



MINUTES OF THE SOCIETY'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 78th Annual General Meeting held at the Welcome Centre,
Coventry on Saturday 12th April 2014
The Meeting Commenced at 13.30hrs

Present: Hugh Gould (President); Gordon Davies (Chairman); Bob Green (Secretary); Mike Robinson (Managing Editor – The Railway Observer); Reg Wood (Treasurer); Alan Cooke (Branch Liaison Secretary); David Kelso (Publicity Officer); David Pick and David Goddard (Committee Members).

60 members registered their attendance and the meeting total was therefore 69 of which 6 were attending for the first time.

- 1. Apologies for Absence:** Management Committee Members John Redgate, Richard Morris and David Jackman apologised for their absence. 35 members also submitted their apologies.
- 2. Confirmation of 77th AGM held in Coventry on 13th April 2013:** There were no amendments to the minutes. Chairman Gordon Davies (17822) proposed that they be adopted and Tom Reardon (4441) seconded the motion. All members voted favourably. There were no matters arising.
- 3. Chairman's Address:** Chairman Gordon Davies (17822) welcomed all to the 78th Annual General Meeting at this new venue – The Welcome Centre Coventry. 2013 has been a busy year which has seen the introduction of a digital version of "The Railway Observer" that now gives members the option to either receive the current paper version or take up the digitised version at a reduced rate. Subscription renewal by Direct Debit has also been introduced and the three year membership category is to be withdrawn. In the December Railway Observer it was announced that Network Rail has agreed to name one of its Class 43 power cars "The Railway Observer". However progress became delayed as Network Rail was in the process of renegotiating its locomotive leasing contract. Now this has been cleared the nameplates have been cast and a naming ceremony is to be held in Derby, probably sometime in May. Some of our collection of steam age nameplates have been placed on long term loan at various preservation sites around the country which is excellent publicity for the Society. In January this year the Management Committee extended the "Branch Recruitment Initiative" for a further year at £16 for new, and lapsed members who might wish to re-join. Since January this year 31 new members have been recruited. Last year the initiative brought in 59 enrolments out of which the Hitchin Branch, with a contribution of 12, was the most successful of our Branches. Conscious of the need to attract younger recruits the Management Committee has extended the recruitment campaign to attract potential members biased towards the digitised version of "The Railway Observer" for the sum of £12. At the next Management Committee in June further ideas will be discussed in the drive to attract the younger railway enthusiast. Things look extremely positive in relation to the siting of the new library and archive at Leatherhead and whilst consultations continue to be held with Southern Railway and the Railway Heritage Trust an announcement on the final outcome is expected before the end of this year. In the autumn of last year the Volume 1 of the LMS Class 5 book was launched which has been written by John Jennison who is now busy preparing Volume 2. It is expected to be published next year. In the rapidly changing world of Information Technology it has been

identified that our current website, which has been in service since 2006 and based on software technology from that period, will no longer be able to handle features the Society plans to introduce in the future. As a result a project to be known as the 'Web 4 Project' is being initiated aimed at producing a new website employing modern technology. It will be overseen by the Development Sub-Committee and engineered by a sub-group comprising of no more than five members. Whilst the current website remains up and running, and to assist David Jackman, Jack Knights (21634) has been appointed Assistant Webmaster.

The Chairman thanked all of his colleagues on the Management Committee, Society Officers, RO Editors and Sub-Committee members for all of their hard work throughout the past year. Also a special thanks to both Bob Ellison (Assistant Treasurer Branch Finances) and Richard Morris (Membership Secretary) who this year have stood down from the Management Committee. Their work in assisting with the running of the Society over a number of years is greatly appreciated. However it is to the members who continue to support the Society that extended thanks should be given who in so doing make the RCTS "Britain's Leading Railway Society".

A special tribute was then paid by the Chairman to member Eric Palmer (3919) who in recognition of his outstanding work and allegiance to the Society over many years was made an Honorary Vice President. His work has resulted in the setting up of a number of branches and he has also served as Chairman of the Northampton and Ipswich branches, the Publications Sub-Committee and Management Committee as well as the Four Societies Working Party. All have experienced his valued contributions and he continues to serve the Society as Chairman of the influential Development Sub-Committee. The award is richly deserved.

As is customary the Chairman introduced the members of the Management Committee and as a final act in his address paid a warm tribute and thanks to Society President Hugh Gould who is retiring after 22 years. Hugh was presented with an engraved clock as a token of the Society's appreciation for his long and loyal service to the Society.

- 4. President's Address:** Following the previous announcements that he would be retiring from his position as President Hugh Gould opened his address by informing the membership that he departs with mixed feelings. Hugh commented that he was very pleased to be presented with his gift which will take pride of place in his home. This, his 22nd AGM as President, is not be the last that he will attend as it is his intention to be at as many AGM's and Members' Weekends as possible. Having no intention of simply vanishing from view he described his 22 years as President as a marvellous experience. Throughout the last year he has met many of his old friends and although being out and about has not had his camera on his shoulder. His local branch at Shenfield is now likely to see more of him.

On his departure from office he believes the Society to be in a very strong and best ever position, and furthermore is a super Society with lots to do and see. With a very bright future ahead he finished by giving both the Society and its members his very best wishes.

- 5. Adoption of Management Committee Reports and Accounts:** These were published in the special supplement for the AGM that accompanied the April 2014 RO. The Chairman thanked the various Management Committee and Officers of the Society who have submitted the reports.

a) Questions Relating to the Report on Activities and Administration: None.

b) Questions Relating to the Financial Report: None.

- c) Questions and Comments Relating to the "Railway Observer":** Tom Reardon(4441) offered his full support and congratulations to the Managing Editor for the improvements that have been made to the RO.

d) Questions Relating to Other Reports: Callum Macloed (12817) sought assurances that safety precautions at the proposed new Leatherhead Library/Archive facility had been checked. The Chairman, in response, advised that the internal design work had not yet been finalised but Health and Safety aspects have to be given full and due consideration. Should Callum wish to inspect and advise on this his input would be welcomed. Under the Publications banner David Tyreman (7972) informed the meeting that he believed there to be a number of errors in the recent book on the Class 5's. The Chairman commented that in a volume of this size which contains thousands of pieces of data it is possible that some minor inaccuracies might be present. Being in possession of these details he was informed by the Chairman that the information has already been forwarded to author John Jennison and if necessary some form of errata may be issued in the future.

Callum Macleod (12817) proposed that the reports be adopted. Seconded by John Archer (8569) the motion was carried unanimously.

Adoption of the Financial Report was proposed by Bob Ballard (10372) and seconded by Mike Green (9297). Again 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 as follows:

For 3 years:

Chairman:	Gordon Davies
Committee Members:	David Kelso
	David Pick

All three nominees were proposed by David Walker (18498) and seconded by Bob Barby (5843).

As no other nominations had been received the proposal was therefore carried.

- 7. Appointment of Auditors:** Chairman Gordon Davies (17822) proposed and Tom Reardon (4441) seconded that Richardson, Watson & Co be re-appointed as Auditors for the financial year 1st November 2014 to 31st October 2015. This was approved unanimously.
- 8. Date and Venue for 2015 AGM:** This will take place on 11/18 April 2015 and most probably would be held once again at The Welcome Centre, Coventry.
- 9. Any Other Business:** Irene Rabbitts (20072) gave details of this year's Members' Weekend which is to be based at hotels in Llandudno on 24-26 October. The event will principally focus on the Welsh Highland and Ffestiniog Railways, whilst the Great Orme tramway will be visited on the Sunday afternoon following the Officers' Conference.

Ted Vaughan (18410) advised the attending members that he was in possession of a number of artistic type line drawings of locomotives. Anyone who might be interested in such items should contact him.

Bob Ballard (10372) made secretaries aware of changes to the recruitment pack membership application forms and the new sales leaflets that form part of the packs.

John Dixon (19507) raised the subject of payments to the Society by Debit/Credit card. Gordon Davies replied that this is being looked at by the Publications Sub-Committee. Jack Knights (21634) commented that payments can already be made via PayPal which is available on the Website. Cheques however are still acceptable.

The Meeting closed at 14.35hrs.

Bob Green
Society Secretary