

RCTS

Railway Correspondence and Travel Society

Web Site: www.rcts.org.uk

Branch Liaison Secretary

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NEWSLETTER No 18

OCTOBER 2004

1. INTRODUCTION

As we move into the winter season there are a number of things that need to be brought to your attention. Since the last Newsletter the MC has met three times, two evening meetings and one all day meeting where a number of matters and issues have been discussed. All the issues raised at the Regional Meetings have been discussed with a summary being provided by Gordon Davies. The majority of issues have been resolved, some are still being actioned and will be ongoing whilst officers and/or sub-committees deal with those matters. A few have been referred to the Officers' Conference at Norwich on Sunday 16th October, these will be seen on the OC Agenda enclosed with this Newsletter to all Branches.

2. SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions for 2005 will be increased by £1.00 to £19.00, a figure that continues to represent excellent value for money and still considerably below that of contemporary societies similar to ours. *Read on* The increase will go a long way to supporting additional activities the MC is involved in to move the Society forward. One of the more ambitious activities is the formation, under John Lewis, of a Publicity and Exhibitions sub-committee of which you will be hearing more at the Officers' Conference.

Read on once more "The Deal"

Our Treasurer Tony Skinner has put a lot of work in recently to forecast the future of the Society's financial position. The MC were thus pleased to accept his recommendation that we implement a "Three Year Subscription" - therefore we will offer existing and new members a subscription for 2005/06/07 for the sum of £50.00. Numerologists amongst you will very quickly work this out as an initial minimum saving of £7.00 on the increased rate. Renewal Forms will reflect these changes and Branches **MUST** ensure that updated forms are obtained and correct amounts remitted for subscriptions.

Renewal forms will be available for all branches at Norwich and thus should be collected whilst there to ensure maximum exposure to the membership and assist with early renewal of subscriptions.

3. MEMBERS' WEEKEND AND OFFICERS CONFERENCE 2005

Please note that the Swallow Nelson Hotel has recently changed it's branding to read The Norwich Nelson Hotel thus to avoid any confusion references to either of the names are applicable to the same establishment.

It is pleasing to announce that response has been overwhelming for this event, despite there still being a number of branches who have not sent booking forms or intimated that they will at least attend the Officers' Conference on Sunday 17th October. The venue has proved very popular, as has the programme of events surrounding the weekend. It would be, however, satisfying if we were fortunate enough to have the attendance of ALL branches at some stage during the weekend.

The Agenda for the Officers' Conference is enclosed with this Newsletter. You will note that the minutes of the Cheltenham 2003 Officers' Conference have been previously circulated. Any Society/Branch Officer requiring a duplicate copy should contact me by 10th October and I will print a copy and bring to Norwich with me.

It is anticipated there will be a "Help Point" at Norwich station on Friday afternoon as well as one to be situated in or around the reception area at the Hotel. Notices regarding all the events/participants and seating plans for the Dinner on Saturday evening will be posted at the Hotel and a comprehensive itinerary will be published and available for delegates at Norwich from Friday afternoon. Our guest speaker for the Dinner is Jonathan Denby, Head of Corporate Affairs for One-Anglia.

Finally, as far as the Officers' Conference is concerned we intend meeting at 08.45 for a prompt 09.00 start to the Conference. It is necessary to complete the proceedings by 11.15 to allow those members successfully "drawn out of the hat" to visit Crown Point can be there for 12.00.

4. BRANCH MEETINGS

Speakers

There are a few things those branch officers dealing with fixtures and speakers should take into account. When booking a speaker the level of fee/expenses/facilities that your prospective speaker might require should be discussed before any confirmation of a booking is made.

Once a speaker is with the host branch, responsible officers should ensure that your guest is looked after. Prior to the engagement you should have established equipment needs, these should be available for the event. Meeting and greeting is important, as is the need to ensure that your guest is, if necessary, "fed and watered" prior to the meeting. Make sure that the speaker is happy with the facilities and ensure a clear understanding that break and finish times are known. Please make sure that your speaker is offered his/her fee and/or expenses - preferably before the start of the meeting. That allows for a comfort zone later in the presentation. After then it should be common courtesy to write to the speaker offering thanks for time and effort as well as considerate comments and thoughts about the evening. Also don't forget the report for your Branch Web pages and the R.O.

5. SOCIETY WEB INFORMATION

Below is a reminder of the information previously circulated to branches regarding the:

WEB SITE PRESENTATION PACKAGE

Used to publicise the Society and its web pages to attract new members at public events such as branch participation in exhibitions.

The package can be sourced by branches from local computer shops and the costs are in the order of:

Second-hand or off-lease laptop with a CD-ROM drive and running Windows 98SE. No other software required	£ 200.00
Second hand 14" colour monitor	£ 10.00
Suitable collapsible stand. Viking or Staples	£ 18.00
A two-socket power extension lead	£ 16.00

Approx TOTAL COST £244.00

A CD-ROM will be provided by the webmaster and can be customised to suit a particular branch by including all the branch web pages in the programme.

The CD-ROM will include all software to run the show.

No detailed computer knowledge is required to run the programme. Full instructions will be supplied with the CD-ROM

**THE WEB SITE IS THE BIGGEST SINGLE SOURCE OF
NEW MEMBERS AND RCTS BOOK SALES**

6. LIBRARY BOXES

Branches wishing to exchange their Library Boxes at the Members' Weekend should contact Terry Silcock in order that appropriate arrangements can be made.

Terry can be contacted by Email at: librarian@rcts.org.uk
or by post at: 17 Raisins Hill, Pinner, Middlesex HA5 2BU

7. IDENTITY BADGES

Another reminder, this time should anyone require badges these can be made up in time for the Members' Weekend or indeed any other event that you might require them for by contacting Gordon Davies.

8. SOCIETY SALES STOCK

Branches requiring stocks of the new Society Birs for delivery at Norwich please contact John Redgate by phone or e-mail - each pack contains about 25 pens. Similarly, any branch requiring their supply of exhibition table covers please contact John for them to be brought to Norwich

In addition Derek Morris will bring a surplus stock of the RCTS 75th Publication for Branches to collect and distribute at Norwich.

9. SOCIETY STATIONERY

Each Branch Secretary will receive, with this Newsletter, Society Publicity leaflets for inclusion with membership packs and at sales stands whilst updated renewal forms will be available at Norwich. Otherwise all other stationery requests should go to Bob Ballard.

10. BRANCH AGM REPORTS

Despite requests during the last few months there are still some branches who have totally ignored requests for copies of their AGM reports, this is totally unsatisfactory and branches who still have to submit these reports (You know who you are!!) to Gordon Davies should do so forthwith. Gordon will be at Norwich for the Members' Weekend so there will be an opportunity for branches to hand them over. A list will be published and sent to all branches and officers after the Officers Conference that will show a branch by branch listing of those who have and those who have not submitted their AGM Reports.

11. INFORMATION GROUPS

One point raised at Regional Meetings was the ability to access "real-time information" via the Internet. There are a large number of groups set up that offer this service and that of discussion and comment. These are privately run groups, generally moderated by enthusiasts like us. It is necessary to "subscribe" to groups, a simple process once access is gained to their site. Each group has rules that subscribers must adhere to.

Below is a short list of some of the groups:

60gen@yahoogroups.com
GMGEN@yahoogroups.com
anglia-gen@yahoogroups.com

Freightliner-Gen@yahoogroups.com
scot-rail@yahoogroups.com
The_Shunter_Page@yahoogroups.com

*John Day/Ipswich
3rd October 2004*