion in 1829

(www.thestourbridgeline.net)

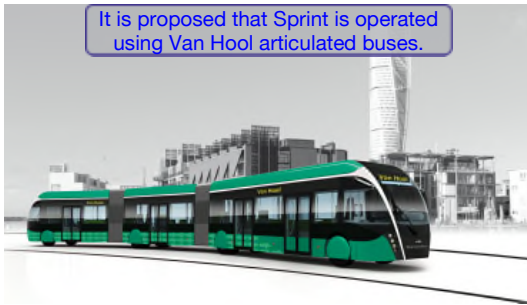


The replica Stourbridge Lion at Honesdale.

(www.thestourbridgeline.net)

In 1932, the Delaware & Hudson built its own replica of the *Stourbridge Lion* from plans that were made based on the parts remaining in existence, and this replica is now on display at the Wayne County Historical Society Museum. This museum is in a small brick building on Main Street, Honesdale, Pennsylvania, which was once the D&H Canal's company office, and is where the *Stourbridge Lion* began its inaugural run.

In the mix (or mess!) comes a new proposition to provide in-filling. This is called the “Sprint Bus”, not dissimilar to the “Bendy Bus” which has been rejected by Londoners. West Midlands Combined Authority is promoting Sprint as the magic solution to congestion but it is not without its own problems: Sprint requires road priority measures and elsewhere in the country, bus lanes have been either misused or removed altogether. The short term fix is not the long term solution.



Despite the vandalism of Dr. Richard Beeching, track beds of suburban railways still survive. Some of the Stourbridge Line railway stations could easily be plugged into Midland Metro, way down the line from The Hawthorns or Jewellery Quarter. Granted there has been some redevelopment of railway land but Metro is capable of street-running where a diversion is required.

My point is that we will never have a West Midlands Underground system due to the geology of the area and numerous abandoned mine shafts, dating back to the Industrial revolution. However, a West Midlands Overground is perfectly possible, building on the West Midlands railways. We cannot deny that Birmingham is a magnet for employment nor can we ignore the logistical findings of the “Movement for Growth” strategy. Instead, I believe that our Councillors should reconsider the modes of transport assigned to specific corridors. A little in-filling is required before progressing to the Metro extensions from Birmingham or Wolverhampton. The spider’s web is strongest at its centre.

The views of the author are from a personal perspective and are not necessarily those of SLUG officers.

ALL CHANGE AT ... LANGLEY GREEN
The changing scene at one of the Stourbridge line stations



| MONDAY TO SATURDAY | | SO | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Birmingham Snow Hill | 0737 | 0955 | 1055 | 1155 | 1215 | 1255 | 1355 | 1455 | 1555 |
| Hockley | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ |
| Soho & Winson Green | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ |
| Handsworth & Smethwick | 0743 | 1000 | 1100 | 1200 | 1221 | 1300 | 1400 | 1500 | 1600 |
| West Bromwich | 0749 | 1006 | 1106 | 1206 | 1226 | 1306 | 1406 | 1506 | 1606 |
| Swan Village | 0752 | 1010 | 1110 | 1210 | 1229 | 1310 | 1410 | 1510 | 1610 |
| Great Bridge South | 0755 | 1013 | 1113 | 1213 | 1233 | 1313 | 1413 | 1513 | 1613 |
| Dudley Port Low Level | ▼ | 1016 | 1116 | 1216 | ▼ | 1316 | 1416 | 1516 | 1616 |
| Dudley | 0800 | 1020 | 1120 | 1220 | 1239 | 1320 | 1420 | 1520 | 1620 |

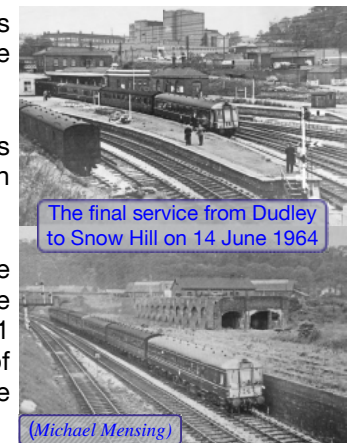
| MONDAY TO SATURDAY | | SX | | | | | | |
|------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Birmingham Snow Hill | 1658 | 1737 | 1815 | 1908 | 1955 | 2055 | 2155 | 2255 |
| Hockley | ▼ | 1740 | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ |
| Soho & Winson Green | ▼ | 1743 | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ |
| Handsworth & Smethwick | 1703 | 1747 | 1822 | 1914 | 2000 | 2100 | 2200 | 2300 |
| West Bromwich | 1709 | 1752 | 1828 | 1919 | 2007 | 2106 | 2206 | 2306 |
| Swan Village | 1713 | 1755 | 1831 | 1923 | 2010 | 2110 | 2210 | 2310 |
| Great Bridge South | 1716 | 1758 | 1834 | 1926 | 2013 | 2113 | 2213 | ▼ |
| Dudley Port Low Level | 1719 | ▼ | 1837 | 1929 | 2016 | 2116 | 2216 | 2316 |
| Dudley | 1723 | 1803 | 1841 | 1933 | 2020 | 2120 | 2220 | 2320 |

| MONDAY TO SATURDAY | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--|
| Birmingham Snow Hill | 1145 | 1310 | 1445 | 1610 | 1745 | 1920 | |
| Hockley | 1148 | 1313 | 1448 | 1613 | 1748 | 1923 | |
| Soho & Winson Green | 1151 | 1316 | 1451 | 1616 | 1751 | 1926 | |
| Handsworth & Smethwick | 1155 | 1320 | 1455 | 1620 | 1755 | 1930 | |
| West Bromwich | 1200 | 1325 | 1500 | 1625 | 1800 | 1935 | |
| Swan Village | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | |
| Great Bridge South | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | |
| Dudley Port Low Level | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | |
| Dudley | 1210 | 1335 | 1510 | 1635 | 1810 | 1945 | |

The service fell victim to the Beeching Report and was withdrawn on 15 June 1964, the same date as the line via Bumble Hole closed.

Today, even though Midland Metro line 1 passes through the site of Swan Village station, there is no sign that the station ever existed.

The route between Horseley Junction and Swan Village has disappeared, mainly under the A461 Great Bridge bypass (aptly named Great Western Way) and the A41 Black Country New Road. In this respect, Minister of Roads Transport Ernest Marples got his wish as the railway really was replaced by new road infrastructure.



NO LONGER STOPPING AT ... HANDSWORTH AND SMETHWICK
by John Warren

This is the third in a series of articles that looks at the stations between Birmingham Snow Hill and Worcester that have closed since 1960, working down the line from north to south.

HANDSWORTH & SMETHWICK

Handsworth and Smethwick station building



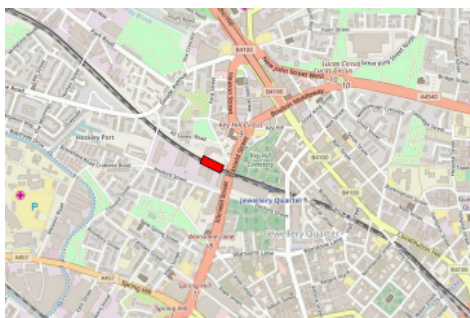
(Geoffrey Skelsey)

| | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Date Opened | 14 November 1854 |
| Final Passenger Services on | 4 March 1972 |
| Number of Platforms | 4 |
| Number of Trains (1959) | 130 (M-F), 134 (Sa), 76 (Su) |
| Number of Trains (1972) | 21 (M-F), 16 (Sa), 0 (Su) |

General view looking towards Snow Hill



(John Alsop)



Station Name : Handsworth and Smethwick (November 1854 - June 1965), Handsworth (June 1965 - March 1972)

Handsworth and Smethwick station was situated to the west of Booth Street in Handsworth. Entrance was via a courtyard that led up from Booth Street to the main station building situated on the north side of the station. The Midland Metro stop at Handsworth (Booth Street) partially occupies the site of the two platforms on the main line. This station was far more important than Hockley and Winson Green stations with many services from Snow Hill making this their first stop. The station's final hurrah came on 21 October 1990 when the down relief platform was used to pick up people walking the trackbed from Snow Hill. At that time, all platforms were intact, albeit without any buildings, but were swept away when the Jewellery Line was built. The original intention was to reopen Handsworth and Smethwick on the Jewellery Line, but this was shelved in favour of building a station to serve The Hawthorns just over ½ mile to the west, with the Metro stop provided instead.

IN FILLING
by Rob Hebron

Those of you who keep a personal diary will have already filled a few pages by now. Time passes swiftly. Why not turn back those pages to the inner cover? There is a good chance you may find the traditional London Underground map. This iconic diagram depicts the best network of light railways in the British Isles. Not only is the map easy to use, so are the underground trains which serve all the major destinations in London and its suburbs. The London Underground system enables local and cross city journeys to be made directly or with minimum connections. It is the model for all urban transit planners to follow.



The London Underground is the legacy of the Victorians and Edwardians and largely financed by private enterprise. That is not to say that the New Elizabethans haven't improved the network and the Jubilee Line is the best example. Putting aside detours on escalators, the Tube offers an efficient alternative to road transport in a very congested city.

What is the relevance of the Tube to Birmingham and the West Midlands? The fact is that there is no similar system for the Second City or large neighbouring towns. Even if we were to overlay the West Midlands train network map on that of the principal bus companies there would not be the overall coverage required day and night to make reasonable journeys without inconvenience.

Light rail and heavy rail alongside each other at Birmingham Snow Hill.



The nearest equivalent in the West Midlands to the London Underground is the Midland Metro light rail system, (often incorrectly termed a "tram" line). The singular line is all that exists because effectively, extensions have been (or will be) linear. Until Metro Line Two is operational in 2023, there is no network. What happens then? It appears that Birmingham will be the axis and future extensions will be to Digbeth, Birmingham Airport and Edgbaston. I am not criticising the importance of these destinations but elsewhere, such as Halesowen, there are no plans for Metro stations.