

**BRITAIN’S GREAT LITTLE RAILWAYS**

**Minutes of the 2015 Autumn General Meeting held at the Beer Heights Light Railway, Pecorama, Underleys, Beer, Nr Seaton, Devon, EX12 3NA on Wednesday October 7th starting at 11.00 am**

**Railways represented**

Beer Heights Light Railway, Bekonscot Light Railway, Bickington Steam Railway, East Herts Miniature Railway, Eastleigh Lakeside Railway, Exbury Gardens Steam Railway, Fairbourne Railway, Ferry Meadows Railway, Grosvenor Park Miniature Railway, Hambleton Valley Miniature Railway, Hotham Park Railway, Littlehampton Railway, Mortocombe Railway Society, Stansted Park Light Railway, Strawberry Line Miniature Railway, Woking Miniature Railway.

**Welcome by the Acting Chairman**

Our Chairman, Jim Haylock, was unable to attend the meeting due to a last minute medical problem and Iain Dinnes stepped in as Chairman. (I am pleased to report that a regime of antibiotics has solved Jim's problem and he is fighting fit again.) The stand in Chairman expressed his thanks, on behalf of the members, to John Edmunds and his team for hosting the meeting and welcomed everyone to the meeting. It should be noted that John MacDougal organised the meeting but was not present. John Edmunds welcomed the members to Pecorama and gave them the details of the events after the meeting.

**Apologies for Absence**

Barnards Railway, Bentley Miniature Railway, Brookside Miniature Railway, Bure Valley Railway, Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway Echills Wood Miniature Railway, Exmoor Steam Railway, Evesham Vale Light Railway, Fancott Miniature Railway, Great Cockcrow Miniature Railway, Great Laxey Mine Railway, LTM Engineering, Hollycombe Steam Museum, Kirklees Light Railway, Moors Valley Railway, North Bay Railway Company, Private Member, Simon Clarke, Private Member, John Wrangle, Perrygrove Railway, Rhiw Valley Light Railway, Rhyl Miniature Railway, Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway, Rudyard Lake Railway, Sherwood Forest Railway, Shibden Miniature Railway, South Downs Light Railway, Summerfields Miniature Railway, Swanley New Barn Railway, Thompson Park Railway, Wells and Warsingham Railway and Weston Park Railway.

**Minutes of the 2015 Spring General Meeting**

The acceptance of minutes of the 2015 Spring General Meeting was proposed by Mr Roger Brown and seconded by John Edmunds and the resolution was carried unanimously

**Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

**Treasurers Report**

In the absence of Maureen Atkinson the Treasurer's report which had been circulated to all members was reviewed by Iain Dinnes.

**Treasurer’s Report to Britain’s Great Little Railways 7th October 2015**

Current Account Balance 702.27

Deposit Account Balance 2,994.49

Subscriptions outstanding 130.00

**Total Funds 3,826.76**

**Expenses still to come in this Financial Year (estimated)**

Companies House Fee (actual) 13.00

Heritage Railway Association Sub 290.00

Administrative Expenses 200.00

**Total Expenses to come 503.00**

**Forecast Balance to Carry Forward 3,323.76**

This compares with £2,208 carried forward from 2014/15, which means we could anticipate a profit of approximately £1,115.76 this year against a profit of £671.49 in 2014/15. I should note that Mike Hanson has very kindly covered the cost of posting out the leaflets and posters this year, which has saved approximately £190.

**Membership Subscriptions**

Members who do not appear on the promotional leaflet and poster pay a reduced membership fee of £35

Subscriptions paid: 41 @ £65 and 3 @ £35 = £2,770

Subscriptions due: 2 @ £65 £130

**Total Subscriptions for 2014/15 £2,900 compared with £2,615 in 2014/15**

**Notes**

**1.** One member has asked to pay by Standing Order and this can be set up easily by the member contacting his own bank. I can produce a form if necessary. Would other members like to pay by this means in future? The Standing Order could be set up to come out on 1st February each year.

**2.** My thanks to Peter Jackson, who has offered to take on the role of Treasurer in 2016.

Maureen E. Atkinson

5 October 2015

Chris Phillimore apologised for a mix up in his standing order and will pay his outstanding subscription immediately.

The interim accounts highlighted the outstanding contribution of Mike Hanson who as well as publishing the brochure and poster also distributed them but did not make any charge to BGLR.

The Treasure's recommendation on subscriptions is reviewed below.

Maureen has informed the members of her decision to resign her post and Peter Jackson has volunteered to be the new Treasurer.

The members voted to accept the Interim Accounts Proposed by Chris Phillimore and Seconded by Stephen Hardin and the resolution were carried unanimously.

The members voted to accept Peter Jackson as the new Treasurer. Proposed by Maureen Atkinson and Seconded by Stephen Hardin and the resolution was carried unanimously.

**Legislative Update and HRA Matters**

Iain Dinnes stated that the HRA had recently issued a draft code of conduct which is being reviewed by its members. This draft code has also been circulated to all members of BGLR. It is clear that not all aspects of this code of conduct apply to our railways. The relevance of this document to our members will be discussed at our next meeting when it should have been ratified by the HRA. This has not yet been ratified by the HRA and the discussion will be held over to the 2016 Spring General Meeting.

Wells and Warsingham have had a claim against them for hearing loss due to whistle noise. Iain has been following this up

* There has been no other similar case in the UK
* One case was found in Canada and one in the USA but neither but both were dismissed
* There was a case in the UK re a Tamping Machine which although noisy was not in continuous use and therefore outside the act which specifies the average noise level over a working day.
* A steam whistle at approx 115 dbA is also not in continuous use throughout an 8 hour day and should therefore also be outside the act.

John MacDougal has carried out some sound checks at BHLR and will make them available to Iain.

**October Newsletter**

The editor requested copy for the October Newsletter which will not be published until after Halloween and the schools half term.

**BGLR Inspection Scheme**

The April Minutes stated:

"Mike Hanson, who will retire at the end of the year, is concerned that this initiative will fade away. He reiterated that this was a good policy for a railway to have in place to improve its operations and was an essential insurance policy if the railway was subject to an unfortunate accident.

There are currently two active groups reviewing each other's railway at approximately two year intervals, one centred on Rudyard Lake and the other on Moors Valley. The Littlehampton railway has requested to join the southern group".

Chris Phillimore, Littlehamton Miniature Railway, has volunteered to take over the coordination of the BGLR Inspection Scheme. Please contact Chris if you want to set up your own mutual inspection groups.

**Review of any Safety Incidents during the past 6 months**

It was noted that no report has been issued by either the HSE or the RAIB on the three accidents which occurred on the Longleat Railway despite the length of time which has passed.

Some comments were received that it is believed that the HSE and ORR are yet again having "turf wars" over responsibilities which could affect miniature railways

**2016 Brochure and Poster**

At the Spring General Meeting Mike Hanson pointed out that he would be retiring at the end of the year and therefore not available to edit the brochure and poster next year.

No one at the meeting volunteered to take on this role. Is there any member who is prepared to take on the responsibility of preparing the poster and brochure ready for the printers? Please contact me if anyone is interested. Mike will hand over all his material for this year's efforts and is prepared to give any necessary training.

The Embsay and Bolton Abbey Steam Railway will again sponsor the poster

**Date and Venue of next meeting**

Weston Park offered their railway as the venue for the AGM and Spring General Meeting. The date and venue will be confirmed after discussions with the Chairman ensuring that there was no conflict with HRA meetings as happened this year.

**Proposed subscription for 2016**

The Treasurer's Report indicated that there was sufficient surplus to cover the costs of commercially getting the brochure and poster set up if no volunteer could be found. The proposal on the table was the subscriptions should remain unchanged for 2016 at £65 for members on the poster and brochure and £35 for others. I do not have a record of the proposer or seconder but the motion was carried unanimously. Please contact me to complete these details so that I can correct the minutes.

**AOB**

Peter Smith stated that a number of societies had applied and received charity status and wondered whether BGLR or its members could be eligible. It was stated that BGLR was effectively a trade organisation and was constituted as a Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a Share Capital and there would be no tax or other benefits by becoming a Charity.

It is clear that this is a possible route to go down by some railways for example the Embsay and Bolton Abbey is both a Limited Company and a Registered Charity.

The meeting ended at 11.45 am