

INTERCITY RAILWAY SOCIETY

MINUTES OF THE INTERCITY RAILWAY SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FOR YEAR 2008 HELD AT THE CREWE ARMS HOTEL ON SATURDAY 4th APRIL 2009

Present: Simon Mutton, Carl Watson, Maurice Brown, Mark Richards, , Trevor Roots, James Holloway, Michael Hillier, Lawrence McCormick, Paul Bright, Alan Lowe, Fred Lyon, P.Moyor, M.Smith, R.Bamford

1) WELCOME & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from: Gary Mutton, Jeff Hall, Martin Hall, G.Hall, Peter Britcliffe, Robert Brown, David Sharpe, Peter King, Bryan King, George Palin, C.Vellam, P.Foster, D.Barlow, T.Stamp

2) CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS – Simon Mutton

Looking back over my Addresses for the last three or four years, a common thread running through my reports on the Society has emerged. This was its maintenance and successful transformation into a publications and web based 'enthusiast support' organisation, developing on a considered, 'steady as she goes' basis.

It would be fair to say that the year under review could be best described as one of 'hidden upheaval' in which significant challenges have had to be met, almost exclusively behind the scenes as far as ordinary members have been concerned, in order to continue to deliver the services that the Society provides.

Firstly there has been the management of a significant change in the relationship between the Society and its publisher HB Publications, and within that the way key operations and processes are delivered. This has resulted in a lot of work to ensure these activities and processes continue, and to negotiate on a revised (and what is now a commercially based) agreement with HB to ensure that the Society's interests are protected.

Secondly there were significant problems this year with the website, all of which I hasten to add were entirely out of the control of the Society. Again a significant amount of hard work went in to resolving the problems, which has been done and has in fact meant an even better site.

Thirdly there has been consideration of the proposed link up with the GB Bus Group under the UK Transport Group umbrella, which is on today's agenda and therefore not something I shall speak on in detail now.

Throughout all this the Society has continued to function, and deliver. It provides good quality publications (including the magazine) and its finances are sound. It remains by any objective measure a successful organisation

For this, I would on behalf of all the Society's members, offer my sincere thanks to all of the officials involved in what has been a very busy and at times stressful year. I make no apologies for reminding all of the membership that all the officials undertake the responsibilities, which includes a considerable workload, on a voluntary basis.

Think about that for a moment: The website, the publications (including compilation and updating), the magazine, membership, secretariat.....I wonder if any members have stopped to think just how much work is involved in these things? Let me tell you it's a lot- many hours of peoples time, and all voluntary, done by people who enjoy their interest in railways and just want to provide something which helps others to enjoy it too. And that's without all the 'corporate stuff'; officials meetings, administration and finance, things such as the HB negotiations above.

I'm not going to single out any individuals for special mention- all the officials are worthy of the memberships extreme gratitude for the way they have supported the Society in its most challenging year for some time.

In connection with all of this, I have for some time been considering my role as Chairman and have come to the conclusion that the direction the Society has been successfully moving in over the last few years (and which I fully support) requires a Chairman who better reflects that direction and activity (i.e publications, web, magazine). The bulk of the work/decisions which underpin the direction of the Society are quite understandably led by the publications/web team, and my input has been minimal. An effective Chairman needs a level of engagement which I do not feel I am currently providing. I genuinely believe the Society would be better served by a Chairman who can provide that engagement, and I know there are some strong candidates from the existing management team. In addition I have been an official for around 20 years and feel I would like to take a step back from 'front line' duties!

This therefore is my last address as Chairman. My own personal thanks go to all officials both past and present who have made it such an enjoyable and rewarding experience. I know I will be handing on a Society which has a solid base on which to move forward, and I believe a very positive future

Thank You

3) MATTERS ARISING FROM THE AGM 05/04/2008 NOT COVERED BY THE AGENDA

There were no matters arising not covered by the agenda.

Adoption of the minutes from last years AGM approved by the meeting.

4) ELECTION OF OFFICIALS FOR YEAR 2009

The outgoing Chairman advised that (through the officials) Carl Watson had been proposed as Chairman of the Society. Following formal nomination by Simon Mutton and seconded by P Bright Carl was elected as Chairman by the AGM .

Introducing himself, Carl thanked Simon for his work as an official of the Society over the last 20 years. Carl then referred to his current role as the compiler of the Society's UK publications. He believed ICRS to be a viable Society and highlighted its change into a publications/web based organisation. Although he acknowledged that we perhaps could still do visits the issues around depot access/costs etc. made this difficult to organise successfully.

The officials list for 2009 as amended was proposed by Maurice Brown and seconded by Paul Bright .

Officials were elected as follows:

<i>Carl Watson</i>	<i>Chairman</i>
<i>Gary Mutton</i>	<i>Secretary and Treasurer</i>
<i>Maurice Brown</i>	<i>Membership Manager/Publications Manager</i>
<i>Trevor Roots</i>	<i>Editorial Manager</i>
<i>Peter Britcliffe</i>	<i>Magazine distribution</i>
<i>Martin Hall</i>	<i>Editorial & Publications assistant</i>
<i>James Holloway</i>	<i>Editorial assistant - sightings</i>
<i>Robert Brown</i>	<i>European Official</i>
<i>Vacant</i>	<i>Publications – European compiler</i>
<i>David Sharpe</i>	<i>Publications assistant – Wagons</i>
<i>Vacant</i>	<i>Publications assistant – European</i>
<i>Carl Watson</i>	<i>Publications assistant – UK compiler</i>
<i>Mark Richards</i>	<i>Website Manager</i>

Peter King and Jeff Hall have resigned their Vice President roles and these posts will be removed.

Bryan King and Chris James have resigned their roles as publications compilers. The Society is grateful to all of them for their invaluable contributions and hard work over the years.

5) PRESENTATION OF OFFICIALS REPORTS

a) Financial & Subscription rates for 2009

The accounts summary is attached.

The Society accounts at year end showed assets of £7577.72 and liabilities of £3199.20 giving a balance of £4378.52

The year ended with a slight surplus on operations compared with the loss mainly on membership of the previous year. The action taken which was recorded at last years AGM in reducing magazine costs has worked and membership showed a slight surplus.

The major profit stream as shown in the summary was once again publications.

It is usual for me to recommend to the Society the subscription rate for the forthcoming year and whether there should be an increase.

There are various factors to consider and whilst membership showed a slight surplus, I have to judge whether this will be sustained.

- *The credit crunch : will members renew at the same level?*
- *Membership is planned to break even.*
- *Postage costs for the magazine (which comes under membership) are due to rise.*

After a lot of thought I would recommend an increase of £1 p.a.

Notes to the attached accounts:

Branches - this refers to insurance - £150

Sales – the loss showing of £222.49 is simply the final writing off of old stock value which was an anomaly carried over from previous accounts.

I would like to record my thanks to all my fellow Officials and HB publications for providing prompt accounts for their areas of responsibility and Mark for setting up the paypal facility to enable continued credit card facilities to the membership.

An increase in annual subscription rates of £1 was agreed. It was further agreed that the increase would be deferred until 1st June in order to better promote membership of the Society at the Eastleigh Open Day in May.

The 5 year membership rate would be held at £75 as an incentive to take up this option.

A question was asked as to whether there could be incentives for existing members. The meeting was reminded that members already enjoy significant reductions on society publications

Adoption of the accounts and membership rates as detailed above was proposed by Trevor Roots and seconded by James Holloway, and approved by the meeting

b) Editorial

Trevor presented the Magazine report:

*From September 2008 the magazine finally came out of ‘obscurity’ and gained its own identity when it was named ‘**Tracks**’. Regular features continue to be the backbone of the magazine with the adventures of Ray Smith an invaluable mainstay of **Railway Globetrotters**. There is always room for other members to share their exploits and give Ray a break. For my part, **Location Spot’Light** has covered many*

more railway hotspots though I am aware there is an increasing need to return to previous ones to record changes over time. There are still many more sites as yet uncovered for the coming year. Another regular feature introduced is a review of publications, which hopefully highlights the vast range of books on offer. Another feature, **Diary of a Loco Spotter** is unfortunately coming to an end with only one more instalment from Eddie Rathmill to come. However other members have come forward, notable Jim Fitch to share his **Memoirs of a Railman**. I am sure there are more members out there who could do similar articles and would be of great interest to read. Irregular articles continue to be welcome especially **Days Out**, a visit to an interesting railway location or just a report of a days spotting with added descriptive detail. Thanks to Mark Richards for his contributions over the year. Similarly thanks to Stephen Skewes and Mike Rumens for their contributions to **Preservation News**, again though there must be many more members who could write similar short articles. Though **Stock Changes** is much shorter than it used to be, I hope the combination of just essential facts (no long list of pool codes) and photos of new stock and liveries is interesting, the latter can be fully appreciated in colour on the web site. Lastly thanks must go to Martin Hall as the unsung quiet regular contributor of **Wagon Corner** and **Light Rail & Metro News**.

Please remember '**Tracks**' is your magazine and reflects the activities of the members, so please share your thoughts, memoirs, adventures be they past or present. The magazine will be all the better for contributions from a wider spread of members.

The magazine, and Trevor's hard work during the year in compiling and editing it, was complimented on by those Members present. One observation made was that the magazine doesn't portray any of the 'infighting' evident in some other similar organisations magazines.

c) Publication Sales/Production:

Maurice presented the publications report and an additional report was received from Martin Hall:

Note: sales figures relate to ICRS financial year Nov 07-Oct 08

UK Railway Series

(Compiled by Carl Watson)

	<u>2008</u>	<u>2007</u>
UK Combined	731	746
Locomotive D/File	119	128
EMU	56	68
DMU	40	73
Ireland	72	71
Name Directory	26	15
USF 1 Shunters	24	41
USF 2 Diesel	31	45
USF 3 Electrics	20	43
Total	1119	1230

ICRS Pocket D/File
(Compiled by Carl Watson)

669

N/A

Sales of the spiral bound UK Rail series were slightly down on last year; this again is in trend with rail publications in general. We normally published the Combined quarterly, but for 2008 we decided to change it to a six monthly one. As you can see it didn't affect sales too much.

For 2008 we did publish the ICRS Pocket edition, although we were hoping to have the book in the shops for Christmas 2007 – this didn't happen due to the printers letting us down, but as you can see we did sell 669 copies.

Wagon Series
(Compiled by David Sharpe)

Wagon Combined	475	387
Engineers	64	106
Air Braked	27	24
Private Owner	13	20
RIV	12	23
Total	591	560

As said in the previous year the Wagon Combined is now the bible for the wagon enthusiast and as you can see sales have increased for 2008. Feed back we receive endorses this view. What is surprising is the fall in sales for the Engineers book. This book was published in its own right due to enthusiasts, only being interested in the engineering fleet (Track Machines etc) and not the wagon side.

The Engineers book for 2009 will contain Track Machines and Road/Railers

Preserved Series
(Compiled by Martin Hall)

Steam & ex Industrial Steam Loco's	109	134
Wagons	80	78
Coaching Stock	155	148
Industrial Diesel	58	65
Total	402	425

Preserved sales dipped slightly, especially the steam edition, where as the coaching and wagon remained virtually the same. Perhaps steam is losing its following?

Trams Series
(Compiled by Martin Hall)

Western European	110	68
Eastern European	68	34
European Metro Systems	67	64
Preserved Trams	24	71
	269	237

The East and West tram editions have seen an increase; this may be due to enthusiasts buying them perhaps every couple of years or perhaps the foreign tram market is growing - See what happens next year.

Foreign Series

(Compiled by Martin Hall)

<i>Germany</i>	109	76
<i>German Private</i>	105	87
<i>France</i>	134	96
<i>Benelux</i>	125	86
<i>Austria</i>	61	50
<i>Switzerland</i>	86	103
<i>Iberia</i>	79	100
<i>Italy</i>	46	77
<i>Czech</i>	86	87
<i>Scandinavia</i>	56	60
<i>Hungary</i>	53	71
<i>The Balkans</i>	73	108
<i>Poland</i>	71	78
<i>Russia</i>	20	31
<i>Australia/New Zealand</i>	37	34
<i>North Africa</i>	14	N/A
Total	1155	1144

The only new book to be added this year is the North Africa Data File.

Steam History Series

<i>No 1 LNER</i>	15	32
<i>No 2 LMSR</i>	22	35
<i>No 3 GWR</i>	16	37
<i>No 4 SR</i>	17	32
<i>No 5 BR St.</i>	21	37
<i>No 6 Names</i>	9	21
<i>No 7 Combined 1949 – 68</i>	22	39
Total	122	233

The Steam History series is still selling, which is surprising when you think it published just as a one off series. So really we can't complain considering its not updated - I know at times we can receive a few amendments

Loco Log 5
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Timetable 1
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Total Publication Sales **4333** **3829**

So looking at it overall – if we hadn't published the Pocket edition, our sales would have been slightly down.

It was confirmed that new editions of publications are only published when there are updates to the previous edition.

An A6 size one-off commemorative datafile pocketbook (loco's only) is being published for Eastleigh Open Day. Bruce knights from Knights Rail Services, based at Eastleigh, will hopefully provide the foreword.

Report from Martin Hall

The 2009 publications all went well again this year and many have much more information in them like coaching stock for Spain, Austria and Denmark. Many more enthusiasts have sent in added information to help me produce as up-to-date books as I can but we all know that as soon as we publish a book it is out of date.

A new data file this year is the North African which a member ask me to put together with information he sent me and info I had already.

At the moment I am working on two projects which have not been attempted by anyone yet and as I have been working on them I can see why. I received the new disc from P.Meyer with much more information than the previous one in fact some 40 countries including some private operators so it will mean many more volumes than we first thought and this series of datafiles, which will cover all wagons in central Europe, is a massive undertaking.

I have already completed two, DB Germany, which took me nearly a month and SNCF France which took about the same. I am currently working on SNCB Belgium and then OBB Austria.

The other was an e-mail from Ian Ring who bought the European Tram Datafiles and noticed I had added some information on trolleybuses but wondered why I had not put all the rest in. I e-mailed him back saying time was not on my side with all the other books I keep up to date so he sent me a 64 page e-mail with all the information he had on trolleybus systems in Europe and so another book was born. I think I am now running out of new books I can produce although I say this every year and somebody always comes up with another idea.

Another thought is the German Private Owner. With the many changes to private operators and the open access now spreading through Europe the number of private operators are increasing and also the open access operators who run their locos through-out Europe including the UK now that DB Schenker has taken over EWS. So in the future we may have to divide this book into two separate volumes DB German Private Operators and European Open Access Operators.

I have also put together another book on Narrow Gauge Vehicles. With the help of Tony Ellis I have collated all information on narrow gauge wagons, steam locos, diesel locos and a first coaching stock. We do have some of this info in other preserved books but I thought it may be useful to have a sperate datafile to cover this subject and the coaching stock is all new data. It may not be a large book so Jeff and I thought for 2010 it could be a combined with the preserved tram book which is also very thin.

I have also included an up-dated bibliography list. More and more enthusiasts are sending me info on many subjects and I have also been looking for more foreign books to help me get info. I have this year added new sections in Austria (coaching stock), Denmark (coaching stock) and Spain (coaching stock and other info) which I got off the internet.

d) Membership:

Maurice presented the membership report:

Our membership for the end of 2008 stood at 648 – down only 3 on the previous year’s figure, which is good.

We gained 63 new and 15 rejoins - making a total of 78 but lost 81 which included 6 deceased

End of the month follow ups helped us to retain 104 members - but if I had deleted them, who is to say that they may have renewed a few months later.

This brings me on to my concern, which is the time it takes for members to renew, the majority renew in the required time but at times we can have 18 outstanding and in getting a response can be anything up to two weeks.

A way round this might be as a large number of members renew by credit card, could we keep the card details on a data base – so it could act as a direct debit. The reason I say this is I received an email from a member in response to a follow up “I thought you were going to take the renewal automatically from the card details I provided last year”.

Is this perhaps a way forward with retaining membership?

New members joined via the following:-

<i>HB Publications and Hotline</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Web Site</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Data Files</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>GB-BG</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Railway magazine</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Unknown</i>	<i>2</i>

Reasons given for joining ICRS – from the 35 Surveys received by new members:-

<i>1) Publications</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>2) Magazine</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>3) 20% discount</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>4) Modern Traction Cover & Web Site (Joint 4th)</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>5) I am into Preservation</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>6) Wagon Coverage</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>7) To out more about ICRS</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>8) Tram/Light Railway Enthusiast</i>	<i>11</i>

9) Ian Allan 10% discount	10
10) Friendliness of the Society	9
11) European Coverage	8
(And Met others & Joined)	8
12) Interested in Narrow Gauge	6

Reasons for not renewing:-

Telephone number not recognised	5
No contact number	7
No response to calls	13
No response to message left on answer Machine	10
No reason given	6
Sorting it out will renew and didn't	5
Rationalising/Financial	7
Into buses	2
Will put check in the post and didn't	1
Will renew later	1
Can obtain info from elsewhere	1
Interested in carriage working	1
No useful purpose	1
Scaling down, half century is enough	
For any man	1
Haven't been out for a long time	2
No longer need membership	1
Wavering in at the moment	1

We received seven enquiries during the year and not one joined

So my overall view is membership losses are slowing down now and believe this is due to the magazine with its monthly feature '**Location Spotlight**'. We are essentially a spotter's society and this feature I feel is retaining members.

This is confirmed by when I talk to members, one of the questions I ask is "what do you think of the magazine" and they say "I like it" and it appears they read from cover to cover.

So from my chats it appears we have the magazine content right!

Five Year Memberships

Just a thought – looking at 5 year memberships, hardly any new members subscribes to the scheme. When renewals go out to for them, they tend to come back as an annual subscription; this may be due to age.

With the freezing of the 5 year rate and promotion in the magazine there is possible scope for increased take up

Membership input

I do feel that the membership could involve themselves with the society more, by supplying information/articles for the magazine – especially on preservation, light rail and industrial.

We could also possibly in the future, require assistance with the preparation and distribution of the magazine – this would save the ICRS money

Discussion took place on the setting up of a Direct Debit system for members to pay their subscriptions. Whilst it was noted that an annual payment for something such as this is not something everyone would set up a DD for, it was agreed that the Treasurer investigate the financial and technical issues around setting up such a system.

The idea of providing flyers on Specials was discussed and agreed. Members going on Specials will be encouraged to contact Trevor who will provide the flyers for distribution

e) Website: www.icrs.org.uk

Mark presented the website report

It has been another busy year for the ICRS web site with some more significant changes recently, not covered in this report.

At the end of 2007 the web site was reflecting the changing face of the railways in the UK with farewells to established franchises Midland Mainline, Silverlink, GNER and Central Trains and welcome to new TOC's East Midlands Trains, London Midland, London Overground and National Express East Coast. The web site also saw the introduction of a new Features section, whilst other pages were retired such as the Works Report, mainly because they had not been updated for a long time. Most information is still available in the Downloads section of the site.

Towards the end of July 2008 the ICRS Fotopic Gallery was launched, which has been a big success attracting over 5,100 visitors at the time of writing with 31 different collections currently available. I am grateful to ICRS members who have contributed photos to the site and helped make these first six months so successful.

For the main ICRS site, our visitor numbers remain healthy (attracting over 100 hits per day) and the regular feedback and enquiries received throughout the year show that the site is well respected and popular with railway enthusiasts.

As I mentioned briefly, the web site has undergone more recent changes which will be covered in next year's report. My plans for the coming year are to consolidate the strengths of the existing site as a place to find out more about the ICRS and the benefits of joining our Society. I also hope that it provides a useful additional service to our members through the exclusive Members' Area and I welcome comments on how to improve this offering over the coming year.

Feedback, positive or negative as well as members' contributions and suggestions on how to improve the web site are always welcome.

The revamped website was now recording an average of 250 hits per day, with visitors viewing an average of 2-3 pages on each hit. This was encouraging as it meant people were not simply logging on, and then straight off again when they saw what the site was.

For 2009 Mark was looking to develop closer relationships/link exchanges with other websites; make all downloads available as pdf files to improve download times; and develop the PayPal system.

The hard work that both Mark and Gary had put in with regard to the introduction of the PayPal system at extremely short notice was acknowledged by the AGM

6) ICRS/GBBG – UKTG

Reference was made to meetings which had taken place with ICRS and GBBG since the last AGM. It was agreed that there was a place for the UKTG to exist if we get the right benefits for both groups.

It was reported that since the last AGM complications had arisen arising out of the change in arrangements with HB publications. This has meant that HB now has agreements with ICRS and GBBG which are different. (Members will recall that some of the intended benefits revolved around HB publications previous administration service to both groups)

It was agreed that any decision on moving forward with the UKTG would be put to one side for now, with officials looking to see how it might be progressed during 2009, and bring an updated report to the next AGM.

7) ICRS President

Simon Mutton explained that this item was discussed at last years AGM and had arisen out of strong feelings from some of the membership that Pete Waterman was doing nothing to support or promote ICRS. Attempts to engage Pete in dialogue over the last year had proved fruitless. On the other side of the argument it was noted that Pete could simply be seen as one of the majority of the membership who make no practical contribution to the activities of the Society, but that with his high public profile, having his name as president was of no disbenefit to the Society.

After further discussion the matter was decided on a free vote of those Members present- 13 voting to remove Pete Waterman with 1 abstention.

Following on from this vote Maurice Brown nominated Simon Mutton as President of the Society. Simon thanked the Society for the honour and said he was happy to accept. The motion was seconded by Carl Watson and agreed by the AGM

8) AOB & INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Nothing to report

9) 2009 AGM

It was agreed the Secretary be asked to investigate a different venue for next years AGM – possibly at a preserved railway site.

10) CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and wished all a safe journey home.