

January 2018

Hello and a somewhat belated happy new year to all readers. I know it's a. not long since the last newsletter and b. not long till the convention but there is some important news from Neil Lancaster which will not wait till then. He writes:-

N-Trak UK Convention Confirmed

I am pleased to confirm that we have now reached the required number of Bookings to allow the Bournemouth Convention to take place in March next year. Well done everyone. This will be our 23rd Convention which all started in Staines in 1995, before moving on to Torquay and then various locations in and around Bournemouth. This is the 9th appearance at the Trouville Hotel.

By way of acknowledgement I have received bookings from (no. of party in brackets): Summers (2); Snelling (2); White (2); Quick (1); Hamilton Turner (2); Wilson (2); Franklin (2); Burns (2); Kauffman (1); Starmans (2); Lancaster (1); Cross (2); Cook (2); Smith (2); Jewiss (2); Owen (3); Parkinson (2); Wood (1); Johnson (2); Carnaby (2); Dickinson (2). This gives us to date, 39 bookings.

I have also received a telephone call from Rex in the last few days and he confirmed that he and his lovely wife will also be in attendance.

Late bookings should be made directly with the hotel. The telephone number of the hotel is 01202 552262. May I also remind members who wish to make payment with a credit card, to make payment immediately, if they haven't already.

Now that the organisation of the 2018 Convention has been safely put to bed I must now consider my position in the above post. It will not come as a surprise to many of you that due to a number of issues in my life (primarily health related), I think it is now time to step down and look for a new NTrak UK Co-ordinator.

If we are to continue therefore we must find a replacement as soon as possible, particularly if we are to achieve a smooth transition.

As you would expect, I have done a lot of arm twisting to seek out a replacement. In doing so I have managed to persuade Russ Cook to come out of retirement and take over from me.

In my view this is a good fit. Russ is already involved in organising the

raffle and has been involved with the group since its first Convention at Staines in 1995.

His position will of course need to be ratified at our AGM(!) held during the convention (in case anyone else comes forward), but in the meantime, I intend to pass on the reins to Russ. However, if you have any specific queries on your booking etc then please continue to contact me.

My email address is lancasterlan55@gmail.com

Neil

I think that this is an appropriate place to thank Neil for all he has done for N-Trak over the past years, taking up the reins when David Balham passed away and keeping us on track since then despite his own considerable health problems and a foray into Hon3!

I would second Neil's remarks that Russ is an excellent nominee, but this is a democratic organisation, and if any one else would like to take over this position he/she should make their position known to Neil before the AGM on the Saturday afternoon of the convention so that due process can be followed.

Miniatur Wunderland – A Follow Up

In the last issue I published a lengthy piece from Bill Hamilton-Turner about this major attraction in Hamburg, Germany. Just before Christmas Christine and I were fortunate enough to visit Hamburg ourselves and of course had to

take in Miniatur Wunderland. All I can really say is that Bill's article doesn't really do it justice! For a start the place is vast, spread over three floors of one of the old warehouses in Hamburg's dockland (actually quite close to the city centre).

The standard of modelling is superb, despite some of the obvious geographic compromises (I don't think Bryce Canyon runs into the Grand Canyon!) and everything just runs, and runs, and runs – seemingly by magic. It was fascinating standing by the airport scene, watching a 747 be towed out of a hanger, taxi along the hardstanding and taxiways to the end of the runway, turn, accelerate and take off through the wall – complete with sound effects.

All I can say is – if you get a chance – GO! Even the restaurant is quite good. One tip though – buy your entrance ticket online before travelling. That way you'll be able to select your entry time and jump the queues at the cash desk, which can get up to an hour long during holidays.

See you all in Bournemouth

Ralph