



## LOCKDOWN SMOKESTACK



Long before Lockdown last year your President was at a light rail meeting in London Docklands. Here is one of the driverless trains the system is famous for.

*April 2020*

**This is our emergency issue in the absence of RI Convention in Hawaii and any other Rotary meetings other than by electronic means.**

I thought it was time we put out another Smokestack. The Board thought so too. All Rotarians will be aware we live in what the Chinese would call “interesting times” and, as a result, we are unable to meet even our local friends and colleagues, let alone attend any kind of Convention. As a result, all is going to have to be by email, with Board meetings by such as Zoom or Skype.

**PLEASE CONTACT US IF YOU HAVE ANY NEWS RELEVANT TO IFRR AND RAILROADING IN GENERAL. THE BOARD IS ALL TO WELL AWARE THAT ANY RAILROAD ATTRACTIONS ARE AT THE MOMENT CLOSED AND THERE IS LITTLE CURRENT TO REPORT. ANYTHING HISTORIC WOULD BE A WELCOME ADDITION.**

**BOARD MEETING**

**10.00PM LONDON TIME on Tuesday April 21<sup>st</sup>**

**Contact via Zoom**

Officers managed to make this Zoom meeting at the time above. Inevitably it was somewhat informal. For two of us, myself and Treasurer John Evans it was 10pm but for Curtis Reinhardt a fairly civilized 2pm but for Bruce McNaught it was 7am! The best we could do worldwide.

We had a short discussion under the headings of President’s remarks, thanks to the officers, upgrading the database, finances (as a no dues Fellowship these are fairly easy!) and once again the rejection of pin badges at present. More important was the discussion of the need for contributions to our rather irregular information sheet Smokestack, which has resulted in a really marvelous response as I hope members will agree when reading on. We thought about future Conventions, but these are an unknown quantity as I write.

The core of the discussion was under the heading of election of Officers. For the time being the present officers were willing to continue in post. We all hope that that members are happy with this. Please let us know if you are thinking of a change!

*President:*

*Robert Bracegirdle (U.K.)*

*Treasurer:*

*John F. Evans (U.K.)*

*Vice President Excursions and Database Management:*

*Bruce H. McNaught (Australia)*

*Vice President:*

*Curtis B. Reinhardt (U.S.A.)*

IFRR Board in lockdown mood  
President Robert top left then as listed ANTI Clockwise!



The rest of our meeting was a general discussion on what should be in this Smokestack issue and how Board members could contribute. Some of that discussion should become clear as you read on.

### CURRENT NEWS

Well on to what we have in the way of pictures and comments, mainly from the Board but also just some general input. President's rights to start off with a nod to the USA members but from his own Model Railway Club in north west England.



Another touch of Americana Railroading for the IFRR members across that pond. Latest building for the new ON3 layout from the **Macclesfield Model Railway Group**, whose exhibition in March was the last in Britain before lockdown. Your President was involved and survived without catching anything.

That's enough from me. Our Database officer Bruce McNaught also dabbles in his spare time (spare time!) as District 9600 Foundation Polio Committee Chair (he is Secretary of his Rotary Club as well as many other activities). On 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2019, the Rotary Districts in both Brisbane and Sydney each conducted a train ride for polio. Rotarians from all around the cities joined the trains at their local stations and rode around wearing polio tee shirts. Most clubs used the occasion to make donations and pledges to Polio Plus. The Sydney rail network is basically "U" shaped, but Brisbane's is more star shaped. A lot of members were able to join a train and travel to the terminus and then ride back home. The things we did before lockdown.



That really does tell railroad commuters what Rotary is all about. We hope they didn't keep other passengers off the trains! Some of these people could actually be enjoying themselves.



Bruce tells us that railway travel in Queensland has always been pretty good.



The rail network first became electrified in 1979 and the entire network was completed just in time for World Expo 1988. The system uses 25KV overhead AC feed. The single-phase track supply is derived from a three-phase support distribution.

Thyristor controlled Static VAR compensators are located at strategic parts of the network to ensure balance on the phases. The use of such a high voltage is not without problems but the distances involved in the Queensland are greater than most rail networks in the world and using a high voltage system greatly reduces cost.

The New Generation Rollingstock (NGR) is a class of electric multiple units manufactured by Bombardier Transportation in Savli, India for the Queensland RailCity network that first entered service in December 2017 and this year all 75 trains are now in service. The NGR trains are beautiful. They are quiet, fast and comfortable.

Queensland has 8146 Km of the 1067 mm (3 ft 6 in) Narrow gauge track. Each state of Australia decided what gauge that they would use before the country federated in 1901. The differences in gauges between the states has been an ongoing debate in this country ever since. (Robert can vouch for this, having worked in Melbourne in the 1980s and watched the 5'3"/4'8½" change at Victoria/New South Wales border and the building of a separate standard gauge line to Melbourne. As a man with an Irish grandmother he can understand the Irish/British split!).

Modern train on an Irish narrow gauge (no Irish track was as good as this Coming back home, John Evans, our overworked Treasurer, comments on his East Anglian connections.



**Heritage Railway assists Rail Operator**



The Mid - Norfolk heritage railway in England is fortunate to have a direct link at Sheringham, near Cromer, to the national rail network. This has been very useful for Rail operator, Greater Anglia (owned by the Dutch Railways), which needed to store new 12 coach trains, prior to introduction to service, between London and Norwich. The heritage railway was able to help and constructed new sidings to store some new stock. These sidings will thereafter be used by the heritage railway for their own use. As with most other attractions of this nature the Railway has been closed due to lockdown for the time being.

<https://www.nnrailway.co.uk>

John is not one to stay at home, except on lockdown, and also comments on a trip to New Zealand.

He had the opportunity to ride the Northern Explorer train in February 2020 from Wellington to Auckland. The journey took 11 hours and the scenery was magnificent. The 680 kilometre journey runs three times a week in each direction.

There is an observation car at the rear, but, as it is open sided, with no windows, it can be rather draughty. (Robert can vouch for this as he has also done the trip – after RI Convention in Sydney and being June midwinter in the Antipodes).

Wheeled luggage travels in a separate baggage car - there is officially a one item per passenger, but this was luckily not enforced.

The buffet closes at each station stop, as the staff attend to loading and unloading luggage. Altogether a memorable experience. Must try the lines on the South Island another time.

John says, "Sorry that I have no pictures from my NZ expedition."

No worries John – the President obliges with his post RI Convention visit in 2014!



**John adds**

**something from his interest regarding Rotary on Stamps**

One of the other successful Fellowships is Rotary on Stamps, which exists to promote, and report, on philatelic material that commemorates Rotary International, its Districts and Clubs. A comprehensive bulletin is issued every two months, to keep members updated. Unfortunately, some Postal Services, including USA and U.K., will not issue stamps commemorating Rotary. The USA did issue a stamp in 1955, to mark our 50th anniversary, but will no longer do so. The offshore islands of Jersey and Isle of Man have however been more cooperative and have issued stamps in recent years.

Further information may be found on [www.rotaryonstamps.org](http://www.rotaryonstamps.org)

Whilst I naturally collect Rotary related material, my other philatelic interests include railroads, trams and buses, rather than collecting by country.

*John Evans*

Member Jamie Foster emailed via Curtis a whole pageworth of news. I'm sorry but my difficulties at home with a relative seriously ill with Covid-19 made me miss the timeline for the online treats but I add some of the news to encourage IFRR members once the virus emergency is in retreat.



## FREE Online Railroad Photo/Art Conference

Saturday, April 18, 2020

Something you could have done but should no doubt book for next year...

# CRP&A | CENTER FOR RAILROAD PHOTOGRAPHY & ART

For the first time ever, the [Center for Railroad Photography and Art](#) (CRP&A) hosted their annual conference online, and FREE on Saturday, April 18, 2020 from 9:30am to 5:00pm Central Time. From the CRP&A website:

"The Center, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit arts and education organization, achieves its mission through exhibitions, conferences, and publications that spring from its core commitment to collect, preserve, and then make widely available imagery that portrays the nearly 200-year history of railroads. While based in Madison, Wisconsin, the Center does not maintain a museum space or large facilities, but instead collaborates on its many projects with individuals and institutions ranging from museums and universities to libraries and historical societies. This approach allows the Center to focus on railroad imagery and the profound and moving stories it can tell." "The Center's annual spring conference, *Conversations*, has been held annually since 2003 and sold out for the past three years. The much-anticipated gathering at Lake Forest College has attracted hundreds to hear renowned presenters as well as to meet and develop relationships with those who share an expertise and interest in railroad imagery and its significance."

This year the conference was named "Virtual Conversations." Here's a [YouTube welcome to this year's online conference](#) by Scott Lothes, CRP&A's President and Executive Director.

CRP&A on: [FLICKR](#) | [Wikipedia](#) | [YouTube](#)

Something we are in time for is the Central Coast Railroad Festival (CCRRF) October 2-4, 2020

If you'd like to participate in any way, please [Contact](#) direct. Check the [Schedule page](#) to see how the line-up is developing.

## Participants and Sponsors

These folks have already committed to the 2020 Festival:

- [CoastRail 2020](#) will be at the SLO Railroad Museum on Friday, October 2, 2020 from 4pm to 9pm. An evening of railroad photography and videography presentations, and some pizza. \$
- [Railroad BBQ](#) will be at the SLO Railroad Museum
- [Oxford Suites](#): Pismo Beach and Paso Robles
- [Lamplighter Inn & Suites, SLO](#)
- Bob Chaparro and the [Model Railroads of Southern California](#) return to organize the Model Railroad Layout Tour (see photos from last year's: [Indoor](#) and [Outdoor](#)).
- Railroad Story Times at [SLO Library](#) locations
- [Santa Maria Valley Railroad](#)

CoastRail 2020

A new CCRRF event at SLO Railroad Museum! CoastRail will be an opportunity for photographers and videographers to share their work related to railroading. This year's first effort will include four hours of presentations with a pizza party break in the middle. The 2020 theme is Vintage Trains. Friday, October 2, 2020, 4pm-9pm. Tickets are very limited. [Details](#).

### Modeling Clinics

As soon as the COVID-19 situation abates, these modeling clinics will resume every fourth Saturday at the SLO Railroad Museum. Watch [here](#) for details.

### Art After Dark

Art After Dark is currently scheduled for August 7, 2020 at the SLO Railroad Museum (see [last year's](#)). It's a fun evening to see works of invited artists, enjoy some refreshments, and enjoy each other. And admission is free. Of course, this assumes we're "back to normal" from the COVID-19 stuff.

### Area Railroading Opportunities

There's a plethora of railroading going on in our area (broadly speaking, in some cases). Check out this [Index of Area Railroading](#). Be sure to check with any of interest to you to verify their COVID-19 status.

Do you have a Central Coast railroad event to add to our next broadcast email? Email it to: [addevent@ccrrf.com](mailto:addevent@ccrrf.com). More details from Jamie at [wjamiefoster@gmail.com](mailto:wjamiefoster@gmail.com)

*Your President says "That's a load of things I'd love to be at – just need some way out of this lockdown and a Star Trek "Beam me up there Scottie" machine"*

*And a little news from the Toronto Railway Museum  
who stay in touch with us since our visit there at the RI Convention in Toronto.*

### **Coming Soon: Uncovering Union**

We have some exciting news! On April 20 we'll be launching our new online exhibit, Uncovering Union.

Created in collaboration with Master of Museum Studies candidates from the Faculty of Information at the University of Toronto, Uncovering Union delves into nine stories related to Toronto's iconic train station. Check back for the link to visit virtually.

There's lots more news from them and they'd love to hear from you we are sure, especially in these lockdown days that keeps them closed like everyone else in this field. They can be reached at:

**Toronto Railway Museum**  
255 Bremner Blvd., Stall 17  
Toronto, ON M5V 3M9  
416-214-9229  
Email: [manager@trha.ca](mailto:manager@trha.ca)



I'm sure that I could think up more to include but it would become one sided to UK Railways and I would insist on calling them railway stations not train stations too. What I am grateful for is the amount of contributions the Board and other members have made to this issue of Smokestack. If you like it then please send more information to me and I and the rest of the Board will do our best to get another issue out over the late summer when we all hope we will be trying to get back to post-viral normal.

In the meantime, John Evans made a point of his interest in the Fellowship of rotary on Stamps. This motivates me to remind all our readers to look into this and other fellowships in Rotary.

**Rotary Fellowships** are international groups that share a common passion. Being part of a **fellowship** is a fun way to make friends around the world, explore a hobby or profession, and enhance your **Rotary** experience. Both Curtis and I are members of the Fellowship of Rotary Musicians and have great fun singing at Conventions and now, via Zoom, almost every Sunday at 1800hrs London time! More details of this from [chair@ifrm.org](mailto:chair@ifrm.org) or at the IFRM website <https://ifrm.org>. Others can be found on the [My Rotary](#) site. Classic cars, Whisky, Beer, cycling etc etc. are represented. They are all a fine way of getting to know Rotarians around the world and sharing experiences outside the Fellowship as well.



Long before Lockdown too these would be perfect for the classic cars Fellowship. trolleybus or trolleycoach from Manchester The back one is a Triumph TR6 and is your President's. One item in the transport museum I volunteer in.



Oh no. Railless. A

And finally! One from Bruce again



Railroading Rotarians in action at

Gympie. First station. 5am.

Let us know your interests and how you want the IFRR to continue. We would all love to hear from you.

*Robert Bracegirdle  
President IFRR*

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