



# The Friends of the National Railway Museum

Briefing 11

**South of England Group**  
Vice Presidents - Captain Bill Smith VRD, RNR; Alan Pegler

April 1998

## FNRM South of England Group 6th AGM 5 January 1998

About 45 Friends gathered at the South Eastern Training Centre for the New Year Social and AGM. This year we welcomed representatives from the Eastleigh Railway Preservation Society Ltd as guests and they gave us an update on the restoration progress on the engine (see item in next column).

Our chairman George Rutter gave a review of the past year's activities which included 5 evening meetings, an increase over previous years. Average attendance at these was 20 (we can easily cope with double this number, so don't be afraid to turn up because you believe we are full). Three issues of the *Briefing* were produced. Not many members attended the summer outing to Leighton Buzzard, so we are looking for something a little special this year. Sales turnover was lower than in 1996 but the latter was exceptional because of the Duchess outings on mainline. In 1997 there was no "Steam on the Met" which has, over the years, proved to be a very profitable event. Nevertheless there were 10 outings of the stand covering 17 days and producing an income of just over £2000. We look forward to increased activity this year, with the possibility of Green Arrow coming to the south and the reinstatement of "Steam on the Met". Our thanks go to Roy Bell who donated display equipment which has greatly improved the look of the stand; there has even been enough equipment to produce a second mini stand, which was used successfully at Old Warden. If double outings are repeated we will need more volunteers to help man the events - remember you get in to the event free if you help.

Our accounts are in a healthy state with a total of £7110 in funds. £5000 of this is committed to the Friends' general budget which will be used to match lottery funding allocated to various improvements at York. We also have £95 in the current account and about £2000 is held in stock. Elections were held for two committee posts; Roy Bell and George Rutter were both re-elected.

This year is the 21st anniversary of the FNRM and a number of special events are being organised. From March onwards there will be a photo exhibition at York of Friends activities. On 16th May there will be a dinner at York, with a celebrity speaker - see main Newsletter for details.

Philip Brown showed slides of the Group's activities during the previous year and Ian Harrison rounded off a very pleasant evening by setting a video quiz on railway topics - it's amazing how much you forget when faced with some obscure (and not so obscure) questions.

## "Lord Nelson" at Eastleigh

As a special objective, we will be helping raise cash to support the re-build of the NRM's "Lord Nelson", which is in the care of Eastleigh Railway Preservation Society (ERPS). At the AGM Keith Warner, Treasurer of the ERPS, and his colleagues gave an overview of the project.

Donations directly obtained by the ERPS so far amount to £1750 with a further £224 raised in sales. They aim to raise money via a painting of 828 and "Lord Nelson" at Portsmouth Harbour, by the artist Stephen Goddard. It is possible that prints and postcards will be made of this and/or an auction of the painting - we will keep you informed of developments. In addition, a range of merchandise has been developed to support the project. A specially designed mug has been produced by an ex-driver from Eastleigh. Badges have been produced which could nicely compliment our own series. Limited edition glass beer mugs which commemorate the move to Eastleigh are available from the ERPS. Sponsorship is being sought from local firms to help with the project. One useful contribution comes from Wessex Traincare, which is providing restoration facilities free of charge. Unfortunately, since public access to the rebuilding site is not possible they have not been able to register the exercise as a charitable activity, making the raising of finance even more difficult and our help all the more significant. Although raising money is always a challenge, the real problem, at present, is that the final bill is not known.

Jessie Moody, project leader, described the engineering activities. He noted that it was the late Harry Frith's dream to get "Lord Nelson" home to Eastleigh and restored to activity on the mainline. The NRM agreed. Previously the locomotive had been housed at Carnforth and was kept outside. It wasn't wanted there and the owners wanted it moved. Since there wasn't room at the NRM, the relocation to Eastleigh was welcomed by all concerned. Through the generosity of Andrew Goodman, the owner of Moveright International, it was transported free of charge. Already, its move has had a big impact in the local press and there is a lot of interest in its progress and the development of the associated transport heritage centre with all types of transport, be it rail, road, air and sea, but all locally produced.

Initial investigations have shown that the loco and tender are in a good mechanical state with the main problem being the boiler. There was great relief when it was confirmed that there is no asbestos on the locomotive, allowing a boiler lift to take place soon. Work is progressing with the aim of getting it back in service by the Millennium. The loan from NRM is for 10 years but they would like to extend for this if it proves possible.

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## The Summer Outing The Great Cockcrow Railway 28th June 1998

This year the summer outing for the Friends in the South of England will be to the Great Cockcrow Railway, Lyne, near Chertsey. The railway is an extensive 7¼ inch gauge line. It opened in 1968 and has been growing ever since. There are now two routes which typically take 15 to 20 minutes to traverse - so this is no small garden layout! Just to emphasise the point, the "branch" line goes through a tunnel and over a 45 ft viaduct. In addition, the line is fully signalled and operates to prototypical standards.

Our visit will take place on 28th June and will feature a special visit behind the scenes to see some of the signalling and other operations. The railway is easily accessible from the M25 and we will pick up from Chertsey Station, which has an hourly service from Waterloo. For details, please contact George Rutter - see address on rear.