

THE RAILWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF IRELAND

President: The Rt. Hon. The Lord O'Neill
Vice-President: The Rt. Hon. The Lord Dunleath



MARCH 1984 NEWS-SHEET

STONE ME: The clock was turned back some 15 years when, as part of her running-in, the RPSI's 2-6-4T 4 performed a week of duties on the NIR materials train. It all happened on the week starting February 6 and the sight of a steam engine at the head of a train of stone train wagons had quite a few heads turning. It was a real throwback to the days of the Magheramorne stone trains which finished in 1970. Each day an RPSI crew prepared 4 and then NIR took over for a full day's work out on the line. For the record, this is the way it worked out:

Monday	To Magheramorne and then York Road for shunting.
Tuesday	To Magheramorne.
Wednesday	To Ballymena with materials train.
Thursday	Ballasting on the Larne line at Ballycarry.
Friday	To Magheramorne and then to Belfast Central to move one of the Enterprise carriages back round from York Road works.

The only untoward moment came at 4am one morning when the local police phoned our treasurer, John Richardson, to tell him that some people had been spotted in our premises at Whitehead and that there was smoke emerging from the chimney of an engine! John had to reassure them that yes, it was all above board, and could he go back to bed now. Seriously, though, it's nice to know that an eye is being kept on our site. All in all, it proved to be a most satisfactory operation and hopefully will have been a big help to the Society's efforts to restore 4 to full operational status. Our thanks go to NIR for their outstanding co-operation and also to those RPSI members who made themselves available at short notice.

TOP OF THE CHARTS: As you will see from an accompanying circular, if you haven't already heard, the RPSI has chalked up another major success by winning the annual award of the Association of Railway Preservation Societies. Lord O'Neill, our president, accepted the award trophy at a ceremony in London on January 28 which was attended by a delegation from the RPSI. Then on January 30 the group returned to Belfast for a special function at York Road station at which the winning of the award was announced to the local media. The trophy was in turn presented to Sir Myles Humphreys, the chairman of NIR, for display at the NIR travel centre at Belfast Central. The Society also took the opportunity to invite along a number of friends to join in the celebration. About 120 guests then boarded an RPSI special train, hauled by 4, for a lunchtime trip from Belfast to Carrickfergus and back. The train included the directors' saloon, and restored carriages 87, 1142, 1327 and 91. On board RPSI catering kept all our passengers well plied with food and drink, and a good day was had by all. The Society's image was further enhanced and this is already starting to show results. The trophy itself will go on display at various venues throughout Ireland in the coming year. Any suggestions, by the way to Robin Morton.

GALWAY HERE WE COME: Everything is going according to plan for the 1984 two-day tour, the Traen 150 Galway Bay Railtour on the weekend of Saturday May 12. CIÉ have given outline approval to the proposals, including the operation of steam under the energised electric wires at Dublin Connolly. The fare for the Dublin-Galway-Dublin trip will be £45 stg and other costs such as hotels, lineside buses, meals, etc., are being finalised at the time of writing. We hope to have a circular and booking form with you in three weeks' time. Also on course is the pipe-opener trip to Galway, the Claddagh tour with 184 on Aril 21. During the afternoon we'll be giving Galway people a chance to celebrate the city's 500th anniversary by travelling with us to Attymon Junction and back. Details Of that tour should be in the post soon.

HELP: As you will note from the report of the AGM, the Society finds itself without a commercial officer, which is a most serious state of affairs. Obviously if the money we're used to receiving from fund-raising dries up the Society's activities will grind to a halt. If anyone would like to step forward to volunteer to serve for the forthcoming year in this role, he would be most welcome. In the meantime, our next big event at Whitehead will be the Easter Bunny train rides which take place on Easter Sunday and Monday. Any adult members who would like to volunteer to man the Society's shop and ticket desk on that occasion should contact our treasurer, John Richardson.

MILES AND MILES: Our loco running Officer Brian Hill has been busy with his calculator and has come up with the RPSI 1983 loco mileages:

Loco	Train miles	Light engine miles	Total
4	730	184	919
171	1,454	285	1,739
184	648	403	<u>1,051</u>
			3,709

The total is about 400 miles up on 1982, but, delving back into the records, it is a 50 pc increase on our mileage in 1976 and it represents a 60 pc increase on 1975. Interesting! Our coal bill should certainly make Mr Ian McGregor happy - we got through some 98 tons last year. This year, unusually, we've already clocked up some mileage in January and February, normally steamless months. No.4 has already turned in a total of 374 miles, what with ARPS specials and ballast train workings.

PROMOTIONS: Recent promotions on the operating grades at Whitehead are:

Stuart Agnew - to shunter.

Jeremy Saulters - to steamraiser.

Nelson Poots and Sullivan Boomer - to driver.

Congratulations to all concerned. Incidentally, so as all those staff can keep their engines shining, Brian Hill would be grateful for any donations of cleaning rags to Whitehead. Either leave them down or ring Brian.

SANTA REPORT: Santa, as mentioned briefly in the last news-sheet, did brisk business at Whitehead this time. A total passenger figure of 2,350 was recorded, marginally down on 1982 because of the deplorable weather. Well done to all concerned.

BELFAST BONANZA: Attendances at the Belfast meetings this winter have also been most encouraging - about 120 turning up in February for member Fred Cooper's entertaining film show. The soiree, held on February 24 at the Drumkeen Hotel, attracted around 45.

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE: Thanks to NIACRO (The NI Association for Care and Resettlement of Offenders), who have a major scheme going at Whitehead, and who photocopied, addressed and compiled this circular. Well done!

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