

Inter City Railway Society

MINUTES OF ICRS AGM FOR THE YEARS 2020 & 2021

Held on Saturday 9th April 2022 at Crewe Heritage Centre, Crewe

The meeting commenced at 14.15 with introduction by Simon Mutton

Members Present:

Dave Atkinson, Ronald Bamford, William Belgrove, David Benson, David Blackburn, Robert Boak, Trevor Brough, Tony Brzosko, Anthony Burnham-Bamford, Robert Dalton, Sean Davies, Neil Dix, Ronnie Dunn, Martin Hall, Roger Harris, Benjamin Hemming, Nicholas Hemming, Michael Hillier, Mike Holland, James Holloway, Barrie Jeremy, Russell Kinder, Barry Knibbs, Lawrence McCormick, Stephen Miller, Keith Morey, Clive Morant, Gary Mutton, Alan Naylor, Nick Page, Robert Perry, Mark Richards, Paul Robinson, Andy Scott, Leslie Spencer, Roger Thomas, Aidan Turner, Peter Turner, Michael Ventham, Peter Ventham, Carl Watson, Louise Watson, Bill Whittaker (43 + 5 Officials)

Apologies for Absence:

Ian Beckerson, Peter Britcliffe, Dave Doulton, Stephen Hamley, Steve Hooley, Richard Hunter, Brian Landamore, Stuart Moore, Lee Nixon, Ian O'Donnell, Brendan Rise, Bill Sutcliffe, Michael Wallis, William Wallis, Albert Ward, William Waugh, Tony Whitehead, Michael Windsor, Paul Young

Matters Arising from the 2019 Minutes:

The minutes from last year's AGM were read and there were no matters arising. Approval of the minutes were proposed by Gary Mutton and seconded by Martin Hall.

Treasurers Report - Peter Britcliffe: *Also see attached Accounts*

Minutes were read by Simon Mutton in Peter's absence

2020 saw only the AGM take place and the programme of visits and shows cancelled. Despite this it produced the best financial returns since I took on the job of Treasurer. We had a surplus of £3,790.49. 2021 was even better with a surplus of £6,673.36.

See attached for detailed accounts for both years.

Membership fees now cover the cost of producing **TRACKS**. Based on Jan / Feb 2022 invoice from Lavenham Press, the projected annual cost of printing / distribution is £27,137.22 whilst the current income (Feb 2022) is £27,974.32 (full members only receiving **TRACKS**). This however means that all other general admin costs must be paid largely from income generated by book sales. Sundries generate little income as sold close to cost price.

Over the two years we have replaced hardware for officials to enable the use of the latest software needed to maintain the high standards of the books and Tracks.

Sales were down in both years compared to 2019 with the loss of the visits and also the closure of the Ian Allan shops.

The society is in a very strong financial position at the present time largely due to book sales and a quiet two years. Therefore, there is no real imperative to raise our membership fee from the current £20 but in a world where many variables are affecting the cost of everything this will need to be kept under review. For the present I am sure you will all agree that the membership rate remains more than excellent value for money.

Discussion: We have increased our surplus but we are not out to make a profit, all money made is invested back into the Society. Membership fees cover the cost of the magazine, the books are where we make any profit.

Approval of the Treasurer's Report was proposed by Carl Watson and seconded by Dave Atkinson.

Membership Report - Colin Pottle:

Considering the pandemic has been present for almost the entire 2 years of the period under review it is not surprising that membership has not risen as fast as in previous years, though the fact it has risen at all is testament that the Society still had something to offer, namely **TRACKS** and our books. Other than the one visit in January 2020, following the AGM we were unable to offer any visits to railway installations due to COVID restrictions until the end of 2021.

2020 started with 1349 members and was fairly average throughout the year, we gained 188 new members and 126 left, of these 41 only stayed for one year. We finished with 1395 members. These figures are disappointing as the year was promising to be our best yet for visits until restrictions put paid to all of that.

2021 saw new member highs in February and March, but then the figures tapered off to below average for the remainder of the year finishing with 1440 members. 2021 saw 197 new members and 145 left, 51 only staying for one year.

Over the past two years sadly 29 members passed away, 20 in 2020 and 9 in 2021. I am sure COVID had something to do with this, with 2020 having the highest amounts of deaths ever recorded in one year, though we have had with none since July 2021.

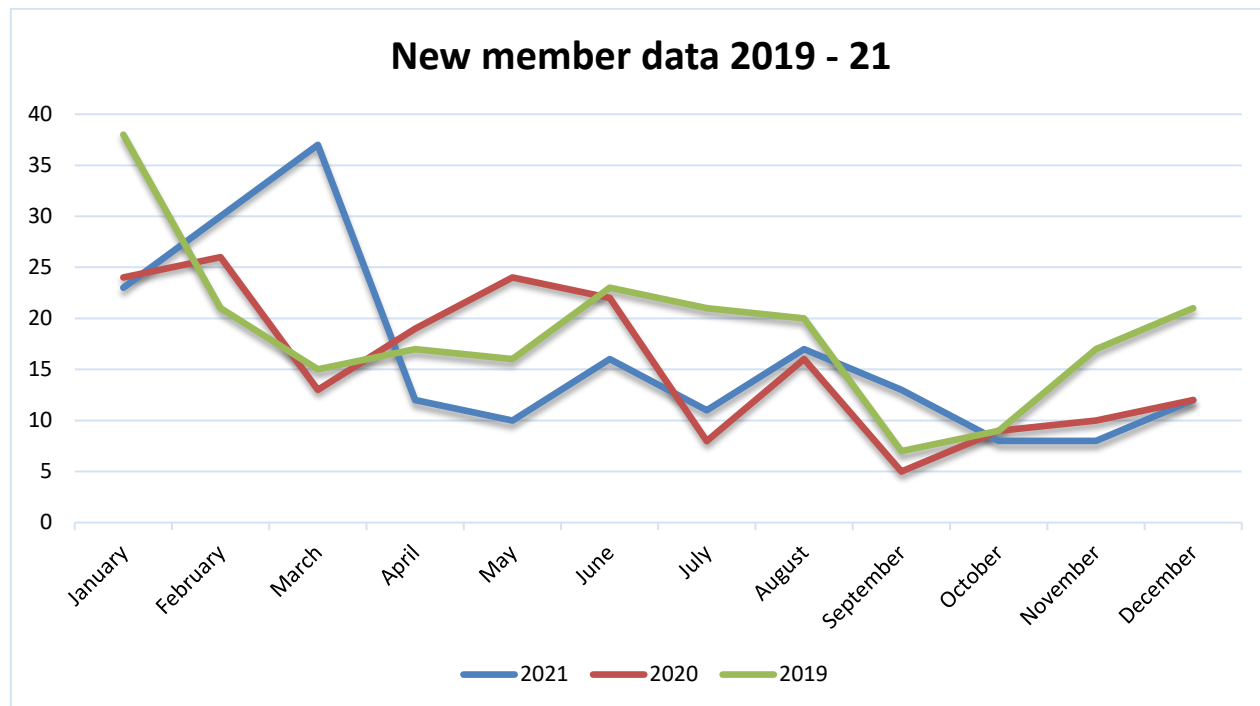
The overall trend for members is up, we are constantly gaining new ground especially with 'word of mouth' recommendations, so keep spreading the word.

We continue to have members who don't renew on time and then re-join at a later date. I would speculate that the reason for this is that the renewal message isn't always getting through. Along with the two reminders you get with **TRACKS**, I also send two email reminders, a gentle nudge in the first instance and then a final reminder – if these are going to your spam folder then you haven't followed the instructions on joining and making 'Membership' one of your trusted contacts!

The 'Additional Family Adult' & 'Additional Family Child' now stands at 5 children and 30 adults.

There are now no 5 year members and everyone has a 'Card for Life'.

The following chart shows the comparisons of new members over the last three years.



As always, it is important to keep your details updated, a quick email, text or message left on the phone to myself is all that is required.

The number of members opting to take **TRACKS** as a pdf only is 119 with another 381 taking it in addition to the printed version, so 500 in total. This is 35% of the membership.

Current Membership as at 06/04: Total - 1486, pdf - 127, AFA - 33, AFC - 11, **TRACKS** + pdf - 392

Discussion: No questions forthcoming from members.

Editors Report - Trevor Roots:

What a last two years, notwithstanding Brexit, the Covid19 pandemic has dominated every aspect of life with the first lockdown starting on the 23rd March 2020, just 11 days following our last AGM.

Having no health issues myself and with our printers, Henry Ling (HL) continuing to operate, there was no interruption to the production of **TRACKS**, though with myself and members unable to travel getting topical photos became increasingly more difficult. Luckily though, because several photographic contributors were key workers, photos still trickled in so meant the content still managed to keep up with the chaotic times. The lockdowns meant many members found time to scan their photo collections which allowed me to fill the pages with more retro articles, which I believe has been popular and I was able to also catch up on the many pending articles. The use of more nostalgic photos has continued. Ironically because my ICRS workload never slackened I have not had the same time to spend on sorting my photos !!

In July 2020 I was approached by another printer, Oxford University Press (OUP), looking to take our business. Normally I dismiss such approaches but having got increasingly frustrated by a raft of quality issues with HL I asked them to quote. Their quotation was so good it allowed us to move to a regular 80 page mag from the July 2020 issue. After the first month tweaking the ink density / colour the quality of **TRACKS** was excellent and OUP were easy to work with. Sadly the ongoing fallout / changing work patterns caused by the pandemic, as with many businesses, meant OUPs parent company, Oxford University decided to quit printing. A bit bizarre as they would then need to go to outside printers for future needs. This unwelcome news came out of the blue and therefore meant, having only been with OUP for a year, I had to go to the trouble of finding another printer. Having had higher quotes from other companies I decided to go with the printer that the OUP Sales Manager moved to, Buckingham Colour Quest (BCQ). Even though their quote was higher than OUP, because of him taking our business with him it was kept as low as possible. Their first issue was the September 2021 issue which not only was printed on the wrong paper, it had poor ink density / colour and after an equally bad October issue, which they stated was their best effort, I was yet again forced to look for another printer. A bit of detective work elicited that one of OUPs customers, Hornby Railway Collectors Association had moved the production of their A4 mag to Lavenham Press (LVP). On contacting them, they were happy with the quality so it was LVP to whom **TRACKS** has been entrusted since the November 2021 issue and we are back to a perfectly printed mag.

However one of the downsides of moving printers was that for the first time found we had to pay VAT on the distribution side and again this caused hassle during the various printer negotiations as well as increasing the cost of producing **TRACKS**.

With the pandemic restrictions easing from the summer of 2021 the number of rail tours exploded with pent up demand and many preserved railways opened up, albeit with advance booking only and limited access to their sites. However, this meant I started to receive more photos and coupled with the annual RHTT season, filling the pages of issues at the end of 2021 was no longer a problem.

One other effect of the pandemic was the demise of the Ian Allan empire with the loss of London Waterloo at the end of October 2020 due to the lack of footfall in London. This just leaves Tornado Books & Hobbies taking copies of **TRACKS**.

On the technology side, a new faster desk top computer meant also having to upgrade software to work with Windows10. I now have the full Adobe suite and Office 365, all needing a bit of getting used to but now enormously helping with **TRACKS** and book production. However none of this helps with the deluge of emails I have to deal with daily and on that side things have deteriorated. As I am sure many of you will be aware addressing online security issues means ISPs have introduced tighter controls and this means more genuine emails are being directed to spam folders. Even with all my knowledge and top line security I have more of your emails turning up in spam. Not a problem per se as I see them almost immediately but I know some members do not look for days and it is frustrating that my emails do not get a response. Even worse towards the end of 2021 **TRACKS** pdfs sent by BCC to members with BT and associated addresses suddenly got bounced back even though the quantity was less than 60. I therefore had to keep re-sending and eventually resorted to individual emails, very time consuming. A complaint to the BT Postmaster promised a solution as they saw there was an issue but as yet not resolved. The other 440 members who receive **TRACKS** pdfs via various other ISPs have not been a problem. Sending and receiving so many emails can have a negative effect as not only can I exceed the daily allowance of 2000 preventing further use, at one point my ICRS emails were blocked as deemed to be a spam generator, not something many will have to worry about, but worth members understanding the problems that have to be regularly dealt with to bring you a monthly mag.

All in all 2020-21 has been a turbulent two years but **TRACKS** has come through stronger, though a bit battered en route. With all that was going on I certainly could have done without the email hassle and dealing with three printers and all the associated quote negotiation / re-designing of address carrier sheets etc, so I look forward to a settled 2022.

Discussion: Trevor asked members to keep sending in photos even if you think he may have been sent them from someone else but remember to provide all the details eg where it was taken, time, what it is. He also said that if anyone would like to become a proof reader, to let him know. No questions forthcoming from members.

Publications Report - Trevor Roots:

Book Compilation: The major change for 2020 was that the majority of Industrial Steam Locos were added to the **Combine** but with it now becoming too large and unwieldy, it was split into two Volumes by removing Carriages and combining them with Wagons / Track Machines (previously **Wagons**) to create Vol.2. The remaining stock listed in the original **Combine** became Vol.1 Locos, Units, Trams & Underground. This created two evenly matched books of 198 and 192 pages.

For 2021 yet further Steam Locos were added to **Combine Vol.1** along with all Industrial / Preserved Diesel Locos from Broad Gauge down to Narrow Gauge of 2'-7" increasing the pages to 224. A new edition of the **Name Directory** was released and **Irish Railways** made a return after 6 years. This latter book was totally revamped in line with the format of the other current books.

The work of updating the books has become even more difficult as each year goes by, but more so during 2021 as a large amount of stock was scrapped or found homes in preservation. With the books compiled in Microsoft Publisher this entails manually constantly moving hundreds of text boxes to accommodate even just one amended entry and also re-handling the pages, a nightmare when it is at the start of the book !! The 2022 books are therefore being compiled in Word which allows far more flexibility and though this means effectively totally re-building the books it will be worth it. The one shortcoming is the number of columns that can be used is limited and the inability to alter the dividing line thickness.

With stocks remaining of both, neither the **Name Directory** nor **Irish Railways** will be updated in 2022.

As stated in my 2018 Report the continuing workload has prevented anything being done with the other old Sighting Files.

Book Printing / Distribution: From the start of independently producing our own books in 2010 we have used the Minuteman (MM) franchise in Botley near Southampton to print and post out (in later years) our wire bound books. This was convenient as we could print to order our core books **Pocket Book** and **Combines** once the initial (500+) main print run sold. Conversely for **Locomotives**, **Name Directory** and **Irish Railways** which have smaller print runs of no more than 150, these were all printed up front to get the best price so have often not sold out. There were some issues in that we had to have covers printed in blocks of 250, 500 or 1000 to be cost effective so didn't fit in with book runs and though we could print the text whenever we wanted, we could run out of covers as happened with the **Pocket Book** in late 2021. In recent years posting out was done for the initial orders with some of the stock collected for the AGM and then the bulk of the remainder collected often when travelling later in the year. This saved MM having to store our books but this system couldn't operate in 2020-21 with travel restrictions so all books were largely posted out by MM following a collection for our York AGM. In October 2021 the owner retired and it was sold and discussions were had about the new setup which would be by print on demand to save storage. Sadly, the standard of service deteriorated with follow on print runs badly printed / put together and books not posted out correctly. Fortunately, this only affected a few dozen books but the hassle I had in rectifying missing or defective orders was very annoying and time consuming to the point I decided enough was enough and just prior to Christmas requested a quote from Lavenham Press (LVP) our new **TRACKS** printer. It was perhaps fortuitous that some books were printed by the new management before we placed the

order for the 2022 books. Another problem with having books stored by the printer is it was difficult to get an accurate count of remaining stock which always seemed to alter every time I asked. The advantage therefore of ending our business with MM is that all the remaining stock of current books, **Name Directory**, **Irish Railways** and **USF Vol.1 & 2** will be couriered to Scotland at the start of 2022. I will report on what stock we hold next year. As at the end of 2021 I was still awaiting a quote from LVP

Book Sales: The **2020 Combine** and **Pocket Books** were released prior to the start of the pandemic and with no shows / galas to attend no Summer Editions were produced as was repeated in 2021. With travel largely restricted for most of 2020 it was good to see that sales held up particularly of our core books as was the case in 2021 even though the books were released in the middle of another lockdown. Though no sales could be made at shows etc fortunately we have a good online sales system through our website, which together with postal ordering kept sales going. However, **Locomotives** did not sell particularly well and **Irish Railways** only sold half of the 150 books printed probably because international travel was in such a mess. Hopefully with more able to travel to Ireland in 2022 sales will perk up. With a still large stock of the **Ultimate Sightings Files** these books were reduced in price at the start of 2020.

The sales of the spine **Pocket Book**, printed in one go from Henry Ling, fluctuate from year to year making it difficult to gauge how many to order and in 2021 I got it wrong. Since its inception in 2018 the wire bound version has proved popular and outsells the spine version by 2 to 1. Interestingly the total sales of both **Combine Vols** in 2020 is the same as the combined corresponding original first and summer editions printed in 2019 with a slight reduction in 2021. The change has therefore not had any effect on sales. What is obvious though is that the smaller books struggle to sell in any great numbers and though they break even, is the effort worth it? With a new way of printing, these books may not be viable in the future as smaller quantities will cost more to print so possibly raising the price.

As stated in the **Editors Report** the Ian Allan London Waterloo shop closed in October 2020 ending our 10 year association with a major walk-in outlet for our books. Tornado Books & Hobbies in Birmingham has established itself even though it was forced to close during the pandemic. It took our 2020 and 2021 books though understandably the quantities were lower than the two IA shops as can dramatically be seen below with an 80% drop. In fact, the combined sales from events and bookshops fell by 90% between 2019 and 2021. Some sales will have transferred to online or post, but I suspect we have lost that impulse buy from a walk-in bookshop and those who don't like buying online.

Analysis of Sales 2020-21 compared to 2019: (total books sold doesn't include complimentary copies, remaining stock excludes stock lost, damaged or written off, # sold out)

| | | Online / Postal | Direct | Total Sold | Trade | Total Printed | Remaining | |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------|------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|------------|
| | | Members Non-Mem | Events | (excl bookshops) | Bookshops IA TBH | (+ Stock at start of year) | Stock at end of year | |
| 2019 (* remaining stock as at start of year, \$ stock only for sales stand) | | | | | | | | |
| 01A | Pocket Book (spine) | 63 | 61 | 24 | 148 | 50 | n/a | 206 # 0 |
| 01B | Summer PB (spine) | 30 | 31 | 16 | 77 | 20 | n/a | 100 # 5 \$ |
| 01WA | Pocket Book | 188 | 107 | 50 | 345 | 100 | n/a | 501 0 |
| 01WB | Summer Pocket Book | 72 | 60 | 24 | 156 | 25 | n/a | 200 0 |
| 02A | Combine | 342 | 116 | 61 | 519 | 70 | n/a | 600 # 0 |
| 02B | Summer Combine | 141 | 55 | 42 | 238 | 25 | n/a | 300 0 |
| 03 | Wagons | 228 | 88 | 34 | 350 | 40 | n/a | 401 0 |
| 04 | Name Directory | 49 | 17 | 12 | 78 | 20 | n/a | 150 53 |
| 05 | Locos | 47 | 9 | 16 | 72 | 70 | n/a | 200 4 \$ |
| 10 | USF Vol.1 * | 23 | 5 | 8 | 36 | 0 | n/a | (158) 122 |
| 11 | USF Vol.2 * | 20 | 4 | 7 | 31 | 0 | n/a | (170) 139 |
| Totals 1203 | | 553 | 294 | 2050 | 420 | 2986 | 323 | |
| 2020 (* remaining stock as at start of year, \$ stock only for sales stand) | | | | | | | | |
| 01A | Pocket Book (spine) | 84 | 88 | 6 | 178 | 25 | 16 | 250 4 \$ |
| 01WA | Pocket Book | 215 | 186 | 10 | 411 | 40 | 21 | 500 5 \$ |
| 02A | Combine Vol.1 | 462 | 190 | 17 | 669 | 20 | 17 | 736 # 0 |
| 03A | Combine Vol.2 | 365 | 118 | 17 | 500 | 20 | 15 | 550 # 0 |
| 04 | Name Directory (2019) * | 16 | 4 | 0 | 20 | 0 | 0 | (53) 0 |
| 05 | Locos | 50 | 30 | 3 | 83 | 20 | 15 | 150 4 \$ |
| 10 | USF Vol.1 * | 17 | 10 | 1 | 28 | 0 | 0 | (122) 93 |
| 11 | USF Vol.2 * | 16 | 8 | 1 | 25 | 0 | 0 | (139) 112 |
| Totals 1225 | | 634 | 55 | 1914 | 125 | 84 | 2500 | 218 |
| 2021 (* remaining stock as at start of year, \$ stock only for sales stand) | | | | | | | | |
| 01A | Pocket Book (spine) | 97 | 75 | 0 | 172 | n/a | 14 | 250 10 \$ |
| 01WA | Pocket Book | 270 | 198 | 0 | 468 | n/a | 21 | 516 # 0 |
| 02A | Combine Vol.1 | 478 | 205 | 0 | 683 | n/a | 18 | 705 # 0 |
| 03A | Combine Vol.2 | 349 | 123 | 0 | 472 | n/a | 10 | 502 # 0 |
| 04 | Name Directory | 73 | 18 | 0 | 91 | n/a | 6 | 150 50 |
| 05 | Locos | 71 | 37 | 0 | 108 | n/a | 10 | 150 5 \$ |
| 09 | Irish Railways | 47 | 22 | 0 | 69 | n/a | 3 | 150 71 |
| 10 | USF Vol.1 * | 23 | 10 | 0 | 33 | n/a | 0 | (93) 58 |
| 11 | USF Vol.2 * | 19 | 8 | 0 | 27 | n/a | 0 | (112) 85 |
| Totals 1427 | | 696 | 0 | 2073 | 82 | 2628 | 279 | |

Advertising: Full page adverts, at discount rates wherever possible, were taken out in **Railways Illustrated (RI)** (Feb & Mar 2020, Mar, Jun & Aug 2021) and **Railway Express (REx)** (Feb 2020, Feb 2021). We also had an advert in a **Railway**

Magazine (RM) released in Apr 2020. These have continued to be successful with the costs recovered through new members and orders. We also continue to get our books advertised on WNXX, which can be seen when you scroll to the bottom of the Latest News page under Members Marketing. In addition Gareth continues to push us on social media.

Sundries: As promised in 2019 we now stock A5 clear book covers

Discussion: Books and magazine are now printed by Lavenham Press following the change in ownership of Minuteman which has worked out well as they are now a better quality with better paper and hole punching is more accurate. One member said their books arrived nearly out of the envelope so we need to make sure they are well secured, especially if it is a large order although it doesn't help when the Post Office throw packages about! Trevor asked if anyone wanted anything done differently eg. possibly split the Pocket Book into 2 volumes, a new book on locations and do a list alphabetically by site. Stock list for the various sites are not kept up-to-date which isn't helpful. He also asked if anyone would like to assist by proof reading the books before going to the printers as everyone picks up something different and therefore makes the books as accurate as possible. He congratulated all the current proof readers for their sterling work. Preserved book may be useful for members but there is such a lot of movement at the moment so this is something to keep in the pipeline.

Website Report - Trevor Roots:

The website has been constantly updated and tweaked to add new books and sundries as they are released or made available with yet more user friendly guidance. It is amazing how some still do not read the guidance !! The same applies to the EVENTS page which has had to be amended a few times during the pandemic.

Gareth Patterson is doing an excellent job with Social Media, see his report below and the three advertising platforms are continuing to generate new members and book sales.

The **TRACKS** photo database has still yet to be put on the website as no time to fully check it but it is kept up to date as each issue is released.

Discussion: Trevor requested that if anyone notices a link not working, to let him know so that he can fix this. No questions forthcoming from members.

Social Media Report - Gareth Patterson:

2020-21 were yet again good years for the ICRS Social Media side of things with the Society leading the way for railway groups. The figs for each site were:

| | end of Dec 2019 | end of Dec 2020 | end of Dec 2021 |
|-----------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Facebook | 3200 | 4000 | 4357 |
| Twitter | 1401 | 1742 | 1975 |
| Instagram | 1983 | 2869 | 3348 |

Regular photo contributor Tony Falloon went on holiday for seven weeks at the end of 2021 so no photos until the New Year which might impact followers.

A members only Facebook group was started in February 2021 which stood at 144 by the end of the year.

Books were advertised on a variety of other railway group sites.

Our current followers as at 04/04/22 are: Facebook 4371, Twitter 2070 Instagram 3347, Facebook Members Group 183

Discussion: A few members were part of the Members Group and it is hoped the numbers will increase.

Events Report - Trevor Roots / Tony Whitehead:

Having planned the most ambitious programme of events for 2020, it was decimated by the Covid19 pandemic which meant after a successful visit to WCR Carnforth on 25th January everything else was progressively cancelled after March. A lot of effort especially by Tony Whitehead was therefore not only wasted in the initial planning but work was still needed afterwards maintaining contact with organisations to keep up to date on their policies just in case circumstances changed. Not only were our members only visits thwarted but with the general shut down all preserved railway galas and the planned DRS Open Day were cancelled in 2020, with the latter also cancelled for 2021. As restrictions were eased from the summer of 2021 we began to see if we could squeeze in a few visits before the end of the year, which we managed with two visits to WCR Carnforth on the 11th September and 16th October sandwiching Crewe Basford Hall on the 2nd October.

The intervening time unable to visit anywhere has resulted in a few casualties with what was to be our first visit to Merehead and Whatley Quarries being unable to be re-arranged as the organiser has retired. Also with Porterbrook taking over the operation of Long Marston our annual visit has been lost though we hope to submit a request when we can find a contact.

It is hoped that a comprehensive programme of events can be planned for 2022 with responses suggesting these will initially be: WCR Carnforth / Crewe Basford Hall / Scunthorpe Steelworks / Goodmans Yard Wishaw / Peter Briddon, Darley Dale and Eastleigh Works.

Discussion: We have now been able to make contact with Portabrook who are now running Long Marston and we have agreement for a day visit next year. A trip has now been arranged to visit the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway. No agreement can be reached to have a trip to Worksop or Toton as of yet. Darley Dale - there has been an upset between Peak Rail and Briddon but with change in management things may have improved now.

Election of Officials:

The election of the committee en block - overall agreement. Proposed by Simon Mutton and seconded by Aidan Turner.

Any Other Business:

Nothing.

Presidents Closing Comments - Simon Mutton:

Firstly, I would like to say thank you to Crewe Heritage Centre for allowing us the use of their facilities for our AGM today. I must say it is both a pleasure and relief to be able to meet and speak in person to friends and colleagues at an ICRS AGM.

So much has happened in the last couple of years, and those happenings have brought changes that none of us could have foreseen when we last got together, mere days before the first Covid lockdown in March 2020. Covid, the war in Ukraine and the cost of living crisis have all come together to create a much more worrying and uncertain future for all of us.

It is not my intention to dwell on these things – in many ways our meeting here today is I believe meant to be an escape from such concerns by following the hobby we have all managed to continue to enjoy. That brings me to the crux of my annual closing remarks, which is, as customary and on behalf of the whole society, to thank the officials who have continued to make it possible to follow our interest in the railway scene and to enhance our enjoyment of it.

You will be aware from Trevor's 'Editors Comments' over the last couple of years the work (and stress!) that is involved in not only editing, collating and meeting monthly deadlines with the magazine but dealing with recalcitrant printers, researching and collating the books (which in terms of the amount of information remain the best on the market) and managing the website.

Throughout the pandemic the officials of the society have continued to work hard and long - and I again remind everyone that this is all done voluntarily. Trevor I've already mentioned; Peter managing our finances; Colin dealing with an ever expanding membership (that in itself being a measure of the success of all the hard work!); Gareth managing our Social Media; Christine our secretary; James who edits the sightings in the magazine; and Tony who, as we emerge from the worst of the pandemic, has already secured a number of visits for this year. Our thanks and gratitude go to them all.

Next year is our 50th anniversary – something to genuinely celebrate and the officials will be looking at the ways in which that milestone can be celebrated. To that end we have already provisionally agreed with Porterbrook a visit to Long Marston next year; something we thought had ended when they took over the site from Ruth Dunmore and Quinton Rail.

No one knows what the future may hold – particularly in these uncertain times. That is as true of ICRS as anything else and as we head into that future, we will at some point be looking to you, the membership, to consider how you may be able to help, support and ultimately take over the reins of the society. If you feel that could be you – or if you know of any members who think it could be them - please let any of the officials know. I'm not setting any hares running here but continuity will be essential for us going forward i.e. not waiting until an official suddenly leaves before having backup or a replacement trained and ready. Please consider it.

In the meantime, thank you all for coming, have a safe journey home.

Thank you.

Meeting closed at 15.25