



West Riding Branch

February 2022 Newsletter

The programme of indoor meetings for 2022 set off to a good start when our own member Austin Hughes presented his talk to the title “Extreme Gricing”. This covered a couple of spotting expeditions that he and his colleagues from Birmingham made in 1960 to the extremities of Scotland and the depths of South Wales in the quest to see everything Great Western. A visitation to Scotland was absolutely essential as a couple of Great Western Class 1600 tanks were outstationed at Helmsdale Depot (60c) in the very north of the country. Further opportunities were taken to journey along the significant picturesque lines plus, in and amongst, visits to major railway centres that form part of the Scottish railway scene. Following this a weekend of shed bashing by coach into and around South Wales provided further opportunities to extend the Great Western adventure as locomotives in vast numbers were pictured in the majority of the depots that were to be found in the Welsh coal mining regions. Given that the presented photographs were all from outside English territories involving high mileage travelling, and undertaken in 1960, “Extreme Gricing” appropriately described the presentation. Once again the meeting was enjoyed by another excellent attendance.

In moving forward, the next meeting which is set for 17th February is to be a second presentation to be given by Stewart Liles covering the “Tramways of the Dales”. This thoroughly researched presentation further extends the knowledge and depth of the industrial railway infrastructure that once prevailed in the magnificent scenery of the Yorkshire Dales. As is usual the meeting will commence at 7.30pm at Saltaire Methodist Church and I look forward to greeting yet another good turn-out to listen to this excellent informative rendition that covers this nearby very attractive region of Yorkshire.

Many of the members will have noticed in the December RO the mention of a new centrally created award which, outside of management levels, is aimed at recognising the outstanding work of branch members who have done much towards the upkeep of the Society. It is to be known as the “Certificate of Appreciation”. At the time of the announcement the first member to be so ‘anointed’ was known but his identity was withheld pending the formal presentation of his certificate at his Branch AGM – wherever that might be. However, the February RO let the ‘cat out of the bag’ as it was announced that the first recipient was to be our own David Beeken in recognition of his 50 years’ service as Branch Treasurer. At this current time David has yet to receive his accolade and it is hoped that he will be presented with his certificate at the commencement of the forthcoming February meeting. This is a huge thank you to David who is thoroughly deserving of the award.

Branch Newsletters can now be found on the website and the January rendition has been uploaded. This latest February update will be posted very shortly. As a next step in the updating of the Branch website the Branch "signatory" photograph and notes of welcome are to be added in the very near future. Furthermore, in the effort to keep the ball rolling, thoughts are now moving towards extending the indoor programme of meetings through to the end of this year. All will be revealed shortly.

Advance notice that the April meeting will be the AGM covering the year ending 31st October 2021 which finally, and formally, tidies up the hangovers arising as a consequence of Covid. These meetings, which are never very long, are subsequently followed up with members' presentations and in this respect if anyone has anything they might wish to show would you please let me know. In addition there happens to be a vacancy on the Branch Committee and if anyone is interested in helping out please make it known to either myself or any member of the committee.

In closing this communication my thanks to all who continue to support the Branch meetings. It is much appreciated and long may this continue. I hope to see you at Saltaire on 17th February.

Best wishes and kind regards to all.
Bob