

London & North Western Railway Society AGM 2021

Acting Chairman's Report

I'm not sure many of us want or need reminding of what made 2020 such an awful year. In our own world, all Society events were cancelled, including our AGM. It is now over two years since we last held an AGM and the world we inhabit now is very different to that of 2019. I don't wish to dwell on the obvious downsides of the past eighteen months but to look to the future of our Society in this changed world.

In looking back at our Society's journey through the past year or so, I firstly want to pay tribute to David Bond who was Chair of this Society all through 2020. As I said in my introductory letter, published in the March Newsletter, David has set a high standard for those who follow him. I am especially pleased to report that David continues to work for the Society in several different ways.

Despite the restrictions your trustees continued to meet, if anything on a more regular basis thanks to modern technology. I do have to confess that it was a case of a very steep learning curve for some of us! We have now adopted a pattern of monthly Zoom meetings which obviously can be far shorter than the previous quarterly marathons. These meetings have proved to be more productive too, partly, it has to be said because trustees only have four weeks rather than three months to tackle tasks accepted at the previous meeting before having to report progress at the next. Such a meeting regime will also open up the EC to people who might find it difficult (or expensive) to travel to a fixed meeting. Two new EC members were co-opted in February 2021. Both Matthew Cadbury and David Maltman have brought new perspective to our meetings. I hope members will vote for them to become trustees of the Society.

Although there were few outward signs, the Society was far from being dormant in 2020. Bob Williams has continued to provide us with the best Journal of any single line society. Obviously, thanks must also go to all those who contributed articles for the Journal. The depth and breadth of knowledge from within our ranks is something the rest of us should cherish. Tony Gillam has, despite taking on extra duties in the absence of a Secretary, not only continued to produce the quarterly Newsletter but has actually managed to bring out bumper editions.

Some of our archive volunteers have, thanks to modern technology, been able to work from home on processing and cataloguing the raw scans of documents held at the Study Centre. Others have continued to travel to Kenilworth, often from some distance away, when regulations allowed. Many more items were scanned, and much thought was given to facilitate access without the need to travel to Kenilworth. Because of the lockdown this had gone from something we would like to do to something we must

do. The resulting system for on line access, known as DMS (Data Management System) is a huge step forward for the Society. Some members have, I know, already made use of this groundbreaking system.

The official launch of the system was timed to coincide with the date of the AGM. Please take a look, there are thousands of items there already and work is ongoing to add more. Making our archive material freely available is a fantastic achievement but only possible because of the years of effort put in by volunteers in collecting, cataloging, repairing and scanning not to mention the countless hours of post scanning work required to turn the raw scans into useable items. We should also thank those who donated equipment to the Study Centre, those who found funding in the form of grants and those who take on the mundane tasks required to keep the Study Centre running. Without all these people we would have had little to put into an on-line archive. We must also consider that scanning fragile documents means they can be preserved and anyone wanting to study them can have access to a high-quality copy.

I know members share the frustration and disappointment of those who work so hard to put on events for us. I hope in the coming months there will be a gradual return to something approximating normality. When this happens, I think members will need little encouragement to return to those pleasurable events. It is the social side of the Society that has been the biggest casualty of recent events.

Since taking on the role of Acting Chair earlier this year I have been impressed by the way the trustees have worked together for the good of the Society. In my role as chair of our meetings, I actively encourage debate within the EC and believe that good decision making is based on the airing of a wide range of views. If elected as Society Chair I will pledge to both continue on this path and endeavor to open up the working of the EC and sub committees to the membership. I have ensured that important documents such as the constitution are available to all. In the past few weeks, I have uploaded EC and AGM minutes to the "Members Area" of the DMS. My belief is that committees exist to serve the membership and you, the members, have a right to know what we are doing on your behalf. I will actively encourage feedback from members as to how we can improve our Society.

I see recruitment of new members as essential if the Society is to have a secure future. We have to accept that the profile of potential members is vastly different to the early days of the Society. Anyone under 60 will have no real memory of a working steam railway, no concept of a society that relied on rail transport for almost everything. Despite that there are those who have a spark of interest in the LNWR, the fact that our Society Facebook group has attracted over 1,900 members is testament to this. We must find ways of turning that spark into a flame. I am sure you will all agree that, once truly bitten by the LNWR bug, there is no going back.

I remain convinced that our Society has a bright future. We must adapt of course but I see no reason why my personal target of a membership numbering 1,000 cannot be achieved.

John Gowers Acting Chair London & North Western Railway Society
16th. July 2021

London & North Western Railway Society
Registered Charity - No 1110210

Income and Expenditure Account Year Ended 31st December 2020

| <u>Income</u> | |
|---|--|
| 2019 | 2020 |
| £19,143.41 Subscriptions | £18,974.00 |
| £2,760.02 Donations | £1,735.48 |
| £112.94 Council Grants | £100.00 |
| £6,111.90 Sales | £3,513.64 |
| £3,378.00 Sub-Rentals | £3,138.00 |
| £97.00 Scanning | £861.88 |
| £94.37 Interest | £40.09 |
| £3,750.00 Gift Aid | £3,988.14 |
| £427.55 Study Centre Cash Sales/Donations | £193.10 |
| £35,875.19 | £32,544.33 |
| <u>Expenditure</u> | |
| <u>Study Centre</u> | |
| £4,895.32 Rent | £4,895.32 |
| £1,152.20 Rates | £1,303.60 |
| £790.37 Insurance | £776.90 |
| £0.00 Legal Fees | £900.00 |
| £304.25 Telephone & Broadband | £392.98 |
| £1,147.66 Electricity | £843.59 |
| £200.00 Repairs & Maintenance | £1,410.00 |
| £1,843.24 Furniture & Equipment | £840.00 |
| £539.86 Misc supplies | £331.78 |
| £10,872.90 | £11,694.17 |
| <u>R&A</u> | |
| £1,813.60 Acquisitions | £1,467.38 |
| £267.01 Zenfolio & HRA etc | £455.59 |
| £0.00 Photographic Collections | £0.00 |
| £2,080.61 | £1,922.97 |
| <u>Publications</u> | |
| £5,631.00 Journal | £5,899.00 |
| £1,172.00 Newsletter | £1,144.00 |
| £624.00 LNWR Modeller | £354.00 |
| £1,458.00 Production | £1,506.12 |
| £5,330.00 Portfolios | £0.00 |
| £0.00 Provision | £3,800.00 |
| £485.00 Notices and Questionnaire | £508.78 |
| £5,319.68 Postage | £3,054.15 |
| £20,019.68 | £16,266.05 |
| <u>Sales</u> | |
| £726.56 Book purchases | £106.89 |
| £374.19 Postage | £668.13 |
| £51.90 Ebay Costs | £106.89 |
| £1,152.65 | £881.91 |
| <u>Activities</u> | |
| £375.00 AGM | £0.00 |
| £0.00 Committee Expenses | £0.00 |
| £411.78 Administrative Postage | £265.79 |
| £48.00 Exhibitions | £0.00 |
| £154.95 Publicity | £0.00 |
| £436.01 Website/Webhosting | £1,157.09 |
| £141.15 Paypal Costs | £193.03 |
| £0.00 Misc Expenses | £0.00 |
| £1,566.89 | £1,615.91 |
| £35,692.73 | Total Expenditure £32,381.01 |
| £182.46 | Excess of income over expenditure £163.32 |

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2020

| 2019 | 2020 |
|---|-----------------|
| Assets | |
| 0.00 Society's library and records and relics | 0.00 |
| 7649.92 Cash at bank - Current Account | 5974.84 |
| 481.98 - Community Account | 774.16 |
| 42520.12 - Reserve Account | 45501.30 |
| 54.54 - Librarian | 73.90 |
| Accrued revenue | |
| 191.08 Cash in hand - records and relics | 86.94 |
| 382.57 Paypal Account | 2955.64 |
| 3762.35 Gift Aid recovery debtor 2019 | 3762.35 |
| 3750.00 Gift Aid recovery debtor 2020 | 3950.75 |
| <u>58792.56</u> Total | <u>63079.88</u> |
| Liabilities | |
| 10750.00 Subscriptions in advance | 11874.00 |
| 400.00 Accrued costs - electricity | 400.00 |
| 5000.00 Provision for Long term liability for maintenance | 5000.00 |
| 4000.00 Provision for future publications | 7000.00 |
| <u>38642.56</u> Net Assets | <u>38805.88</u> |
| Represented by | |
| 38460.10 Balance brought forward | 38642.56 |
| 182.46 Excess of Income over expenditure in current year | 163.32 |
| <u>38642.56</u> | <u>38805.88</u> |

It is the policy of the Society to write off the Library, Records and Relic purchases to current expenditure and accordingly they are held on the books at no value. The estimated replacement value for this material is :-
Library £20,000, Archives £60,000 and Relics £50,000

John Gowers

(Acting Chairman)

Michael Hollick

(Hon. Treasurer)

Date: 25 March 2021

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of London & North West Railway Society

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the London & North West Railway Society (the Trust) for the year ended 31 December 2020.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: Gordon Stretch

Relevant professional qualification: Chartered Accountant

Address: 3 St Margarets Court, Kineton Green Road, Solihull, West Midlands B92 7DZ

Date: 25 March 2021