

MIDDLETON RAILWAY TRUST

Minutes of the A.G.M. of the Trust held in the Civil Engineering Block of the University of Leeds on Saturday, 24th February, 1968 at 2.30 p.m.

PRESENT Dr. R. F. Youell (in the Chair) and 35 other members.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE received from Lord Garnock, Mrs. Youell, Mrs. Ashurst & Messrs. Atherley, Dews and Fearnley and J. Lee.

MINUTES OF THE LAST AGM Proposed Mr. Jones, seconded Mr. Ashurst these be taken as read and accepted as a true record of the proceedings. Carried nem. con.

BUSINESS ARISING There was no business arising from the minutes.

SECRETARY'S REPORT Not presented due to illness.

TREASURER'S REPORT Reports and comments were passed round the meeting. Acceptance of report deferred till end of meeting to give all a chance to read in full the report.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT Mr. Bushell reported that at 31.12.67 membership stood at 171. During the year 37 new members enrolled (23 in 1966). 15 failed to renew (23): the net increase in membership was 19 which was thought to be hardly satisfactory. Present figures included 7 Life Members, 5 Corporate, 8 Family, 14 Honorary, 59 Annual, 47 Junior and 4 O.A.P. Members, totalling 148 against 111 at the corresponding time in 1966. 1968 had started in a very encouraging way though we should not be jubilant. The inability to make desired improvements on the line was put down to the inability to increase membership. Existing members were urged to make special efforts in 1968 to recruit more new members. New Hon. Members put before the meeting for approval were: Graham Smith (Leeds College of Art), George F. March (descendant of Matthew Murray) and Gerard F. Fiennes. All were accepted nem. con.

PUBLICITY REPORT Mr. Bushell reported steady progress in this field. The line was filmed for Look at Life. Railway Journals, national and local press had recorded highlights of the year. The Secretary had been featured on Woman's Hour, the Chairman on 'Today'. This was most encouraging; the campaign for public recognition as the world's oldest railway was gradually having effect. More visitors had come to the line: a party from a 'Clun Castle excursion from London, a Steam Gala in September when, in addition to our own attractions, Traction engines, steam rollers and wagons and a Gavioli Organ were present. Monthly Open Days were also quite successful. The 'Derbyshire Dawdler' excursion in April proved to be successful, socially and financially. 'Kolhapur' and 'The Great Marquess' hauled the new coach train to Derby - visits to the Works and Crich Museum were arranged. Mr. Bushell concluded by asking members to promote publicity through sales, posters and the distribution of prospectuses and membership forms. Finally Mr. Bushell passed on the Society's grateful thanks to Mr. A. Naylor and Mr. D. R. Jones who had assisted in Publicity during the year. Mr. Foster proposed, Mr. Lodge seconded acceptance of the report. Carried nem. con.

OLD RUN REPORT Mr. Ashurst reported that although 3 issues had appeared after the last AGM, none had appeared since. However an Editorial Committee had now been formed and it was hoped that three more issues would appear very soon. The difficulties had been due to printing trouble. Mr. Ashurst thanked all contributors in past issues and particularly Sheila Young who was responsible for the typing. He encouraged more contributors during the coming year. In reply to Mr. Cox, Mr. Ashurst said the Old Run should appear at three-monthly intervals. Mr. Nettleton proposed, Mr. Syms seconded that the report be accepted. Carried nem. con.

TRAFFIC REPORT No traffic report was presented. In reply to a question from Mr. Cox, Dr. Youell explained that there was a good prospect of increased traffic during 1968.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT Dr. Youell reported steady progress during 1967. However there had been an alarming number of cases of irresponsible behaviour as a result of which the Chairman and Secretary had been involved in very delicate negotiations. Dr. Youell pointed out that members must take more care in their actions and develop a sense of responsibility. Junior members should be kept under firmer control. Lack of an adequate labour force had resulted in little new track work being done - new track had been on site for 3 years yet it was not being used. In addition very few qualified train crews were available for operation. A civil engineering group (a sub-committee had been formed) had, with the ex-

pert assistance of Mr. McAskie, relaid the B.R. interchange. Grateful thanks were given to the University squad who had helped on 2 or 3 occasions each week, every week.

During the year a Matthew Murray bicentenary exhibition had been held and thanks were due to Messrs D. Jones and Mrs. Youell, G. Smith and R. Sellars. The National Trust had agreed to put the M. Murray obelisk, the March and Thompson graves on the list of historic relics. The Civil engineering team were thanked for the work done in renovating the obelisk.

The Trust was trying to get the Clayton's traffic back to rail - B.R. had realised that road transport was costing them more than the original rail transport. There was good prospect of inter-works traffic being started. Wagons for the purpose were to be prepared.

Mr. J. Lee was thanked for help in Civil Engineering and tracking down sheds which would be suitable for storage of locomotives and other stock.

Operating had been split into two parts and sub-committees - operating and locomotives. Working parties were to be set up to consider relations between the University Railway Society and the M.R.T.

As far as the Motorway was concerned we were in a safe position - a place would be provided for the storage of relics.

Dr. Youell concluded by asking all members to back up Mr. Bushell in his membership campaign and to put Middleton on the Map and keep it there. He thanked all members, particularly the Secretary, for the vast amount of work done during the past year.

In answer to a question Dr. Youell confirmed that with the acquisition of the sheds that Mr. Lee was after, all locos could be maintained under cover. The realigned track near King's siding would provide space for a building for about four locos. Concerning the possible steaming of 'Windle', Mr. Lodge said there was no reason why the loco could not be put in a condition for steaming. Dr. Youell said the donors could be informed but he saw no reason why 'Windle' should not be steamed in the future.

Mr. Bushell pointed out that the Insurance, which was considerable at the moment, might be reduced in view of the fact that several locos were steamed very infrequently. As far as 'Windle' was concerned, this loco was only on loan and strictly speaking we had not kept our part of the bargain in ensuring that the loco was kept under cover.

In reply to Mr. Cox pointed out that the quality of coal left at Middleton was deteriorating and it was almost certain that the life of the Colliery was limited - there did not seem much likelihood of obtaining coal traffic. There was the possibility of industrial traffic from the site, however, on future development.

As to what difference the motorway would make, Dr. Youell said that the Rugby crowds would be no longer a hazard, the line would be fenced off and all tips would be removed and the area landscaped. A replacement line would be advantageous for traffic operation, saving the cost of a bridge - at least £10 000. The motorway would improve our standing in every way.

Mr. Lodge proposed, Mr. Bushell seconded the acceptance of the report. Carried nem. con.

CONSTITUTION CHANGE The Committee proposed by the Committee that 'Operating Superintendent' in the list of Officers be replaced by 'Traffic Manager, Mechanical Engineer'. Voting: 25 for, 7 against with two abstentions.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS Mr. Ashurst proposed, Mr. Spencer seconded the adoption of the following Officers for the year 1968: Chairman - Dr. Youell; Secretary - Mr. D. Jones; Treasurer - Mr. Brampton; Committee Secretary - Mr. Crew; Membership Secretary - Mr. J. Bushell; Publicity Officer - Mrs. S. Youell; Traffic Manager - Mr. J. Lee; Mechanical Engineer - Mr. J. Lodge; Civil Engineer - Mr. P. McAskie; 4 other members - Messrs J. Foster, D. Hobden, R. Syms & P. Nettleton. Voting: For 18, Against 1.

The following non-Committee posts were also filled: Windle - Mr. Crabtree; M. Murray - Mr. Foster; Sentinel - Mr. McKenna; Swansea & 21 - C.M.E.; John Alcock & Fowler - P. Nettleton; Steam crane - D. Hobden; Hand crane - Mr. Duckworth; Goods Agent - Mr. Taylor; P.W. Adviser & Safety Officer - Dr. Lawrence; Editor of Old Run - Mr. Ashurst; Liaison officer - Mr. Teale.

TREASURER'S REPORT Proposed Mr. Bushell, seconded Mr. Syms that the report and accounts be accepted as a true record. Carried nem. con.

There was no other business.