Secretary’s report 2021

I sure everyone is familiar with the saying ‘’Every cloud has a silver lining’’ and this is certainly true as far as the club is concerned. It may have been a poor year as far as layout building and exhibitions have been concerned with two lockdowns since last March, but the club has flourished, with another two generous grants being awarded to us, on top of the one we had received prior to the last AGM. These have offset the loss of earning from the four cancelled exhibitions, two Abingdons and two Didcots. We had hoped that this year’s Didcot show would have been a possibility, but the NHS has retained the Civic Hall for vaccinations, alongside this, the Civic Hall has raised their charges to over a £1000 for the day’s hire, this is just too much, we could never have sustained that cost even with pre covid exhibition numbers. Despite the best efforts there does not appear to be another suitable venue in Didcot, so sadly it would appear that we won’t be returning to Didcot anytime soon.

It is now even more important to attract new members and it may surprise you to know that throughout the lockdowns we have continued to receive visit requests from potential new members. Hence the reason for the open day on Sunday the 12th. I do hope as many of you will make an effort to be there to show off what we do and our refurbished premises.

The committee has continued to meet on Zoom with five meetings since the beginning of the year and I have tried my best to keep everyone up to date with our ‘goings on’. We have, as everyone is aware, started the building maintenance and upgrade programme which is progressing well, this being made easier by the monies we have received.

I do hope that as many of you as possible will make the effort to attend our AGM, which this year is being held ‘off site’ for social distancing reasons.

I would like to thank the committee for their active support. With especial thanks to Bill Marnane who has acted as chairman of the committee throughout the lockdown, because Eric has been unable to attend meetings. Also, Trevor who has seamlessly taken over the financial dealings of the club, Chris Nutman who works behind the scenes ensuring that we receive something back from the Tax man through gift aid, and Fraser who has ‘stage managed’ all our Zoom meetings since the lockdown commenced and ensured the website is up to date. It is really reassuring to have such commitment within the club to ensure its smooth running.

One other outstanding thank you goes to Chris Maycock who has cajoled us into action by producing a very concise Maintenance plan and has energised us all to put it into action. Not only should we thank him, but he is the catalyst who is ensuring the club premises will continue to be fit for purpose for the generations of modellers that will follow us through the doors.

Peter Hunt,

Secretary 2021