

1758 MIDDLETON RAILWAY

Minutes of the 1970 Annual General Meeting, held at the Houldsworth School, Leeds University on Saturday 2nd May 1970, commencing at 4 p.m.

Present: Dr R.F. Youell (in the chair) and 49 other members.

1. Apologies for absence: received from:

Mr N.A. Brampton Mr C. Dews Mr J. Eckersley Mrs D. Hebden
Mr R.J. Hunter Mr D.R. Jones Mrs E.M. Lonsdale Mr I. McDougall
Miss D. Quigley Miss S. Young

2. Minutes of the 1969 AGM: proposed by Mr Hebden, seconded by Mr Nettleton, and carried nem. con., that the minutes as circulated be agreed to be a true record.

3. Matters arising therefrom: Mr J. Cowling pointed out that the open meeting of the Rules & Disciplinary Subcommittee, as agreed under item 7, had never taken place. After discussion, agreed that the meeting should have been held, but that the grievances which had caused the demand for the meeting had now died down.

4. Officers' reports:

The Secretary, the Editor, and the Civil Engineer had nothing to add to their reports as distributed, and there were no questions.

Publicity Officer: the report had been distributed. Mr R. Roberts congratulated Mr Carr on managing to have the same news item published, with slight variations, in the railway press each month. Mr J. Cowling pointed out that the setting-up of sales facilities at the colliery had been prevented by lack of manpower rather than by vandalism.

Chief Mechanical Engineer: invited questions in lieu of presenting a formal report; none were asked. The Chairman remarked on Mr Lodge's hard work, and appealed to members to support the CME.

Membership Secretary: reported an encouraging year for membership, on the whole with steady increases throughout the year. The introduction of the Visitors train service had the effect of increasing membership locally, as many seemed to have joined to enjoy concessionary travel. We still had a comparatively small membership.

Total figures as at December 31, 1968: 201

as at June 30, 1969: 202

as at December 31, 1969: 245

During 1969, 89 new members were enrolled, and unfortunately 44 failed to renew. At present the membership total was 259, including 50 enrolments in the first four months of 1970. The present breakdown was approximately:

Junior 70; Ordinary 131; Family Corporate 20; Corporate 10; Life 12; Hon. 26.

He proposed that the following additions to the list of Honorary Members be approved: Mr P. Judge; Mr I.R. McDougall; Mr S.H. Pierce Higgins;

Mr & Mrs G. Buckle; Mr J.M. Crowther; St Michael's School (to 31/12/70);

Jimmy Saville (to 31/12/70); Mr R. Hannerby (to 31/12/71).

cont.

A member enquired whether corporate members (which Leeds City Transport had recently become) enjoyed concessionary travel; Mr Bushell replied that this was not so, but that the facility was enjoyed by family corporate members. The report was accepted, and the Chairman observed that at last a more attractive public image was creating new members.

Chairman & Deputy Chairman: commenting upon their report as distributed, the Chairman observed that the railway was on the upgrade and was gaining wider public appreciation. However, despite the offer of some large loans, no relaxation could be made from our appeal fund efforts.

Treasurer: upon the report as distributed, the Chairman observed that the alarming shortfall in traffic had now been reversed, and traffic so far in 1970 already exceeded that for all 1969. Mr Carr did not agree that freight traffic was now the mainstay of the Trust's revenue; visitors' revenue would become more important and much work must be put into fostering it. He also observed that the advertisement for the Easter weekend had cost £10 in the Yorks. Evening Post and £50 had been taken; however he was sceptical of the value of other advertisements, and suggested market research into the effectiveness of advertising. The Chairman remarked that advertising in the railway press was preaching to the converted, and that not one of 30 enquiries to a recent advertisement costing £9 in Steam Alive had brought any benefit to us. Mr R. Roberts enquired what was the profitability of visitors' and goods services; the Chairman replied that, overall since commencing regular services in September 1969, visitor traffic had just covered its direct cost in coal and oil; indirect revenue in sales and new membership subscriptions had also resulted. Mr Bushell enquired how profitability was affected by payment of insurance premiums; the Chairman replied that, at the moment, an increase in premiums had been avoided by transferring the passenger cover from the bottom section to the top section of the line. The Trust's insurance agent had recently suffered a fire at his office, but the Chairman was ensuring that the Trust's cover was up to date. Mr Harrington enquired with whom were we insured; the Chairman replied that several firms were involved, including General Accident and Lloyds. Mr J. Cowling wondered whether advertising the opportunity to become a driver would bring new members; the Chairman replied that he felt existing members should be given preference for the honour of being appointed driver. He noted Mr Cowling's remark that we were in fact short of drivers. Mr Lodge remarked that there were a number of qualified drivers who did not often drive. A member asked what was the formal footplate training program; the Chairman expounded it in detail.

Publications: the meeting noted the circulated memorandum from the Chairman and the Sales Manager.

It was proposed by Mr Short, seconded by Mr Roberts, and carried unanimously, that the reports be accepted and the comments made upon them be noted.

5. Change to the Constitution: proposed by Mr Bushell, seconded by Mr Ashurst, and carried unanimously, that the Constitution be amended thus:

In Clause 3 (membership):

Delete sentence 2 (rate of ordinary membership subscription)

Delete sentence 3 (rate of life membership subscription)

Delete in sentence 4 (junior membership) the words "at 7/6 per annum"

cont.

Insert, in place of sentences 2 & 3 above, the sentence: "The rates of subscription for ordinary, junior and life membership shall be set by each Annual General Meeting of the Society."

6. Revised rates of subscription: the Membership Secretary reported that rising costs, particularly the anticipated rise in postage rates, required higher subscription rates; in 1969, over £90 had been spent on publications out of a subscription revenue of £141. He proposed, ^{seconded} by Mr Edwards, that from 1st January 1971 the Junior and Ordinary rates should be raised to 15/- and 25/- respectively. He pointed out that this was an incentive to members to renew early for 1971. Replying to a question as to why costs could not be cut by delivering all members' mail by hand, he replied that members had the choice of electing for delivery by post (for which they were paying and to which they therefore had a right) or by hand; the Chairman pointed out that, in any case, two thirds of our members were out of reach by voluntary delivery. He observed that our members got very good value for their money, with both a monthly newsletter and a quarterly journal for a subscription much lower than other societies, some of which now had rates of £2 or so. Mr Carr, remarking that junior members worked hard and were the senior members of tomorrow, proposed that Mr Bushell's proposal be amended by making the junior rate 12/- or 13/-; the amendment was seconded by Mr R. Roberts and carried by 34 votes to 10. The Chairman then invited Mr Carr to make up his mind as to the exact amount; Mr Carr proposed, seconded by Mr Edwards, that the amount be 13/-; carried by 22 votes to 13. An amendment proposed by Mr Ashurst and seconded by Mr Metcalfe, that the ordinary rate be set at 30/-, was defeated by 26 votes to 13 after Mr Hebden observed that it was "a bit much". The Chairman asked for the meeting's views as to whether it wished to continue receiving the present 12 newsletters a year and four magazine issues, or whether it would prefer fewer publications for a lower membership fee; the vote was overwhelmingly for the former. Mr Milner, seconded by Mr Cowling, proposed an amendment that students over 18 should no longer be eligible for junior rates of subscription; the Chairman commented on the evident altruism of the sponsors of the amendment. After discussion of the status of those over 18 and still at school, this amendment was dropped in favour of an amendment proposed by Mr Lodge and seconded by Mr Short, that no members over 18 should be eligible for junior membership, which was carried with one vote against. The Chairman then put the amended proposal in its final form (i.e. to increase the ordinary membership subscription rate to 25/- p.a., the junior rate to 13/-, and that the eligibility for the junior rate should cease at age 18 regardless of occupation) to the vote, and it was carried with 4 votes against.

7. Progress with the appeal fund: The Secretary reported that the fund stood at approximately £1250. A recent Committee meeting had decided to distribute, on a trial basis, the revised appeal leaflet to households door-to-door; the original leaflet distribution had been to business addresses only. A commercial tariff of £3.10s per 1000 leaflets had been quoted, but volunteer members would be used as much as possible. Action on this awaited completion of the reprinting of the leaflet, which the Chairman reported was partially done, and the Secretary was

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sure that all members were agreed on the urgency of proceeding with the trial, since one month of the Coal Board's six months' grace was already gone. Offers of loans, in two cases for very large amounts, had been received, but with less than one third of the appeal money raised there was a long way to go.

8. Progress at the colliery: a report prepared by Mr Nettleton had been distributed. Mr J. Cowling added that further police help would not be very effective, since much of the damage was being done by youths under the age of criminal responsibility. The Chairman drew the meeting's attention to the last paragraph, warning that we might never have a museum. Replying to the question of how optimistic was the date of September for occupation by a caretaker, Mr Nettleton replied that it was the earliest possible date. After some discussion about the use of dogs, the Chairman took the feeling of the meeting as being that the Committee should pursue this possibility. A member asked about progress on covered accommodation for locomotives. The Chairman replied that pneumatic drilling had failed to break up the concrete road across the entrance to the shed, and that explosives might be needed. It might be found possible to enclose Parkside bridge.

9. Progress on incorporation of the Trust and on Charity registration: the Secretary's report on this had been distributed. He proposed a vote of thanks to Mr Hellewell for his services as solicitor; this was seconded by Mrs Youell and carried unanimously. Mr Bushell asked if the guarantee should be equal to the annual subscription; the Chairman and the Secretary agreed that this was not necessary. Mr Carr asked how long would now be required to complete the incorporation; the Secretary replied that at least another 3 months would be required. He sought the approval of the meeting to continue negotiations with all deliberate speed.

10. Swansea & Mumbles Coach: the Chairman stated the proposal of the Committee that, since the coach's body must be regarded as past repair, the body be scrapped, the motors sold, and the trucks and possibly other parts of interest be preserved. The proposal was put to the vote and carried by 34 votes to 6. Dr Youell, speaking as a member rather than as Chairman, wished to register his regret that the Trust had let the vehicle deteriorate and to draw attention to the poor public image which had resulted. He reported that a Mr Ford of the Leeds Round Table had offered to overhaul or restore the vehicle at Balm Road or Parkside bridges; and suggested that one month be given to Round Table to prove their ability to fulfil their offer. Mr Bushell observed that previous offers had all come to nothing, and that experience showed that Balm Road bridge was quite insecure; Round Table members would be better employed in work on the colliery buildings. After an extensive discussion, it was agreed that it should be put to the vote that the Round Table suggestion be followed up; this was carried nem. con.

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11. Election of new Committee: nominations received by the Secretary were displayed to the meeting. Elections were then held as follows:

President:	Viscount Garnock elected unopposed.		
Vice-Presidents:	Canon Eric Treacy	do.	do.
	Dr R.C. Lawrence	do.	do.
	Prof. W.A. Tuplin	do.	do.
	J. Alcock	do.	do.
Chairman:	J.K. Lee	do.	do.

Dr Youell then vacated the Chair in favour of Mr Lee, who said that he hoped for the guidance of members in fulfilling his duties during the coming year. Continuing with the elections:

Deputy Chairman:	J. Bushell elected unopposed		
Secretary:	J.D. Edwards	do.	do.
Treasurer:	J.D. Carr	do.	do.
Committee Secretary	T.S. White	do.	do.
Membership Secretary	B.W. Ashurst	do.	do.
Publicity Officer:	P.J. McAskie	do.	do.
Traffic Manager:	Dr G.D. Crapper	do.	do.
Civil Engineer:	C. Metcalfe	do.	do.
Chief Mechanical Engineer:	J.A. Lodge	elected by 23 votes to 20 votes for N. Short	

It was then proposed by Mr Bushell, and seconded by Mr Lodge, that Mr Short's name be added to the list of candidates for the four remaining committee positions. A ballot was held to elect these four, and the following were declared elected:

N. Short	32	votes
D.J. Hebden	27	do.
G.E. Duckworth	20	do.
M.N. Phillips	20	do.

12. Other business: (a) Mr Ashurst announced that he would continue to act as Editor until a replacement was found.

(b) Dr Youell reported that he had received a number of requests for a dinner to mark the tenth anniversary of re-opening. He requested the views of the meeting on the choice between a formal dinner and a film show with buffet. After some discussion, during which the desirability of a licensed bar became apparent, and considerable support was voiced for the film show with buffet, it was agreed to accept the offer of Mrs Youell, Mr Ashurst and Mr Carr to organise the event.

(c) Mr Bushell drew attention to the proposed "Steam '70" on Saturday June 20th.

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(d) Mr Lee presented to Dr Youell a framed lithograph of "Claud Hamilton" as a gift from Trust members upon his retirement from the Chairmanship. Thanking members, Dr Youell observed that the permanent way a man lays lives after him.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 6.50 p.m.

Engineer:	J.A. Lodge	23 votes	20 votes	for N. Short
Chief Mechanical Engineer:	C. Metcalfe	do.	do.	
Civil Engineer:	Dr G.D. Crapper	do.	do.	
Publicity Officer:	P.J. McAle	do.	do.	
Membership Secretary:	B.W. Astur	do.	do.	
Committee Secretary:	T.S. White	do.	do.	
Treasurer:	J.D. Carr	do.	do.	
Secretary:	J.D. Edwards	do.	do.	
Deputy Chairman:	J. Bushell	23 votes	20 votes	unopposed

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