

Great Eastern Railway Society

Trustees' annual report for the period 1st January 2020 to 31st December 2020

Registered Charity Number: 267275

Principal address:

Honorary Secretary, 6 Robins Avenue, Lenham, Kent, ME17 2HN

Trustees who manage the charity:

John Watling; Nigel Bowdidge; Rodger Green; Bill King; Bernard Anderson

All the above Trustees have been in post for the full year.

Structure and governance:

The governing document is the Constitution adopted 16th March 1974 and amended 20th March 1976, 17th March 1979 and 20th March 2004 as amended 17th October 2020.

The Great Eastern Railway Society is an association of approximately 1,000 members.

The Officers and Executive Committee are appointed or reappointed annually at the Annual General Meeting held in March.

The Great Eastern Railway Society currently has policies in place for Finance, Complaints, Volunteers and Data Protection.

All Trustees, Executive Officers, Co-ordinators and Committee members etc. give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration or other benefits.

Objectives

To promote the advancement of public education and knowledge by the study of the Great Eastern Railway, its predecessors, successors and associated railways.

Summary of the past year:

Secretary's Report For The Year 2020

Following the noted decline in membership during 2019 the Society was all set to increase its presence at model railway exhibitions such as Alexandra Palace and the NEC in order to reverse that trend. The current worldwide pandemic that took hold early in the year made it necessary for the Society to cancel the Annual Meeting in March. Subsequently all public exhibitions were cancelled during the remainder of the year. The upside of this however has been an increase in interest from people having more time whilst confined during lockdown. This has produced an increase in membership which has outweighed the natural loss through those that are no longer with us and non-renewals. It is good to see that at the end of the year there were 1010 members, a number still above the psychological barrier of 1000 after it was in doubt last year.

Members will have noted the advertisements in the Great Eastern News for the position of Chairman of the Society. As has been noted previously the current Chairman, Bill King, had stated his intention to stand down. Bill has been devoting his efforts to Journal Editor and felt that he needed to formally give notice of resignation rather than let either of the roles slip. Bill, as a Trustee of the Society, still remains an active member of the Executive Committee.

In the absence of any response to the advertisements for Chairman Brian Watson agreed to take on the position. He has been co-opted to this position on a pro-tem basis until elections are held at the 2021 AGM where his position will be formalised if there are no other contenders. Brian has been an active member of the Executive Committee for several years.

Similarly the Treasurer, Bernard Anderson, has stated his intention to step down. Whilst there has been interest from a few members for this position discussions have not yet reached a conclusion with any candidates. Interest from any further members would be welcomed.

Our President, John Watling with assistance from Bill King, has brought the Catalogue of documents held by the Essex Record Office on behalf of the Society up to date and this is available as an Addendum on the Society website. The collection has expanded this year with a substantial number of legal agreements for land and various services covering the years from 1841 to 1943. Where necessary the documents have been conserved and catalogued ready for deposition with the GER collection at the Essex Record Office once it reopens.

Barry Jackson, as Publication Sales Officer, has had another good year and achieved the highest sales figure in the history of the Society. This being despite the cancellation of the AGM, at which he normally boosts sales with a new digital offering. This year's offering being the Journal of the Ipswich Transport Society which covered the period from 1959 to the current day. The national lockdowns have again led to an increase in people searching the sales offerings of the Society. It is noted that the majority of sales are now made to non-members. There has been a continued increase in the availability of digital downloads from the Files Emporium on the Society website. Whilst the Society has plans for further digitisation projects these have unfortunately become delayed during this period.

Whilst the pandemic has caused the closure for most of the year of the County Records Offices and the National Archives we have been fortunate that sufficient research has previously been undertaken by various members in order that they were able to complete articles for the Journal. The Great Eastern News, under Ruth Ivimey-Cook as Editor, has continued to evolve with the introduction of a modelling input and further changes are planned. The print company we are using is classified as an essential business and this has enabled the Journal and Newsletter to be published as usual.

The Half-Yearly Meeting in October was also cancelled this year and we all look forward to the time when public meetings are able to resume safely in 2021.

The Annual Return has been submitted to the Charities Commission and in addition the recent administrative update to our Constitution has been registered with them. I would also record that our Accounts accord with the recommendations of the Charities Commission with regard to the extent of financial reserves.

In administering the Society the Executive Committee met on two occasions at the start of the year. Consequent upon the restrictions subsequently imposed the following 4 meetings were held online using the Zoom online meeting application. This enabled the usual 2 monthly cycle of meetings to take place in

order that the administration of the Society was maintained. The members of the Executive have remained unchanged for the full year.

The Historical Research Sub-Committee whilst still maintaining activity by the members has been unable to meet during this year. The members of this committee have been submitting their reports during this time, these have been reviewed by the Executive Committee as part of their meetings and included within their Minutes.

On behalf of the Chairman and Officers of the Society I thank you all for your continuing support and we all look forward to being able to meet members again next year.

Paul M Weeden

Honorary Secretary

Great Eastern Railway Society

Financial Review

The Society currently holds funds in excess of £50,000 in respect of the membership accounts, all of which is in unrestricted funds. These funds are held in order to meet anticipated expenditure for the next 12 months. This being in accordance with Charity Commission guidelines that sufficient funds be available for an orderly shutdown should the Society cease operations.

At the time of preparing this Trustees report for inclusion in the Newsletter, to enable distribution prior to the AGM, the final account figures for the year are subject to Independent examination. Final account figures will be made available for the AGM.

Declaration

The Trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the Charity's trustees:

Signature:

Full Name:

Position: Chairman

Date:

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP ACCOUNT TO 31 DECEMBER 2020

INCOME	2020	2019	EXPENDITURE	2020	2019
Subscriptions	25694.01	25370.00	Journal - Production	5798.99	5304.42
Gift Aid reclaim	4211.59	4200.54	- Distribution	4749.20	5394.53
Donations	213.00	1076.20	News - Production	5250.28	4420.08
Bank Interest	51.43	113.95	- Distribution	5671.29	5114.86
Surplus on meetings refreshments &c	0.00	228.07	Administration	1108.26	847.11
Payment from			Meetings	73.27	1658.79
Trading Account	0.00	0.00	Insurance	203.62	201.00
			Publicity	0.00	86.40
			Commission	112.19	104.63
			Depreciation	542.13	391.33
			Surplus	6660.80	7465.61
	<u>£30,170.03</u>	<u>£30,988.76</u>		<u>£30,170.03</u>	<u>£30,988.76</u>

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2020

	2,020	2019
FIXED ASSETS at Cost less Depreciation	907.15	695.30
CURRENT ASSETS		
Bank Accounts - Current	100.00	100.00
- Business Reserve	57,913.50	50,003.00
- Capital Reserve	2,692.45	2,690.10
Cash in hand	0.00	0.00
Due from Publications Account	47.94	0.00
Deposits and pre-payments	33.94	109.94
Outstanding Credit	624.40	0.00
Gift Aid claim(s) outstanding	4,211.59	4,200.54
	<u>£66,530.97</u>	<u>£57,798.88</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Payments Outstanding	0.00	0.00
Cheques issued but not presented at bank	1,646.59	48.00
Due to Publications Account	1,573.92	338.31
Reserve for Journal	0.00	0.00
Reserve for Journal distribution	0.00	0.00
Reserve for Journal expenses	0.00	0.00
Reserve for News	0.00	1,122.00
Reserve for News distribution	1,390.00	875.00
Reserve for Meetings	0.00	48.00
Reserve for Admin expenses	100.00	185.00
Reserve for Conservation	0.00	0.00
Balance on Archive and Capital Projects Account	11,021.89	11,033.64
	<u>£50,798.57</u>	<u>£44,148.93</u>
Financed by: Accumulated Fund	44,148.93	36,682.69
Surplus	6,660.80	7,465.61
Gift Aid adjustment (Previous Year)	(11.16)	0.63
Funds Available	<u>£50,798.57</u>	<u>£44,148.93</u>

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY SOCIETY

TRADING ACCOUNT TO 31 DECEMBER 2020

	2020	2019		2020	2019
PUBLICATIONS					
INCOME			EXPENDITURE		
Publications Sales	5564.45	4891.66	Postage & Telephone	363.24	353.19
inc pre-paid postage			Photocopying	0	10.05
Interest	0.00	0.00	Stationery etc	35.44	98.16
			Stock purchases	331.10	456.46
			Advertising	0.00	0.00
			Commission	295.16	174.39
			Administration	168.41	327.29
			Write Down of Fixed Assets	0.00	0.00
			Due to Membership Account	47.94	0.00
			Surplus over expenditure	4,323.16	3,472.12
	<u>£ 5,564.45</u>	<u>£ 4,891.66</u>		<u>£ 5,564.45</u>	<u>£ 4,891.66</u>

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2020

	2020	2019
FIXED ASSETS at Cost less Depreciation	£ 0.00	£ 0.00
CURRENT ASSETS		
NatWest Current Account	46067.24	43021.39
Due from Membership Account	1573.92	338.31
Cash in hand (Publications)	48.42	147.10
Stocks (Publications)	589.57	485.17
	<u>£ 48,279.15</u>	<u>£ 43,991.97</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Cheques issued but not presented at bank	0.00	0.00
Owing to Membership Account	47.94	0.00
	<u>£ 48,231.21</u>	<u>£ 43,991.97</u>
Financed by: Accumulated Fund	43991.97	47440.41
Surplus/(Deficit)	4323.16	3472.12
Investment in Digitised Magazine Projects	(83.92)	(6,920.56)
Investment in Digitised Drawings	0.00	0.00
Funds Available	<u>£ 48,231.21</u>	<u>£ 43,991.97</u>

REPORT BY THE INDEPENDENT EXAMINER TO THE MEMBERS OF THE GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY SOCIETY

I have examined the financial statements comprising the Income and Expenditure accounts, Trading Accounts and Balance Sheets. In my opinion the financial statements give a true and fair account of the Society's affairs as at 31st December 2020 and of its overall surplus for the year then ended.

G. S. Jansen

Independent Examiner