

THE RAILWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF IRELAND

"FAREWELL TO THE SEVENTY CLASS RAILTOUR"

(AND WELCOME TO THE 450s)

Saturday 12th October 1985

Welcome aboard this special train organised jointly by the RPSI and the Irish Transport Trust, with the co-operation Of Northern Ireland Railways. Today's outing will be a farewell to the 70 class DEMU and, with a bit of luck, a welcome to the 450 class as well. Provided there are no last minute hitches, it is hoped to be able to round off the day with a spin on board the new DEMU which should be awaiting our arrival back at Belfast Central. There is no additional charge for this portion of the trip and you can either disembark at Central or come right round to York Road.

The timetable is:

| | | arr. | dep. | |
|-------------------|-------|-------|------|-----------------------------|
| Belfast York Road | | 10:43 | | 70 class. |
| Ballymena | pass | 11:19 | | |
| Coleraine | pass | 11:49 | | |
| Londonderry | 12:23 | 12:40 | | From NCC station. |
| Castlerock | 13:10 | 13:14 | | |
| Coleraine | 13:22 | 13:35 | | Lineside bus departs. |
| Downhill | 13:47 | 13:52 | | |
| Coleraine | 14:04 | 14:28 | | |
| Ballymoney | 14:38 | 14:44 | | |
| Ballymena | 15:06 | 15:15 | | |
| Antrim | 15:29 | 15:40 | | From GN platform. |
| Lisburn | pass | 16:05 | | |
| Belfast Central | 16:15 | 16:20 | | Change trains to 450 class. |
| Bangor | 16:40 | 16:45 | | |
| Belfast Central | 17:05 | 17:06 | | |
| Belfast York Road | | 18:50 | | |

Please do not attempt to board the lineside bus unless you have already been informed that a seat has been reserved for you. It is only a 34-seater and for insurance reasons we are not allowed to take any more passengers.

We regret that, contrary to earlier hopes, it has proved impossible to provide any RPSI catering on today's outing. There are shops within easy reach of the station at Coleraine.

The 70 class, in whose honour today's trip has been organised, were introduced by the UTA in 1966. There were eight power cars, all fitted with English Electric four cylinder turbo-charged engines, developing 550 horsepower at 850rpm, 440hp traction. Their fleet numbers were:

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| 71 River Bush | 72 River Foyle |
| 73 River Roe | 74 River Lagan |
| 75 River Maine | 76 River Inver |
| 77 River Braid | 78 River Bann |

Have an enjoyable day, and don't forget tomorrow's running-in trip with "Merlin", our Class V Compound 4-4-0, due to leave Whitehead at 10:35.

Ernest H Gilmore (RPSI Operations)

NON-STOP DIESEL EXPRESSES TO LONDONDERRY

The diesel era on the Belfast-Londonderry route really began on Monday 3rd February 1958, when the Multi-Purpose Diesel (MPD) trains were introduced on the express services by the UTA.

The initial timetable called for end-to-end timings of 1 hour 50 minutes, inclusive of 5 or 6 stops totalling 8-10 minutes, equivalent to a non-stop timing of about 1 hour 35 minutes, - i.e. 95 minutes for 9¾ miles - not quite 'even time'.

In the next timetable, from 2nd June 1958, the point-to-point timings were eased slightly - by about 5 minutes overall - but on summer Saturdays a non-stop service at 08:20 from Belfast was introduced in the Down direction only, with a timing of 1 hour 50 minutes from York Road to Waterside.

In the 1959 Summer Timetable, the non-stop running time was reduced to 1 hour 40 minutes, and this proved to be the fastest overall timing ever scheduled for the route, remaining in force until 27th August 1966, when the 1966 Summer Timetable finished. This service was designed to connect with the overnight passenger ships from Glasgow, Heysham and Liverpool to Belfast.

By June 1966, when the next Summer Timetable was in force, the first Magheramorne Spoil Contract started, and the line speed restriction from York Road to Bleach Green Junction reduced from 70 to 50 mph, necessitating an additional 2 minutes in the schedule.

The non-stop timing of the 08:20 on Saturdays was further extended to 1 hour 45 minutes in the 1968 Timetable, and by 1969 not only had a Coleraine stop been included, but the timing had been extended to 1 hour 55 minutes, with the overall speed restriction reduced from 70 mph to 50/60 mph throughout.

Finally, by the end of the 1970 season, the decline in holiday traffic to the Londonderry and Donegal area, together with the withdrawal of the overnight boat from Glasgow to Belfast, led to the cessation of the Saturday morning Express service.

For most of its existence, the non-stop service was operated by MPD sets, but for the last few weeks of the 1966 Summer Timetable, the then-new Diesel-Electric sets (now the 70-Class) appeared on the run with Power Cars 71 and 72.

In those days, crossing-loops on the single-line from Ballymena to Londonderry were in use at Cullybackey, Glarryford, Dunloy, Ballyboyland, Ballymoney, Macfin, Coleraine, Castlerock, Bellarena, Limavady Junction, Eglinton and Lisahally, and Electric Tablets were picked up at speed by means of the Manson 'Tablet Snatchers' fitted to the Guard's Vans of the trains.

Today's run, with some of the last-remaining 70-Class vehicles, is aimed at recapturing the atmosphere, and hopefully the running-times, of the 100-minute non-stop service operated from 1959 to 1966.

Within a few weeks from now, all the 70-Class units will have been withdrawn, and future signalling and track rationalisation schemes will not be conducive to non-stop running from York Road to Londonderry.

Ironically, the 70-Class units have only been scheduled to operate to Londonderry in 100 minutes in the first few weeks and last few weeks of their existence. The following details will form the basis of a log of today's run, if you wish to keep a record of the performance.

D Grimshaw

Operating Executive

SATURDAY 12 OCTOBER 1985

BELFAST YORK ROAD - LONDONDERRY

3-Car 70 Class Set 75/728/77

| <u>Mileage</u> | | <u>Scheduled</u> | <u>Actual</u> | |
|----------------|-----------------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|
| 0 | Belfast York Road | 10:44 | __:__ | |
| 3¼ | Whitehouse | 10:48 | __:__ | |
| 4½ | Bleach Green Junction | 10:50 | __:__ | |
| 6 | Monkstown | 10:52 | __:__ | |
| 9¼ | Kingsbog | 10:56 | __:__ | |
| 13¾ | Templepatrick | 11:02 | __:__ | |
| 19¼ | Antrim | 11:08 | __:__ | |
| 26¾ | Kellswater | 11:16 | __:__ | |
| 31 | Ballymena | 11:20 | __:__ | |
| 34 | Cullybackey | 11:24 | __:__ | |
| 38¾ | Glarryford | 11:29 | __:__ | |
| 41 | Killagan | 11:31 | __:__ | |
| 43¾ | Dunloy | 11:33 | __:__ | |
| 48 | Ballyboyland | 11:37 | __:__ | |
| 51 | Ballymoney | 11:40 | __:__ | |
| 54½ | Macfin | 11:44 | __:__ | |
| 59¼ | Coleraine | 11:49 | __:__ | Cross 11:05 ex Londonderry. |
| 65 | Castlerock | 11:56 | __:__ | |
| 72½ | Bellarena | 12:03 | __:__ | |
| 77¼ | Limavady Junction | 12:07 | __:__ | |
| 85¼ | Eglinton | 12:14 | __:__ | |
| 88¼ | Lisahally | 12:18 | __:__ | |
| 92¾ | Londonderry | 12:24 | __:__ | |

SATURDAY 12 OCTOBER 1985

RPSI RAILTOUR - 3-Car 70 Class Set

| | arr. | dep. | |
|-----------------|-------|-------|----------------------------|
| Londonderry | | 12:40 | (Departs from old Station) |
| Castlerock | 13:10 | 13:14 | |
| Coleraine | 13:22 | 13:53 | |
| Castlerock | | 14:00 | |
| Downhill | 14:04 | 14:07 | |
| Castlerock | | 14:11 | |
| Coleraine | 14:19 | 14:28 | |
| Ballymoney | 14:38 | 14:44 | |
| Ballymena | 15:06 | 15:15 | |
| Antrim | 15:29 | 15:39 | (Shunts to Bay Platform) |
| Crumlin | | 15:48 | |
| Ballinderry | | 15:55 | |
| Lisburn | | 16:04 | |
| Dunmurry | | 16:08 | |
| Belfast Central | 16:15 | | |