

THE RAILWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF IRELAND

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



AUGUST 1984 NEWS-SHEET

BUMPER SEASON: The Portrush Flyer enjoyed a popular and successful season in 1984 - amazingly, the 12th season of operation since the Flyer made its debut in 1973. By a long stretch it is the longest surviving steam preservation special anywhere in the British Isles, if not Europe. Figures for the passengers carried this year were:

	Main Flyer	Castlerock Extension
July 21	270	210
August 4	240	180
August 18	300	250

As always, the final Flyer proved to be the most popular but it was most encouraging to see the first outing of the season receiving such strong support. No.4 performed excellently throughout, with the unanimous verdict from the timers being that the 1984 running was the best on the Flyer for some years. The effort put in on the carriage front is also paying dividends with the train looking a lot smarter than a few years ago. Financially, all three Flyers covered their direct costs but we rely on the Castlerock extension to tip the balance. On the August 18 Flyer we welcomed on board the Mayor of Carrickfergus, Alderman Charles Johnston, who, with his family, thoroughly enjoyed his day out. At Portrush the Mayor of Coleraine, Councillor William King, laid on a small reception for Mr Johnston and a group from the RPSI.

So well done to all concerned for a highly successful Flyer season!

ENTER THE ENTERPRISE: No sooner is the Flyer season over than our thoughts turn to the Steam Enterprise. Advance bookings are most encouraging for both September 1 and 15 with particular interest being aroused in the Newry area by the possibility of a steam trip to Dublin and back. Newry people will travel by NIR from Newry to Dundalk to catch the Steam Enterprise (we would lose too much time by stopping No.4 on the steep gradient at Newry station) and on the way back we stop at Newry to let our new supporters off. The venture has attracted banner headlines in the Newry Reporter and tickets are selling well. The prospect of the rejuvenated No.4 being let loose on the Great Northern main line plus the first appearance of steam among the DART electrics is certainly whetting the appetite.

RIDING HIGH: Business has been picking up well during August on the Whitehead steam train rides with a steady crowd keeping 0-6-0ST No.3 R.H. Smyth on her toes. Dining car and shop have also been doing brisk business and the train rides have proved to be a useful "platform" for publicising the Flyer and Enterprise.

THE NAME GAME: NIR's new GM loco 113 now carries nameplates "The Belfast & Co. Down" courtesy of the RPSI. The Society provided nameplates for both 111 and 112 so it seemed fitting to make it a trio when the new engine

arrived. The nameplates were unveiled by Mr Robert Rolston, chairman of the Transport holding Company, at a ceremony in Bangor on August 7 at which the Society was represented.

MAKING ROOM: The most ambitious site project since Enterprise Ulster left in 1978 is due to get under way in early September in Whitehead. Tee Council has decided to hire a contractor to excavate the bank at the NIR side of our site, making room for a new 10-coach siding. The project, which is expected to cost the Society £7,000, will take around a fortnight and will involve the removal from the site of 1,000 plus cubic metres of spoil - quite a few lorry loads in other words. The Council though long and hard before sanctioning the expenditure but it is felt to be vital to the long-term development of the site. Needless to say the contractor won't do the whole job for us - it will be up to the Society to lay the new track. To this end Johnny Glendinning our site officer announces that a track squad will be setting to on Saturday October 6 and successive Saturdays to get the work done. We will be using the hand crane to set in position the new panels of track but many hands would make light work so please turn up if you can. Work squads will be on site every Saturday from 10 am to 5 pm.

ENFIELD EXPRESS: Enclosed in this circular are details of the Enfield Express, the special Traen 150 steam train being run by the Society in Dublin on Saturday September 29. Loco No.184, our 0-6-0 class J15 which is based in Mullingar, will be in charge of the special. The RPSI stock, including our dining car, will be worked down from Belfast by GM diesel loco early on the day and will return that evening.

IRISH RM - AGAIN? Negotiations were under way at the time of writing for the possible use of loco 184 and coach 1142 for filming in connection with a new series of the TV programme "An Irish RM". The plan is for a day's filming on the Mullingar-Athlone line, possibly on Friday September 28. Members will have seen 184 starring in the last series.

IN THE PICTURE: Plans have now been finalised for the opening Belfast area meeting of the season on Tuesday October 16 (7.30 pm) at St Jude's Church Hall, Sunnyside Street. As you will see from the enclosed meeting card, we are indulging in a little nostalgia with a look back at the railway scene of the 1960s on colour (and black and white) slides. Our hosts will be members Bill Scott and Joe Cassells who will each be presenting their top slides of the days of steam. A night to look forward to!

BANGOR & BACK: At the time of writing final preparations were being made for the Bangor Belle special on Bank Holiday Monday, August 27, and the indications were that ticket sales were very promising. It will be No.4's first visit with an RPSI passenger train to Bangor since 1976.

CHECK YOUR RECORDS: Talking of firsts, we reckon that No.4's visit to Larne with the Larne Lough railtour on September 30 could well be the "jeep's" first visit with a passenger train since around 1968-69. Although Larne is just down the line from our base at Whitehead, 4 has always headed in the opposite direction on her outings since coming into Society ownership in 1971. History being made before your very eyes!

PROJECTING THE RPSI: As members will have noticed, the Whitehead Railway Project (our youth training scheme) broke new ground this month by handling the bookings for the Bangor Belle tour. The trainees are also doing valuable work in answering telephone queries during the day at our Whitehead number (the Answerphone by night). They have also been of great

assistance by printing, collating, addressing and posting this circular.
Long may the good work continue!

CHARTER NO-GO: The proposed private charter of the Steam Enterprise train on September 22 has been ruled out on grounds of cost.

AUTUMN SALE: An appeal from treasurer John Richardson for members in the Republic who hear of possible sale venues for the RPSI to ring him in time for the RPSI to mount a sales team.

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