



Romney Hythe & Dymchurch Railway Association

Registered Charity 1127688

NOTICE OF AGM

The 52nd Annual General Meeting of the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway Association will be held at The Light Railway Restaurant Hall, Hythe on Saturday 8th June 2019 commencing at 15:45hrs or as soon thereafter as possible subject to operations on the Railway.

The Officers and Trustees due to retire at the meeting are Simon Foulkes and Simon Haynes, who have indicated their willingness to continue and being eligible offers themselves for re-election.

Elections will be held for Trustees in accordance with the rules. Nominations, together with the names of a proposer and seconder, must be submitted to me by 26th May 2019 and nominees must express their willingness to stand.

In accordance with Rule 14.10, any member wishing to put forward at the meeting any motion relevant to the conduct and affairs of the Association must indicate their intention to me not less than seven days before the meeting.

Members wishing to appoint a proxy in accordance with Rule 14.15 must advise me of their intention and the name of their proxy by 31st May 2019.

Simon Haynes (General Secretary)

AGENDA

- 1) Apologies for Absence 
- 2) Confirmation of the minutes of the 51st Annual General Meeting 
- 3) Matters Arising 
- 4) Portfolio Group Reports:
 - 4.1) Education and Heritage
 - 4.2) Volunteering and Engagement
 - 4.3) Communication and Special Events
 - 4.4) Finance, Liaison, and Compliance
- 5) Presentation & Adoption of Chair's Report for 2018-19 and Chair's Address 
- 6) Adoption of Accounts 
- 7) Election of Officers and Trustees 
- 8) Appointment of Auditor 

9) Any other business relating to Charity Management matters made known to the chair in advance of the meeting



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Minutes of the 51st Annual General Meeting

Held on 9th June 2018

Commencing at 15:45 at Light Railway Restaurant, Hythe.

The Chair Simon Foulkes welcomed all members to the 51st AGM.

1. Apologies for Absence:

Simon Parsons, Colin Marsh, Alan Botting, Richard Bryant, Andrew Kanter, Peter Woolgar, Brian Hoyland, Roger Wood, Andrew White, Joe Bannister, Paul Ross, Neil Matthews, Laura Jacques, Tim Godden, Simon Jones, Susie Birchell, Michael Boatman, Diana Boatman, Robin Whitehead and Richard Pearce; in addition, all those working on the railway today are formally recorded as having given their apologies.

2. Confirmation of Minutes:

The Minutes of the 50th AGM held on 10th June 2017 were adopted as presented with corrections to the spellings of Casartelli and Kanter.

Proposed: Ernie Taylor Seconded: Richard Hearn

Carried nem con.

3. Matters Arising:

Proposed amendment to Constitution to Rule 10.2.3. to delete all and substitute:

10.2.3. The Committee has the power to further delegate its work to sub committees each with a specific portfolio set by the Committee, and while such groups shall always have a at least two Committee Members as members of the sub-committee, they may include other Members of the Association who are not Members of the Committee. One of the two Committee members shall chair the sub-committee. The Committee Member to be chair shall be elected by vote of the sub-committee, and the sub-committee shall maintain a list of its members and provide the General Secretary and Chair of the Committee with a current list of members at all times.

Proposed: The Trustees Seconded: David Collins

Carried nem con.

4. Portfolio Group Reports:

4.1) Education & Heritage: [appendix i]

In response to questions from the floor, Nigel Whitburn assured the meeting that archive material is held on several computers at several locations, including dropbox. The group are actively looking at transferring old films of various mediums into a digitally storable format. The next steps are creating an archive that is safe and secure, that people will willingly donate to, and how best to share details in a controlled way.

Peter Casartelli reported that he had obtained a decent copy from the BBC archive of the episode Michael Bentine's 'It's a Square World' which featured the railway.

Regarding a question of the location of the proposed interpretation centre; Danny Martin replied that we do not own much land at Dungeness, and that planning permission would be an issue. New Romney was the most cost effective solution.

4.2) Volunteering and Engagement:

In Andrew White's absence, Simon Foulkes thanked Danny Martin for his kind words at the PLC AGM, and noted that arising from that meeting, volunteer hours will appear in their next AGM. He thanked Andrew for his sterling efforts, but added that a deputy is needed as working parties not only now fall on a Saturday, but mid-week as well. The working party efforts assisting p/way had been a huge and impressive effort – and one that will continue.

The area of engagement is something that needs more work, and is something the Trustees are actively pursuing.

In response to questions from the floor, Danny Martin stated that it was important that all volunteers make engaging with customers their first priority – that foremost they become a 'railway person'. The railway holds the responsibility for matching volunteers to the most appropriate place.

4.3) Communication and Special Events: [appendix ii].

4.4) Finance, Liaison and Compliance: [appendix iii].

5. Chair's Report:

As contained in the notice of the 2018 AGM.

Proposed: Jim Cleaver Seconded: Keith Barnes

Carried nem con.

Chair's Address:

Simon Foulkes opened his address by thanking Danny Martin for his positive words about The Association at the PLC AGM held earlier in the day – and reassured him the The Association stands firmly behind him. He spoke of the new website, and how absorbing a task it is to help create. He thanked John Owen for all his help and advice. It has all been compiled by volunteers, and although up and running needs more work to achieve all we want it to. Most importantly it engages with people and as such becomes a community activity, closely linked with the Railway's own website. Recently loco history has been transferred to our site in order to free up space on the Railway site.

Regarding membership, it is important that people are not left behind by technological advances. That said the electronic part of the website is still in the building. Hopefully it will be up and running next year.

Regarding finances – we currently have approximately £0.5m in the bank. Some of this needs to be used (however in reply to a query from the floor – care is needed so as not to conflict with any legacies or our charitable aims). We have agreed to supply defibrillators at various locations on the railway; plans are in the making to assist with the overhaul of *Black Prince*, the relocation of C&W to the new p/way depot (thus freeing up the current paint shop for interpretation centre usage) and the construction of a new replica armoured train.

At the PLC AGM, the chairman Field Walton stated that he only intends to occupy the post for a couple of years – and that we (the PLC) must look to the future. As a supporting Association, we too must look to the future and how best we can work towards this.

Finally, he spoke of creating a section of the website devoted to works of art depicting the railway; and encouraged all to bring any ideas they may have to the table.

6. Adoption of Accounts:

The Treasurer presented the Approved Accounts.

Proposed: Peter Casartelli Seconded: Chris Du Pont

Carried nem con.

7. Appointment of Independent Examiner:

The Chair asked that the meeting approve E B Taylor FCA, who had agreed to continue for a further year. Thanks were expressed to Ernie for his work for the Charity.

Proposed: Stuart Goyns Seconded: Peter Bower

Carried nem con.

8. Election of Trustees:

Following the amendment of the constitution in 2017, as per the grid on page 2 of the AGM notice, and there being no other nominations received, Stuart Goyns, Andy Nash and Joe Bannister offered themselves for re-election en bloc.

Proposed: Robert Walker Seconded: David Collins

Carried nem con.

9. Any Other Business:

None.

The meeting closed at 16.45

Appendix i

Education & Heritage Portfolio Group Report

The Education & Heritage Portfolio Group has been set up with two key tasks. Firstly, to continue to collect, catalogue and preserve artefacts, documents, photographs and other items relating to the history of the railway and the personalities connected to it. Secondly, to establish an Interpretation Centre somewhere on the railway where visitors can learn about the line.

Andy Nash and I are joint Chairmen of this Portfolio Group with Andy having prime responsibility for the archive and me taking the lead on the Interpretation Centre project. Since the last AGM, the Group has organised the 90th Anniversary Celebration weekend celebration which was reported in full in the Autumn 2017 edition of *The Marshlander*. This was an amazingly successful and enjoyable event for visitors and staff that forged new relationships with descendants of Captain. Maintaining those relationships is paramount. The 90th Anniversary event generated a lot of interest on social media which is now a powerful way of sharing and discussing our collection of images. The event also saw the launch of the new book "*Romney Then and Now*", co-authored by Portfolio Group member Andy Nash with Association members Tim Godden, Simon Haynes and Steve Town. The RH&DRA contributed to the costs of the production of this book and sales have been very good. Our attention now turns to the railway's centenary. In the meantime the EHPG will be running our biennial Heritage Tour on the evening of 14th July on the 90th Anniversary of the opening of the Dungeness extension.

The archive or Heritage team meet regularly at New Romney in an office that the railway has kindly allowed us to occupy. There are new collections of photos being donated all the time and it is a major job to catalogue, store and digitise them. There are also a significant number of duplicates and Andy has been selecting the best copy of each picture in the main part of the collection. At the last count the main collection had been reduced from 34,000 images to 31,500! The duplicates are not disposed of, but kept in a "copies" folder. We look out for items, photos, tickets etc that come up on e-bay and Duncan Adam is our nominated "bidder" to avoid cross bidding. An example of a recent purchase is an original glass negative taken during the Duke of York's visit in 1926. Andy and Duncan have also visited the National Archives at Kew to examine and copy documents relating to the railway and specifically the original Light Railway Order. In addition to physical items, the group is also keen to gather the recollections of former staff, and others, with an Oral History Project. A portable recorder has been obtained and Andy will be visiting people willing to pass on their memories. Tony Crowhurst and Barry Clarke have already agreed to take part and Derek Smith is approaching Capt. Howey's grand-daughter to see if she will take part. Andy has also visited Robin Caseley who was a driver during the 60's and 70's. He has made over 700 pages of notes on all aspects of the railway and many pictures that we have not seen before. He is naming the RH&DRA as the place to pass his collection on to. A wonderful legacy.

The success in obtaining all this material does indicate that we need to seriously consider setting up a proper archive where these resources can be safely stored and examined by members and researchers. It has long been an aspiration of the RHDRA to establish some form of heritage display on the railway. Indeed, when the Association became a registered charity in 2009 its aims and objectives were (and are) *“to preserve and maintain the historic miniature trains and associated elements on the Romney Hythe & Dymchurch Railway for the benefit and education of the public in particularly but not exclusively by the provision of a heritage centre as well as financial and human resources.”*

Following discussions and workshops facilitated by Consultants “Red Kite”, the Association has refined its vision to *“Provide a high-quality interpretation experience for railway visitors and local visitors. The interpretation centre would tell the story of the railway, drawing on its place in the social history of the area.”* There has been much discussion about whether the Association should seek to build a new, purpose-built Centre or to instead start with an interim facility that would be both quicker and cheaper to set up. It has now been agreed that an interim Interpretation Centre could be established in the current paint shop at New Romney which we understand is soon to be vacated by the Carriage & Wagon Department.

Ideas for a purpose built Interpretation Centre have been hamstrung by cost - significant grant funding would be required. In contrast, utilising the old Paint Shop will be cheaper, not require architects or planning approval and could be established in a much shorter timescale. It would also demonstrate the value of such a facility to the Railway and help the decision making process for redevelopment of New Romney Station. In addition, the Paint Shop has been used in recent years during the main operating season for the “1940’s” exhibition and in 2017 for the 90th Anniversary exhibition. These were temporary and the building has reverted to a paint shop during the winter. The building is also (at least partially), one of the original structures from the 1920’s although relocated, and is easily accessible to visitors.

We would anticipate the following work would be required to the building and surrounding area. Repairs and renovation of building exterior, specifically to woodwork. We do not propose changing the external appearance. Installation of floating floor to match external ground level. Installation of internal sliding doors behind the existing wooden swing doors. Possible new internal lighting. Reducing length of siding leading to Paint Shop and installation of new buffer stop clear of footpath. Resurfacing and extending footpath to building. Possibly relocate sleeper crossing and access point from platform 1.

We have yet to plan the Interpretation displays and activities in any detail yet. What is clear is that we do not want to just be presenting a range of panels and photographs. There will also be audio-visual displays, hands-on activities and some displays of artefacts. It is not intended that the Interpretation Centre be staffed on a regular basis or for there to be a charge for admission. Station staff involvement would be limited to the opening of the Centre at the start of day and locking up at close of play. Exactly as has been the case for the 1940’s Exhibition and 90th Anniversary Exhibition. However, the Association would seek to provide volunteers to be present at busy times to greet visitors and answer questions.

The Association and the Railway Company need to agree a “Transfer of Control” agreement for the Paint Shop. This less formal type of agreement is felt to be suitable rather than a more formal lease

and contract and will hopefully be in place before many weeks have passed. And clearly the C&W department will need to vacate the building which is possibly going to happen over the winter.

Appendix ii

Communications and Special Event Portfolio Group Report

The focus of the group is production the quarterly publication - Marshlander, edited by the chair of the group, Simon Haynes, assisted by Jim Cleaver. The production of the magazine currently falls into two parts. The first half comprises 'News from New Romney' submitted by various departments of the railway, the General Manager, the Chair of the RH&DRA and the heritage group. The second contains submitted articles from members and other interested parties, letters, a diary of events and a regular series 'Ask Andy', which explores heritage items in depth. Between these parts are usually a couple of photo montages, usually featuring special events etc and a quality centre spread photo.

In this electronic age of ever increasing 'instant-ness', we cannot hope to compete with social media; even with the co-operation of our printers, who have production down to a fine art, it still takes the best part of two months for the team to compile, edit, print and distribute an issue. We therefore aim to provide a record of the main events on the railway – but with only 36 pages, this is far from a complete list of everything that happens.

A question sometimes raised is, whether Marshlander will always be a quarterly hardcopy? Who knows? Maybe one day both; but many people like to have them on their book shelves, especially those who either live or work abroad, or who can for whatever reason not visit the railway as often as they might.

The new website technically comes under the group, however as an all-encompassing medium for the Association, its design and development is in the hands of experts in that field. However, the Trustees are aware that as an inclusive organisation, we must not exclude those with no internet access [a show of hands at the meeting revealed that only one person out of the fifty or so present had no internet access], therefore for the foreseeable future there will be provision for those affected to book manually with the General Secretary by post. Similarly, such things as the notice of the AGM will be published in Marshlander, with the papers to either download or request by post.

Lastly Special Events: although many of these are organised by the railway company, volunteer help is always welcome. The End of Season Special is one regular event that remains in our court. This year, as before it will take place on the Saturday of the Railway's End of Season Parade, details of which will be available through the usual channels.

Finally, the centenary of the railway is looming – heads are starting to be put together for this once in a lifetime occasion.

Appendix iii

Finance, Liaison and Compliance Portfolio Group Report

The group comprises Simon Foulkes (Chair), Trustees: Stuart Goyns (RHDR Treasurer), Joe Bannister; Members: Richard Hearn and Michael Morris. The key achievements of this rather dry sounding but vital group have been: To establish a process for regularly renewing the Association's accounts and expenditure – and making recommendations to the Trustees. To recommend for adoption a Privacy Policy and ensure compliance with GDPR and building on our existing registration with the ICO. To consult with other PGs and draft a risk register for adoption by the Trustees. Through Richard Hearne (Clerk to the Trustees) establish a regular procedure for the production of reports and papers for the Trustees which ensures that all PG Chairs and members are fully represented and held accountable. Going forward, a new Chair will be required for this group.

Appendix iv

Chair's Report

Throughout the last year, the Trustees have met on 5 occasions, and through our involvement have hopefully contributed in a positive way towards the railway's development.

Perhaps our most potentially far reaching achievement is the creation of a new website, and I would like to record our thanks to John Owen for his invaluable assistance with this task. Much of the site is now live, however there is still quite a bit to do behind the scenes – particularly in the membership area. Progress on this front will hopefully enable membership cards to be produced which will interface with the railway's EPOS system – ensuring security for members and the correct discounts for travel being automatically applied. In due course members will also have access to their details, so that changes of address and e mail details can be self-administered in the most efficient manner. Online booking of special events is now a reality – a feature that will be no doubt enhanced as the system grows and progresses.

On the ground on the railway, the Association is involved with several projects: Plans for an interpretation centre at New Romney are well advanced. This project also ties in with support for the re-location of the Carriage & Wagon shop to the 'new' p/way depot (a building currently underutilised). This work will free up the current paint shop – itself substantially an historic Greenly building – where the new interpretation centre will be housed. The Special Project Fund continues – and the next focus of this will be the long-awaited overhaul of *Black Prince* – the next in line after *Green Goddess* in the overhaul shop. As in the past donations from members will be match-funded by the Association.

Following the sad loss of Sir William McAlpine, the Board of the Railway Company will no doubt be reviewing its activities and ambitions in the light of its key performance indicators. The Association proposes setting up a group to monitor the Association's shareholder status and activity with respect to the aims and performance of the Railway Company.