



CROYDON & SOUTH LONDON BRANCH NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2022

Dear Member

Welcome to the latest Croydon & South London Branch Newsletter.

During its preparation, we were deeply saddened, as no doubt you were, by the news that Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II had died, on Thursday 8 September. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family; and particularly with her heir, now proclaimed our new monarch His Majesty King Charles III.

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the formation of the Croydon & South London Branch: our first meeting was held in September 2002. The first twenty years of the Branch's existence have seen it hold many interesting meetings and other events, and overcome a number of challenges – culminating in the suspension of face-to-face meetings as Covid-19 struck, which led to the Branch being a Society pioneer in holding meetings via Zoom. However, with the abatement of the pandemic, we have resumed face-to-face meetings in Croydon and Redhill, which we hope will continue for many years.

An especially warm welcome if you are a new member, who has joined the Society in recent months and been 'allocated' to the CSL Branch. We look forward to seeing you at one of our coming meetings. Although you have been allocated to this Branch for administration purposes, you are perfectly welcome to attend meetings arranged by any Society branch, or those organised nationally, in particular the programme of 'National Zoom' meetings, held every month: details are on the Society website www.rcts.org.uk.

If you provided the Society with your e-mail address, you will have already been invited by Jeremy Harrison, the CSL Branch Treasurer and Web Co-ordinator, to join the Branch's e-mail group, and if you have done so, you will be receiving this Newsletter by e-mail.

The Branch e-mail list, run via the groups.io service, is used to send out Branch Newsletters, notices of our and neighbouring branch activities, any last minute changes to the advertised programme, and other information of railway interest, until you unsubscribe (there is an unsubscription link in every e-mail).

We would encourage any of our CSL Branch members who have received this Newsletter by post and have the technical means to do so, or can make arrangements with someone else to do so, to ask Jeremy for an invitation to join the CSL Branch e-mail list, by sending an e-mail, including your Society membership number, to him at croydon.web@rcts.org.uk

Like most Society branches, September sees the start of our new season of activities - our twenty-first - and the Branch Committee is busy working on a programme of indoor meetings which we hope you will find attractive, entertaining and enjoyable. The Committee has decided that, following the return to face-to-face Branch meetings earlier this year, starting with the Branch AGM Evening in April, we should proceed on the basis that physical meetings would become the norm from the start of the new 2022-23 season. The Committee has, however, agreed that our Branch meetings in January and February 2023 - the depths of winter - would not be face-to-face, but online meetings using the Zoom platform. Zoom has served the Branch and, indeed, the Society, well in maintaining contact with existing members and attracting new ones during the period of the Covid-19 pandemic. We hope that by offering online evening meetings in the darkest months of the year we can continue to bring some comfort to those who became Zoom meeting devotees during

that time. They may be preferable to braving the wintery weather and travelling by public transport to and from real evening meetings in Croydon in January and February. We shall see.

All our face-to-face evening meetings will be held on the Second Tuesday of each month in the Small Hall of the East Croydon URC, Addiscombe Grove, Croydon, CR0 5LP, starting at 19.30 and finishing at about 21.30 in time for us to clear the building by 22.00. Our afternoon meetings, again face-to-face, will take place at Redhill Methodist Church, Gloucester Road, Redhill, RH1 1BP, starting at 14.00 and finishing by 16.30.

The CSL Branch Programme for the first half of the 2022-23 season, although not yet complete, is looking like this:

Tuesday 13 September 2022 in Croydon: *Remembering the end of Southern Steam - a personal view 50 years on.* A presentation by Des Shepherd.

Tuesday 20 September 2022 in Redhill (afternoon meeting): *30850 Lord Nelson - its restoration & operation.* presentation by Neil Kearns. We are delighted that we can at last welcome Neil. We were originally ready to greet him at Redhill in March 2020, but this meeting had to be cancelled at the last moment, when the first Covid-19 lockdown was introduced. Neil's presentation is all on conventional slides, so not suitable for an online Zoom delivery.

Tuesday 11 October 2022 in Croydon: *The Masked Gicer 2020-2022.* A presentation by Simon Colbeck, which might just strike a familiar chord with members and visitors.

Tuesday 8 November 2022 in Croydon: Being arranged.

Tuesday 13 December 2022 in Croydon: *The Work of the RAIB.* A presentation by Ian Capewell, Inspector, Rail Accident Investigation Branch. Ian is another speaker who we are really pleased to be able to welcome at last: he was originally booked for April 2020 but, again, had to cancel for Covid-19 lockdown reasons. Although invited to give his presentation on Zoom, Ian has much preferred to wait for an opportunity to deliver it in person.

We are very much aware that Covid-19 is still around and a concern for many people, so, for the first few meetings in the new season, we would expect attendees to try to maintain an element of social distancing in the meeting room, to bring hand sanitiser if they wish and to wear a face covering if they feel more comfortable with one. We expect to provide some refreshments during the usual half time break, but attendees are welcome to bring their own flask of tea or coffee or a bottle of water or soft drink if they wish. We also plan to have a small Branch sales stand with a few second hand books and unused copies of some RCTS publications. These will include, although possibly not at the Croydon meeting on 13 September, the Society's latest title in the LMS series, *The LMS Royal Scot 4-6-0s*. Copies are available to Society members at £25.00 (full price £29.95p).

Finally, we are planning to return to the Porter & Sorter Public House (by East Croydon station) this year for a Branch Christmas evening meal. The proposed date is Tuesday 6 December. Please pencil it in your diary if you are interested in attending. Full details, with booking arrangements, will be included in the Autumn Newsletter, due in early November.

In the meantime, we wish you well.

Peter Wilson
Branch Secretary and Exhibitions Officer
Tel.: 01737 355150
e-mail: croydon@rcts.org.uk

Chris Meredith
Branch Chairman
Tel: 020 8660 9237
e-mail: croydonchairman@rcts.org.uk