

THE MIDLAND RAILWAY SOCIETY

Registered Charity - Number 1149613



Minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting of the Society

The Annual General Meeting of the Midland Railway Society was held on Saturday 13th April 2019 at the Midland Hotel, Derby, commencing at 11:00hrs.

1. Register of Members and Apologies

A total of 49 members signed the attendance register, while apologies from 15 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, 14th April 2018

The minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting had been previously circulated. No amendments having been suggested, David WHITE proposed and Garth PONSONBY 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:

I am happy once again that I can report that we have enjoyed a successful year, although it is with regret that I have to announce the passing of two of our members, namely Jack Turner of Bedford and Brian Kitchener of Thurso. I would therefore ask all those present to join me in observing a minute's silence in their memory.

The meeting stood in silent contemplation.

One of the major events of the last year concerning the Society has been completion of the decant of the Study Centre material from the Silk Mill to a storage facility so that work on refurbishing the building and converting it to become the Derby Silk Mill Museum of Making can take place. Once again I have to acknowledge the intensive efforts of the Collections Committee and the Study Centre 'Thursday gang', giving special mention to the Study Centre Co-ordinator, Dave Harris, and Chairman of the Collections Committee, David Geldard, who have continued to meet regularly with members of Derby Museums Trust as well as consultants and contractors to ensure that our interests are well looked after. Due in no small part to their involvement we

THE MIDLAND RAILWAY SOCIETY

Registered Charity - Number 1149613

still have limited access to the collection while it is in store during the two years or so that work on the Silk Mill will be in progress.

As you are all undoubtedly aware, our former Journal Editor and Deputy Chairman, Ian Howard, suffered both a heart attack and a stroke just over a year ago, which precipitated John Earl's early takeover as Journal Editor at the very time that we were experiencing difficulties with the then printers; an unenviable situation to say the least for someone new to the job without the lead in time he was expecting. Together with the Executive Committee's efforts to keep costs down, the change of printers forced upon us led to some problems with the quality of paper and photographic reproduction but due to John's efforts this was resolved and I want to thank him for the task that he has undertaken on our behalf to keep one of the cornerstones of the Society in being to the benefit of all members.

John Earl has also taken on the task of trying to overcome the delays several members have been experiencing in acquiring copies of our photographic collection housed at the Kidderminster Railway Museum. He has visited the site and intends to go again with the means to copy all the scanned images so that they will become more readily available. To do this, however, he needs to co-ordinate with the KRM and this, together with ill-health, has delayed the process but John is still pursuing the matter and hopes to make more progress soon.

As I hope you will all realise, this is the second AGM that we have been able to organise at no cost for the room hire and after which, therefore, we have been able to offer a substantially subsidised lunch for all those who wish to partake of it. It will be followed this evening by a dinner to commemorate the 175th anniversary of the formation of the Midland Railway and once again we have to thank the manager of what I suppose we all still think of simply as the Midland Hotel, Donald Stewart, for giving us an extremely favourable rate both for the meal and for overnight accommodation. Unfortunately, Donald is unable to be with us today but I think that we can still express our appreciation for his most valuable friendship towards our Society.

In all our dealings with the hotel we are indebted to Steve Huson for his ongoing efforts to establish and further the good relationship that now exists between us. The reproductions of Midland Railway posters evident in the foyer and around the hotel are further evidence of this and Steve is still working on putting together a display of exhibits once the situation concerning insurance is sorted out, which is something we hope that the new hotel owners will resolve soon.

In addition to the above, Donald Stewart has enthusiastically embraced the idea of an exhibition to be held at the hotel from 10th - 12th May to celebrate Midland 175. Unfortunately the Silk Mill decant has precluded a display of artefacts from our collection but once again the combined efforts of Steve Huson and Dave Harris, together with input from some other members, is producing a 'mini exhibition' of very professional-looking display panels as well as some other exhibits. We also hope to have a Society flag flying above the hotel for the duration. There will be a need, of course, for members to support the event by maintaining a Society presence and liaising with the public, so I want to make a plea for as many of you as possible to help out. The duties will be far from onerous but nevertheless essential and I hope that a good number of members will contact Steve and Dave to offer their help. This will be an occasion on which the public face and reputation of our Society will potentially be enhanced to everyone's benefit so please step forward.

As usual, we must also be grateful to Andrew Surry for editing several Society publications and for organising the excellent range of meetings and the Society weekends that we have been able to enjoy. Thanks are also due to Nick Wheat for getting various items of printed matter into finished form and production, and to Howard McLean for editing the Newsletter, which is another essential plank in the Society's structure. In addition to those people already mentioned who have

THE MIDLAND RAILWAY SOCIETY

Registered Charity - Number 1149613

contributed so much during the past year I also want to thank, in no particular order, Adrian Tester, Robin Cullup, Henry Noon, 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. The modelling team of Tony Gomersall and Tony Etches as well as Stephen Lea are also making steps to improve our profile among modellers and I hope to be able to report much more progress in this area next year. Without all the people whom I have mentioned, the Society would simply not be able to function as effectively as it does for the benefit of its members so I invite you all to register appreciation in the usual fashion.

Other activities such as outreach initiatives with the Friends of the Settle & Carlisle and with developments on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway are still ongoing and when there is noteworthy progress you will be informed. One small triumph that I can report is that, mainly due to the efforts of member Don Asher, the birthplace of Matthew Kirtley in Tyneside will soon be commemorated by a plaque that will acknowledge the Midland Railway Society's involvement in getting such recognition.

My last point for this report is that the presence of the Society bookstall here and at other Society meetings as well as at various exhibitions will soon be in jeopardy unless someone steps up to take over the role of Commercial Sales and Publications from Andrew Cholerton. As I wrote in my last Newsletter Chunterings, Andrew is having to step down due to an imminent house move and other family commitments and that move will probably happen within the next few months. If no-one takes over by then the bookstall will fall into abeyance to the detriment of members' convenience and considerable loss of revenue to the Society that could even result in the need to raise subscriptions. This, of course, is something we all wish to avoid. The post does not necessarily need to be filled by a single person – a team could be just as effective and result in far less work for each member. Please consider whether you could help and if you could, get in touch with anyone from the committee.

That concludes my annual report but before I sit down there is one more thing I want to do. I have already referred to Ian Howard's ill-health and although he is just coming to the end of his second term as President of the Society he is unable to be with us today, so his Presidential Address will be given in his stead by Dave Harris. As I am sure you will be aware, Ian has been a stalwart of the Midland Railway Society since its inception and has made an almost immeasurable contribution to its rise and progress as Journal editor, President and Committee member as well as undertaking demanding tasks such as editing and producing some Society publications, copying and cataloguing our late President Jack Braithwaite's photographic collection and many others. His input to committee matters has been invaluable and he still takes an active role despite being effectively housebound. In recognition of his outstanding contribution to the Society over many years I am therefore proposing that he is elected an Honorary Life Member and so that he can continue in an active role that he be appointed Emeritus Vice-President until further notice. In this motion I am seconded by Dave Harris and I would now ask you to indicate by a show of hands all those in favour.

This received unanimous agreement.

I will now stop boring you all and let the rest of this meeting as well as the remainder of the day's events take place. Thank you.

Membership Secretary

Alan Cox reported that since the last AGM, there has been a net increase of 13 members taking the total at the time of this meeting to **442** (429 last year). We gained 24 new members in 2018/19 but this was offset by the resignation (5), lapsing (4) or passing (2) of 11 members. This good news is tempered by there being 18 members who have yet to pay

THE MIDLAND RAILWAY SOCIETY

Registered Charity - Number 1149613

their subscription. These late payers will not receive any further publications but Alan will make further attempts to persuade them to pay.

Treasurer

The Accounts and Treasurer's Report for the year ended 31st December 2018, including Budget figures for 2019, 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 for a significant period and that remains true. He said that we continue to add to our reserves and as such there is no immediate need to raise subscription rates. However, he sounded a note of caution following the remarks made in the Chairman's Report in respect of commercial book sales. It is the profit made in this area which primarily keeps us from having to eat into our reserves. If this revenue dries up or is significantly reduced, then subscriptions will almost certainly have to rise to counter this.

Alan also highlighted the fact that the £1,300 surplus for the year would have been a £700 deficit were it not for the Gift Aid reclaim. He again urged the remaining members who have not yet signed a Gift Aid form to do so. Alternatively, please let Alan know if your tax situation doesn't allow us to claim Gift Aid on your membership, or for whatever personal reason you prefer not to do so. That way we will know where we stand on this point.

4. Election of Executive Committee

The Chairman informed the meeting that the following members offered themselves for election as Trustees and Officers on the Executive Committee for 2019/20.

| | | | | | |
|---------------|---|----------------------|----------------|---|---------------------|
| 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 Garth PONSONBY and Seconded by Michael HOLLAND, being agreed *nem com*.

5. Election of President

The Chairman informed the Meeting that the Executive Committee had invited **Ian ABRAM** to be the Society's President for 2019/20. 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:

This time last year I reported that the Silk Mill was virtually empty, with all objects having been moved into off-site storage, and that the Study Centre team would be working out of temporary premises. Our collections are spread across more than one site with most of the large plans being stored remote from the main document collection and the objects all effectively being in deep store for the duration. After snagging had been completed the team was finally able to gain access to the

THE MIDLAND RAILWAY SOCIETY

Registered Charity - Number 1149613

document store in April and familiarise itself with the new locations. It transpired that a good job had been done and that although working conditions were very cramped we were able over the year to deal with approximately 75 different enquiries of varying degrees of complexity and, in the later part of the year, host a total of six researching visitors. Add to that the fact that during 2018 we also responded to over 150 email enquiries made via our website and seeking information from documents in the collection, and you will see that we continued to fulfil our object of educating the public in the Midland Railway.

One excellent piece of news at the end of the year was that negotiations between Derby City Council and Derby Museums over the terms of the Silk Mill lease were concluded with the result that the museum will have greater operating flexibility across the enhanced site. A side effect of this is that the lease, and consequently the Study Centre agreement, has been extended to 10 September 2043.

Notwithstanding this, the current limitations on the Study Centre have of course continued into this year, and towards the end of it there will again be a period when our access to the collection will drop to almost zero. It is anticipated that this will take effect from about November but we will ensure that you are kept advised via the website and the Newsletter.

During 2018 roughly 250 new items were added to the collection, covering items such as luggage and wagon labels; contract documents, plans and drawings; timetables, special notices and handbills; signalling items; photographs; buttons and badges; a tea towel; an Inspector's hat; and, yes, even a set of handcuffs duly stamped MR. Our purchasing team of Frank Berridge and Henry Noon are assiduous in their perusal of eBay and auction catalogues and thanks are due to them and to some other Society members for spotting choice items that will enhance our coverage of Midland history. Thanks also to Alan Cox for keeping a close eye on the budget.

I mentioned the Collection Handbook in my 2017 report. Effectively, this is the operations 'bible' for the Collections Committee and Study Centre volunteers and is designed to help our successors when they come to take over the work. It has been enhanced and updated over the year, thanks to much hard work by Mervyn Bryce and Dave Harris, and is now nearly complete. It covers the governing documents under which the Society and the Study Centre operate, collection policy, procedures for acquisitions and disposals, cataloguing routines, the design and function of the database in which all collection items are recorded, and agreements between the Society and other parties.

Talking of agreements, one that came to an end during the year was the loan to a signalling enthusiast in Canterbury of an eight lever signal frame with tumbler locking. Dave Harris and Tony Overton spent a couple of days dismantling this and transporting it to safe storage at Statfold. They know how to enjoy themselves!

Steve Huson has taken the lead on much of the outreach work during the year and it is largely due to him that we now enjoy such an excellent relationship with the hotel, our venue today. We are still hopeful of installing here a significant display of hotel related objects and these remain earmarked for that purpose.

I have mentioned all members of the Collection Committee and thank them again for their efforts during the year. Thanks are also due to the other volunteers who have endured the privations of the temporary accommodation to continue work on the collection, Tony Overton, Paul Walpole and Steve Huson; the invaluable help of Anne and Roy Burrows must also be acknowledged. As ever though, the final tribute has to be to our indefatigable Study Centre Co-ordinator Dave Harris.

THE MIDLAND RAILWAY SOCIETY

Registered Charity - Number 1149613

That concludes the formal report for 2018 but I should also say that this year has already seen our involvement with interpretation panels for the new museum and with the selection of objects for various displays therein. It is now settled that the model railway will be housed on the second floor in a room that will specifically be themed as a railway gallery and where our principal displays will be housed. This will also be the route through which the new Study Centre reading room is reached. We are advised that at present the whole of the project is on schedule and within budget. The aim remains for all building work to be completed by April 2020 and for the public opening of *The Museum of Making at the Silk Mill* in September 2020.

The Meeting closed at 11:55 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 Tony ETCHES for his superb breakdown train.

Appendix I - Members who Signed the Register of Attendance:

| | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Robin CULLUP | David SWAN | Christopher WILLEY | James POPE |
| Peter BUTLER | Peter STANLEY | Garth PONSONBY | John PARKER |
| Mick BYNG | Paul WALPOLE | Steve HUSON | Michael HOLLAND |
| John DOWNING | Andrew SURRY | Mervyn BRYCE | Adrian TESTER |
| Steve DUCKWORTH | Paul CLARKE | Patrick COOPER | Dave HUNT |
| Alan COX | Alistair DUDGEON | Andrew TREVES | Tony ETCHES |
| Peter SCOTT | Peter TRENCHARD | Roger BRETTLER | Brian CLAYDON |
| Peter BARNES | Alan GALINSKI | Howard TURNER | Roy BURROWS |
| Reg DAVIES | John MILES | Ian ABRAM | Anne BURROWS |
| Andy BOOTHMAN | Andrew CHOLERTON | Bryan CROSS | Richard EAST |
| Michael SHAW | Dave HARRIS | Jim PERKINS | |
| Ken WRIGHT | Colin ROBERTS | David GELDARD | |
| Michael KING | Neil HANCOCK | Paul WEST | |

Appendix II - Apologies:

| | | | |
|------------------|---------------------|------------------|------------|
| Ian HOWARD | Prof. George HUXLEY | Michael WOODWARD | Nick WHEAT |
| Ian APPLEYARD | Jamie GUEST | Frances PEACOCK | John EARL |
| Graham WHITEHEAD | Richard GRETTON | Richard MORTON | |
| Tony GOMMERSALL | John STEVENSON | Stephen LEA | |
| Bob ESSERY | Howard McLEAN | Barry CODY | |

Minutes by Dave Harris 15APR2019