



Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2018

The Midland Hotel
Derby, DE1 2SQ

Saturday, 14th April 2018

1. Register of Members and Apologies

A total of 54 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, 8th April 2017

The minutes of the 2017 Annual General Meeting had been previously circulated. No amendments having been suggested, Peter BUTLER proposed and Steve HUSON seconded that they be accepted as a true record, which was agreed *nem com*.

3. Presentation of Executive Committee reports

Chairman

The Chairman reported as follows:

Welcome to you all. Once again the general theme of my report is that the Midland Railway Society has enjoyed another successful year with several notable developments that I will mention shortly. Before that, however, I have to tell you the sad news that five of our members have passed away, namely Duncan Bridge, Clive Kirkland, Fred Emery, Stuart Smith and Brian Juden, in memory of whom I would ask all those present to join me in observing a minute's silence.

The meeting stood in silent reflection.

Two major events of the last year concern the Study Centre at the Silk Mill in Derby. First, thanks to the eager cooperation of Derby Museums Trust we have been able to negotiate an extension to the agreement that underpins the Study Centre. This makes it coterminous with the Museum's own lease from Derby City Council, giving us security of tenure and a home for our collection until at least 2043, which is of incalculable importance to the Society. Second is the ongoing 'decant' of the collection to a temporary site so that vital renovations can take place at the Silk Mill. This has involved a lot of work by the Collections Committee and the Study Centre 'Thursday gang' but I have to mention specifically Dave Harris and David Geldard who have been involved in a myriad of negotiations, meetings and arrangements. Remodelling the interior of the Silk Mill, which is expected to take about two years, has now

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begun and will lead to the establishment of the Derby Silk Mill Museum of Making. The new space we will then have promises to be more convenient and attractive, thanks largely to the efforts of the Davids and the sympathetic response from Derby Museums Trust. In the meantime we still have access to the collection, albeit more limited, so it will be business (nearly) as usual for researchers and the 'gang'.

As you will realise from the reproductions of Midland Railway posters evident as you entered the building this morning, our outreach with what I suppose most of us still think of simply as the Midland Hotel has developed due to Steve Huson's initiative and drive. Together with the enthusiastic co-operation of the hotel manager, Donald Stewart, and our Collections Committee, Steve is putting together a display of exhibits from Midland hotels that will be put in place once a few wrinkles concerning insurance are sorted out. That will help to bring the Midland Railway's position as the pioneer of railway hotel construction and operation into the public eye as well as making many more people aware of our Society and its work. Through Steve's efforts and Donald's generosity we are also able to enjoy the use of this room free of charge, allowing us to subsidise the lunch to which I am sure you are looking forward. I know that you will all join me in thanking them both in time-honoured fashion.

My recent suggestion in the Newsletter that there may be scope for the introduction of modelling items in the Society's publications and possibly some modelling based activities has met with a positive response; not only that, but two members have offered to replace Steve Duckworth, who has had to step down from the position of Modelling Co-ordinator, and to take things forward. Those members are Tony Gomersall and Tony Etches. Unfortunately Tony Gomersall can't be here today but Tony Etches is so if you have any suggestions about modelling initiatives, I'm sure he would be only too happy to talk to you.

The fact that over 50% of our members express an interest in modelling was one of the factors leading to the Executive Committee's discussions on the matter and my Newsletter suggestion. It also engendered the thought that raising our profile in the railway modelling world would be beneficial as we could possibly attract more members from that area. Although membership numbers have held steady in the last twelve months, I would be happier if they were increasing. For keeping track of membership matters as well as acting as Treasurer and frequently having to explain matters of accountancy to me I would like to thank Alan Cox, without whose patience the whole subject would to me be effectively opaque.

As you will all be aware, our Journal Editor and Deputy Chairman, Ian Howard, suffered a medical double whammy during the Christmas period when he had both a heart attack and a stroke but I'm glad to say that Ian's recovery is still progressing and I know that you all wish him well. As a result, though, Ian has had to stand down from his position as Deputy Chairman and Trustee but we are fortunate that Adrian Tester, our President in 2016-2017, has volunteered to take over, for which he has my thanks as well as that of the other committee members and, I feel sure, everyone here. Thanks are also due to John Earl, who was propelled into the position of Journal Editor sooner than expected and did a superb job of getting the latest Journal out with minimum delay. Luckily we had Howard McLean taking over editorship of the Newsletter from John so the transition has been almost seamless and to him we also owe a vote of thanks. The new style that Howard has adopted for the Newsletter has met with general approval and his enthusiasm for the job bodes well for its future.

In addition, we must be grateful to Andrew Surry for assuming responsibility for editing the other Society publications and although there have been some inevitable delays in the production schedules this too is in good hands. In all of this, of course, Nick Wheat has remained pivotal in getting the various items of printed matter into finished form and production and his efforts are not only appreciated but also essential to our Society's prosperity. My final point concerning publications is that we now have in Dave Arrowsmith a co-ordinator and editor for what is potentially one of the most important projects the Society has undertaken – that of producing a definitive work on Midland Railway signalling, which is a significant gap in the coverage of the Company's history. Dave faces a lot of work and the project will not be quickly completed but it is very worthwhile and to him we owe thanks for taking it on.

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In recognition of Ian Howard's excellent work for the Society over many years as Vice Chair and Journal Editor as well as activities such as editing and producing some of our recent publications, copying and cataloguing our late President Jack Braithwaite's photographic collection and many others, the Executive Committee have decided to offer Ian the post of Society President for 2018-2019. This is the first time that anyone will have held the post twice and is a reflection of the esteem in which we hold him. It is also worth noting in this context that Ian's work in the Society has required no fewer than three people to take it over.

Other activities such as outreach initiatives with the Friends of the Settle & Carlisle, support for the St. Pancras 150 celebrations and involvement with developments on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway are still ongoing and we will keep members advised on progress in due course. I must also mention that in addition to his work on publications, Andrew Surry manages to find time to organise excellent members' meetings and outings that add significantly to the benefits of belonging to the Society. He is in the process of arranging a weekend in the Gloucester area during July and if similar events he has organised in the past are anything to go by it will be well worth while so I would encourage you to take part.

My last point results from what has happened due to Ian Howard's troubles. Had the process of handing over Ian's editorship of the Journal to John Earl, in itself facilitated by Howard McLean's taking over the Newsletter, and other publications to Andrew Surry not already been in progress I probably could not be so sanguine about our Society's immediate future. Now I know that I bang on at frequent intervals about the need for more members to become involved in running the Society but in view of recent events I make no apologies for doing so once more. We really do need volunteers to shadow committee members and other management appointees so that any future problems can be overcome promptly and the Society continue to run smoothly and effectively. I made reference to this in my last Newsletter chunterings so will say no more other than ask you, please, to read what I wrote then.

It remains for me to thank formally all those who have put so much effort into running the Society and without whom it could not function as well as it does. Apart from those I have already acknowledged, my appreciation goes to Robin Cullup, Henry Noon, Frank Berridge, Mervyn Bryce, Andrew Cholerton, Roy and Ann Burrows, Frances Peacock, Ashley Sanders and Jim Pope for all their work during the year as well as Paul Waldron for independently examining the accounts. I know that you all will join me in registering thanks to everyone concerned in the normal fashion.

Now that you have listened patiently to me for long enough, I hope that the rest of this meeting and the remainder of the day's events will be enjoyable and worth the journey. Thank you all for coming.

Membership Secretary

Alan Cox reported that membership numbers have remained almost unchanged during 2017 and into this year. We gained 16 new members in 2017 but this was offset by the resignation or passing of 15 members. The paid up membership at year end stood at **430** (429 last year). So far during 2018 the Society has gained seven new members while there has also been seven resignations. Sadly, we have also been notified of one death. At this point there are four individuals who have yet to pay their subscription which is a much smaller number than most years. Following a procedure agreed by the Executive Committee, the late payers won't receive any further publications and Alan will make one further attempt to persuade them to pay.

Alan reiterated the benefits of members setting up a Standing Order to pay their annual subscription – as 60% of the membership now do. This streamlines the administration at both ends of the process as it means these members don't have to post back their membership form unless there is an amendment to be made.

In answer to a question from the floor, Alan said that none of the resignations were due to dissatisfaction. Generally they had joined for a specific reason and that reason had subsequently

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gone away – the promotion of the 'Engineer's Book", for example. As with previous years, there was also a proportion of non-renewing members who cited "cutting back on expenditure".

Treasurer

The Accounts and Treasurer's Report for the year ended 31st December 2017, including Budget figures for 2018, were circulated with the Notice for this meeting.

In respect of Membership Subscription rates, Alan said that the increase to £20 in 2013 was intended to avoid the need to raise it again in the near future and that continues to hold true. He said that he remains optimistic that this will continue to be the case for several more years.

A question was asked from the floor in respect of any potential tax liabilities that might be incurred through maintaining the balances on the accounts as they are. Alan responded that as a Registered Charity this is not something we need to be concerned about. This led to a reminder to those members who have yet to return the Gift Aid mandate which was recently circulated to kindly do so. The collective benefit to the Society is a considerable contribution.

It was Proposed by Garth PONSONBY, Seconded by David WHITE, that the Balance Sheet be adopted and it was agreed *nem com*.

4. Election of Executive Committee

The Chairman informed the meeting that following the resignation of Ian HOWARD due to ill health, the Executive Committee had co-opted Adrian TESTER into the role of Vice Chairman. Therefore the following members offered themselves for election as Trustees and officers on the Executive Committee for 2018/19.

Chairman	-	Dave HUNT	General Member	- Ian ABRAM
Vice Chairman	-	Adrian TESTER	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 once again 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 Chris FURNESS and Seconded by Garth PONSONBY, being agreed *nem com*.

5. Election of President

The Chairman informed the Meeting that the Executive Committee had invited **Ian HOWARD** to be the Society's President for 2018/19. Ian has served as President before and this will be the first time the Committee has invited anyone to do so for a second time. This is a conscious decision in order to honour Ian for the work he has done for the Society over a very long period of time. 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.

7. Collection Committee Report

David GELDARD, Chairman of the Collection Committee reported:

In my report last year I let you know that Derby Museums were on course to submit their final stage HLF bid; that was duly done and as you are no doubt all aware the bid was successful. The team for redeveloping the Silk Mill has been assembled, the building is now virtually empty with all objects having been moved into temporary storage and the structural work is due to start at the end of this month.

For the next couple of years or so our Study Centre team will be working out of temporary premises, where they will continue to have access to the whole of our archival collection so that ordinary day-to-day work can continue and enquiries can be dealt with. Our discussions with the museum, their architects and design team has already started and the present expectation is that when we are able to move back into the building the new Study Centre will comprise an archive storeroom on the first floor, substantially where we already were, with a reading room suspended above it and accessed from the second floor through a space occupied by the model railway. We hope to be able to use parts of the wall area here for display purposes and also to have virtually the whole of our object collection on public view at various locations around the museum.

This will be a challenging, but exciting, exercise, and one that we are able to approach in the knowledge that, as reported in the March Newsletter, we now have in place an agreement with the museum that covers our joint operation through to the mid-2040s. A long-term arrangement of this nature has been our goal for some considerable time; we are delighted to have achieved it and thank Daniel Martin, Curator of Making, and the museum team for the manner in which they approached the negotiations.

Throughout the year the normal work of the Study Centre has continued thanks to our willing band of volunteers. There were over 60 formal visits for research purposes, two organised tours and we dealt with approaching 200 email and other 'non-visiting' enquiries. Very significant work has been done on sorting and cataloguing the MRS Legacy collection as a result of which access to this important material has been significantly improved. Progress has been made on restoration and conservation, perhaps the main item in the latter category has been the disbinding, scanning and sleeving of the pages of a guard book of Engineer's lithos. This is not the only project in which our digital scanner has proved to be invaluable, and indeed it has become one of our most-used tools. The ability to rapidly scan large drawings means not only that less access to the originals will be necessary in the future (so aiding conservation) but also that material can be made available to members on the Study Centre website, something which would otherwise never have been possible. We are also, incidentally, working towards making the website a vehicle via which PDFs of specific sections of the collection can be viewed and downloaded.

The photograph and postcard sections of the collection have been enhanced and we can now confidently say that we hold the most comprehensive publicly accessible collection of Midland postcard images. I would like here to record our gratitude to John Alsop for supplying us with copies of items from his well-renowned collection.

Enhancement of the collection has, of course, also occurred through donations and purchases during the year. Getting on for 200 items have been purchased, from ebay, which is regularly monitored, from railwayana auctions and from private individuals. Prices have ranged from 99p for a privilege ticket application form from Hunslet to £900 (including buyer's premium) for an extremely rare ivory LT&SR pass. In between were items such as a fish knife, signal box diagrams, parcel stamps and a superb 66ft to 1 in plan of Burton and branches dating from 1874.

Outreach work has continued, our dialogue with the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway proceeds although it will be some time yet before any project can be advanced. Collaboration with the National Railway Museum on a finding aid that records the incidence of Midland public and working timetables in accessible collections has been completed; the finished document can be

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downloaded as a PDF from the website. Additional display material has been supplied to the hotel, our hosts today; we still hope that a significant object display will be arranged and the necessary items have been stored so as to be readily accessible. Several other new contacts have also been made, all helping to spread the reputation of the Society and the Study Centre.

None of this would have been possible, of course, without the sterling work done by the members of the Collection Committee and I thank our purchasing team of Frank Berridge and Henry Noon; Mervyn Bryce for his invaluable work on systems and the handbook; Alan Cox for keeping his eye on the budget and Steve Huson, for his outreach work in particular. The backroom volunteers must not be ignored, Andy Boothman, Tony Overton, Peter Stanley and Paul Walpole; coupled with continuing and valued assistance from Anne and Roy Burrows. Finally, none of this would be possible were it not for the almost superhuman efforts of our Study Centre Co-ordinator Dave Harris.

Questions from the floor:

Alan GALINSKI asked if the Society was aware of difficulties he, and on the basis of feedback he had received, other users of the Study Centre, were experiencing in obtaining photographs from the Society's collection held by the Kidderminster Railway Museum. In his capacity as Study Centre Coordinator, Dave HARRIS replied that this has been raised with David POSTLE at KRM. In short, demand is outstripping supply in terms of available staff time at KRM. The MRS owes a great deal of gratitude to KRM in that they have taken a significant burden off the Midland Railway Study Centre over the years – not only in handling the supply of copy prints of our photographs, but in cataloguing the 6.854 images they administer on our behalf. In order to mitigate the issues being experienced, the Society has resolved that future bulk acquisitions of photographs will be processed and retained "in house". In the meantime, patience, understanding and persistence is the approach advocated for KRM.

Stuart McKAY queried whether it was in the best interests of efficiency to have two separate web sites; one for the Society and one for the Study Centre. David GELDARD pointed out in response that it was primarily because the Midland Railway Study Centre is operated jointly with Derby Museums. Dave HARRIS added that there was a distinctly different target audience for the two sites; the MRS site being aimed at members and potential members of the Society. The Study Centre site, meanwhile, was aimed directly at potential users of the resources it offers. Those in the latter category tend, in many cases, to have little or no interest in railways as such – their research being more social or family history oriented.

Finally, John OLLERENSHAW raised a concern in respect of the Midland Compound model on display in the Silk Mill, specifically in respect of its ongoing care and conservation. Dave HARRIS undertook to pass on his points to Derby Museums as owner of the item concerned.

The Meeting closed at 12:05 with thanks to the Manager of the Midland Hotel, Donald Stewart, for his very generous gesture in allowing us the use of the room without charge.

The Chairman's Cup

The Chairman's Cup was awarded to Michael HOLLAND for his highly detailed recreations of the signals at Peak Forest North signal box.

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Appendix I - Members who Signed the Register of Attendance:

Roy BURROWS	Adrian SMITH	Steve HUSON	Brian CLAYDON
Anne BURROWS	David WHITE	Paul WALPOLE	Stuart McKAY
Robin CULLUP	Roger BRETTL	Peter BARNES	Neil HANCOCK
Dave HUNT	Andy BOOTHMAN	Michael HOLLAND	Michael BYNG
Adrian TESTER	Kevin WILLIAMS	Colin ROBERTS	D. INGHAM
Alan COX	Don ASHER	Garth PONSONBY	John HASTINGS-
Andrew SURRY	Ken WRIGHT	Chris FURNESS	THOMSON
Dave HARRIS	Derek PREECE	Jim POPE	William ROSS
David GELDARD	Roger WEST	John OLLERENSHAW	Peter BUTLER
Ian ABRAM	Michael DIX	John PARKER	Christopher WILEY
Peter STANLEY	Frank BERRIDGE	John STEVENSON	David SWAN
Michael WOODWARD	Tony ETCHES	A.G.TREVES	Barry CODY
John ELLIOTT (887)	Alan GALINSKI	Mervyn BRYCE	Stephen LEA
John ELLIOTT (812)	Peter TRENCHARD	Pat COOPER	

Appendix II - Apologies:

Ian HOWARD	Mike GOODWIN	Christopher WILLIAMS	Nick WHEAT
John MILES	Ray PETTIT	Lawrence GRATTON	John EARL
Bob ESSERY	Howard McLEAN	Ian APPLEYARD	
Arnold TORTORELLA	Barrie TIMS	George SULLIVAN	

Minutes by Dave Harris 16APR2018