

NEWSLETTER No 4**20th May 2001****Enclosed with this Newsletter for Branch Secretaries (unless previously received)**

Outdoor Programmes for: Cheltenham/Humberside/Merseyside Chester & N.Wales/Northampton
Meetings Programmes for: Bristol/Lancashire & North-West/Sussex

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Faulty production of the May 2001 Railway Observer means that the complete run must be reprinted. As the fault is believed to apply to ALL copies of this issue replacements will NOT be available from Peter Davies. Every member will receive a replacement May RO enclosed with their June copy. The matter is in hand so please do not contact any Society Officer about this problem.

COMMENT

As summer approaches, hopefully we will get some sun, and can get out and about recording happenings on our "rejuvenated railway". I am sure we all hope that the problems resulting from the Hatfield tragedy can be put behind us and those in charge can get back to doing what they do best - running a railway.

It was good to see many of you at Exeter for the AGM Weekend and thanks go to Tom Reardon and the West of England Branch for hosting another excellent Society weekend. The full report of the weekend's activities will subsequently appear in the RO. As will details of the Rule Changes.

This time of year sees the start of the holiday season and I for one am no exception. I will not be available to deal with any Society matters until mid-July so if you do send me mail, by various methods, these will be dealt with this on my return from across the pond.

In the last Newsletter mention was made of Society name badges. Whilst it would be nice to see everyone wearing name badges at outdoor functions and events as well as at Branch meetings, it has to be accepted that sometimes circumstances may dictate otherwise. I am sure you all make every effort to display your name but understand that there will usually be a good enough reason when you don't. Remember replacement and new badges can be obtained from Gordon Davies.

NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION

Much of the success of the previous newsletters is due to the submission of material by fellow officers on the MC. The increased use of electronic mail allows me to copy data directly to the newsletter and, with a minimal amount of editing, what you read is as sent to me. Therefore any issues that may arise from these may be referred back to the original source for response. The views expressed in these reports are not necessarily those of the Branch Liaison Secretary.

REGIONAL MEETINGS

One of the topics being discussed at regional meetings is the formation of new branches. I have been asked to provide criteria to work to. There are some obvious constraints to be addressed. The geographical location of current branches needs to be addressed in relation to the branch membership spread. There may be areas highlighted where a membership base exists around a centre that meetings could be held. Each branch should by now have received an alphabetical list from Peter Davies. It is important to go through this and identify where your members are. Add to this any that are listed as miscellaneous and who could be attached to your or a surrounding branch. As you are discussing this at regional meetings any problems relating to "encroachment" should be a minimal risk. Another issue to take into consideration is that some branches committee members may well live in an area where a new branch could be formed. This could help rather than hinder the formation of a new administration. As with everything, sometimes prevailing common sense might well resolve otherwise controversial issues so it is important to work together on this.

As previously indicated, I am prepared to chair a meeting of the Chairs from each Regional Group once the minutes are to hand and prior to the Officers Conference in Altrincham. With holiday and other bookings I don't have many Saturdays free but have pencilled in September 22nd as a definite for availability. If you are available on that date please let me know so that we can discuss a venue. I can deal with this once I return in July.

SOCIETY WEB SITE

CTRL SECTION 2

An Appeal

Those of you who have access to the Society's Web Site will have seen the CTRL Update pages. David Kelso, who lives at Broadstairs, has developed these pages relative to Section 1 but now needs help to cover Section 2. David can cover the Section 2 works south of the Thames but needs someone to cover the progress of the works from the Dartford Tunnel to St Pancras. For example there is now a big hole appearing in St Pancras station and shortly the gas holders will be dismantled.

Is there a member in London, South Essex or possibly Hertfordshire branches equipped with camera and PC who could produce update material of the type and style that has regularly appeared covering Section 1??

Offers of help to David directly at phone to 01843-868124 or email to webmaster@rcts.org.uk

INTERNET COMMITTEE

Further to my comments in Newsletter No 3, the Management Committee have asked that an Internet Committee be formed to assist in the development and management of our Web Site. The proposal is to have a committee of no more than six members, each of whom will be responsible for specific pages and projects. Although the committee will be in continuous contact via E-Mail it is hoped that face to face meetings with all of the six members be arranged at least twice a year, possibly at the AGM and Members' Weekend venues.

Eric Palmer, Chairman of South Eastern Branch, has agreed to chair the committee - as a non-IT person he will ensure that the same editorial policy will be applied to the site as applies to the

Railway Observer. Gavin Menzies (Surrey), Gordon Searle (Furness, Lakes and Lune), Bevan Price (Merseyside, Chester and North Wales) and Tony Scarsbrook (Milton Keynes) have volunteered to make up the committee along with Webmaster David Kelso. As Branch Liaison Secretary I will act as the link between the Internet Committee and the Management Committee.

In forming the committee we have achieved one part of the request from Newsletter 3. However, we do still need volunteers amongst the membership within branches to act as web correspondents who can regularly submit local material about their own branch. A look at the Web Site will give potential web correspondents some idea of what to submit. Check out the work that has already been done for some branches, see what they are sending in. How the material can be sent is outlined on page 5 of Newsletter 3.

If the site is to develop it is vital that as much information as possible is sent in by branches - if your branch is still without a correspondent please do your best to persuade someone at your next meeting to take on the task. Anyone offering to help will be given all the support they need.

MEMBERS' WEEKEND

The booking form for the Members' Weekend will appear with the September RO in readiness for the 26th- 28th October at the Cresta Court Hotel, Altrincham.

A varied range of events has been arranged with assistance from the Lancashire & North West branch. On Friday evening local member Tom Heavyside will give a presentation looking at the Preservation Movement. The Tallyn Railway is currently celebrating its 50th year since foundation and the presentation will look at the various Heritage Railways, in order of opening, right up to some of the latest which will include the Windmill Railway where we hope to visit on the Saturday of this weekend.

On Saturday participants will leave for the West Lancashire Railway, on to the Windmill Farm Railway then for lunch at the Beconsall Hotel, Hesketh Bank. Following lunch a visit is arranged to the GMPTE facility, Queens Road, Manchester where a look at the maintenance and control functions has been organised for us. The GMPTE visit is strictly limited to 60 in total so it will be on a first come - first served basis. Costing for this event will be related in the next newsletter and obviously on the booking form itself.

Our guest speaker at the Dinner on Saturday evening will be Roger Tripp who is the Local Authority Co-ordinator for GMPTE Metrolink. Roger will base his presentation on an update of the system and look ahead to the developments in securing future phases of Metrolink. This of course will be a suitable follow on from the afternoon visit to Queens Road.

PUBLICATIONS

Railway Observer

A new Ed Rep position has been created to deal with all matters "photographic" The intention is to look at improving the topicality of RO pictures and all submissions should be sent in future to: Pauline McKenna, 27 Millfields, Ossett, West Yorkshire WF5 8HE - Tel: 01924 280962.

SALES

Please make your Sales team aware of opportunities to increase revenue at both outdoor events, exhibition, and at Branch Meetings. Rail Photoprints offer very competitive rates for calendars and postcards. Year 2002 Steam, Modern Traction and Bus calendars should be available by the time you receive this. Telephone/Fax number is 01761 453045 or write to Rail Photoprints, "Stoneycombe", 8 Paulmont Rise, Temple Cloud, Bristol BS39 5DT or Email: Rail.Photoprints@tinyworld.co.uk

SOCIETY TREASURER

Officers and Branches need to be aware of the arrangements in respect of returns between now and 1st July which is the start date for the Society's Administrative Year.

Officers should send their claims to Tony Skinner at 1 Front Street, Monkseaton, Tyne and Wear NE25 8AL.

Branches must send their end of quarter (30th April) return to John Redgate at the usual address and not to Tony Skinner.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

A formal announcement will appear in the July RO and confirmed in the next newsletter.

Dates to remember

17 th May	East Coast/Scottish Branches Regional Meeting - darlington
7 th June	Evening Management Committee Meeting - London
9 th June	Northern Home Counties Regional Meeting - Digswell, Herts
9 th June	South Eastern Branches Regional Meeting - Ightham, Kent
23 rd or 30 th June	North Western Branches Regional Meeting - Chester
TBA	Surrey/South and Western Branches Regional Meeting - TBA

John Day