



Newsletter



Welcome our new CEO, Claire Houghton

I am delighted to be the new CEO of RBF, having joined the charity in April. The railway industry is new to me; having worked previously with national cancer charity Myeloma UK and with a hospice in Cheshire before that. I've worked for many years in the charity sector but 'rail' is something I am very excited to learn more about.

Since lockdown began, the RBF team have made great efforts to continue working flexibly and remotely just like so many of you across the UK. I am proud to say, we are very much open for business and here to support the UK Railway Family through the pandemic.

As someone entering the industry, I can already see how much you support each other. Many of you have told us that you see 'rail' as one big family and you demonstrate this everyday through your passion for each other's welfare and huge pride in what you do. We feel privileged to be part of the family and to be here for people going through tough times.

RBF has seen a surge in demand for services during the crisis, with more applications for support than ever. Our app and legal advice line have been very popular, enabling free access to specialist guidance on many of the issues of concern to families during this time. Our website has attracted a huge number of visitors, all looking for information on just how RBF can help.

You will all be aware that these testing times have had a devastating impact on so many charities across the UK, all of whom rely on events and donations to generate crucial funding in order to keep going. The RBF is no exception; as a registered charity, we are solely reliant on fundraising to keep providing support to the people who need us most. Our rail community has always been incredibly supportive and now more than ever, we need your help. My ask of you is that if you can consider supporting us at this difficult time, please do. There are more details on this later in this newsletter.

I am very much here to enable RBF to respond to your needs and to continue supporting Railway men and women.



If you would like to say hello, or talk to me about what you think RBF could do for the industry, do drop me a line. For now, I hope you are staying safe and well and let's hope for a speedy recovery nationwide, with huge thanks to all of those keeping Britain moving.

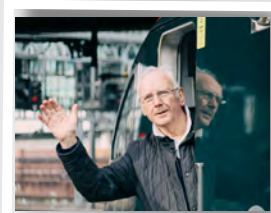
choughton@railwaybenefitfund.org.uk

Claire

President's Update

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2020 and my goodness what a year it has been already and what unusual times to be bringing this to you! Hope you are all keeping safe and looking after each other - more than ever, it's so important that we are here for the Railway Family and showing our support.

Here is a flavour of what's been happening since the last newsletter.



Our Annual Dinner, at Crewe Hall, was a great success with over 200 people enjoying a glamorous night of gin and jazz.

I've entertained prize winners and supporters at the X Factor: The Band, live shows and final.

We had an amazing evening at the RIA Annual Dinner where I was the Master of Ceremonies and hosted the fundraising as their charity of the year.

The #MeetPete roadshow headed to Derby in March, where we spent some time with our Friends at EMR and Porterbrook.

Little did we know that this would be the last trip out before Covid-19 and that life as we know it would face some huge changes and challenges.

We have had to cancel numerous fundraising and networking events but hope they will back bigger and better next year!

However, we have had some lockdown successes such as our virtual Rail Quiz Night with our friends at YRP and our Heart of Gold Awards.

Our Covid-19 Support Appeal has been well supported enabling us to meet the increased demand during these difficult times.

I want to say a huge thank you, on behalf of RBF and on a personal level, to all the railway workers who have been part of this front line industry - making sure passengers and freight have continued to keep moving in the most difficult of circumstances. We salute you all and can't wait until we can get out and about and thank you all personally.

Enjoy reading this issue and see you soon!

Pete

Heart of Gold Awards

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Ambassadors

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Partners and Friends

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RAIL EMPLOYEE? CHILDREN?

HOUSEHOLD INCOME UPTO £30,000?

THE RBF FAMILY SUPPORT FUND IS FOR YOU!

Family Support Fund

The Family Support Fund is designed to help those with household income not exceeding £30,000.

You can apply for a maximum of £200 to help pay for those additional costs that can seem like a stretch too far such as school uniforms, school trips and keeping them occupied during the never-ending school holidays. If you have a new addition to your family then we can help with the cost of some of the baby equipment that you will need.

These things can put so much pressure on families and cause great stress for parents and carers. With a fast and simple application process, let the RBF help you to relieve some stress.

All we need from you is a copy of you and your partner's (if applicable) payslip as proof of rail employment and income, together with the cost and detail of the help you need -it's that easy!

Contact us today on 0345 241 2885 or visit us online www.railwaybenefitfund.org.uk

RAILWAY WORKERS

WW1 CENTENARY MEMORIAL SERVICE



We were delighted to be the chosen charity for the Railway Workers WW1 Centenary Memorial Service, organised by Network Rail, at Southwark Cathedral, London, in November. The collection on the day raised an amazing £3,635 for the charity and it was an absolute honour to be part of this event.

Over 186,475 railway people from Britain and Ireland fought in World War One, on land, sea and in the air, and more than 18,957 of these gave their lives.

On 14th May, 1919, in the presence of His Majesty King George V, over 7,000 railway people and families attended a service of remembrance in St Paul's Cathedral 'In memory of the railwaymen of Great Britain and Ireland who have died in the service of their country during the war 1914-1918'.

A century later, the railway industry of Britain and Ireland came together again in a service to remember those that fell in the 'Great War'. The railway industry has changed a lot over the last century, and was represented by people from the successor companies, including the former railway shipping companies. As well as remembering those that fell, the service celebrated the great industry as it is today.



Thank you

Just some of the amazing fundraising support we have recently received...



The Charity Heroes team from Abellio, Scotrail and Rainbow HR hosted an amazing ABBA Mania event raising £3,300



Our super supporters at Merseyrail raised in excess of £9,000 in 2019



Branch Line Society donated £500 in recognition of Richard Maund's successful publication

Charity raffle at the Rail Business Awards raised £3,400



Northern made a Christmas charitable donation to RBF



Darren Lumber, LNER, collected £160 on the last HST journey between London and Leeds



Neil Bedford has been repairing and selling bikes from Swindon Station to raise £120

Our Covid-19 Appeal has raised over £13,000 to date with your generous donations - we still have a way to go to enable us to support all those in need- www.justgiving.com/campaign/RBFCovid19Support



Sales of the late Tony Cook's 'Journey of a Railway Signaller' book amounts to over £1,000

Heart of Gold Awards

Only the third year of our Heart of Gold Awards and it was a truly inspiring experience.

2020 hasn't been the easiest year so far with the Covid-19 crisis affecting us all in some way. However, it has also brought out the best in people and we have seen some amazing acts of kindness to celebrate and honour.

We were inundated with nominations for colleagues in the Rail Industry who have a genuine heart of gold - those who go the extra mile, show amazing kindness and really make a difference. There were some real heart warming stories and it was so difficult to shortlist. Congratulations to everybody who took part.

Over 1,000 votes were cast over two weeks in June and Pete Waterman took to social media to announce the winners.

Congratulations to Glyn Smith our WINNER with 39% of the votes.

Glyn saved the life of a young child on the tracks when he was driving his Arriva Rail London train - such a worthy winner.

Thank you Glyn for being a true rail hero.

Paul Hutchings, Managing Director at Arriva Rail London, said "Glyn's quick thinking prevented what could have been a tragedy, and we are delighted to see his heroic actions recognised by our railway family."



- Donna Taylor, Station Assistant, Merseyrail
- Ezekiel Awoyomi, Police Inspector, BTP
- Glyn Smith, Train Driver, Arriva Rail London
- Katie Smith, Customer Service Assistant, Avanti West Coast
- Matthew Ullman, Empty Operations, Pentalver

Congratulations to Ezekiel Awoyomi who received a HIGHLY COMMENDED award and 29% of the votes.

There is huge admiration for the work Ezekiel does, outside of his day job, supporting those in need in his community - so inspirational - thank you Ezekiel for your kindness.

www.railwaybenefitfund.org.uk/events/heart-of-gold-awards-2020/



Let us not forget those in the industry who have lost their lives to this pandemic - you will forever be in our thoughts.

Ambassadors

We aim to have 100 Ambassadors in 2021

An RBF Ambassador is somebody who is passionate about helping their fellow rail workers and want to get involved and do their bit for the industry they love. Can you help us to reach our goal and join our 40 strong Ambassador team?



Our Ambassadors include ticket retailers, station managers, on board assistants, engineers, planners and human resources within train operating companies, freight companies and rail supply organisations - in effect anybody within the rail sector can get involved and we need, and welcome, you all.

The role of the Ambassador is as little or as much as you can manage for us - we will send you updates on our services, events and campaigns and ask you to share information, put up posters, pop some leaflets in your communal areas - that's the basic level of involvement - from there it is up to you!

We have Ambassadors who invite us to their community events, health and wellbeing days, sell Christmas cards, raise money from bake sales and raffles - the sky is the limit and we are grateful and supportive of anything you can do for us.

Our Ambassadors are key to our #MeetPete programme. Being our eyes and ears on the ground they identify opportunities for us to bring Pete along to meet with staff and spread the word about the support and services RBF can provide. We've had some great days out up and down the country and can't wait to get back out there - maybe we can come and visit you?

Some fun Ambassador facts:

- Our most Northern Ambassador is Anna Macdonald from Helmsdale in Scotland (5 stops away from the most Northerly station in the UK!)
- We only have one Ambassador so far in Wales - Carl Jones in Machynlleth
- We have the most Ambassadors over Merseyside and the Midlands
- Ambassadors receive a Superstar badge when they sign up
- We would like to have an Ambassador in every station and depot
- There is no limit to the number of Ambassadors in each organisation - you can work together!

Example of the power of reach

Two Ambassadors from Scotrail in Glasgow, Kathleen McGee and Margaret Hoey, helped spread our covid-19 campaign messages on Yammer and around their stations. This led to us receiving a call for support and enabled us to help one of our Railway Family during these really difficult times. If it wasn't for their help one of their colleagues could still be struggling and in a far worse situation.

We need to make sure that everyone in the railway industry knows the RBF are here for them, especially in times of crisis. We are the industry's charity but a small team which is why the Ambassador role is so important to us.

Can you get involved? Contact Ryan who will send you an Ambassador information sheet, answer any queries you have and hopefully get you onboard - rmorgan@railwaybenefitfund.org.uk



Are you up for the challenge and would like to fundraise for RBF?

We are delighted to have secured a charity place in the ballot for the 2021 London Marathon taking place on Sunday 25th April.

Register your interest by email
fundraising@railwaybenefitfund.org.uk

Would you like a Christmas Fundraising Parcel from RBF?

Your parcel will be filled with a selection of Christmas cards and calendars to sell in your community on our behalf.

Help us to raise the funds we need to support the Railway Family over the festive period and beyond.

Register your interest by email
events@railwaybenefitfund.org.uk



RBF's Partners

We are lucky to have some great working relationships with industry organisations

During our time as Charity of the Year with Rail Delivery Group, we worked together on various fundraising and awareness initiatives. This enabled us to build strong foundations and friendships for the future.

We are grateful for the massive £10,000 raised for us during our time with RDG. Jon Witt even got hands on when we needed help during our busy Christmas card mailing!



We are delighted that the Railway Industry Association (RIA) has chosen us as their Charity of the Year for 2020. We kicked the year off with a fabulous evening at their Annual Dinner where we got to meet lots of their members.

Pete Waterman led proceedings as Master of Ceremonies and an incredible £3,500 was raised during the charity raffle.



Railway Industry Association

The voice of the UK rail supply community

Rail Delivery Group



YOUNG RAIL PROFESSIONALS



This year we are excited to be working on a closer collaboration with Young Rail Professionals (YRP). Coming together we can better support and learn from young people within the UK Rail Industry.

During lockdown we hosted a virtual Rail Quiz Night with Pete as our quiz master. Over 200 people joined and displayed some excellent knowledge! We were grateful for the generous donations from quizzers raising over £1,000 for our Covid-19 Appeal.

Making Friends

Earlier this year we launched a new way for rail businesses to support the Railway Family by becoming an RBF Friend.

Bringing relationships with our supporters even closer, Friends offers a way for us to fundraise whilst giving back to our Friends with a range of benefits.

Benefits include enhancing your wellbeing strategy with our services, a Friends logo to use on your communications, entry in our online directory, your profile in features and campaigns and a discount on our flagship events.

Becoming an RBF Friend is an easy way for any rail organisation, or supplier, to show support for the UK Rail Industry's employees and families who may be experiencing tough times.



Ian Jeffrey, Ancillary Services Director, Abellio UK "ARR is delighted to be the first company to sign up to RBF Friends and I would encourage my colleagues within the industry to join in with this initiative as soon as possible."

Jane English, People Director, Merseyrail "We didn't hesitate in becoming an RBF Friend - a great way for us to continue our support with them and the great work they do for our staff and many others in the industry."

Gemma Allanson, EMR Head of HR, Operations, Fleet & HSSE "We continue to recognise the importance of our friendship with RBF as it is a special charity for the railway family and is there to help with life's ups and downs however large or small."

Rupert Brennan Brown, Porterbrook's Director of Stakeholder Engagement "RBF offers a fantastic range of support to all the members of Britain's railway and Porterbrook is proud to have joined the growing number of rail businesses who have become an official friend of this very worthwhile industry charity."

Become an RBF Friend today - it's easy!



Get in touch - fundraising@railwaybenefitfund.org.uk

We have seen a huge increase in the demand for our services since the Covid-19 outbreak.

"There has been a significant increase in requests for financial assistance and our team have been dealing with an unprecedented volume of cases, a level unseen since the charity began over 160 years ago.

With many of our colleagues in the Rail Industry experiencing changes in working patterns, some are now struggling to cover the basic costs of living and families are finding themselves in extremely difficult financial situations.

RBF is the charity they turn to - we are here for the Railway Family during these incredibly tough times."



Tim Shoveller

RBF Chairman, Managing Director North West and Central at Network Rail

Our funding depends on your generosity.

The charity relies solely on the donations and fundraising of its loyal supporters and now, more than ever, we need your help.

Please help us to support the Railway Family through one of the toughest times we have ever experienced.

Covid-19 causing money worries?



RAILWAY BENEFIT FUND
Registered Charity No 206312

We're here to help the Railway Family through tough times

- Grants to help you pay the bills
- Access to the help you need
- Friendly and confidential advice

covidsupport@railwaybenefitfund.org.uk / 0345 241 2885

In the first month of our Covid-19 campaign we experienced:

- 60% increase in requests for financial assistance
- 50% more calls to our helpline

Please support RBF's Covid-19 Appeal by making a donation

The easiest way to donate is online:

- www.justgiving.com/campaign/RBFCovid19Support
- www.railwaybenefitfund.org.uk/online-donations

For other donation options please call 0345 241 2885

RBF, 1st Floor, Millennium House, 40 Nantwich Road, Crewe, CW2 6AD