

THE RAILWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF IRELAND

APRIL 1982 NEWS-SHEET

CHEERS: The RPSI has been "highly commended" by the publication "Steam 82" for its work in the railway preservation field. The citation praises the Society for its activities saying "RPSI steam excursions are a pure delight to thousands of families who travel on them." The certificate has been framed and we hope to display it inside the RPSI dining car. Steam 82, which has just been published, is a complete handbook to railway preservation activities in the British Isles and of course the RPSI is strongly featured.

NEXT FEATURE: Unfortunately the plan to mail you out Five Foot Three with this circular came unstuck because of delays with the magazine. We did not want to delay sending you the Thomond Tour booking form. The magazine will be despatched with the next circular, probably in May.

IT'S A RECORD: To date our operations officer, Ernie Gilmore, has received no fewer than 190 inquiries about the Thomond tour - and that's a record. Interest in the May 15/16 tour has been heightened by Leslie McAllister's excellent article on the RPSI in the April Railway World, illustrated, of course, by some fine photos from Charles Friel. Judging by the level of inquiries, there is no doubt the railtour will be very popular - so don't waste any time in getting your booking form in.

MAY DAY? NAY: A correction to the railtour prospectus sent out with the last circular. Sadly we have had to cancel the proposed May 1 Dublin suburban tour, because of complications with the electrification work. We hope this does not inconvenience anyone.

IF IT'S TUESDAY: It must be Whitehead. Now that the evenings are lengthening the Tuesday evening squad is extending its carriage activities to the great outdoors - and it's on the lookout for new recruits. One major job will be to improve the fortifications around the perimeter fence by stringing coils of barbed wire along it. The squad meets at Whitehead every Tuesday around 7 pm - so please come along if you're free.

SCHOOL'S OUT: Plans are now advanced for the Schools Open Day at Whitehead on Tuesday June 15. The event will feature an audio-visual display on railways and steam, a short train ride, a goods train made up for inspection, a conducted tour of the Society's workshops and a chance to examine the footplate of a live steam engine. We're going to provide handouts for the children and, the teachers will be relieved to hear, teacher's notes to answer any awkward questions. If you know of a school which would be interested, contact Johnny Glendinning and he will pop the form in the post to you.

STOCK MARKET: Many thanks to those of you who responded to the special appeal in the last circular for assistance on the coach front. To date we have raised enough to purchase two of the four carriages in question.

A GREY AREA: Visitors to Whitehead recently have been surprised to see 186 in a new experimental livery. The fireman's side of the engine has been coated in D&SER grey while the driver's side retains its "First Great Train Robbery" green livery. The plan is to haul the engine out of the shed at some occasion and see what the 0-6-0 looks like in grey. The loco is at present stopped pending a new set of boiler tubes.

WORK IN PROGRESS: The three Action for Community Employment workers at Whitehead are making great inroads, two of them on the carriage front and the third on the locomotives. The Government pays 90 pc of the wages, while the

Society pays the other 10 pc. Currently they are concentrating on coaches 1142, the ex GSR all-first, and 1327, the Bredin side-corridor which has been a regular on railtours. Meanwhile another midweek squad has been busy renovating our second dining car, 87. Much of the rotten woodwork inside is being replaced and a very professional job it is too.

MAKE A DATE: Some dates for your diary.

Saturday April 10	Easter Bunny Specials, Mullingar.
Saturday April 17	The Claddagh Railtour, Mullingar-Galway.
Saturday April 24	Enthusiasts' Day, Shane's Castle Railway, Antrim - a chance, perhaps, to ride in the ex Donegal railcar? Plenty of action.
Saturday May 1	The Vintage Vehicles Rally at Bangor, with the Irish Transport Trust buses.
Monday May 3	Have a day out on Bank Holiday Monday with a visit to the Shane's Castle steam working, an all-day event at Antrim. Traction engines, the steam railway, etc.
Saturday May 8	171 and the tour train leave Whitehead for Dublin and Mullingar.
Sat/Sun May 15/16	The two-day tour to Limerick. See details in the enclosed circular.

Don't say there's nothing to do!

FRAMED: As part of the publicity campaign for the Easter Bunny train, the RPSI ran a painting competition for schools in the Mullingar area. A number of children entered the event, in which they were asked to draw or paint a steam locomotive. Eventually the judges settled on the painting by Francis Oxley, of St Mary's CBS, who qualifies for free tickets for the train. So well done, Francis.

POST HASTE: Our Dublin agent Sam Carse asks us to remind you that postage in the Republic now costs 28p for a letter. So, please, when you're sending in a stamped addressed envelope, don't be stingy on stamps.

BUILT-UP AREA: We're trying to build up the workforce at Whitehead and in particular we could use someone who's handy at the old bricks and mortar. Our empire at Whitehead has expanded and we now find ourselves with a number of buildings to maintain - the stables, the engine shed, the tarry, and now even the former bus-shed which we're leasing from Carrickfergus Borough Council. So you can imagine there's a fair bit of work on the maintenance front - and if you've just finished your extension at home, we could use you. Contact Johnny Glendinning.

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