

## Chairman's Report to the AGM 2021

The 12 months since our last AGM has been something of a rollercoaster for our Society. This time last year we were celebrating a rather successful summer and, in particular, the very welcome grant received from the Lottery which was also had benefit to another business by supporting the local vintage bus service operation to link Haworth Village with Ingrow yard and which certainly added footfall to our museums. Our Finance Director David Guest will elaborate shortly on our financial position.

In the autumn we faced another lockdown, with the museum once again forced to close. Whilst we again placed our Duty Officers on furlough we made the clear decision that we needed a presence at Ingrow and kept our Learning and Community Engagement Manager in post throughout the autumn, winter, and early spring seasons. We re-opened the Museum in early summer and returned our Duty Officers to work to open the museum.

The visitor numbers have steadily picked-up through the summer and autumn. On many days there was better footfall than in 2019, and we have just finished a very successful week with an excellent number of visitors during half-term to enjoy the KWVR Dinosaur event. Also encouraging has been the enthusiastic return of schools to take up our education offer.

We have received welcome grants from Bradford Council, Museum Development Yorkshire, and the Association of Independent Museums who financially have helped out with highlighting better ways of conserving our collection and archive. We have also been working with Bradford Council on a number of new initiatives, and from 15th January 2022 our Learning Coach will host the Local Councillors Advice Bureau. It is also to be used as a Polling Station in future Elections. We have also been supporting the Bradford City of Culture 2025 bid, which has successfully passed the first hurdle and is through to the second round shortlist of eight city bids and, 13th November, our Learning Coach will be used for a consultation meeting with local residents as to how they can become involved in the next stage of the bidding process.

Without a doubt 2021 has been the year to see 45596 *Bahamas* return to the mainline with gusto. For most of the summer, *Bahamas* has been based at Southall to undertake a series of excursions from London, all of which has been new territory for our locomotive. The first trip in July, on the hottest day of the year, was indeed challenging for our support crew who have been tremendous in their dedication in not only turning up to service *Bahamas* but keeping the locomotive immaculate, which has been comment everywhere 45596 has been seen. That first trip also saw the High Commissioner of The Bahamas join us and he was blown away with his enthusiasm for the loco and has even joined the Society as a member. He is hoping 45596 will have a part to play in the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham so to promote the Bahamas team who will be competing in the games.

As well as the mainline excursions, *Bahamas* visited the Nene Valley Railway in August, which included their Bank Holiday Gala. We have made many new friends both at the Nene Valley and from the passengers who have enjoyed riding behind our loco, and we have had quite a good number of new members join us with some new young blood for our support team.

*Bahamas* has also been active on the KWVR and was used during the Beer Festival Weekend, as well as operating today for our AGM. But the most thrilling news must be the part it played as the star of the Railway Children film sequel 'The Railway Children Return'. This stars Jenny Agutter again, along with Sheridan Smith and Tom Courtney. The film is set in the Second World War with the children being evacuated. None of the locomotives from the original film appear and, apart from *Bahamas*, only the KWVR's 4F and S160 take part. So, *Bahamas* is very much a star, but is a little dirtier than we would expect and bears the LMS number 5596 with LMS on the tender. The film is due to be launched in Keighley on 1st April and we certainly can expect some real marketing opportunities for our pride and joy.

Work on the Coal Tank has continued and we are expecting that 1054 will play a major part in the event next year to celebrate the merger of the L&Y and LNWR in 1922. Our crane has also been in action helping the KWVR with work on the replacement of Bridge 11 at Ingrow and also the boiler lift of the 'Ironclad' in Haworth Yard. James, our diesel, looks very splendid in its new coat of green paint.

It only remains for me on your behalf to thank the Directors for their work over the last 12 months, our locomotive support team for their care of *Bahamas*, to our sales team for their sterling ability on both the mainline and at the Nene Valley, to our staff for all that they do, and to all of you for the support given to me.

Keith Whitmore  
Chairman