

You may make donations online, personal cheque, or credit / debit card. Please also consider setting up a standing order.

WAYS TO DONATE

1. See www.steamtrainsireland.com/appeal/
2. See enclosed form for standing orders
3. Cheques may be made out in either Euros or Sterling, and in all cases payable to "The RPSI"
4. Credit / Debit Card – Please fill in the details and post:

Card Number

Expiry Date: / / 20

CVV number (Last three digits on the back)

All donations are welcome, large or small. Once you have filled in the relevant part of the form, please post your donation or standing order form to:

RPSI 861 Appeal
16 Belmont Drive
Belmont
Stepaside
DUBLIN 18
D18 RHX7

If you require an acknowledgement, please enclose a stamped addressed envelope. Please let us know your postal and email address.

NAME: _____

EMAIL: _____

POSTAL ADDRESS:

The 861 Appeal

RAILWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF IRELAND



No. 186 and coach 861 on an RPSI train near Athenry. 12.6.77. Photo: Chris Gammell. (IRRS collection)



No. 4 and coach no. 861 at Dublin Heuston, ready to depart on the RPSI 'Cu na Mara' railtour to Limerick. 11th. June 1977.

Dear Member

We are appealing to you to help with the restoration of one of the most historically important surviving Irish railway carriages. The carriage is the former Great Southern & Western Railway No. 861.

HISTORY

The vehicle is a clerestorey-roofed, twelve wheeled brake tri-composite, meaning that when built it had a brake (Guard's compartment), as well as having seating accommodation for first, second and third class passengers.

Clerestorey roofed carriages were rare in Ireland. Twelve wheeled carriages were rarer still; only a handful of examples ever existed. No. 861 is the last survivor of either type by some sixty years, and even before that was one of only two or three vehicles to display both of these design characteristics.

The carriage was one of a set built by the GSWR at its Inchicore Works in Dublin for the inauguration of the "Rosslare Express" in 1906. This train travelled between Rosslare Harbour and Cork via Waterford, Dungarvan and Mallow. She is fondly remembered as she retained her gas lighting right to the end of active service and throughout RPSI life and was the first of some 100 carriages acquired by the Society to date. She is also one of the oldest.

At 20.1m in length (66ft) she and one single other example were the longest railway carriages in use in Ireland – this is why six-wheeled bogies were necessary.

Her survival allows us the opportunity to travel in an exceptionally comfortable and historic vehicle when restoration is complete.

RESTORATION

In 2005 the Society received some money to help fund her restoration and this was duly started. In 2015 we appealed to members for internal photos to help with accurate restoration of carpentry details. The original dismantling record is still at large, however, and we have enough information to move forward. We are indebted to those who contributed, though we're always pleased to receive more photos.

Further work requires further funding, and this is where you come in!

WHAT IS HAPPENING RIGHT NOW?

Currently the timber cladding and structural elements are largely dismantled, to reveal the parts that need replacing. No surprise that the timbers around the two toilet areas are especially rotten – condensation and spill from the water tanks (and some passengers!) having been a perpetual problem.

When the new workshop facility is complete at Whitehead 861 is to be the first RPSI carriage to be fully avail of the new facility. In the meantime work is progressing on organising suppliers, patterns, fittings for replacement or overhaul. Due to private support so far we are now in a position to place an order with our subsidiary Heritage Engineering Ireland to rebuild the gangways.

THE APPEAL

This appeal is for money and expertise. Due to the extensive nature of the rot, the complexity of the repairs (i.e. at clerestory roof level) we need approximately £60,000 (€79,000) to complete the coach to mainline standards. This will pay for replacement timbers, various safety upgrades for mainline running (these will not detract from the character of the vehicle), expert labour and a finish to "as-new" 1906 condition and livery, so that we can get No. 861 running again with passengers on board.

In addition to financial contributions, we will be delighted to hear from anyone who is an expert joiner, upholsterer or just willing to spend an afternoon working on the vehicle.

We would therefore urge all members and friends to contribute as generously as you can to this very important appeal. Once No. 861 is back on the main line, it will strongly assist our eventual plan for heritage passenger coaches to return to main line operation.

We would urge you to please fill in the form overleaf and post it today! Depending on the level of donation, you will receive some very attractive benefits! See below....

		You will receive
£ Sterling	€ Euro	
>50	65	1. Invitation to official launch
>100	130	2.(1) plus an invitation to view progress at milestone points
>250	320	3.(2) plus new RPSI Museum pass for 1 year
>400	500	4.(3) plus 1 day trip for two from Belfast or Dublin
>500	650	5.(3) plus two 2 day trips for two from Belfast to Dublin
>1000	1300	6.(3) ½ price travel on the May Tour, or four day trips from either Belfast or Dublin, for 1.