

THE RAILWAY CORRESPONDENCE AND TRAVEL SOCIETY

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Steve Ollive
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9th June 1997

Dear Steve

BRANCH NEWS LETTER

I have seen Eric's letter of 20th May and agree with his approach as to content, I was particularly taken with his enthusiastic style. Herewith are my thoughts for discussion. They are not in any coherent order so paragraphs are numbered to ease reference.

2. I understand that it is the practise to address the circulars personally to the Branch Secretary in the form of a letter. I see no need for this, indeed, it could be counter-productive. It has always been said that some Branch Secretaries take the circular as a personal letter to them and file it away, presumably in their wall safe to which only they have the combination, and the rest of the Committee, are left in blissful ignorance of matters which concern them. These are intended for the whole Committee and it seems sensible that they are retitled **BRANCH NEWS LETTER** (as Eric has done) and contain just news and information; something on the lines of a good parish magazine. I wonder if, rather than use a letter heading, a distinctive banner heading would be a good idea. If a personally addressed letter is required, and I am unconvinced that it is, it should be a covering note on the lines of:-

"I enclose the xxxxxx issue of the Branch News Letter.

Please pass it around your Branch Committee".

3. In my opinion that the News Letter should be the principle, if not the only, link between 'Headquarters' and the Branches. From time to time Society Officers need to circulate Branches, whether it be new restrictions on visits, new publications, special offers on publications or whatever; I am thinking here particularly of Peter Davies recent letter to Branches. All this could and should be included in the News Letter. This will require input from other Officers and, possibly, more frequent and regular issues and a formal system of Press Days.

4. Bearing in mind the recent hiatus over an overseas tour the News Letter could, and should, carry notes of official (Government) regulations and legal requirements that affect the Society and/or its activities. There remains the possibility that there may be need to prove that the actions of a Branch are against MC advice and instructions.

5. As Branches are supposed to be self-supporting some advice as to how to raise funds might be appropriate. From what I have heard some Branches expect members to make a larger donation towards meeting costs than visitors. This is hardly an aid to recruitment as it negates the benefits of membership.

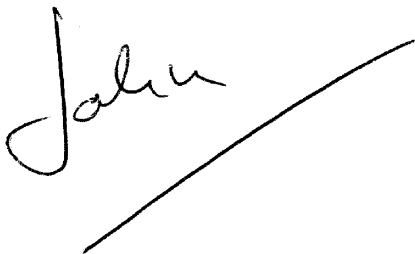
6. Branches might be invited to have some input into the News Letter. Examples are their experiences of speakers, who to avoid and who to invite. Notifications of members book collections for disposal, some Branches may like to take some for their sales stands. Suggestions for visits to non-National Railways installations based on their experience, who to approach etc.

7. If Branches were required to circulate other Branches via the News Letter the Branch Organisation Secretary/MC might have some idea and/or control over what was being circulated.

8. Is there really any point in repeating the "Adverts" each time. Certainly they do not need the prominence they get, even "The Times" took the small ads. off the front page!

9. No doubt other thoughts will emerge in discussion. A copy of this goes to Eric.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John". Below the signature is a long, straight diagonal line extending from the bottom left towards the middle right of the page.