

RCTS

Railway Correspondence and Travel Society

Web Site: www.rcts.org.uk

Branch Liaison Secretary

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NEWSLETTER No 15

FEBRUARY 2004

1. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our first Newsletter for 2004, one that contains notice of some important announcements and changes that will affect all Branches. You are requested to note the changes and respond accordingly, especially when dealing with new membership enquiries and applications.

As you are aware each Railway Observer has a four-page insert that gives important administrative information about the Society. There are three main subjects covered on this first page, Society Officers, Branch Secretaries and Editorial Representatives each being rotated at quarterly intervals. The January RO announces the important change on the MC with John Redgate now serving as our Society Chairman having taken over from Rodney Lissenden on 1st January. Rodney has not severed his links with the administration of the Society as he now takes on the role of Publications Committee Chairman, taking over from David Cole who is taking a well earned rest, but not altogether inactive. We all wish John, Rodney and David well for the future in their various roles and thank each for their hard work in the past in furthering the aims of the Society.

2. MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

All Branches should by now be checking that all their members have renewed for 2004. If a member advises you he has not received the February RO once it is published then non-renewal may well be the reason. Please be alert to this and encourage speedy renewal.

3. NEW MEMBERSHIP

We are pleased to extend a very warm welcome to our latest recruit to the ranks of our Society Officer's. Veronica Cooke has agreed to take on the role of dealing with New Membership Enquiries and Applications. Therefore, with immediate effect Branches should ensure that all New Membership Enquiries and Applications should be directed to **Veronica Cooke at 23 Haig Drive, Slough SL1 9HA and not to Peter Davies.**

Any application forms handed to prospective new members either separately or in your Membership Packs should be amended with Veronica's details. These applications should also show the correct **Membership Fee of £18.** Apparently far too many are being received with old rates on the forms and subsequently insufficient funds. **ALL BRANCHES** are asked to obtain new supplies of the application form from Bob Ballard who will forward reprinted ones immediately they are available. Once new stocks are to hand it is suggested that old stock be destroyed. The Society adverts in the popular railway press are in the process of being updated in order to facilitate this change.

4. MEMBERSHIP PACKS

As previously mentioned branches must use current information in their membership packs. This includes Society Publications Lists, Membership Application Form, a recent RO and a copy of your Branch Fixture Programme and any other relevant information that

might be of local interest to encourage new members to join. Do not forget to contact **Bob Ballard** for Membership Pack Folders, and Application Forms. This together with any of your Branch stationery requirements that are also available from the same source.

5. AGM WEEKEND - COVENTRY 23RD-25TH APRIL

As previously reported the AGM will be held at the Best Western Hylands Hotel, Coventry and arrangements are well in hand by our hosts, West Midlands Branch, for an interesting and varied weekend. Visits so far arranged are for Saturday to the Great Central Railway and on Sunday to the Battlefield Line at Shackerstone. Transport to both these preserved lines will be by a Midland Red D9 Double Deck Bus (72 seat) so there should be plenty of room for everyone who wishes to take part. The AGM will take place at 16.00hrs on the Saturday and followed by a presentation by Steve Ollive on visits to Belgium during 2003. At the time of going to press with this Newsletter arrangements are progressing for a visit to Brush Works at Loughborough, details of which will be announced once confirmed. Look out for the booking form on the website and in the RO. Please remember to **book early!**

6. BRANCH AGM MINUTES

As part of the ongoing programme of adding to the Society's Archive (see separate Library Notes) there are still a number of Branches who have not submitted their **last** AGM Minutes to John Day. If you have not yet submitted these then you are asked to do so before 11th February 2004 as this matter is to be discussed at the next MC meeting. The requirement is for:

- Draft Minutes of your last AGM (this might have occurred as far back as Feb 2003)
- Approved and signed minutes of the previous AGM (that is, those minutes that would have been approved at your last AGM)

Once this information is collated then attempts will be made to resurrect past AGM minutes. Branches will be advised individually of what will be required once searches of material held by Society Officers is dealt with.

Your urgent attention to this appreciated. Thank You.

7. OFFICERS CONFERENCE 2003 - MINUTES

Enclosed with this Newsletter are the Minutes of the 2003 Officers' Conference held at Cheltenham. Please keep these safely filed in readiness for the 2004 Conference at Norwich. Where there were instances of branches being represented by members who do not appear on the regular newsletter mailing list copies for those members are enclosed with the Secretary's material for forwarding. Your assistance with that appreciated.

8. REGIONAL MEETINGS

Details of ALL 2004 Regional Meetings will be forwarded in due course with agenda's and other relevant information, especially noting which management committee members will be attending which meeting. If any branch has items they wish to be discussed generally at regional level then please pass agenda items to Gordon Davies, Regional Meetings Co-ordinator.

9. NRM RAILFEST - YORK 29TH MAY TO 6TH JUNE

A Sub-committee has been formed, comprising members from the EMNESH Regional Group and Society Officers, to oversee the running of the Society Stand at this event. All Regional Group Chairman have been contacted in this respect and any Branch or Branch Member in a position to offer themselves to **WORK** on the stand during this event are asked to communicate immediately with Carey Vessey, Humberside Branch on 01482 351774. It must be stressed that volunteers will be expected to be available to be part of

the team manning the stand on the day or days they state for availability. This is a prestigious event that is being strictly controlled by both the NRM and the Society.

10. EXHIBITIONS

During the 2002/2003 reporting period 72 Exhibitions/Events were attended by the Society and/or its Branches. Included in this total were the two Industry Open Days at Crewe and Doncaster with the overall revenue generated through all events amounting to just over £26K. Whilst individual branch attendance figures are not available it is recorded that North East Branch attended ten events and Humberside following closely with eight. Sadly four Branches had no input whatsoever to the exhibitions circuit.

11. THE ALTON OBSERVER – PATHFINDER RAILTOURS

This provisionally rearranged railtour, originally planned as part of our 75th Anniversary Celebrations, and due to take place on Saturday 13th March 2004, has once again been postponed. This time due to the Mid Hants being unable to accommodate a tour train whilst they are enjoying a steam gala day. The future of the Society's participation in the next rearranged date of 9th October 2004 will be discussed at the next MC Meeting.

12. PUBLICATIONS

There is a need for a clearance of stock to be administered and according to 31st October Branch returns the following titles are still held by branches. These should be immediately returned to **DAVID COLE (and not to any other officer)** in order that the clearance can be administered. Please make your Branch Sales Stand volunteers aware of the need for some urgency in this matter. Your cooperation appreciated.

TITLES ARE

LNER 2A, LNER 10B, LNER 11, LMS Design and Construction, Newport-Shildon, GWR11 and SER.

13. BRANCH MEETINGS

Below is an extract of information passed to Branches in Newsletter Number 7 (*Item 5 – Branch Meeting Protocol*) in respect of Branch meeting admissions and the process for administering the entrance donations! Branches are urged to adhere to these instructions and not, under any circumstances to refer to an admission fee or charge. It is also suggested that the word "surplus" might be more appropriately used than the word "profit."

BRANCH MEETINGS PROTOCOL

Branches of the Society organise programmes of indoor events that members and (subject to any accommodation limitation) non-members can attend at no charge. The branches have discretion to make a voluntary collection at each indoor event, or to hold a raffle, to defray room hire cost and speaker expenses.

For the convenience of regular attendees at indoor events, branches also have the discretion to accept a seasonal donation and where deemed necessary to make a record of that seasonal donation. To encourage non-members to join the Society, their donations may be recorded in a suitable way by the branch and branches can make a local agreement for some or all of the donations made prior to payment of the membership subscription.

Any description or records made should use only the terms collection, donation, or seasonal donation, or raffle to avoid any misunderstanding over VAT.

Protocol

Branches are advised to publicise their arrangements for indoor meeting finance by the use of statements along the lines of:

The branch does not charge members or non-members for their attendance at indoor meetings but a voluntary collection by way of donations is normally made, or a raffle held. Where convenient to the individual a donation may be made periodically and we will record that an advance donation has been made.

We encourage non-members to join the Society and to that end will be pleased to arrange to record donations made and make a refund against the Society membership fee when you become a member of the Society.

If a branch is in any way in doubt about its arrangements or the way they are described they should contact Tony Skinner, the Society Treasurer.

14. BRANCH OFFICERS EMAIL LIST SERVER

As mentioned in the last Newsletter there is an opportunity for Society and Branch Officers to join this group that will allow them to receive Newsletters via the server list.

So far over 30 Society Officers have joined this E-mail list, and will have received digital copies of this Newsletter. However, we are sure there must be a total of about 200 Society Officers - Branch Committee Members, Publications Officers, RO Editors and Ed Reps, all of whom are eligible to be added to this list if they have an Internet connection. Please encourage all members of your branch committee and other eligible officers to join, the aim is to improve communications between ALL Society Officers. If you have received a printed copy by Royal Mail, you will continue to do so. The free service is EXCLUSIVELY for Society Officers.

To join send an e-mail to

RCTSOfficers-Subscribe@yahoogroups.com with a copy to

LIBRARIAN@RCTS.ORG.UK Subject of the e-mail to be **SUBSCRIBE**

Contents of the e-mail to include your name and Society Office held.

You will receive a confirmatory message when you have been added to the list.

Any Officer may send E-mails to the list, which will be received by all the others.

15. SOCIETY LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES

The Society Archivist/Librarian having completed the listings of most National Officers, would like to compile listings for the Branches. If you already have such information or have compiled a Branch History would you please let Terry Silcock have a copy? He will also be pleased to accept archive copies of Branch Minutes for the Society's Archives. The AGM at Coventry would be an opportunity to bring items.

16. BRANCH LIBRARY BOXES

If any Branches wish to exchange Library boxes at the AGM in Coventry, would they please contact Terry Silcock as soon as possible and definitely before the end of March. It will only be possible to exchange a limited number.

John Day/New15, Ipswich 1st February 2004