

THE RAILWAY PRESERATION SOCIETY OF IRELAND

MARCH 1986 NEWS-SHEET

A GOOD TURN

As forecast in the January news-sheet, work has now got under way on the Coleraine turntable project. NIR moved in first of all and cleared the site ready for excavation. Then a crane was used to move the former Londonderry table to one side to allow the excavators access. On Tuesday March 4 Enterprise Ulster moved in to mark out the site and excavation work began the following day. As outlined at the AGM, we are now going to use the 56ft table formerly at Great Victoria Street instead of the 50ft Londonderry one, both because of the extra length and because the ex GV Street table is not so badly corroded. It has been in store in recent years at Whitehead and is to be renovated there before being transported up to its new home at Coleraine. Peter Scott is in charge of the mechanical side, while Arthur Wickham is acting as our "resident engineer" on site. We should now be on target to have the table in operation in time for the Portrush Flyer, thus opening up the possibility of 85 having a run up the NCC main line. Again, thanks to those who have generously supported the Coleraine turntable appeal but more money is still needed. Send your donation to John Richardson.

BUMPER BUNDLE

Included in this circular you should find your AGM reports. There was a slight hiccup when we turned up at Belfast Rowing Club to find the room had been double-booked but club officials managed to arrange an alternative location just down the road at Queen's University boathouse, so we were none the worse. As you will read, the Council has been left with the task of finding a successor to John Richardson, our long-serving treasurer, and John has kindly agreed not to see us stuck in the immediate future. If anyone out there would offer their services, please contact the chairman, Sullivan Boomer. Our thanks to John, and also to Neil Hamilton and Rory McNamee, who have stood down, and our good wishes to new Council members Gavin Martin and Denis McCabe.

MEMBERSHIP MATTER

Paul McCann, our new membership secretary, asks all members who pay by standing order to ensure that they have increased their order in line with the sub increase (£7.00 adults, £3.50 senior/junior). If you haven't yet gone round to paying your sub, why not do it now and avoid getting put on the blacklist?

IN THE PICTURE

News from Sam Carse of plans for an RPSI meeting in Dublin. It is a slide show by member Norman Foster featuring Irish and Continental steam. The meeting starts at 20.00 on Thursday May 1, and it is being held at the IRRS clubrooms, Heuston Station. All welcome!

HERE'S A CLEW

Along with this circular you will find your full booking form for the Clew Bay railtour. Already 200 bookings have been made using the £10 deposit system, so don't delay if you want to come. Included among our visitors will be a group from the West Berlin railway enthusiast club.

QUIZ TIME

When was Carrickfergus Castle in Whitehead? Well, on Thursday February 27, to be precise. The castle concerned is NIR's new 451 class DEMU which was being officially named. Afterwards

the VIPs came to Whitehead where they were entertained by NIR, using the RPSI directors' saloon and dining car.

A RUN FOR YOUR BUNNY Northern Ireland based members will receive, with this circular, a couple of copies of the Easter Bunny Train Rides poster. Do please try to spread the word by having it displayed in a local shop, garage, office or school. Dates and times:

Easter Sunday, March 30, Easter Monday, March 31 and Easter Tuesday, April 1. Whitehead Excursion Station, 2 pm 5 pm. Admission: Adults £1.00, Children £1-50.

A present from the Easter Bunny for all the children, a glass of punch for the parents, and a steam train ride for the family.

Our trusty Whitehead loco. No.3 "R.H. Smyth" will be in charge and we're expecting a bigger crowd than ever. It is the first occasion on which we've operated the Easter train rides over a three-day period. So make your own plans for a visit to Whitehead over the holidays.

#### A HELPING HAND

An SOS from the RPSI sales department - we could use your help at Easter and during the important spring season of displays and events. The Society relies heavily on the contribution from Irish Steam Scene and now is the time to come forward and offer your help. Even if it's just for one afternoon at Whitehead, we'll be pleased to hear from you. It's a good afternoon's crack, you'll be one of the bunch "behind the scenes" and you'll be helping the Society. For further details, please contact the RPSI commercial officer, Henry Beaumont.

#### TOP CLASS EVENT

Plans are being made for our annual Schools' Days at Whitehead, to be held this year on Tuesday June 3 and Wednesday June 4. Being a mid-week event, many of our regular stalwarts are not available and this is a special appeal for help from those not normally involved in our Whitehead events. Already some 500 primary school children have booked and we need members to act as guides, shop assistants, and dining car staff. Don't worry, all the groups come chaperoned by teachers!

We're hoping to unveil the new video about the RPSI being made by Monkstown Community School. So please, if you have a couple of days' leave to take, book them for June 3 & 4 and contact Mrs Reta Craig at Whitehead Railway Project for further details.

#### CHARTER DAY

Word from Ernie Gilmore that plans for two special charter trains in June look at present as though they could well come to fruition. They are:

June 14 - Lions International, Belfast to Balbriggan.

June 28 - Civil Servants Benevolent Fund Portrush Flyer.

The plan would be to use No.4 both trips. Watch this space.

#### STEAMING AHEAD

As announced at the AGM, plans are afoot for three outings during the summer using No.184, our Mullingar-based 0-6-0 and the ex-CIÉ coaches we have recently acquired. Dates are:

June 7 - Maynooth-Dublin shuttle.

July 26 - Claddagh railtour, Mullingar-Galway.

August 23 - Dublin-Maynooth shuttle.

This is a new venture for the Society so please give these outings your full support. The details will be circulated to members well in advance.

WEEKENDING

Negotiations are in progress at the moment for a repeat run of our Irish Steam Weekends package, this time to be handled by an English travel agent. They would tie in with the Flyer weekends of July 19, August 2 & 16, and we hope to have more details shortly.

Another idea we would draw to your attention is the possibility of your own Irish Steam Weekend over the Bank Holiday weekend at the end of August. The itinerary would be: Saturday August 23, Maynooth shuttle, Sunday August 24, Whitehead steam train rides and Monday August 25, Whitehead-Bangor and the Bangor Belle. Three locos, three days.

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