

THE RAILWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF IRELAND

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



JUNE 1984 NEWS-SHEET

SPREAD THE WORD: Enclosed with this circular you will find a Portrush leaflet (two or three if you live in Northern Ireland). This year's brochure has been cunningly designed to double up as a poster. If you unfold it you will find you can display it in your nearest shop window/office noticeboard, etc., and everyone will be able to read the full details. This year we have had several thousand Flyer booking forms published and the idea now is to fill the trains. So if you could use some more booking forms please contact our publicity officer John Friel.

BACK IN TRAINING: The other sure sign that summer's on the way is the arrival of your steam train rides car sticker (again, if you have a Northern Ireland address). Please make sure you display it in a prominent position on the rear window of your car or a friend's vehicle. The car stickers have proved to be a most effective way of letting people know about the steam train rides, which of course operate every Sunday afternoon at Whitehead in the months of June, July and August. Loco No.3 "R.H. Smyth is expected to be on duty for the season.

MINE, ALL MINE: Thanks to some good work by loco running officer Brian Hill and associates we've managed to secure coal supplies at Whitehead which will see us through to the end of August at present. We'll wait and see how the miners' strike develops, but we've got our fingers crossed that we'll unearth some more for September.

LENS (OF SUTTON?): Ernie Gilmore reports that a telephoto lens was found on the Galway Bay tour train. If you find there's one missing from your gadget bag, send Ernie the detail of the missing, and if they tally he'll send it on to you.

DART ABOARD: Our thanks to CIÉ for giving the RPSI a chance to travel on the new Dublin suburban electric trains on Saturday 5. A special trip on one of the new sets took an RPSI contingent from Dublin to Bray and back. Maybe there'll be some converts! Unfortunately there wasn't time to spread the word among the membership as a whole but those who travelled on board the May 5 empty stock working with 171 found they'd struck it lucky.

OMNIFARIOUS NEWS: From talk of electric trains ... to a paragraph about buses! Just to show we're not biased. Dr D.B. McNeill, well known for his talks at St Jude's Hall, asks if anyone might be able to lay hands on a set of Bairds' Monthly Bus & Train Guides for 1924-35 for some research he is conducting.

EDUCATING RETA: School's out at Whitehead on Tuesday and Wednesday June 12 & 13. It's our Annual "Schools' Day" when groups of youngsters from various schools spend a few hours visiting the RPSI site all in the name of education. The tour includes a short trip on the RPSI train rides, a look at some rolling stock, and a stroll around the site, rounded off by a visit to the RPSI shop and dining car! It's a pretty hectic but entertaining day and it's nice to see the Society fulfilling its

educational role. We've already a sturdy band of volunteers for the two days but we could use a few more members on both days. If you can spare the time please ring the office at Whitehead and ask for Mrs Reta Craig.

SELLING A LINE: We're still without a commercial officer but treasurer John Richardson is valiantly trying to plug the gap. Our thanks to him and his team of assistants. However, we could use a lot more help at a variety of events over the summer. Please don't ignore this appeal - its time more members offered to lend a hand for a day at least behind the sales stall, Give a little back for all the pleasure you get from the Society's activities, and help raise the cash we need to keep the RPSI's wheels moving! You'll already have noticed the "Volunteers Wanted" circular in this envelope so that's one way of helping out. But there are also a number of traction engine rallies where the RPSI will have a sales squad on hand. They are:

Moneymore, Co. Londonderry	Sat June 2
Shane's Castle rally, Antrim	Fri July 20 & Sat Jul 21
(Plus erection of tent	20.00, Thu July 19)
Comber rally	Late July
Markethill rally	Sat August 4

So please, make a date in your diary and give us a hand.

BRANCHING OUT: News from the preserved railway committee desk centres mainly on Downpatrick. A delegation from the RPSI committee went to meet the recreation committee of Down District Council recently to hear about the plans to reopen the Downpatrick-Ardglass branchline, The Society is an interested party but not a proponent of the scheme, which is promoted by the Downpatrick & Ardglass Railway Society. The recreation committee was also hearing the views of the B&CDR Museum Trust which wants to re-open Rowallane to Ballynahinch. The next stage will be for the recreation committee to report back to Down District Council as to which of the two proposals it considers more feasible. We'll keep you in touch with developments.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST: You'll remember that in the last news-sheet we set you a little brainteaser by asking for suggestions as to why ex NCC coach 68, currently under restoration by NIACRO at Whitehead, was designed to have two half-compartments. Well, we seem to have cracked the mystery. Our thanks to members Harold Houston of Whitehead, former development engineer with the NCC and Richard Casserley of Berkhamstead, son of the noted Irish railway historian. Mr Houston says they were known as "Honeymoon" compartments, so designed to give the happy couple some privacy for their trip. Mr Casserley has two suggestions - one that they were ladies only compartments and the other that the body was built with material for US Army ambulance trains, neatly adapted for passenger use. Thanks to you both.

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