



Smokestack - Fall 2017

The journal of the
International
Fellowship of
Railroading Rotarians



Greetings IFRR Members!

This Fall 2017 Smokestack is packed full of interesting information for you including a message from our new President Bob Bracegirdle, updates on possible group excursions and activities, and requests for your input, participation and updated information.

Or Autumn depending on where you live. 🌍



* Greetings from our new President Bob!

September 2017

Greetings to IFRR members and all Rotarian Fans of Railways - sorry Railroading. I must get used to the fact we are separated by a common language!

You have a new President and for once he is British. Perhaps you can guess that from the photo at the head of the page - such a small loco and such small freight cars.

Well, I'd better introduce myself. I am Bob Bracegirdle and I have been a Rotarian since 1992. Most of my time was spent in D-1070 in the Coalville and Loughborough Beacon Clubs (with a short two year break in East Fife, Scotland) and I'm a past-President of Loughborough Beacon and past Assistant Governor in D-1070. I am also a Paul Harris Fellow.



My wife Joyce sadly passed away from Pancreatic Cancer over 4 years ago and after a more than difficult time I've re-met Enid, a lady I knew at University 50 years ago (!) also on her own. We were married last April and as Enid has a disabled elder sister in a protected home in the north west of England we decided together that we would set up home in my birth town of Macclesfield, some 20 miles south of Manchester. We have both returned to our roots and I have joined Macclesfield Castle Rotary Club in D-1285. Already I am chairing the International Committee - always hard to avoid responsibility in Rotary. So I'm a new boy in IFRR and in D-1285.

I've been interested in public transport, especially its history, for much longer than I've been in Rotary. I started out, like many boys, trainspotting and collecting engine numbers. This developed into an interest in railway history, railway routes and operations. This blossomed into an interest in trams (streetcars to many of you) trolleybuses, and even the ubiquitous bus, so much so that I once restored a 1949 single deck 35 seater in the garden. That vehicle still exists.

My railway and tramway interests were made more immediate by the savage reductions and closures we experienced in the UK in the 1960s and 70s. Many of these now appear foolish in the extreme as the renaissance in rail travel means we are very short of capacity. Thus the current scene is also of interest.

My "overseas" interests encompass Australia?New Zealand, Belgium (where like many others I almost worship the Vicinal meter gauge lines), and USA Streetcars, especially the modern PCC car. Toronto will feel like I've gone to Heaven - streetcars with old fashioned trolley poles!

This is my background but here I am taking responsibility for the whole world of Rotarian Railroaders. There will be a steepish learning curve for much of the rail infrastructure outside the UK and I shall need all the help I can get from members. We have to appeal to the railway interest all over the world not just our backyard. We also want to recruit new members who will take part in our interests and activities and bring new ideas to the group as well. This can be achieved with more publicity which includes (we hope) a booth at Convention but more so with a continued production of Smokestack where I trust we can gain contributions from as many areas of the world as possible.

Let's move forward!

I hope to meet many of you in Toronto. Until then, feel free to email or write with your ideas and comments.

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*** Vice President PP Bruce McNaught PHF discusses future IFRR excursions around the world!**

G'day to all the Railroading Rotarians.

Your IFRR committee sees one of the main purposes of this fellowship as a way for members to enjoy some of the wonderful railway journeys that are available throughout the world. The USA, Canada, the UK and Australia all offer some fantastic experiences just waiting to be explored. My goal is to fill a couple of cars with Rowdy Rambunctious Railroading Rotarians all enjoying a wonderful experience together as we travel over an iconic railway together somewhere in the world. By traveling as a large group, we will explore any options for group discount that may be available.



I need your help!

Members are asked to send me their suggestions on where they would like the next excursion to be conducted. Please email me with the following information so that I can collate it and come back with a recommendation in the next *Smokestack*:

- Your Name
- Your Email Address
- Country that you would like to visit
- The railway journey that you would like to do (this is optional)

I really look forward to spending a few days of fellowship with as many of you as possible as we journey together.

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*** Toronto IFRR members Don Bell and David Libby have suggestions for IFRR 2018 RI Convention Activities in and around Toronto.....**

Don and David want to set up some activities for IFRR members attending next year's convention in Toronto. Please communicate directly with Don (dongbell@sympatico.ca) with your feedback and interest in the below possibilities. Please also let him know if you have other suggestions or would like to help with the planning. Don will then consolidate your responses for posting and consideration on the website and in future Smokestacks.

- a. Visit the control centre for the GO (Metrolinx) system
- b. Visit the displays at the roundhouse in downtown Toronto
- c. Credit Valley Explorer. A lunch or dinner trip from Orangeville to Brampton and return (3hours includes a meal.)
- d. The Waterloo Central Railway, if steam was running, allows time in St Jacobs
- e. If interested in model railways ...the Black Panther set up is good and extensive.
- f. If we wanted a speaker for a breakout session we could get the head of the Toronto Transit Commission who spoke to Don's Club recently. Maybe we could set up a visit or something to do with the Crosslink as well.

They are also checking out the possibility of holding the annual meeting in a caboose located in a museum across the street from the convention centre!

*** Have you looked at your IFRR Website lately? (<http://www.ifrr.info>)**

Thanks to our webmaster Jamie Foster for creating our website several years ago and for continuing to update it when necessary. Please give VP Curtis Reinhardt (curtis@curtisreinhardt.com) your suggestions for additional content or suggested changes to the website. (We recently updated all the content and contact information.) **We also want to your solicit articles and photos for the "Sharing" section.** (Check out the historical Smokestacks that have recently been posted on the Sharing page!)

*** IFRR now has a Facebook page! Give new member Dustin Buck your feedback.**

Check out the new IFRR Facebook page that Dustin has set up for our Fellowship. Please start interacting and posting on our page. This page offers a great platform for us to stay in touch quickly and easily and share information. Email Dustin (dustinbuck68@yahoo.com) with your ideas for additional content for the page.

*** Attention pre 2017 Atlanta Convention IFRR Members: Your info is requested!**

If you were an IFRR member prior to June, 2017, we would like to collect more contact and rail interest information from you for our new D-Base. For many of our "older" members we know nothing more about you than your name and email address! Please fill out our "new" member application form on our website and email the information to Bruce. (<http://www.ifrr.info/application.html>) Please indicate to Bruce that you are an existing member.