



## CROYDON & SOUTH LONDON BRANCH NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2017

Dear Member

Welcome to the first Branch Newsletter of the year. We are pleased to report that this season's programme is again providing lots of interest and good attendances. It was also very pleasing to see a decent turnout, though a little down on the previous year, at the excellent Branch Christmas Dinner.

The *Croydon Railbrains Competition*, which we hosted on 12 December, was a little disappointing for us. As in the previous year's Competition, the Mid-Hants team again stormed to a second half finish and took the trophy, with the LCGB and Norbury Club in equal second place and the RCTS a creditable last after a much improved second half. Thanks go to our team of Chris Meredith and Alan Walters.

At our first meeting in the New Year, on 9 January, we warmly welcomed Chris Green with *The Network SouthEast Story*. He provided, with the aid of a powerpoint presentation, a fascinating evening on the birth, development and eventual demise (with the onset on rail privatisation) of the network.

For the next meeting, on Monday 13 February, James Waite comes to us with his *Recent Travels in Five Continents*. James is a railway photographer whose hobby takes him far and wide. The evening should offer a satisfying experience for all those interested in the wider rail scene, and will provide a foil to the regionality of the previous meeting and the insularity of the one to follow.

Speaking of which, the main purpose of this Newsletter is to invite you to the *Branch Annual General Meeting and Photographic Competition* due to take place on Monday 13 March at our usual venue, the Small Hall at East Croydon URC, starting at 19.30. A copy of the Agenda for the AGM is enclosed. You should already have the Minutes of last year's AGM which were distributed with the Spring 2016 Newsletter last May. Spare copies will be available at the meeting but if you need to see one before then please get in touch with Peter Wilson.

There is a need to strengthen the Branch Committee. We would welcome one or two new Committee members to help run your Branch. If you are interested in offering yourself for election and wish to discuss the matter, please get in touch with Peter Wilson initially.

The Branch Photographic Competition, now in its tenth year, will follow the AGM. A copy of the Rules (unchanged from last year) is enclosed. Last year's winning entry was a somewhat racy photograph submitted by Chris Meredith. No doubt he will come up with something equally interesting this year. We are expecting other past winners and entrants to have another go, but we will very much welcome new competitors. As in previous years, a £10 voucher will be awarded to the winning entrant to spend on the Branch sales stand.

Following the Photographic Competition, Chris Meredith will give a short talk on the Sir Winston Churchill Funeral Train. His talk, which will not be illustrated, is based on the working file which is at present in Chris's possession. He produced an article on the subject for a recent issue of *Steam World* magazine. If you saw the article you may wish to come along on 13 March to 'meet the author'; if you did not, this will be your chance to catch up.

The current season of indoor meetings continues on Tuesday 21 March with our Spring afternoon meeting at Redhill Methodist Centre, Gloucester Road, Redhill, RH1 1BP. Starting at 14.00, Society member Terry Nicholls will present his illustrated talk *The Great Way Round: From Paddington to Penzance via Bristol*. Terry is a former railwayman and well-respected cameraman who has spent a lifetime photographing and filming railways, especially the GWR. If you have ever collected videos from B&R Video Productions you will probably have come across The Terry Nicholls Collection and will surely want to come along to hear the man himself.

On Monday 10 April we return to evening meetings in the Small Hall at East Croydon URC to welcome Patrick Griffin, Insurance and Information Manager for the Crossrail project, who will provide an up to the minute report on the *Elizabeth Line* which is currently making royal progress across London. Our indoor meetings season will finish on Monday 8 May when Tony Hillman will present, on behalf of the Bluebell Railway Archive, the *John J Smith Photographic Collection*. The Collection forms part of the Archive and contains several thousand photos of railway subjects taken mainly in Southern England from around 1950 to 1970. Copies of prints from this and other collections in the Archive are available to purchase (though not at the meeting!), so if you collect railway photos you might well find it beneficial to come along and see what the John J Smith Collection has to offer.

During this half of the season we will be taking the Branch sales stand again to Chiswick Town Hall, Heathfield Terrace, Chiswick, W4 4JN. This time, on Saturday 1 April between the hours of 11.00 and 15.00, we will be returning to the annual Transport Collectors' Market managed by the Irish Railway Record Society (London Area). As before, offers of help on the stand will be most welcome.

Finally, as in previous years, your Branch Committee will be arranging a series of outdoor events for the Summer months. Information on these will be available at the Branch AGM and full details will be included in the next Newsletter which is due to appear in May.

With all good wishes.

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