



MINUTES OF THE SOCIETY'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 74th Annual General Meeting held at the Hallmark Hotel, Midland Road, Derby on Saturday 24th April 2010. The Meeting commenced at 13.30 hours.

Present: Hugh Gould (President), John Redgate (Chairman), Alan Cooke (Secretary), Callum MacLeod (Managing Editor – *The Railway Observer*), Reg Wood (Treasurer), Gordon Davies (Branch Liaison Secretary), David Kelso (Publicity Officer), Terry Silcock (Librarian), David Jackman (Webmaster), Richard Morris, and Bob Ellison (Committee Members) and 69 other members giving a total of 80 members present.

1] Apologies for Absence: Apologies were received from 21 members.

2] Confirmation of the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held in Derby on 25th April 2009: Alan Cooke said that an amendment needed to be made under item 6] **Changes to the rules of The Railway Correspondence and Travel Society.** In paragraph two, line seven David Walker's membership number is quoted as 18418, this should be amended to 18498. Subject to this alteration the minutes were proposed for adoption by the Chairman John Redgate (13470), seconded by Tom Reardon (4441) with all present voting in favour. There were no matters arising.

3] Chairman's Address: The Chairman, John Redgate opened his address by welcoming everyone to the Society's 74th AGM. He expressed his appreciation at seeing so many here today to support this meeting. This one day event has been arranged through the efforts of Gordon Davies, Alan Cooke and David Kelso to whom we should express our collective thanks for arranging today's programme of events.

The only change on the MC during the past twelve months has been the recent co-option of Bob Ellison the Surrey Branch Treasurer and Secretary to the London and South Regional Group who has agreed to take on an Assistant Treasurer role supporting our Treasurer Reg Wood.

The Chairman then introduced the members of the MC and the President who travel far and wide to attend MC meetings coming from within the boundaries of 11 different Branches.

The MC is a very conscientious and hard working team who serve the membership with considerable energy, commitment, time and much effort so that the members can enjoy the continuing wide range of activities offered by the Society. However, there is a real danger that by trying to do too much we are putting an intolerable strain on certain roles and individuals involved in the management of the Society, and none more so than the Treasurer. To this end we need to try a different approach and bring in additional support to help the Treasurer. To achieve this objective we will be appointing two assistant treasurers, one is Bob Ellison who will look after the Branches and another member to assist with Publication sales and stock management once Reg has got to grips with identifying how he wants this latter role to be undertaken. However to make life a lot easier for the Treasurer and his assistants I appeal to all branches to ensure that all paperwork and returns are sent in completed correctly and on time.

Notable during the past twelve months we said farewell to Alan Sommerfield, Ken Wilson, and Arthur Clark. It was with some shock we heard about the tragic road accident on 20th March which resulted in the death of Steven Machell the Secretary of the Furness Lakes and Lune Branch and his wife Joan. This loss will be keenly felt by the Branch as for some years Steven had been both

Chairman and Treasurer. Following a period of recent ill health George Staddon has stood down after some 35 years of providing Scottish notes to the RO as well as being an Ed Rep. Finally , Malcolm Riley resigned from the Society after many years of service as Branch Outdoor Fixtures Secretary and in addition as Secretary of the West Riding Branch.

There is no further news to report as regards the reinstatement of our locomotive 60001. The MC is now looking to seek an alternative operator who would be prepared to name a loco after the Society's in house magazine.

Until the end of March 2010 we have recruited 63 new members as compared with 46 at the same time last year. The numbers were boosted by a new initiative launched at the Glasgow model railway exhibition in February where the Scottish Branch enrolled 18 new members. We are going in the right direction.

Due to the financial strength of the Society the MC agreed at its March meeting to allocate a further 8 pages to the June and October issues of the RO so we may exceed last year's total of 700 pages. When Callum took over initially as Acting Editor from the June 2006 Edition the RO was running at a total of 648 pages per year and since that time we have seen a 10% increase in the size of the RO. Callum has done a great job with the RO since that time initially with Keith Brown as his Deputy and now with David Bird. Therefore, it was with some sadness that Callum informed the MC in February of his intention to stand down after the May 2011 RO has been produced. However, the search is now on for a new RO Editor and we hope that we have suitable volunteers willing to take on this role. With change comes change and no doubt a new editor will have ideas on this.

We have recently launched a Library Sub Committee which held its first meeting on 23rd March. The objectives are many, but due to the growth of the Library under Terry's enthusiastic stewardship we have reached a time to evaluate the purpose and scope of our Library in the 21st century. A team of seven to eight members will be working on this and report back to the MC later this year. We had been discussing with Brunel University the possibility of combining our respective Library's however due to cut backs in higher education funding this option has been recently aborted.

We successfully introduced a Society Membership card during the 2009 renewals process. This has served us well and a new format of membership card will be introduced later this year, which in addition will feature the British Transport Police phone number on the back. At the closure of the 2010 renewals period the number of non renewals and resignations were only 17 higher than 2009 at 148. Much hard work is undertaken on our behalf by Steve Ollive and Richard Morris to whom I extend my thanks on behalf of all the membership.

The distribution of a Wills & Bequests Advice to Members in the April 2009 RO has resulted in 15 responses being received to date.

Our next publication will be a book on 'Armstrong Whitworth, A Pioneer of World Diesel Traction' written by the late Brian Webb who was *also* the author of Lord Carlisle's Railways. This will be a joint publication with Lightmoor Press and the book should be *published in September just before* the Officers Conference takes place *at Swindon* in October.

The Chairman closed by paying tribute to the members of the MC for all their efforts and hard work over the last 12 months. In addition he extended his personal thanks to all Branch, Society Officers and RO Editors stating that it's the team effort that makes our society so successful. It is thanks to all your efforts that we have a Society that continues to flourish.

4] President's Address: The president, Hugh Gould opened his address by saying that he was glad to be here at Derby and continued to obtain enjoyment from his presidency with the role becoming better and better.

He said that he visited eleven branches in the last year, all visits were enjoyable and he was full of admiration for what the branch committees had managed to accomplish.

There is a colossal amount of work being undertaken by Society Officers, and that he was in awe of what had been achieved which is amply demonstrated by the excellent standard of the RO. But this is being undertaken by too few people and some branches need more help. He commended helping to run the Society and echoed Terry Silcock's comment that he obtained far more from his society membership since he became involved.

He closed by stating his delight with the new initiatives that had been introduced by the Development SC in the last twelve months which indicated a very healthy society of which he was proud to be president.

5] Adoption of Management Committee Reports and Accounts: These were published in the Special Supplement for the AGM that accompanied the April 2010 RO.

5a] Questions Relating to the Report on Activities and Administration – None.

5b] Questions Relating to the Financial Report: David Cole (4799) asked if any attempt had been made to negotiate downwards the 5% levy on all cardnet transactions. Reg Wood replied that this is one of the priorities that he needs to review. There are complexities with dealing the bank and its disparate functions scattered over different parts of the country as well as the dealing with a number of different officers with cardnet machines. David then asked if we are charged to pay in cheques, Reg replied that we are 70 pence per cheque. Peter Fox (8343) asked whether we actually did pay 5% per transaction, Reg replied it was 4%, Peter urged him to try and get the levy reduced as a matter of urgency.

5c] Questions & Comments Relating to the *Railway Observer*. David Tyreman (7972) noted that with the greater number of pages and the AGM Supplement that the currently available easibinders were now not large enough. Gordon Davies (17822) replied that at the current rate of sales he expected them to be out of stock towards the end of the year at which point more suitable replacements will be ordered.

Howard Turner (4620) said that he had been taking the RO since 1950 and had always thoroughly enjoyed it. However he did not like the current use of small photographs. Callum Macleod (12817) replied that using full size pictures throughout would mean a reduction in the amount of text that could be included. He added that since 2007 all pictures of groups have been used two column widths but generally portraits would use a single width.

John Champion (5669) asked whether it would be possible to include the names of all those in group photographs. Callum replied that space is the usual constraint and sometimes the names are not included in the captions supplied with the picture.

Peter Fox (8343) said the caption relating to the picture of the A4 Pacific on the front cover of the March RO had minimal information. Callum replied that all the caption detail received was included while David Goddard (21347) added that the location was three miles north of Ely. David Kelso (4827) said that the captions provided with the images submitted to the RO were a regular problem, normally he receives 90 a month, and some contained minimal information while others were six lines long. He urged all those submitting images for consideration for the RO to refer to the published guideline for submitting images to the RO.

Geoff Adams (18785) asked whether consideration had been given to covering the notes on the current railway network on a TOC rather than a regional basis. Callum replied that this suggestion had been fully discussed by the editorial team but was seen as too difficult to implement; for instance the networks operated by some of the TOCs cover a wide geographical area.

David Cole (4799) congratulated the editorial team on the change in colour of the cover.

Hugh Ballantyne (4717) suggested that pictures from the Photographic Portfolio be re-introduced to the RO. John Redgate replied that currently very little is received and the editorial team would be delighted to publish all that they receive from the members of the Photographic Portfolio.

Adoption of the Reports was proposed by David Goddard (21347), seconded by David Smith (5797) and carried unanimously.

Adoption of the Financial Report was proposed by Tom Reardon (4441), seconded by Bob Ballard (10372) and carried unanimously.

6] Election of Management Committee Officers: The Chairman announced that he had received nominations for the following Officers to serve on the Management Committee.

For one year:

Managing Editor – Railway Observer **Callum Macleod**

For three years:

Treasurer

Reg Wood

Publicity Officer

David Kelso

Proposed by Paul Clark (20204) and seconded by Rodney Allen (8149).

There being no others the nominations were carried unanimously.

7] Appointment of Auditors: John Redgate (13470) proposed and Peter Brown (10201) seconded that Richardson, Watson and Co. be appointed as Auditors for the Financial Year 1st November 2009 to 31st October 2010.

8] Date and Venue for the 2011 AGM: Alan Cooke, (17050) announced that the 2011 AGM weekend would be hosted by the North East Branch. This was to be over the weekend of 15th to 17th April with the AGM itself to be held on 16th April. A full programme of visits has been arranged for the weekend. The hotel at which we will be based is the Caledonian Hotel, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne which was we had last used for the Society AGM in 2000.

9] Any Other Business: David Tyreman (7972) suggested that an afternoon meeting be held in the Manchester area. John Redgate replied that meetings in this area had been under discussion for some time but there was a relatively small number of members in around Manchester and there were a number of competing railway societies in the area.

Brian Myland (6327) urged that changes are made to the RO to make it more attractive to a younger age group. John Redgate replied that there is no easy answer and is largely dependent on who volunteers to help with running the magazine. The railway industry is constantly changing and the RO will always reflect these changes. He went on to say that the Regional and Branch meetings are useful forums for new ideas while the website could be used to recruit younger web correspondents. Max Birchenough (10893) added that the internet had changed the way information is exchanged and shared and that the RCTS website could be used to tap into this. David Jackman (16198) agreed that this was the way to go but does need moderation.

David Cole (4799) expressed a vote of thanks on behalf of everybody present to the Management Committee and to all Society Officers and especially to John Redgate for running the meeting so smoothly.

Gordon Davies announced that the Annual Members' Weekend would be held during the weekend of 22nd – 24th October 2010 at the Marriot Hotel Swindon. Further announcements would be made about the programme for the weekend in the RO.

The Meeting Closed at 14.40

Alan Cooke
Society Secretary