



**THE RAILWAY CORRESPONDENCE
AND TRAVEL SOCIETY** (Founded 1928)
Monthly Magazine 'THE RAILWAY OBSERVER'

Tel: 01372-457615

20, The Lorne,
Great Bookham,
Surrey.
KT23 4JZ

8th October 1999

Dear *John*,

Newsletter to all branch secretaries

I have been asked to send a copy of this and all future news letters to your chairman. The reason behind this decision is quite simple; with two members of each branch committee receiving the letters, there should now be no excuse for not circulating them around the remaining members of your committee.

On the 2nd September I was delighted and indeed, privileged to be amongst those members attending the inaugural meeting of The Society's 25th branch, Milton Keynes. I am sure you will join me in offering hearty congratulations to Bob Ballard for the time and effort he has put in to setting this new branch up. I have attached a list of the committee and I know that we all wish them every success in the future.

I have also enclosed copies of indoor meetings programmes from the the following branches.

Bristol, Cheltenham, East Midlands, Furness Lakes & Lune, Lancashire & North West, Merseyside & Chester, Northampton, Sheffield, South of England, Surrey, Sussex, West of England and last, but by no means least, West Riding. This still leaves a small number of you who have not sent me fixtures. I would be grateful if you would now do so at the earliest opportunity. At this juncture I would like to make a plea for help. Some of you already send me sufficient copies for me to circulate around the branches. In future would you all send me 26 copies of your fixtures. These need not be the actual cards, copies will do.

The final enclosure, is a copy of a letter from David Kelso. Please do not ignore this letter. The importance of the web site to The Society cannot be overstated. David will be making a presentation at the forthcoming officers conference. I know he would be very pleased to hear who your "internet officer" is by then.

You will have received the October RO which contains the booking form for the members weekend to be held at Ipswich next month. We have struck a very good deal with the hotel and I hope that you will do your utmost to encourage your members to attend. Please remember that I do need a note from you confirming the names of your committee members who will attend the officers conference. Apologies for absence would also be appreciated.

In recent years there has been a pitiful response to the appeal for item for the conference. Judging by the regional meetings I cannot accept that you have nothing you wish to be discussed. I am therefore asking you all to supply one item. I may well receive 25 letters all requesting the same subject. At least that is better than nothing. The results and findings of the regional meetings are already included.

Whilst on the subject of regional meetings, let me tell you that four out of the five have already been held with the area representatives making their presentations at the management committee meeting held on the 4th September. The final one, featuring Furness, Lakes & Lune, Merseyside & Chester, Lancs & North West and West Midlands will take place on the 30th of this month. The reason for this delay is down to the ability of Royal Mail to lose post. I am indebted to Gordon Davies for setting up this meeting at such short notice.

Despite some scepticism expressed in certain quarters, the meetings have all been voted a success and will now form a regular feature of the year. My thanks to all committee members who gave up their time, especially those who travelled long distances, to attend.

Last week, Surrey Branch held their opening indoor meeting of the 1999/2000 season. We had an illustrated talk from Hugh Searle and Rob Jacob, from Mendip Rail. I am aware that some of you have already had the pleasure of these two. For those of you who have not, may I strongly recommend that you do. Hugh told me that they will be only too happy to visit all the branches. My apologies as I do not have their address to hand but I will make sure this is available at Ipswich.

John Day and his team have worked extremely hard to provide us with a first class reunion weekend. Let us reward them by turning out in force. I look forward to seeing you there and to hearing from you in the meantime.

What do 34073 and 66050 have in common?

Yours sincerely



Steve Hodge (Branch liaison officer)

PS For the future would you please supply me with a copy of your branch AGM minutes and full details of your committee. By full details, I mean name including christian name, position held on the committee, address and telephone. Some of the records I have inherited are years old and hopefully well out of date. Thanks for your co-operation.