



The Friends of the National Railway Museum

Web Page - <http://www.argonet.co.uk/users/mel.draper/index.html>

Briefing 13

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

December 1998

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our Annual General Meeting takes place on 11 January at the usual place, the South Eastern Career Development Centre (see rear for the map). As usual, the formal arrangements will be followed by a social evening with an opportunity to meet and discuss our activities over the last year (or any other topics you fancy). There may well be a repeat of that test of your railway knowledge, the Ian Harrison video quiz - so start swotting up now. Festive refreshments are provided. If you wish to attend please send a cheque for £6 to George Rutter - address overleaf. This is the same amount as last year. In return, you will be sent a ticket around the turn of the New Year, so don't worry too much if nothing appears for a while. However, if nothing has appeared by Saturday 9th January, give either George or myself a ring.

There is, of course, no charge should you only want to attend the AGM, but we would be grateful for advance notification of your attendance. This will make sure that you get through the door relatively easily!

During this year's AGM the terms of appointment of Ian Harrison and Alan Gosling to the committee come to an end, although they will both be standing for re-election. If anyone wishes to join the committee please contact George.

VISIT TO St PANCRAS CHAMBERS

As you may have read in the main FNRM Review, on 8th October 1998 a group of Friends took part in a guided tour of St Pancras Chambers, previously the old Midland Grand Hotel. This had been originated by John Coiley before his untimely death. The report in the Review gives a word picture of the tour, but I thought you might like to see some of photographs of the impressive interior - see next column.

These photographs are, of course, of the building in its present state. Because of its pretegiuous nature, it was the subject of many official photographs. However, Calum Rollo, the official guide, is aware that only a small fraction of the photographs known to have been taken are actually available from the main record centres, including the NRM. He therefore extends a call to anyone who can provide any details of photographs or, indeed, anything which casts light on the Hotel's past. If you know of any records, please let him know, care of St Pancras Chambers, Euston Road, or contact me and I will put you in touch.

A repeat of our tour has been booked for the Friends on Friday, 26th March, starting at 11 am. The cost will be £9 per head. For further details please send a self-addressed stamped envelope to George Rutter.

Roof of the Grand Staircase following extensive restoration of the panels

Arches on second floor balcony of the Grand Staircase

One of the main guest suites on the second floor

Plans for the Summer Outing 1999

It may be nearly mid-winter, but the thoughts of the committee are turning to next Summer and the annual outing. Last year we went to a miniature railway in the form of the Great Cockcrow Railway. This year we are considering a visit to the full size version.

The idea is to attend the Mid-Hants Railway for both a trip behind the scenes and lunch on board the dining train. Obviously there will be a charge to cover the meal which will probably be around £20 to £25 per head; the actual amount will depend on how many wish to come along,

since we will be seeking some group discounts. We will also need to book well in advance, as these trains are very popular.

To assist us in planning the visit, it would help if you could let George Rutter know, by the end of January, whether you wish to attend, how many there will be in your party and dates (Sundays only) during May, June and July when you could attend. Assuming we get enough interest, we will let you know towards the end of February whether the visit is on and, if so, on which day it will take place.