



## CROYDON & SOUTH LONDON BRANCH NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2020

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. Meetings have included an excellent presentation in October by John Barrance on *The West Highland Line* which drew our biggest audience of the season so far and was considered by many to have been one of the best talks the Branch has organised; and *A Different Point of View* in December when Steve Sedgwick showed other, more dramatic, ways of photographing trains than the three quarter front view in bright sunlight.

The Branch Christmas Dinner in December provided another opportunity for members to get together for an excellent meal and a convivial evening, and it was very pleasing to be able to welcome a new Society member along with a group of our regular diners. At our first meeting in the New Year, on 13 January, we warmly welcomed Brian Garvin with his presentation *Behind the Iron Curtain*.

For our next meeting, on Monday 10 February, we will welcome back, after an absence of several years, Brian Stephenson with images from his well known and highly regarded photographic collection in a presentation on *Boat Train Routes through Kent since the 1890s*. We could well see in this show an appearance of an engine which we will be seeing a lot more of at our Redhill meeting in March: 30850 *Lord Nelson*.

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 9 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. The Minutes of last year's AGM were distributed with the Summer 2019 Newsletter which went out in early September. Spare copies will be available at the meeting, but if you want to see one before then please get in touch with Peter Wilson.

There is, this year, an urgent need to strengthen the Branch Committee. We currently have four Committee members. However, our Branch Chairman, Chris Meredith, intends to step down after five years in the post. So, not only do we have our usual plea for one or two new Committee members, we have a real need to find a new Chairman. This is your Committee helping to run your Branch and take it forward, so please give consideration to becoming involved even in a small way. If you are interested in offering yourself for election to the Committee, particularly as Chairman, and wish to discuss the matter, please get in touch with Chris Meredith or Peter Wilson initially. Your interest will be greatly welcomed.

The Branch Photographic Competition, now in its thirteenth year, will follow the AGM. A copy of the Rules (unchanged from last year) is enclosed. Last year's Competition was won by Jeremy Harrison with his picture of 1450 and autococh 178 crossing Victoria Bridge on the Severn Valley Railway. The image can be seen on the publicity for our indoor meeting on 9 March, a flyer for which is enclosed. Jeremy and other past winners and entrants will no doubt be entering again this year, 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.

The evening will finish with Members' Slides and Digital Images. Here is another chance for you to demonstrate what you have been doing with your camera. If you have a small selection of images

on railway subjects that you would like to bring along please do so. This year we will give precedence to members' slides.

The current season of indoor meetings continues on Tuesday 17 March with our Spring afternoon meeting at Redhill Methodist Centre, Gloucester Road, Redhill, RH1 1BP. Starting at 14.00, Neil Kearns will bring us a presentation on *30850 Lord Nelson, its restoration and operation*. Neil has been actively involved with Eastleigh Railway Preservation Society for a long time and gives slide shows on their behalf. *30850 Lord Nelson* was, of course, built at Eastleigh Works (as E850) and was overhauled there in the 1990s. This promises to be a really interesting talk on a Southern engine which is still much loved on the Mid-Hants Railway.

On Monday 20 April we return to evening meetings in the Small Hall at East Croydon URC. Please note the date as it is later in the month than usual for us so as to avoid Easter. We are delighted that the Rail Accident Investigation Branch has kindly agreed to provide one of their Inspectors, Ian Capewell, to talk to us about *The Work of the RAIB*.

Our indoor meetings season will finish on Monday 11 May when Kim Winter, a Trustee of the War Office Locomotive Trust, returns with a presentation *Around the World with 155 Hunslet WD 4-6-0Ts*. This is the second part of a fascinating presentation he gave in November 2017, which included a selection of original photographs and films of narrow gauge locomotives used on the Western Front during the First World War, which came from archive material at the Imperial War Museum and the National Film Board of Canada, found during research he described as "Hunt the Hunslet".

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 14 March, we will be returning to the annual Transport Collectors' Market organised by the Irish Railway Record Society (London Area). This year the event will be open to the public between the hours of 10.30 and 15.00, so opening half an hour earlier than in previous years. As before, offers of help on the stand will be more than welcome.

You will be aware that the Branch issues vouchers for its sales stand as raffle and photo competition prizes, and at a recent meeting your Committee noted that some are long outstanding. To tidy up the Branch accounts, a decision was made that vouchers issued before the 2018-19 season (numbered up to 068) should be expired at the end of this season, i.e. after the May meeting; and those issued in the 2018-19 season (numbers 069-079), at the end of the financial year on 31 October. So if you have any such vouchers you have a chance to use them at coming meetings, buying something from the sales stand, before they expire!

Finally, as in previous years, your Branch Committee hopes to be able to arrange a number 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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