

MIDLAND RAILWAY SOCIETY

Minutes of the 2017 Annual General Meeting of the Society

The Annual General Meeting of the Midland Railway Society was held on Saturday 8th April 2017 at the Roundhouse, Derby, commencing at 11:00hrs.

1. Register of Members and Apologies

A total of 44 members signed the attendance register, while apologies from 14 members were received and noted. Details of these are listed at Appendix I & II respectively.

2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday, 16th April 2016

The minutes of the 2016 Annual General Meeting had been previously circulated. No amendments having been suggested, Ian HOWARD proposed and Peter SCOTT seconded that they be accepted as a true record, which was agreed *nem com*.

3. Presentation of Executive Committee reports

Chairman

The Chairman opened reported as follows:

Once again I am pleased to report that our Society has enjoyed another successful year, although it has been a somewhat sad one because of the number of members who have passed away. Those members I am aware of who are no longer with us are Mr. B. J. Catterall, who actually died in December 2015 but we were only made aware after last year's AGM, Roger Coleman, Chris Crofts, Bill Edmonds, Mr. G. K. Needham, Steve Sykes, Deryck Watkinson and, last but not least, our Archivist Peter Witts. I have already written an obituary for Peter in the Newsletter so I won't repeat here what I stated then but will just say that Peter will be sadly missed, as will all those colleagues whose passing I have noted. I would now ask all those present to join me in observing a minute's silence in their memory.

The meeting stood in silent reflection.

We have now finished our first full year in expanded form, having amalgamated with the Roy Burrows Trust, and that amalgamation is, I am happy to say, living up to our expectations. You will hear a full report later from the Chairman of the Collections Committee, David Geldard, and whilst not wanting to steal David's thunder I want to thank here and now all those who have steered the Society down its new path so successfully. I also want to thank those members who have made substantial donations towards the major purchase of a large format scanner but who have chosen to remain anonymous; their contributions have helped considerably in enhancing the Society's capabilities in making available items of research and interest to members hitherto only available by personal visits to the Study Centre. This, of course, also helps us in our charitable aims of making available items from our collection to the general public.

Our successes during the last year also include the Society's publications published both by ourselves and from outside sources. Roy Burrows' book on his magnificent collection will surely stand as a beacon in the history of what is commonly termed railwayana and will just as surely serve to enhance yet again our Society's standing. Also sure to serve and delight is the superb Midland Retrospective authored by John Earl and Steve Huson but I will say no more on this subject and leave it to Ian Howard to tell you more in his Journal Report later.

The mention of publications and Ian Howard does, of course, lead me on to talk briefly about what I have previously stated to be a major cornerstone of our Society and one which other line societies, as well as the railway enthusiasts' world in general, hold in high esteem. I refer, of course, to our Journal, which Ian has edited for over ten years now and of which he is justifiably proud, a feeling I am sure we all share. Unfortunately, Ian's health issues are forcing him to relinquish the editorship and, as he stated in the Newsletter

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recently, he intends to stand down by this time next year. So far, however, his request for someone to begin shadowing him and learning the job with a view to taking over has had no response. I make no apologies for telling you that in my opinion this is a critical situation for the Society. Without the Journal, which for many members is the main reason for belonging to the Midland Railway Society and which I am certain is enjoyed by all of you, our future is gloomy. I realise that some of you may think that I am overstating the case but I assure you that it is something to which I and the other members of the Executive Committee have given a great deal of thought and I stand by what I have just said. If no-one comes forward within the next six months to begin the process of taking over the editorship, the first Journal of 2018 will be the last. With it our standing will decline, few or no new members will join the Society and our present membership will also decline. I do not say these things lightly I assure you; they are simple statements of fact. None of the current members of the Executive and/or Collections Committees can take on the job in addition to their current tasks so it is up to you, the general membership, to come forward. As Ian has already stated in the Newsletter, whilst a measure of computer literacy would be helpful, the job does not require a great in-depth knowledge of software or any journalistic arcana and he will guide anyone willing to take on the task through all that is required. I will say no more at this stage but please do not be complacent about the situation – it is critical.

As far as other Society matters stand, the news is good. The Newsletter in John Earl's capable hands continues to inform and entertain, Alan Cox keeps our finances and membership matters on the straight and narrow and Andrew Surry does a sterling job organising members' meetings and outings. Nick Wheat does an outstanding job producing first class publications from the material produced by Ian Howard and our book authors, whilst Dave Harris continues to undertake prodigious amounts of work without which my, and several other peoples', jobs would be much more difficult. We have recently renewed our Partners in Excellence agreement with the National Railway Museum, the outreach with the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway is ongoing and the funding required for work on the first of the projects in which we are to be involved, namely the development of the water tower at Keighley, is all but in place. We have also made considerable progress with forming an alliance with the Midland Hotel here in Derby that promises to be fruitful for both parties and I would like to thank Steve Huson for his efforts in that venture. As you will hear from David Geldard, plans for decanting the Society's collection from the Silk Mill are quite well advanced and both David and Dave Harris are to be thanked for all the hard work they are putting in to it.

It only remains for me to thank formally everyone else who has put so much effort into running the Society and without whom we would not be able to enjoy the benefits that membership confers. Apart from those I have already acknowledged, my appreciation goes to Robin Cullup, Ian Abram, Andrew Cholerton, Frances Peacock, Henry Noon, Mervyn Bryce and Roy and Ann Burrows for their work on our behalf. Our recognition of Roy and Ann's almost immeasurable contribution to the Society by appointing them Patrons and Lifetime Members is something that gave me, and I am sure many of you, great pleasure. I would also like to express my thanks to Adrian Tester who has been a notably active President during the past year and who, in order to attend Executive Committee meetings in Derby, has been leaving his home in Aberystwyth at an hour when only birds and milkmen are usually about.

I hope that this meeting and the rest of the day's events will make your journeys here worthwhile. Thank you all for coming.

Membership Secretary

Alan Cox reported that it is four months since he took over from Ian Abram as Membership Secretary. He paid tribute to the work his predecessor had done and the systems he had put in place.

The paid up membership at year end stood at 442 (435 last year). So far during 2017 the Society has gained 9 new members and one lapsed member has returned. Meanwhile, 11

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have formally resigned, and, sadly, four have passed on. At this point there are 26 individuals who have yet to pay their subscription though this is a similar number each year and usually falls over time. Therefore the current total membership is **437** (compared with 423 this time last year). Within that total, 51 individuals or organisations are granted free membership (up from 48).

Alan closed the Membership element of his report by saying that he is looking at options to help streamline the renewal process to make it simpler for members whilst still realising the very important benefit of Gift Aid on subscriptions.

Treasurer

The Accounts and Treasurer's Report for the year ended 31st December 2016, including Budget figures for 2017, were circulated with the Notice for this meeting.

He noted that the merger with the Roy F Burrow Midland Collection Trust was very successful with a smooth transition in respect of financial matters.

Although the General Fund showed a deficit last year, this was attributable to the purchase of the scanner. Overall the Society made a profit in 2016 and it is anticipated it will do so again in 2017. That being so, there remains no need for him to recommend an increase in subscriptions.

There were no questions from the floor.

It was Proposed by Ian HOWARD, Seconded by Ian ABRAM, that the Balance Sheet be adopted and it was agreed *nem com*.

4. Election of Executive Committee

The Chairman informed the meeting that the following members offered themselves for re-election as Trustees and officers on the Executive Committee for 2017/18.

Chairman	-	Dave HUNT	General Member	-	Ian ABRAM
Vice Chairman	-	Ian HOWARD	General Member	-	Andrew SURRY
Treasurer	-	Alan COX	General Member	-	Nick WHEAT
Secretary	-	Dave HARRIS	General Member	-	Robin CULLUP

In accordance with Paragraph 4(e) of the Constitution of the Society, the following Members have been Appointed as Trustees:-

David Geldard, Mervyn Bryce and Henry Noon.

There being no other candidates for any of the posts, the appointment of the above named members as Trustees was Proposed by Roger BRETTLE and Seconded by Peter SCOTT, being agreed *nem com*.

5. Election of President

The Chairman informed the Meeting that the Executive Committee had invited **Robin CULLUP** to be the Society's President for 2017/18 and we are delighted that Robin has accepted. His appointment was confirmed *nem com*.

6. Election of Independent Examiner

The Treasurer proposed that the meeting reappoint Paul WALDRON to perform the role of Independent Examiner of the Society's accounts, pursuant to the requirements of the Charity Commission. This was seconded by Robin CULLUP and unanimously approved.

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7. Collection Committee Report

The Chairman stated that whereas in previous years the Study Centre Co-ordinator has given a Study Centre Report, henceforth this will be included in a broader report about the activities of the Collection Committed given by the Chairman of that Committee. To that end, David GELDARD reported:

I am pleased to present to you this report on the first year's activities of the Society's Collection Committee. It has been a busy year, but before dealing with any of the detail I must say how delighted I am with the way that the members of the new Committee have developed their working relationships over the year to form a very effective team. The interaction of this Committee and the Executive Committee has also settled to operate in exactly the way that we hoped and I particularly thank the Society Chairman Dave Hunt and of course the other EC members for their help in bringing this about.

The year can be summarised under five headings – acquisitions, housekeeping, Study Centre activities, Outreach and Museum redevelopment.

Acquisitions

Eighty-two new items were purchased during the year, ranging in cost from £2 for an insured parcel label to £2,640 (including buyer's premium and VAT) for a magnificent long case clock. Some acquisitions of particular note have been reported in the Newsletter, the ledger repatriated from the United States comes to mind as does the brass plaque from Derbyshire General Infirmary. Badges, buttons, maps, 2-chain plans, postcards, timetables and many other goodies have all been added to the collection.

The wide and carefully selected range of items is a tribute to our purchasing team of Frank Berridge and Henry Noon, assisted by Dave Harris and with invaluable input from Roy Burrows. We also benefitted from the advice of Peter Witts, who is a great loss to this Committee as well as to the wider Society. It would be very helpful to find someone in a similar position to Peter who could answer (or manage the search for answers) to queries which come into the Society. Alan Cox has kept an eye on expenditure and helped to bring the first year in under budget.

Dave has, incidentally, received from two or three members alerts of auction items outside the main railwayana circuit and I would just like to say that these are always welcome.

Housekeeping

A lot of work was done prior to the merger in reviewing the procedures and systems that had been in use by the Roy Burrows Trust and adapting them to suit the Society. This work formed the basis of the first issue of the Collection Handbook which was issued in February, shortly after the merger. Since then that work has continued and there was a major re-issue of the handbook in September. The work of co-ordinating and updating the handbook has been ably undertaken by Mervyn Bryce. We thank him for his sterling work and also for his important contribution to a major upgrade of the software that is used to manage the collection database and to the screen layouts that are so essential to smooth use of the database.

Hopefully most of you will be aware that the database can be accessed via the Study Centre website; please do use it, a wealth of information is available thanks to Mervyn and to Dave Harris and we hope to enhance this through enlargement of the MRS members' section of the site.

Study Centre Activity

Under the watchful eye of our Co-ordinator, Dave Harris, significant work has been undertaken during the year. In addition to the routine accessioning of new acquisitions, the task of working through and cataloguing the collection donated by Doncaster Grammar School neared completion. We have Paul Walpole to thank for this.

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Work on the Derby Museums Trust collection of Derby Official images has been continued by Tony Overton and Peter Stanley, while Tony and Andy Boothman are making steady progress with the collection of Carriage and Wagon drawings.

You may recall that a large format digital scanner was purchased towards the end of the year. It is no exaggeration to say that it rapidly became apparent that this will revolutionise access to large parts of the collection and I will say more on the subject next year.

There were 54 visitors to the Study Centre over the course of the year and well over a hundred e-mail and other enquiries were dealt with. Dave Harris forms the front line for this, tapping into the knowledge of many other Society members as required. We thank all who contributed in this way, together with all those volunteers who staff the Study Centre and so enable the wider public to access our superb research facility.

A statistic that you may find remarkable is that over the last 12 months the number of unique visitors to the Study Centre web site has steadily grown from an average of around 700 per month to the current level of around a 1,000 a month.

Outreach

Our 'Partners in Excellence' agreement with the National Railway Museum was renewed for a further three years. As part of his work on the Derby Officials, Tony Overton liaises with the NRM under this scheme and the other current project, joint on-line publication of a finding aid for Midland Railway timetables, has continued to make progress.

We were approached by the Settle & Carlisle people to assist with exhibition and display material at Ribbleshead station, culminating in the loan of two items and work on two interpretation panels on ticket history and printing. Valuable publicity for the Society and the Study Centre will result.

Our offer of assistance to the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway with their proposed displays is still open and we await further contact from them.

Although strictly speaking not falling within the scope of a report on 2016 our most recent, and most exciting, outreach venture is with the Midland Hotel here in Derby. A newly appointed manager decided that the hotel had been ignoring its railway history and Steve Huson is now leading the work of decking out public rooms and bedrooms with copies of Midland Railway posters and photographs and of organising a foyer display of objects from the collection related to Midland Railway hotels and catering. Not least to facilitate this, Steve has been appointed a member of the Collection Committee.

Museum redevelopment

In December we were informed that the museum had passed its mid-term review for the HLF bid and they are now on course to submit the final stage bid in June for a decision in September. If all goes well they will then lease temporary premises and work will begin on decanting the whole contents of the Silk Mill. A lot of thought has gone into planning the decant and Dave Harris in particular has spent a huge amount of time in assessing our collection and producing accurate work flows for our part in the process. Working parties will be needed later in the year, we are seeking volunteers so if anybody can offer to help will they please contact Dave.

The expectation is that we will be able to access much of the collection while it is in the temporary premises so that work is able to continue. The scope for visitors may, however, be somewhat reduced.

We anticipate being out of the Silk Mill for about two years but being able to move back in to an environment that will allow most of the hardware collection to be on public display with no reduction in the study facility for the archive and documentary material. We are currently working with the architects towards that end and I will be able to report in more detail next year.

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It is pleasing to be able to report that we have a good working relationship with the team from Derby Museums. Daniel Martin, the Curator of Making, sits with us as the museum's representative on the Collection Committee. They are aware of, and sympathetic to, our needs and value the Study Centre as a long-term asset for the museum. We have already commenced negotiations on a new agreement that will govern operation of the Study Centre after we have moved back into what will then be termed the Derby Silk Mill Museum of Making.

I conclude by again thanking my fellow members of the Collection Committee, together with all those other Society members who have helped to make our first year of operation so successful.

Questions from the floor:

Andrew SURRY welcomed the innovation of scanned material being made available through the Study Centre web site exclusively to Society members as a benefit of membership. He gave an example of how this had been useful to him. He asked whether this will continue and/or expand? Dave HARRIS, as Study Centre Coordinator, replied that yes it will, and the nature of the material to be provided in this way was very much in the hands of members asking for what they wanted to see. Either way, material will continue to be posted periodically, selected on a random basis when it gets scanned. A straw-poll of those present suggested about a quarter were unaware of this facility and so it will be promoted again in the next Newsletter.

Peter TRENCHARD asked if the location of the Temporary Site was known? David replied that it wasn't as taking a lease out on premises is dependant on the Heritage Lottery Fund money being released in "mid-summer". Whilst Derby Museums are actively liaising with local Estate Agents to be in a position to identify suitable premises as soon as the funds are released, it is impossible at this stage to predict what will be available at the relevant time. Dave gave an update on how we currently envisage our time at the Temporary Site will work in practice.

Bryan CROSS asked whether there will be additional costs to the Society in respect of insurance and security during this period? David replied that we will continue to be covered by Derby City Council's insurance and that Derby Museum are working hard to ensure that all the necessary notifications and conditions required by this are covered.

8. The Journal

Ian Howard gave a report in respect of the Society's Journal during the previous year:

I will review what happened with the Journal during the calendar year 2016 and tell you something about the three issues of the Journal planned for 2017. I will also bring you up to date with the Society's forthcoming and planned publications.

Journal Production

We published the Journal for 2016 as follows:

- No. 61, Summer 2016 in mid-August 2016.
- No.62, Autumn 2016 in early December 2016.
- No. 63, Winter 2016 in mid-February 2017.

We are planning publication in 2017 as follows:

- No. 64, Spring 2017: My edited copy is now with Nick Wheat for his professional laying out. We expect delivery to you in May.
- No. 65, Autumn 2017 in August 2017.
- No. 66, Winter 2017 in December 2017.

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Pages and Content

Two of our three issues of 2016 had 32 internal pages, both within my target (of 28 or 32 pages) at which the costs are within our budget, whilst the other, No. 61, had 36 pages which brought to you several very high quality articles. All three had a healthy number of pages allocated to 'Query Corner' and 'Comments', which I interpret as a very important section where you, the members, have an important role in the vigour of our Journal.

We no longer mail the Journal and Newsletter together whenever it is possible because they go to different printers who are also the mailers. So, we have decided to try to get the Journal out at regular intervals through the year, i.e. April, August and December. We have, of course, slipped a bit this year with No. 64, due to No. 63 being much later than planned because of unexpected delays at the printer. This has knock-on effects since you, the members, need time between receiving an issue and my completing the editing of the next so that you can consider and prepare any Comments or Queries and get them to me in time for me to incorporate them in my edited copy. Having said that, I will do my best to bring Nos. 65 and 66 to you on time.

As regards 2017, my edited copy for No. 64, Spring 2017, is now with Nick. It will probably be over-size with 36 internal pages. It contains several important articles around the theme of 'Early Midland'. Even allowing some extra pages to accommodate this, there are several pieces that would not fit, so I have placed this spill-over into No. 65. Both of these issues will have varied and interesting contents, at least something for every one of our members. As regards No. 66, Winter 2017, I have two main articles to hand, with space for anything I receive between now and the copy date of 1st October.

Contributions

So, I still need copy for the last issue of 2017 and for all three of those for 2018. I hope that we will have a new Editor by the end of this year at the latest. That person will need copy in hand by the beginning of 2018 for the Autumn and Winter issues of 2018. So, please look up your research files and let us have anything you would like to see in print. If you are unsure as to how to set out your material, please get in touch with me, and I will do anything I can to help you. I and the new editor will have access to my very large collection of scanned photographs as well as all those held in various places at the Study Centre. We are truly fortunate in our Society to have such a rich resource on hand, at the touch of a metaphorical button, and this might provide some, perhaps all of the illustrations needed for an otherwise bare piece of text.

Amongst the several useful, interesting and important articles that appeared in the three issues of 2016, I want to mention just one especially. That is the piece by Dave Harris and Tony Overton on 'Rediscovering the North end of Derby Station'. Interesting, very well-illustrated and original, this article threw glaring new light on something that previously seemed completely understood - how the north end of Derby station changed and developed over the years. With the resources to which we, as a Society, now have access, I expect new and helpful insight into the history of the Midland Railway to emerge regularly; our Journal is one medium through which that new knowledge can be spread throughout our Society and beyond.

Having said that, smaller pieces are just as welcome as larger ones and are sometimes even more welcome because they give variety and depth to an issue otherwise dominated by one large article.

Thanks

I thank all our authors, our contributors to "Query Corner", and the senders of "Comments". Also, the people who have regularly helped with getting illustrations for the journal; Roy and Anne Burrows, and David Postle of Kidderminster Railway Museum. Having been the proof-reader for our Journal for very many years now Roy has decided to stand down. I want to thank him for doing the job for all the time I have been Editor; his keen

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eye and careful reading our Journal have been essential in keeping the standard we try to maintain.

The Journal production team includes Nick Wheat for the layout and organising the printing, John Stevenson for proof reading, Whittington Moor Print Works for the printing and distribution and Alan Cox for preparing the labels.

My thanks go to all of those people, and to any contributors to our Journal who I have inadvertently not already mentioned.

Society Publications

Published in 2016

The Best Way, by Steve Huson

This excellent booklet was ready for the 2016 AGM. It is a splendid introduction to the Midland Railway and is designed to attract new members at venues like the annual Warley shows.

The Midland Railway Locomotive Works at Derby by Charles Henry Jones (reprint of 1892 illustrated article)

This Society reprint of the original text has new high-quality photographs and captions and a set of plans showing the development of the works over the years. Its price is the affordable £4.95.

Published or to be published in 2017

The Midland Railway Through the Eyes of a Collector, by Roy Burrows

Amberley Publishing, softback, 96 pages, £14.99: just out. Roy has most generously agreed to pass all benefits in respect of this work to the Society.

Midland Retrospective, by John Earl & Steve Huson

The plan for this book was to launch it at this AGM, but delays in final type setting and with the printers have put the date back. Anyway, it will be out soon as a 245×220mm hardback with cloth covers and a dust jacket and containing 212 pages with both black-and-white and colour illustrations. The expected cover price will be £20 for members and £27.50 for non-members. The book is currently with the printers for a few final slight alterations. There are some A5 flyers around the room for you to see further details.

The Nottingham Loop Line of the Midland Railway, by Michael Woodward

The book is A4 size with 200 pages plus four for the cover and is heavily illustrated, many being previously unpublished. There are excellent appendices and a proper index. We are still investigating printing costs, but expect the sale price will be less than £20.

Operating the Midland Railway, by Garth Ponsonby

This is a reference paper based upon the material that Garth used for his Presidential Address of 2010. This work is available as an illustrated pdf 'Reference Paper' for download from the Study Centre web site.

Midland Railway Photographs from the Albums of Robert Brookman and Geoffrey Wilkinson, by Ian Howard

In the last year, with Peter Witts' unexpected death, I have lost my co-author and his deep understanding of all aspects of Midland Railway matters and his contacts for uncovering the personal details of the two photographers. Despite this I have continued slowly with the project on my own. If things go well I might have a readable draft towards the end of this year when I would draw upon others for criticism and guidance. Following that, I expect publication to be some time in 2018.

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Reprint of Journals 1 to 7

Steve Huson is working on collecting suitable images to accompany the text drawn from the first seven (laser-printed) issues of our Journal. That text is now digital in a form ready to receive the images when available and which can be formatted into our normal Journal style. Our intention is to re-issue these in a single volume, printed to the same standard as that of the later issues (i.e. No. 8 onwards) and which members who so wish can incorporate into their set of Journals.

The Sting in the Tail

As Dave Hunt has already told you, after more than ten years in the job it is time for me to pass on the Editorship of our Journal to a fresh pair of hands. Anyone who thinks they might be able to help should talk to me soon to discuss how they might contribute and the various issues involved in that. As Dave said, I will not be doing the job after the first issue of 2018, so there is not much time now to smooth the process of transfer from me to the next editor.

Peter TRENCHARD then very kindly proposed a vote of thanks for the Trustees and officers of the Society for the work undertaken during the year. The Chairman declared the Meeting closed at 12:10hrs with thanks to Derby College for the use of the splendid Carriage Shop facilities.

The Chairman's Cup

The Chairman's Cup was awarded to John TUCKETT for his magnificent Gauge 1 dioramas based on Kirkby-in-Ashfield and Westhouses locomotive sheds as well as Bradford Forster Square station. Although the models were not physically present, the display of excellent photographs depicting them showed the highest standard of modelling and the meeting agreed with the Chairman that they were well worth the award.

Appendix I - Members who Signed the Register of Attendance:

Adrian TESTER	Mervyn BRYCE	Christopher WILLIAMS	A.G.TREVES
Dave HUNT	Roy BURROWS	Robin CULLUP	Andrew BOOTHMAN
Dave HARRIS	Mike HOLLAND	B.M.CLAYTON	Peter TRENCHARD
Ian HOWARD	Keith GILLIVER	Ken WRIGHT	Peter SCOTT
Steve HUSON	M.GOODWIN	Colin ROBERTS	Peter BINKS
Alan COX	M.C.SHAW	Christopher WILLEY	Paul DURDEN
Ian ABRAM	J.OLLERENSHAW	Neil HANCOCK	Stuart McKAY
John EARL	M.DIX	John DOWNING	Roger BRETTLE
Nick WHEAT	Roger WEST	R.GRETTON	John ELLIOTT
Andrew CHOLERTON	Andrew SURRY	Jim POPE	John PARKER
David GELDARD	P.A.CLARK	John MILES	Peter BUTLER

Appendix II - Apologies:

Garth PONSONBY	Prof. G. HUXLEY	Tony OVERTON	Ian APPLEYARD
John STEVENSON	Laurence KNIGHTON	Peter STANLEY	Mick BYNG
Ann BURROWS	Graham WHITEHEAD	Michael WOODWARD	
Peter J WILDE	Howard TURNER	Barry CODY	