

SIGNALLING RECORD SOCIETY

Founded in 1969 for the study of Railway Signalling and Operation in the British Isles and Overseas

*Notice of Annual General Meeting
to be held at 11.00 am on
Saturday 16th May 2020
in the
Bertrand Russell Room,
Conway Hall, Red Lion Square,
Holborn, London WC1R 4RL
also
Officers' Reports
&
Draft Accounts for 2019*



LATE AMENDMENTS:

In the event of any late amendments to this report and accounts being received after the publication deadline for SRS News No.5, updates will be posted on the Society's web site at www.s-r-s.org.uk/agm2020

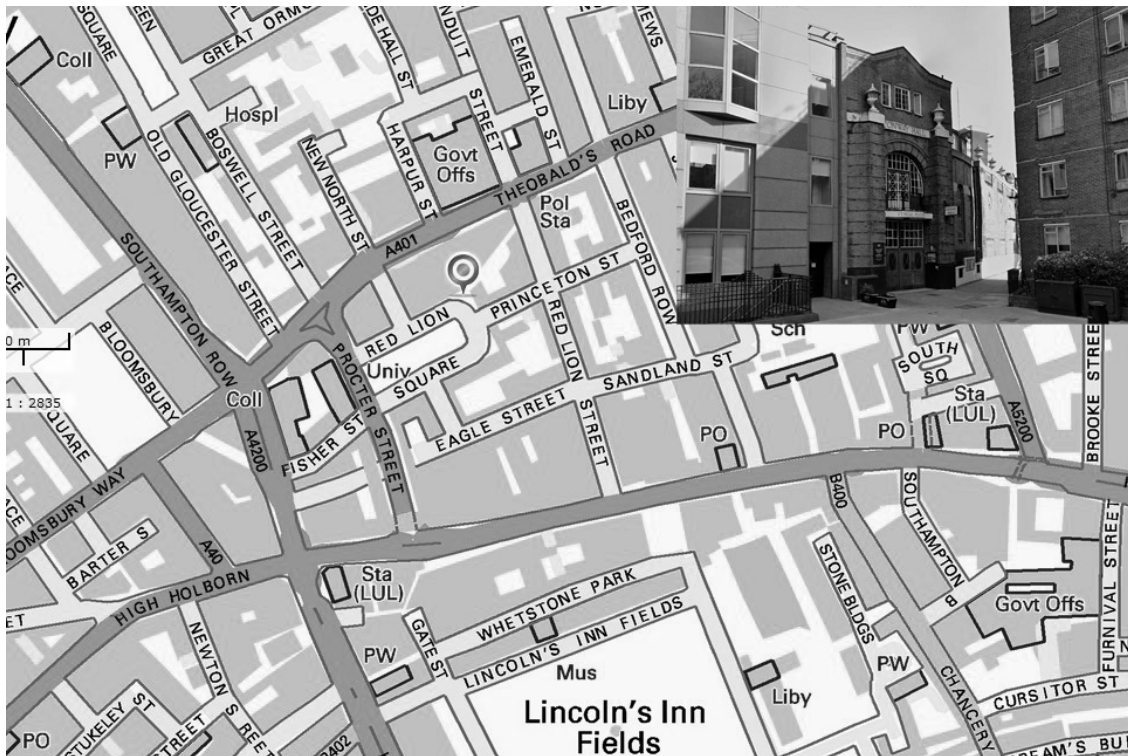
Any member unable to access the web site may contact the Acting Secretary and request a printed copy. Requests must be received by the Acting Secretary no later than 2nd May to allow time to print and post the document in advance of the meeting.

A limited number of printed copies will be available at the AGM.

Programme

- 09:30 Doors open. Tables available for bring and buy and displays.
- 10:55 Opening Remarks and Housekeeping.
- 11:00 **Annual General Meeting and Members' Forum.**
- 12:30 Break for refreshments.
- 13:30 Robert Mills: *"600 Carriages and Signalling"*.
- 15:00 Dave Cockle: *"From Unofficial Signaller to Operations Manager"*.
- 16:00 Closing Remarks.
- 16:30 Room closes.

How to get to the meeting



10 minutes walk from Holborn Underground station, the Conway Hall is in the corner of Red Lion Square as denoted by the marker. The Bertrand Russell Room is on the ground floor and wheelchair accessible via a shallow ramp. Conway Hall's entrance is shown in the inset picture.

Trustees 2019-2020

Elected 2019 and remain in 2020:

Richard Foster
Reg Instone
John Lacy

Elected 2019 and retire by rote or rule:

Paul Armstrong
Graham Cloxton

Francis Dalrymple-Hamilton (Treasurer)

David Garland (Acting Secretary)

Chris Hall (Chair)

Robert Mills

Appointed during the year

Steve Sharpe

AGM Agenda

- 1 Signing of the attendance register.
- 2 Welcome by the Chair.
- 3 To remember our members who have died during the past year.
- 4 To receive apologies for absence.
- 5 To approve the minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting.
- 6 To address any matters arising from the minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting.
- 7 To receive the Trustees' report to the Charity Commission for the year ended 31st December 2019.
- 8 To approve the Officers' reports to members for the year ended 31st December 2019.
- 9 To receive the Treasurer's report and accounts for the year ended 31st December 2019.
- 10 To elect the Key Officers:
 - Chair: Nomination received: Chris Hall
 - Secretary: Nomination received:
 - Treasurer: Nomination received: Francis Dalrymple-Hamilton
- 11 To elect 6 Trustees: Nominations received:
 - Paul Armstrong, Graham Cloxton, David Garland, Peter Gibbons, Robert Mills, Steve Sharpe
- 12 To approve amendments to Rules 7.4 and 7.5 proposed by the Trustees:
 - Existing Rule 7.4
Those appointed to audit or independently examine the society's accounts shall be elected annually by members present at the preceding annual general meeting and shall not be members of the society.
 - Proposed Rule 7.4
The committee shall appoint a suitably qualified person or persons to audit or independently examine the society's accounts each year. The appointed person or persons shall not be members of the society. The committee's decision shall be notified to the Annual General Meeting each year.
 - Existing Rule 7.5
In the event that those appointed by an annual general meeting to audit or independently examine the society's accounts become unable or unwilling to carry out their task, the trustees may appoint substitute(s) to audit or independently examine the society's accounts. Those so appointed shall not be members of the society.
 - Proposed Rule 7.5
In the event that the person or persons appointed by the committee to audit or independently examine the society's accounts become unable or unwilling to carry out the task, the committee may appoint a suitably qualified substitute or substitutes to audit or independently examine the society's accounts. The person or persons so appointed shall not be members of the society.
- 13 To note the Trustees' choice of Independent Examiner for 2020:
 - Jonathan Innes FCCA of Innes & Partners Limited, Livingston EH54 5FD.
- 14 To approve proposals of award of Honorary Life Membership of the Society to:
 - Barry Bridges and David Stirling.
- 15 To announce the winner of the John Howard-Turner award for 2018.
- 16 To announce the winner of the Colin H Betts award for 2019.
- 17 To discuss the new format of *The Signalling Record* and *SRS News*.
- 18 To announce date, time and location of the 2021 Annual General Meeting.
- 19 Any other Business.
- 20 Members' Forum.

David Garland, Acting Secretary, 1st February 2020

Minutes of 2019 AGM

Held at National Railway Museum, York, 18th May 2019

1. Present

Stephen Courten (Deputy Chair), David Garland (Acting Secretary), David Stirling (Treasurer), Richard Foster, Reg Instone, John Lacy (Trustees) and the following 27 members: Bernard Archer, Paul Armstrong, Robert Ashmore, Andrew Barton, Tim Bourne, Graham Cloxton, John Creed, Roy Dandy, Ian Fraser, Chris Gibbard, Peter Hampson, Bruce MacDougall, Neil Mackay, Andrew Matheson, Darryl Meades, Robert Mills, Trevor Moseley, Richard Pulleyn, Michael Rising, Ian Scott, Steve Sharpe, Hugh Thomas, John Tinkler, Charles Weightman, John Wickens, Roger Wilkins, John Young

2. Welcome

The meeting commenced at 11.00. Stephen Courten welcomed members to the meeting and explained that he would be chairing the meeting in the absence of Chris Hall. He drew attention to the papers left on seats and urged members to agree to the Society contacting them by email and to sign Gift Aid forms. He appealed for volunteers to take on currently vacant roles (including that of Secretary) and so avoid the need for current Trustees to carry out multiple jobs.

3. Members who have died in the past year

The Deputy Chair noted the demise during 2018 of Michael Back, Trevor Sutcliffe and John Dixon. The meeting expressed its sympathy with their families and its appreciation for their contributions to the Society over many years.

4. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Chris Hall (Chair) and the following 14 members:

Malcolm Atherton, Allan Beck, Ken Booth, Francis Dalrymple-Hamilton, Edward Dorricott, Martin Elms, John Foreman, George Huxley, David Lowe, Mick Nicholson, Ralph Potter, Chris Roffey, Kevin Smith, Chris Turner

5. Minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting

On the proposal of Richard Pulleyn, seconded by Robert Mills, it was AGREED unanimously that the minutes be approved. There were no matters arising.

6. Subscription rate

David Stirling set out his proposal to increase the standard subscription rate from £25 per year to £30. The last increase had been in 2012, and owing to inflation £30 was of very similar value to £25 then. The SRS had also delivered improvements: the *Signalling Record* had been increased to A4 size, and the archives had more space and were more accessible at Kenilworth. Non-standard rates would be £40 in Europe and £45 in the rest of the world; existing senior rate members would pay £25 (this scheme was no longer open to new applicants). In response to questions David estimated there were 50 overseas members [*Secretary's note: there are actually 21*], and that the date for the increase had been set as 1 September 2019 because members joining on or after that date became members for the whole of 2020 as well as the remainder of 2019. The Trustees agreed to investigate the possibility of overseas members receiving the *Record* electronically at less than the stated overseas rates. On the proposal of Neil Mackay, seconded by Tim Bourne, it was AGREED unanimously that subscriptions for 2020 should be set as proposed.

7. Office Holders' reports

On the proposal of Graham Cloxton, seconded by Steve Sharpe, it was AGREED unanimously that the Office Holders' reports for 2018 be approved.

8. Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts

The Deputy Chair explained that it was for the Trustees to approve the Report and Accounts. He was therefore asking that the meeting receive them. On the proposal of Paul Armstrong, seconded by Graham Cloxton, it was AGREED unanimously to do so.

9. Election of Chair and Trustees

The Deputy Chair announced that there had been no nominations for Secretary and Treasurer; David Garland was acting as Secretary for the time being, while after nominations had closed Francis Dalrymple-Hamilton had volunteered to be Treasurer, and would be so appointed by the Trustees and to hold office until the 2020 AGM. As a consequence of the SRS becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation all Trustees had to be re-elected this year; in future years only half would retire each year. Nominations received were:-

Chair: Chris Hall

Trustees: Paul Armstrong, Graham Cloxton, Francis Dalrymple-Hamilton, Richard Foster, David Garland, Chris Hall, Reg Instone, John Lacy, Robert Mills

Since there were fewer nominations than the maximum of 12 allowed by the Constitution, no election was necessary. On the proposal of Tim Bourne, seconded by Graham Cloxton, it was AGREED unanimously that Chris Hall be appointed Chair. On the proposal of Steve Sharpe, seconded by Eric Talbot, it was AGREED by 24 votes to nil that the remaining Trustees be appointed en bloc.

10. Independent Examiner

The Deputy Chair explained that it was for the Trustees to appoint an Independent Examiner, the meeting was therefore asked to note the appointment. He explained that Francis Dalrymple-Hamilton, as Treasurer designate, had recommended Mr Innes. On the proposal of Graham Cloxton, seconded by Tim Bourne, the meeting AGREED the appointment unanimously.

11. Honorary Life Membership

The Trustees had agreed to recommend for honorary life membership of the SRS Malcolm Atherton and Tony Higgs, who had recently retired after very long service to the society as (respectively) secretary and editor of the *Signalling Record*. Steve Sharpe proposed and John Creed seconded Malcolm, while Tim Bourne proposed and Craham Cloxton seconded Tony; both awards were AGREED unanimously.

12. C H Betts Award.

Unfortunately it was not possible to announce the winner at the meeting. An announcement will be made as soon as possible.

13. Logo competition.

The Deputy Chair thanked all who had taken part, whether as entrants or as voters. He announced the winner as Entry No 2, from John Lacy. The meeting showed its appreciation for the effort Stephen Courten had put into running the competition.

14. Any other business.

None.

15. Members Forum.

Steve Sharpe announced that he was formally taking over as Membership Secretary on the day, though Jerry Plane would continue to provide support. The meeting offered thanks to Steve for taking on the job, and expressed its appreciation of the work put in by Barry Bridges over many years, and of the Jerry's efforts in maintaining the membership database.

Richard Pulleyn thanked Stephen Courten and David Stirling for their service as Deputy Chair and Treasurer respectively. The meeting expressed its appreciation.

John Young encouraged all members who have their own signalling collections not to delay putting into place contingency plans against their demise. Roger Wilkins reminded members of the importance of having in place a valid will, and in appropriate cases a Lasting Power of Attorney. Steve Sharpe asked whether advice could be given in the Newsletter; Reg Instone undertook to draft an article.

Robert Mills added that the Society itself needed a business continuity plan, and John Creed emphasised the need to secure continuing access to the Society's electronic data. The Trustees would need to consider how to achieve that.

Neil Mackay asked if the Society had a collections policy for its archive. David Garland gave a summary of the policy (which is available on the SRS website), but accepted that it had been drawn up some while ago and invited comments.

Trevor Moseley mentioned the Manchester Locomotive Society which had an amount of material relating to signalling on the CLC. Reg Instone, as Research Co-ordinator, said that he was aware of the MLS but did not realise they had any signalling material. He briefly referred to the difficulties of knowing the existence of all potential sources of information, and the now-defunct Railway Librarians' and Archivists' group. Trevor Moseley then went on to ask whether the SRS had reciprocal arrangements with other societies. Reg Instone said that was something the Society would like to do more of, but that the limitation was the number of volunteers and the time they had available.

John Young asked how younger members might be attracted to the SRS given the diminishing visibility of signalling on the national network. He suggested working more with heritage railways. Tim Bourne endorsed that thought from his experience on the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway. John Lacy reminded members that a leaflet was available and offered to provide supplies to any members who know of an appropriate place to display them. Trevor Moseley suggested that a poster could be of value.

There being no further business, the Deputy Chair thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 1230.

David Garland, Acting Secretary

Reports from Office Holders

Chair, Chris Hall

This is my fourth year as Chairman and I look back to 2019 with a great deal of satisfaction. Our membership has grown over each of the last three years which gives us confidence going forward and most members have stayed with us despite the increase in subscriptions for 2020. Thank you.

The big development during 2019 was the complete revamp and upgrade of the publications we provide for members, most notably *The Signalling Record*, which changed to A4 size, with a card cover, many more illustrations and a considerable amount of colour content. Alongside this we have introduced *SRS News*, bringing a lot more information for members. Other publications have been upgraded too. The result has been that we have provided double the amount of printed material to members compared to previous years, giving you extremely good value for money. All this has involved a huge amount of work by our editorial and production team and my sincere thanks go to them for all the hard work, time and effort that they have put in for the members benefit over the year.

The 2018 accounts showed a small deficit on operating expenses of around £400, although well offset by trading profit in the accounts. Our aim is that our core operating costs should be covered by regular income and not rely on trading. The outcome indicated that subscriptions would have to rise in 2020. The figures for 2019 show a much larger deficit on our operating expenses as a result of the massive improvements in *The Signalling Record* and *SRS News*, increased archive costs and the inevitable effects of inflation. Fortunately our trading activities have all shown healthy volumes and profits and overall 2019 shows a small surplus which can be added to our reserves and used to help fund the purchase and preservation of signalling archive material.

Archive, David Garland

During 2019 we held four joint and three SRS-only Open Days at the archive in Kenilworth, with a total attendance of 91 members and others. The level of attendance on Joint Open Days was such as to cause some space problems, so in consultation with the LNWR Society we decided to have separate Open Days for the two societies.

We also set up regular SRS Working Days, usually on the Thursday preceding Saturday Open Days; the five we held in 2019 attracted a total attendance of 18. A similar programme of Open Days and Working Days is being arranged for 2020 – details will be found in *SRS News* and on the website.

If you'd like to visit and none of these days are suitable, it is often possible to arrange visits on other days – please contact me, contact detail on the back page of each issue of *SRS News*.

While accessions during 2019 were at a lower level than the previous year, we have continued to receive

From 2020 gift aid contributions will help with financing our charitable activities.

2018 and 2019 have seen quite significant changes among our committee and officers, with several people stepping down after long periods in office. These have included Malcolm Atherton, Barry Bridges, Steve Courten, Jerry Plane and David Stirling. I would like express my heartfelt thanks to them all on behalf of the members for their long and dedicated service, and the huge amounts of time they have put in to the benefit of the Society over all the years. Without their contributions the Society would not be where it is today. I wish them all the best for the future. Hopefully they will have a bit more time for writing articles!

The changes have led to new blood on the committee and we have been very fortunate in that over the two years six new people have come forward and been elected or appointed as trustees. This has brought new ideas and this has been very welcome, but in reality it only scratches the surface of what is needed. The Society is run entirely by volunteers and what we can do for our members is constrained by the availability of people to help. A particular problem at present is that we have not been able to find someone to fill the role of Secretary and this position is currently filled on a temporary basis. The workload is not that great and could be covered by two or three people sharing the work if need be. Please get in touch if you think you could help even in a small way. We are a very friendly bunch!

We do need some more members to step forward to help reduce the workload that falls onto the shoulders of the small number of active volunteers running the society. Ideally we also need to attract some younger and more active members to assist with some of the tasks.

valuable donations, including:

- Two Train Register Books (for Rhyl and Gobowen) donated by Matthew Lovelock
- A set of manuscript diagrams for North Eastern Region boxes drawn by the late Mick York, and donated by his brother Peter York
- A number of locking charts donated by Mike Marr through the good offices of Tim Petchey of the Winchcombe Railway Museum
- A copy of an account of the recent resignalling at Porthmadog Harbour, donated by Dan Evans of the Ffestiniog Railway S&T Department
- Some notes and scanned pages from two Train Register Books for Blakesley 1935-37 and 1946-47, donated by Robin Cullup
- A substantial quantity of material donated by Trevor Moseley, including the Jack Cooper collection of LNWR signal diagrams rescued from Conway S&T

Depot, where they had been deposited for safe keeping during the Second World War

- A number of Train Register Books donated by Richard Pulleyn

The Society is most grateful to all donors listed,

Digital Archive, John Lacy

The Digital Archive continues to expand and additions to the archive have come from David Allen, and via David Allen from Tony Cooke, Geoff Holme, Allan Lewis, Richard Maund, Mike Norris, Richard Pulleyn and Chris Turner. The efforts of all those named continue to be much appreciated, as is David Allen's role in co-ordinating and carrying out much of the scanning activity. In addition to those mentioned above I have also been scanning documents when time has permitted.

David continued the scanning of Michael Back's weekly notice extracts through the winter and on into spring together with a number of other items from the archive.

Adrian Crafer has scanned more of the mechanical drawings that came from the S&T at Reading. Thank you Adrian.

Of very special mention is the donation of material from the collection of the late Dr. Mike Andrews. Our

and to any I've missed – apologies to them.

Finally, very many thanks to all those members and others who have given their time and effort to help the SRS Archive. Without you we would not be in the position we are.

grateful thanks to his family for making this material available.

I also received donations of material from Graham Cloxton, Richard Foster, Brian Holden, Richard Maund, Stephen Owen and Mark White. Thank you to them as well.

Keith Fitzsimmons drew a considerable number of diagrams of the Merseyside and North Wales areas in 2005-2006 and has sent us a set of them for the digital archive. He has also added a few more since. They were drawn as much for Control office use as being replicas of signal box diagrams although he has since diversified.

Material has been added from my own collection and ebay purchases.

Advantage has been taken of the arrangements made for us to use the London North Western Society's large format scanner to digitise plans and other documents that are bigger than A3 size.

Photographic Archive, Paul Armstrong

I started scanning copies of the Society's photographic collection in mid 2019, with the Mike Back collection of photographs. When I had completed them I started on a collection of negatives that I had been given by John Lacy. It was not immediately clear who had taken the photographs, once I started work on them it became clear that they had been taken by the late John Talbot. The collection includes many London Transport locations, although locations throughout the country are also included. Work on copying this collection will last well into 2020.

During the year the Society received 324 AEI official photographs from Chris Bellett which arrived via

Andrew Overton, along with smaller donations from Martin Elms and John Lacy.

At the end of the year the committee agreed to provide a small budget so that photographs, slides or negatives could be purchased for the Society and at the end of the year a couple of interesting photographs were purchased. I will be on the lookout for further examples in 2020.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank David Garland and John Lacy for their help in getting this work off the ground, and to those members who have donated items for the Society's collection.

Bookstall, John Lacy

Bookstall revenues totalling £6,743.93 were boosted in 2019 by the publication of the London Transport Signal Box Register in July and The first volume of Bruce Bennett's signal box diagrams which covered the LNWR parts of the Central Wales Line. It is a fact that having new publications gives a healthy spike in revenue but then falls off after the initial rush to purchase is over.

Expenditure during the year on printing, shipping and all the related items came to £3,831.81 leaving a net contribution to the Society's funds of £2,912.12.

As ever, I am grateful to John Creed for his ever helpful efforts in ensuring delivery of new publications to a high standard. Thank you John.

Drawing Office, Ray Caston & Allan Pym

We are pleased to report another year of progress for the Drawing Office. We would especially like to thank the Archivist for continuing access to the Michael Back legacy of drawings, John Lacy for his help in scanning and Chris Hall for listing and committing drawings to disc.

We are also indebted to Garth Tilt, John Hinson, Terry Weston and the *SRS News* team for their help and to Bernard Archer for his continued valuable assistance as draughtsman.

Backnumbers and Non-commercial Publications, Steve Courten

The main areas of sales during 2019 have been the Company Publications series, Signalling Papers and Research Notes. Sales of back numbers have been very disappointing again both for the CD's and the printed copies. Various series have been advertised in the Newsletter during 2019 and this has seen an increase in sales for these items.

In the Research Notes series the John Swift Diagrams have again proved to be the most popular sellers with printed versions outselling the CD's.

The Signalling Papers covering the GWR frames and Layouts have been the strongest sellers, though there was a marked increase in sales of the Introduction to French Signalling at the end of the year.

Company Publications sales vary with no one particular item outselling others. However sales of this

popular and useful series are always good and fully justify making these items available. There remain several companies who are notable by their omission from, or under representation in the Company publications series.

This is particularly true of the LNWR and early copies of the GWR pre-grouping era and this is an area I am very keen to expand on. However despite a number of appeals in the Newsletter no one has come forward as yet to offer copies.

During the year the opportunity has been taken to redesign the covers for the various series as the different publications have been printed and this will continue during 2020. A number of new items for the various series are in an advanced stage of production and it is hoped to release these during 2020.

Enquiries Officer, Ian Wannell

During 2019 I received 58 enquiries,(50 in 2018), with several positive feedback responses following contact with our Corresponding Members.

The lack of CM's for some areas is problematic, but where possible I have given enquirers the nearest

contact geographically, with a rider that that CM may only be able to suggest an onward contact.

Generally, enquirers seem happy with our response and I have received no complaints regarding contact with the Society.

Exhibitions, Natalie Jones & John Lacy

When we wrote the report for 2019 we anticipated a 'triple' of attendances in 2019. It was not to be!

The proposed Crewe Gala fell foul of the organiser suffering health problems and being short of volunteers to carry it forward on his behalf. I am pleased to say that the organiser has recovered since.

This left *Guildex* in early September and *Warley* in November.

Guildex had crept forward a week to the last weekend of the school holidays. Nevertheless attendance on the Saturday was good, but the reverse was true on the Sunday. The age demographics is high with persons of more senior age greatly predominating.

Overall we covered our costs at *Guildex* but this was largely because several of our members bought from us at the show; if we had relied solely on purchases by non-members we would have incurred a trading loss. Part of the problem is the Gauge O Guild's decision not to

provide societies with a free table anymore which adds a cost not previously incurred.

Publication schedules for *The Signalling Record* were such that the event report and pictures appeared in *SRS News 4*.

Our thanks to Andrew Barton, Chris Hall, Kelly Harding and Dave Stirling for helping on the stall; also to Kelly Harding for transporting both Natalie and most of the display equipment from Kenilworth and back again after.

Next came *Warley* where we found that we were alongside the main route from the public entrance to the main layout area. The difference was marvellous and we were rushed off our feet earlier and more frequently than we are when just part of an area devoted to societies.

The age demographics here cover a much wider range with many visitors bringing young children with them. The youngsters enjoyed playing with our approach

control demonstration display unit which, in turn, gave us the opportunity to engage the parents in conversation.

A key activity here is The Norman Cadge Award for the Best Signalled Layout, the judging for which is carried out on the Saturday morning. It was a close contest this year which resulted in the final decision only being made mid afternoon.

By a small margin the award went to "Kimble", a gauge 'O' layout belonging to the Leamington and Warwick Model Railway Society. Financially the show was valuable to us and the income was well in excess of our costs.

Our thanks to the judging team of Andrew Barton, David Garland, Chris Hall, Reg Instone and Natalie Jones. Also to Robert Mills for assistance on the Sunday.

We anticipate invitations to attend both *Guildex* and *Warley* in 2020 but our ability to attend the former may be affected by their decision to move the date from its 'traditional' September slot to the August Bank Holiday weekend.

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At the end of November John Lacy announced his withdrawal from attending shows for reasons of increasing age, health and domestic issues and a definite need to reduce the number of SRS hats he wears.

Can we appeal please for as many members as possible, especially those living within easy reach of the venues and therefore not needing accommodation over night, to help with transport between Kenilworth (where to show stand is stored) and the venue in both directions and on the days on which the shows are open.

Area Organiser North East, Richard Pulleyn

With over 40 members present, the York meeting took place once again in the Duchess of Hamilton Suite at the NRM on Saturday 18 May 2019, incorporating the Society AGM and a celebration of the 50th Anniversary of formation of the SRS. Richard Pulleyn set the scene with an illustrated talk "50 years of the SRS North East Group - Remembering People, Places and Activities". The formal AGM was efficiently conducted by our Deputy Chairman, Stephen Courten, assisted by the Treasurer and Trustees. This was followed by a Members' Forum with plenty of participation.

After lunch, Phil Graham and the team of volunteers at the NRM L&Y Signalling School used the layout to re-enact the signalling related accident at Penistone in February 1927. Afterwards, members had an

opportunity to operate a set of Key Token Instruments followed by a visit to the preserved Borough Market Junction signal box. To round off the day, a group of members then visited the demonstration signal box "NRM Central" and tried their hands at the simulator. Meanwhile, working with the team of volunteers, members had an opportunity to work the boxes on the L&Y Signalling School layout.

Since meetings had been arranged at Kenilworth in September, in London in October, and in Crewe in November, the next York meeting is being held over until 2020. Having completed 50 years in this and associated roles, the Organiser gave due notice that he will be looking for younger members to assist then to takeover in due course.

Area Organiser North West, Ken Booth

As part of the SRS 50th celebrations it was planned to have an SRS presence at the June 2019 Crewe Signalling Gala organised by our friends from the Exeter West Group (EWG). Unfortunately due to the illness of the EWG Organiser this event had to be cancelled.

Again as part of the 50th celebrations the November meeting at Crewe was originally planned as a three speaker special. However, events conspired against us and one of our booked speakers had reluctantly to bow out. A detailed report on the meeting, by Mike Blease, appears in *SRS News* 5.

My personal thanks go to:

- Mike Blease for producing the meeting report.
- Our speakers - Trevor Moseley and Andrew Overton for two impressive presentations.
- The Exeter West Group for their excellent assistance in extending the operational hours at Exeter West SB to accommodate our changed programme.

- Crewe Heritage Centre for being helpful and friendly hosts.

Back in 2017 the Crewe meeting was used as a 'test bed' for the concept of 'Voluntary Contributions' (i.e. members making a contribution to the running costs of the day) and the same system was applied in 2018. Due to our recently obtained charitable status and, in order to gain taxation benefits from same, a new system called 'Gift Aid Small Donations' (GASD) was introduced at the 2019 meeting. Whilst both systems have worked well, and our visiting members have proved most generous, it has added an extra burden to the organisers duties.

A warm welcome awaits you at the regular Crewe meeting to be held on **Saturday 21 November 2020**. The meeting will take place as normal in the Crewe North Junction SB of Crewe Heritage Centre. Two speakers have been booked and full details will appear in *SRS News* 6 and on the Website..

FARSAP Project, Richard Pulleyn

During 2019 further progress has been made adding a number of route compilations by a “core team” of film-makers who have delivered good quality material which meets the objectives of the project. Excellent support has been experienced in dealings with Network

Rail. The vast majority of the FARSAP films on the website are now in full High Definition form. Thanks are due to John Lacy for his work in posting material on the SRS website.

Visits Network Rail, Transport for London & Metro, Peter Addis

During 2019 it proved possible to arrange a number of visits to Network Rail installations, almost exclusively within the former Southern Region, largely due to introductions kindly made by SRS member and NR signaller Matt Saunders.

The first visit, on 22nd February, allowed members to view the three panels in Basingstoke ASC and the second visit on 17th May was to Victoria ASC located at Clapham Junction.

The third visit, on 12th July, was to Wokingham SB and then to Feltham PSB where the newly installed panel controlling the Shepperton branch could be viewed.

The fourth visit, on 31st August, was an all day car borne tour visiting Canterbury WASC, Canterbury West gantry, Chartham gate box, Sturry, Minster, Sandwich, Deal and Wye GF (the GF was removed a few days later).

The fifth visit, on 18th September, was to Guildford ASC and the signalboxes at Farncombe, Haslemere and Petersfield.

The sixth visit, on 23 November, arranged at short notice, was an all day car borne tour enabling members to visit the Wherry Lines mechanical signalboxes between

Norwich and Great Yarmouth/Lowestoft which are all due to be closed during February 2020 with control passing to Colchester ASC. The locations visited were Brundall, Lingwood LC GF (as featured in the SRS Journal), Cantley (now reduced to a gate box), Acle, Great Yarmouth, Lowestoft, Oulton Broad North and the nearby Swingbridge, the operation of which was demonstrated, and finally Somerleyton Swingbridge as darkness descended. It was not possible to visit the only other SB on the route namely Reedham Swingbridge.

The seventh visit, on 3rd December, was the third car borne tour featuring visits to Maidstone East (miniature lever frame and NX panel) and West, Watlington, East Farleigh, Aylesford and Cuxton.

In recognition of the facilities granted by Network Rail, and the welcome given by signallers on duty, charitable donations totalling £1,185 have been made to The Railway Children charity which is supported by Network Rail.

No visits were arranged during the year to either London Underground or other metro installations.

Visits Heritage South, Edward Dorricott

In this 50th year of the SRS, we were privileged to have been hosted for our visit to the Dean Forest Railway on Saturday 7th September by two members associated with the beginnings of our society. Roger Phelps, who organised some of the early box visits, and David Collins, our sole surviving founder member, kindly guided our memorable day to look at the boxes with which they are both closely involved.

The old Severn & Wye Railway came into the joint ownership of the Great Western and Midland Railways, and the signalling equipment now in use on this heritage line reflects these historic associations.

Our conducted tour included the three operational boxes on the line, firstly at the present northern terminus at Parkend where the box is being equipped for full use here in the near future. This GWR box and frame came from Maesmawr on the Taff Vale main line. Here and

along the line we saw examples of lower quadrant semaphores of both GW and Midland provenance. Norchard, the organisational hub of the DFR, offered us much of interest, including the excellent museum and the outdoor exhibits area, each displaying items relating to signalling.

The GWR signal box and its frame, formerly at Mileage Yard next to Gloucester Central station, was brought into use here in 1996. A contrasting scene presented itself at Lydney Junction (S&W), with its spacious layout and LMR signalling. A timber Type 15 signal box, dating from 1970, oversees operations.

At the conclusion of our visit we gave a vote of thanks to our hosts, Roger and David, handing over a collection we had taken to help the ongoing S&T projects on the line. Our party greatly enjoyed the opportunity to visit and ride on this appealing preserved railway.

Membership, Steve Sharpe

This is my first annual report in the role of Membership Secretary (and Database Manager) for the society having taken over the role in a phased changeover from May through to September 2019. I must thank both Barry Bridges and Jerry Plane for their assistance through this process and recognise the work that they have done

over the preceding years.

This is a time of change in this role, some more obvious than others. Some members may have noticed the increased use of emails in communicating membership issues which has proved to be very useful in dealing with things quickly and efficiently. I would ask that if possible

members share their email address with us to aid in this process for the day to day operation of the society. This is separate from the process in place for the use of the societies emailing list which members need to specifically opt in to and is used for more general announcements and urgent broad based notices.

Last Spring in *SRS News 1* a "Recruit a Friend" campaign was announced which has not been overly successful with only one application which could be firmly attributed to this. Going forward I will be looking at this and other options to aid in our recruitment of new members and getting lapsed members to return to the fold.

Referring back to last year's report we ended 2018 with 665 members, although during the year we had 668 members but sadly recorded the passing of 3 members.

Moving to this current year we managed to reach the highest number of members the society has ever had with an aggregate for the year of 704. 701 members at the 31st December after the passing of 3 members recorded through the year.

We have had 67 new members join us in this year and 5 lapsed members re-join. The bulk of these joined through the website or used the website to create the form to then send to me, with 10 joining at events that we have attended and a few directly to my predecessors and myself.

I will not go into numbers of renewals for the upcoming 2020 year as a number in relation to the 1st

December deadline as there have been changes to the renewal notice system. A more valid assessment will possible next year when we have another set of data to compare against under the new time cycle.

At the time of writing this report in late January we had 11 members advise that they will not be renewing their membership for this coming year and 36 members who had yet to renew or notify that they will not be renewing.

The only other issue that I will touch on is the methods of payment that everyone is using to pay their membership fees. Many members still use standing orders, which is a perfectly acceptable method as long as people remember to revise their payment when we have a change in membership fees! The breakdown that I can identify is;

Cheque / Cash	- 36 %
PayPal	- 17 %
Standing Order / Bank Transfer	- 47 %

A lot of the members who pay by PayPal could possibly pay by BACS transfer instead and this would save the society money as we incur a cost for every transaction that goes through PayPal. The real benefits of using systems like PayPal is for our overseas members as bank transfer options are extremely expensive in comparison, and for initial entry to the society for new members as it is easy and immediate. We are looking into other options for payment and announcements will be made in due course.

Publications Co-ordinator, John Lacy

Lack of time has precluded much activity this year with the result that there is effectively nothing to report under this heading.

Research Co-ordinator, Reg Instone

The function of the Research Co-ordinator has many possible strands. In the widest sense, it engages with the Archive, exhibition displays, the "Record" and publication production with the object of ensuring that information about signalling is not only identified and collected but also converted into knowledge and disseminated to a wide audience.

Specific research projects assisted during 2019 have included ETS worldwide, GWR Staines branch signalling, Board of Trade inspection files generally, "Warning" arms on the LBSCR, GWR Lock & Block, lever collars, Bedford and Cambridge Railway and assisting with identifying the locations of photographs. Some of these have simply involved referring an enquiry to the correct expert, but others have been more complex, involving numerous repositories and sources or even fieldwork. I have also correlated some entries for the LT Signalbox Register, and am continually working on amplifications and corrections to all Registers.

This is addition to the work I do in connection with my own CM posts, which can sometimes get intermingled.

I am a member of LNWRs, MRS and GCRS and intend to join GWSG, as well as several signalling-related Facebook groups. I respond to items in each group and in the Journal of each society about signalling and operations, giving more information and/or showing where

to find it. I hope this helps to spread awareness of signalling research and the possibilities.

I have also made a start on developing an "information strategy" for the SRS. This seeks to identify practical and effective ways of managing and making the best use of the unrivalled resource of knowledge about signalling within the SRS, whether in the Archive, the personal collections of CMs or members generally. Opinions on this strategy and contributions to it are sought not only from trustees, researchers and CMs but also from members generally.

The enlarged Newsletter has created the opportunity to include items about research. So far I have contributed two, but none have yet been published due to lack of space!

I am keen to encourage more people to take an interest in signalling staff. It was remarked recently that many written works give the impression that railways functioned without any human intervention! Of course, this was, and is, far from the truth. Much information is available about pay, grading and hours of work, but in the main it needs analysing and decoding to reveal anything useful. Staff records can also tell us the opening and closing dates of boxes long ago, including short-lived ones, many of which are not accurately recorded elsewhere.

It might be pertinent to remark that I am also Staff

History Officer of the LNWRS. I intend to become a self-employed family history researcher when I leave Network Rail. I am also Locale Officer of Solihull CAMRA, and actively involved with Knowle Local History Society, Austin A35 Car Club and Silhillians RUFC.

Corresponding Members

It has been suggested that the role of the CM has

been affected by technological developments over recent decades, especially in electronic communications, and we may be missing out on opportunities. I have a long-standing brief from the Committee to look into this, which I will do when pressure of other commitments permits. In the meantime, all observations and suggestions on this point are most welcome.

Signalling Record & Member Publications, Francis Dalrymple-Hamilton, Michael Ellis & Richard Foster

2019 had been a momentous year for our member publications and the team that produce them with radical changes to the publications and a large increase in the quality and quantity of what we send out. All this has involved an immense amount of work by the team to set things up and produce the new material.

The most important and significant change has been to *The Signalling Record*. At the beginning of the year we changed the format to A4 and introduced a card cover with a coloured background, which gives our journal a much more striking and welcoming appearance. At the same time we did not want to make a complete break from the 'old' *Record* which had served the Society so well over the thirty years since the title was introduced at the beginning of 1987. The style of the cover has been retained with the same layout of title block, feature photograph and contents summary box, thus very neatly and effectively linking our old friend with the much improved internal layout and content. Photographs have been introduced on the back cover, providing a means of adding illustrations to an article where there is insufficient space inside.

Internally the page layouts have been completely revamped with a two column text layout to make best use of the larger page size and make it easier to read. More photographs and other illustrations have been introduced within the articles wherever possible to make articles more attractive. The changes have involved a lot of extra work; these things do not just happen, someone has to do things, and learn how to. We are learning all the time, and do not always get things right first time.

The larger page size has allowed us to include more signalling diagrams where appropriate. These were initially reproduced horizontally to fit with the orientation of the text and other illustrations. However, some comments were received that the numbering and labelling on some of the diagrams was too small. However, the quality of the printing is so good that the diagrams are perfectly sharp and if needed can be read with a magnifying glass. Such things are always something of a compromise between space taken and readability.

We have taken note of the point and with *Record* 196 we reproduced some of the longer diagrams vertically, allowing the diagram and the lettering to be a little larger. We welcome member's comments on this, and any other matters related to the layout and presentation of material in the *Record*. We are always willing to receive comments and learn!

A major consideration when planning the new look *Record* was the question of colour in the internal pages. Where original illustrations – photographs and diagrams –

are in colour, being able to reproduce them in colour considerably enhances the value and appearance of the articles, and particularly for diagrams and plans that are coloured. Although the cost of colour printing has decreased in recent years, the added cost of colour printing, compared to black and white, is still quite substantial and a significant issue for small societies like ours with limited resources. In the end it is a trade-off between number of pages and amount of colour content.

For historical articles much of the content will tend to be black and white with very little need for colour. As a result, printing all the pages in each journal in colour could be poor value, and it was determined that the best compromise would be, where possible, to print part of the content in black and part in colour. This does involve extra work for the production team, as the articles have to be specially arranged to fit into the appropriate sections of the journal. This approach is not always possible, but was adopted for *Records* 193 and 194. For *Record* 196 the colour material was too spread out to allow segregation and the whole issue had to be colour printed. *Record* 195 was specially enlarged to mark the start of material to celebrate the Society's half-century and included an additional 16 pages in colour, making that issue an impressive 52 pages.

When *The Signalling Record* was introduced in 1987 each issue was accompanied by a newsletter containing news, details of events and publications and material generally of passing interest. They usually consisted of two or four pages. Small newsletters are relatively expensive to produce and distribute and some years ago it was decided to discontinue the newsletter and incorporate the news in the *Record* itself. This had the advantage that everything was in the same place and the better paper and printing allowed photographs to be included. When the change was made it was intended that the number of pages in the *Record* would be increased to compensate for the loss of the newsletter. However, for some reason this did not happen and the *Record* remained the same size. As a result, the space available for articles was reduced. This became something of a problem in 2017 and 2018, with an increasing amount of news significantly reducing the space available for the other content.

With the changes planned for the *Record*, it was decided to introduce a new newsletter, *SRS News*, with a wider remit in order to allow both more space in the *Record* for signalling material and more space for news. The amount of material we have included in each issue of *SRS News* published in 2019 has come as something of a surprise. When the changes were planned it was expected that an average newsletter would be 8 pages. However, the

average for the year ended up at 16!

The first two issues of *SRS News* were printed on ordinary paper to minimize costs, but there was pressure to include photographs and there were concerns that photographs printed on the paper used could appear flat and muddy. Following discussions with the printers, they recommended a change to silk finish paper. This paper was used in *SRS News* No 3 which included photographs for the first time. The result was successful in achieving what we were looking for, and this quality of paper has been retained. The extra cost turned out to be about four pence a copy, which seems excellent value for money! The down sides of including photographs in *SRS News* has been the extra workload involved in laying out the pages, and the need for extra space.

For over forty years the Society has produced an annual list of *Signal Box Alterations* and issued these to members. As part of the review of our publications we took the opportunity to revamp this publication and include photographs for the first time. The new look *Signal Box Alterations* booklet covering 2018 was issued with the autumn mailing. With careful management and cost control, the cost of the enhanced 2018 booklet was a little less than for the 2017 edition!

These changes have meant that during 2019 we

issued about double the number of A4 equivalent pages compared to 2018 and an appreciable proportion has been in colour too! Members have received extremely good value for money. While there was a subscription rise at the end of the year, members will still be getting very good value for money, and much better than was the case in some previous years.

All these new and upgraded products do not just appear, they require a large amount of behind the scenes activity, and the workload of the editorial and production team has increased markedly. We would welcome additional help. If you think you could help in any way, even if it is only in a small way, please get in touch. The reward will be there for all to see in the quality and quantity of what we send out to members!

We do hope that members appreciate the additional information we are now providing and find the content of both the *Record* and *SRS News* interesting and informative – your comments welcome! The economics of printing mean that unit costs fall quite significantly as the number of copies printed rise, which gives the opportunity to do more within members' subscriptions. If you would like more colour content and more pages, a very good way to provide for this is to go out and recruit some more members!

Signal Box Registers, Chris Hall

I am pleased to report that I have now reached a watershed. All eleven volumes in the original series of eight planned in 2006 have now been started in some form.

Volume 8 (London Transport) has been published during 2019 and has been reprinted and the Combined Edition DVD updated to include it.

Volume 2 (Midland Railway) exists in draft form, complete with coloured maps but, as yet, no photographs and incomplete signal box and frame data. Stephen Courten is working on this.

Volume 7 (North Eastern) will include both NER and H&B and the coloured maps and cover have been produced. Detailed data is being worked on by NERA.

Volume 5A (LNWR South of Crewe and North Staffs) coloured maps and cover are being laid out and a skeleton draft is being worked upon. Paul Armstrong has volunteered to go through the detailed data for the North Staffordshire Railway prepared in 1998 by members of the SRS for any changes and Richard Foster to go through

similar data for LNWR (South).

Volume 5B (LNWR & Independent Railways North of Crewe) – many of the lines have been traced out so that coloured maps can be prepared. No volunteer has yet come forward to prepare the detailed data.

Volume 5C (Lancashire & Yorkshire) – many of the lines have been traced out so that coloured maps can be produced. Detailed data prepared in 1999 by the Signalling Study Group will need to be reviewed for changes since then and retyped.

Corrections to the published registers now extend to a 74 page corrigenda sheet last updated in July 2019.

There is a principal contact for each published register to follow up any further corrections which may be identified - keep these coming!

Online data from the published registers (those that have been in publication for more than two years) are kept up to date so only up-to-date corrected entries will be shown for individual signal box register entries (these are the same data as provided on the combined edition DVD).

Webmaster, John Lacy

In reality there is little of great note or new to report in respect of the web site itself. It is kept as up to date as I can between other tasks and early advice of events and news helps to keep the site current and of interest.

The web site continues to be the largest single generator of membership applications.

If you haven't looked lately take a look round the various sections of the web site and see what you can spot.

Overall usage of the web site has increased this year. The figures in more detail:

	2019	2018
Number of users	34,489	29,481
Page views	180,462	161,049

At the end of the year the Forum had 336 registered members up from 297 in 2018, not all of whom were active.

Please keep sending your notifications of events, meetings, items and news for inclusion. Details can be sent to me through the web site or by post. My contact details appear on the back page of *SRS News*.

Gift Aid Administration, John Lacy

For a number of reasons whilst sorting out declarations and records it did not prove possible to lodge a claim with HMRC during 2019.

However, the number of declarations signed is very encouraging and will enable two claims to be lodged during 2020. Thank you to everyone who has signed up and a thank you to Steve Sharpe who has spent

considerable time persuading members to do so.

We will also be claiming gift aid on the donations made to the Archive and by attendees at meetings. These donations come within the Small Donations regime and can be made without you needing to sign a declaration so there is every opportunity for members who do not pay tax to join in.

Treasurer, Francis Dalrymple-Hamilton

Financially 2019 has been a good year overall for the Society, which has seen the subscription income stabilise at more or less the same level that it was during 2018. By combining the good trading results with the higher than expected operating costs the result has been a moderate surplus, which needs to be considered in the light of our decision to improve the size of *The Signalling Record*, and print it in colour. As the colour printing

affected only part of the former year, this year has seen an increase in the cost of the *Record*, which the 2019 surplus suggests we are managing without undue stress, particularly as there will be benefits from becoming a charity which have accrued during 2019. It should be noted that future years will benefit from the increased subscription charge, as well as from an increased membership base.