

NEWSLETTER TO SOCIETY OFFICERS

Firstly may I apologise for not having sent out a newsletter earlier in the year, but I have been extremely busy at work, to the extent that I have only just finished producing the minutes of the Officers Conference, copies of which are enclosed. I shall be travelling to various countries over the next six weeks, so will not be at home much until the end of June.

Action Points from the Conference Minutes

Following the Officers Conference the Management Committee have had three committee meetings during which various matters have been discussed that were raised at Bristol. To summarise I have listed the actions by section in the minutes:

Section 6: Matters arising:

Progress is still continuing on the matter of Direct Debits, some obstacles have still to be overcome, and if successful, details will be circulated as soon as possible.

Section 7: Local Conferences:

Action 1) The Management Committee would like to see the Internet project developed, advertising given greater impact and believe that one way forward is to create the post of Information Officer to act as a direct liaison with the media. We would like to see ideas from the Branches – **please discuss at area conferences.**

Action 2) A letter has recently been sent out by Peter Davies about the new Computer based preferred letter heading, please use this wherever possible when generating Society correspondence on a computer. In addition we will be arranging for badges to be produced using this version of the RCTS logo.

Action 3) The Management Committee feel that smaller branded items for sale are not really feasible. However if any Branch wishes to develop any ideas in this vein we will support them, provided that the development is put to the Management Committee for approval through Bob Ballard.

Action 4) The Management Committee have taken on board comments made about communication with the membership and are looking at ways to improve the situation.

Action 5) Following review of what has been said in the past about funding for local conferences, we wish to re-iterate that as far as possible we would like to see the Branches involved in the area meeting to fund the event between themselves. However, we also want to ensure that all Branches attend, so anybody feeling that they cannot fund the activity from within their Branch should contact John Redgate who will arrange for suitable funding to be made available.

Section 8: Has our Society a future:

Action 2) The Management Committee believe that the Society should be represented at more railway launches, and would like the area meetings to try to set up local lines of communication so that the Society does get invited to these activities and then report them in the RO as was shown with the recent article on the naming of 86245 at Glasgow Central. Any other ideas from the area meetings would be welcome. We shall also be reviewing any communication lines that already exist.

Action 3) Members will have seen the letter from Rodney Liscenden regarding the review of the Society Image on page 177 of the May R.O., we hope for a good response.

Action 4) The Management Committee do not believe that a salaried person should be employed, however, we may seek specialist help as required.

Action 5) With regard to the idea of a think tank, the Management Committee believe that this should be formed from representatives of the area groups meeting together, taking ideas to / from the Branches via the area meetings, the Management Committee and the Officers Conference.

Action 6) The Management Committee keep the idea of encouraging younger enthusiasts to join the Society in their minds whenever discussing Society matters. We also believe that the Internet will help in this, we would also like to see this thought at the forefront of any Committee meetings and area group meetings, it involves us all!

Section 12: Publications

Action 1) The Management and Publications committees are trying to encourage single topic manuscripts, we would like to see all officers mentioning this to members, and raising it at Branch meetings.

Action 2) The same comments apply as with action 1.

Action 3) With regard to new Society outlets, the Management Committee rely heavily on local knowledge within branches. One idea that we would like to investigate would be the use of the Internet site.

Branch Officer and Society Officer actions

I hope that all of these actions will be discussed at Branch Committee meetings and at the area group meetings, with a view to a plethora of ideas and actions being presented at this year's Officers Conference.

Branch Funds donated to Central Funds

Once again many thanks to all those Branches, who over recent times have made donations to the central funds. All of these contributions are gratefully received and put to good use. Comments have been received that the general membership do not hear what these monies are put towards. We are now publishing details of what has been done, one example of which is the new library computer, as detailed on page 174 of the April R.O.

New ways to recruit members

In the past the Society have encouraged members to individually try to recruit new members. Following the mixed success of recent national campaigns, the Management Committee were delighted to receive a suggestion from the new Branch secretary of the West Riding Branch, Geoff Cooper-Smith, suggesting a points reward system based on the number of new members recruited. We have asked the West Riding Branch to pilot the scheme, and to report back on the results achieved. If any other Branch have ideas, please put them forward for discussion by the Management Committee.

Branch programmes

No doubt all branches are in the progress of producing their indoor meeting programmes for the forthcoming season. Please can you get a copy to Ronnie McAdam at 137 Mountcastle Crescent, Edinburgh. EH8 7SY so that he can then advertise in the commercial magazines and put up onto our Internet page. Even if you have not finished the programme, can you please let him have details of the September and October meetings by the beginning of July so that he can get them published. Can you

also ensure that John Richards also receives a copy at 54 Roakes Avenue, Addlestone, Surrey. KT15 2HA for inclusion in the R.O.. As in previous years, please could you send me 25 copies so that I can circulate them to other branches. It has also been suggested that if John Edgington has copies, he can include them in the new member's pack for anyone recruited to your area. You can either send copies directly to him if you have some spare, or photocopied, or if not let me know when you send me my copies and I will arrange for John to receive a supply. John can be contacted at 20 Baker Street, York. YO30 7AX.

Branch AGM Minutes

For the records of the Management Committee, please could you send me a copy of your branch AGM minutes, together with a full list of the branch committee members. I know that some branches already do this, but for completeness, I would like to receive all of them each year.

Area Group Meetings

Following the successful introduction of these meetings last year, and further ones held already this year, the Management Committee would like to see these continue as an annual event. For those areas that have not held one so far this year, please could you arrange to meet sometime during the summer, to discuss matters of importance with respect to your area, and to pick up on the various actions listed in the conference minutes. As mentioned in the actions listed above, the Management Committee would like to see the formation of a think tank based on representatives from the area groups, with a view to an initial meeting sometime in October to discuss issues raised at area and anything that the MC feel could be better developed by the think tank rather than the MC themselves. The MC have a meeting in early June and I shall be in communication with each area in early July with a view to setting this up.

Direct Debits

As mentioned above, we are experiencing some difficulties in our quest to set up direct debit for membership renewals. I have been asked by John Redgate to ask you all if anybody has experience of trying to set up a direct debit for an unincorporated body. If anybody has, please could they contact John directly at 'High Lee's', 7 Frieth Road, Marlow, Bucks. SL7 2QT.

1998 Officers Conference and Members Weekend

My apologies for not being able to give any news about the location of this years event. I spoke to the Merseyside branch yesterday, and they are still trying to negotiate a good deal with a hotel in Chester. I hope to have more details in early June, which I will detail in the R.O. and contact each branch individually.

Have a good summer.

Steve

12th May 1998.