

Chester Station users learn about the Station's 170 year history and the campaign to commemorate Thomas Brassey, the unsung hero of Railway Engineering.



Peter Bolt, Stephen Langtree and John Whittingham with the TB Society Stand

On 26 July, 2018, Rail enthusiasts enjoyed a community day where they could learn all about the history of the city's railway station. The Chester Civic Trust, in partnership with the Thomas Brassey Society, took part in the Community Rail Day at the station in City Road which was a celebration of the transport hub's 170th anniversary.

There was a chance to meet local train operators, find out about the history of the station and join John Whittingham, a Chester Blue Badge guide, for a guided walk. There was also the chance to learn about and support the fundraising appeal by The Thomas Brassey Society to erect a permanent memorial, either a statue or other piece of public art, to commemorate Thomas Brassey.

The Appeal's first objective is to raise £5,000 as a "seedcorn fund" to design and erect information panels about Thomas Brassey at Chester Station in time for the 150th anniversary of his death in 2020. Steve Langtree, John Whittingham and Peter Bolt, representatives of the Society, generated a considerable amount of interest in the history of Brassey and the Station.

Brassey was "the world's foremost builder of railways in the 19th century". Born in Buerton on the outskirts of Chester in 1805, he went on to be responsible for building thousands of miles of railway in Britain, as well as France, Spain, Norway, Germany, Italy, Australia, India, Russia and Canada.

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He was also responsible for building great bridges and viaducts to carry these railways, including the two-mile Victoria Bridge across the St Lawrence River in Canada—the longest bridge in the world at the time.

Community Rail is a grassroots movement made up of volunteer partnerships and groups across the country. Members engage with communities and help local people get the most from their railways, promoting social inclusion and working alongside train operators to bring about improvements.

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