

THE RAILWAY PRESERATION SOCIETY OF IRELAND

JUNE 1987 NEWS-SHEET

- FLYER TIME Enclosed in this circular you will find your Portrush Flyer booking form. As you will see, we are increasing the number of Flyers from last year's three to four this time, in view of the excellent support there was for last year's trains. We have also brought the season forward, operating a Flyer in June for the first time ever. As you will read on the members' circular, the June 20 is the 50th Flyer, so that will be a cause for celebration. Also, for the first time ever, we are in the happy position of having a choice of three steam locos for the Flyer and we hope to give 4, 85 and 171 each a turn on the special. Your attention is drawn to the members' Awayday special offer.
- Don't forget, too, the Castlerock extension. Further to the members' circular, the Flyer officer has a limited number of Castlerock tickets which are available from him by post.
- CREST OF A WAVE Some of you may already be aware that Whitehead is now unfortunately without a hotel, the trusty Dolphin Hotel having been turned into an old people's home. However, we have established that there is a good B&B in the town and this is the Crestbank Guesthouse, 13 Marine Parade, Whitehead. It is run by Mrs Rigby and her phone number is Whitehead 72338. We understand she charges around £8 for bed and breakfast.
- DINNER IS SERVED To launch the summer season of steam train rides at Whitehead on Sunday June 7, our ever resourceful catering department laid on Sunday lunch in the dining car. Unfortunately there was not time to advise the membership at large in advance, but hopefully some of you saw the local newspaper publicity. The venture was a success and may well be repeated later in the season. More details in the next circular, in early July. The steam train rides operate every Sunday afternoon from 2 pm to 5 pm in June, July and August. If you can lend a hand behind the scenes, please complete and return the "Volunteers Wanted" circular.
- CLASSY EVENTS The Easter Bunny train rides, publicised in the last circular, enjoyed a record season so thanks to all concerned. The schools days at Whitehead on June 2 and 3 were also successful, despite some rather inclement weather. Loco 3 "R.H. Smyth" was the star of the show at the schools' day. Again, well done to all concerned.
- READ ALL ABOUT IT A plea from commercial officer Henry Beaumont to any of you who feel like doing a bit of spring cleaning. Henry would be pleased to hear from anyone who has old railway magazines or books which they no longer need and would like to donate to the RPSI for fund-raising. Also available from him:
- 171 colour poster - only a few left. £2.80 post free.
1927 railway clearing house map of Ireland. £2.80 post free.
- Limited stocks of both items, so don't delay.
- ANY OFFERS Member Henry Cleary of London has reluctantly had to part with a GNR(I) distant signal arm, originally at Adelaide. The arm was at his aunt's home in Belfast, now she is moving, and so Henry has kindly offered the signal arm to the RPSI to auction in aid of funds. The arm is in moderate condition but could be fixed up.

Postal offers by July 1 to Henry Beaumont - and it's all in aid of the Society.

LOUGH GILL SUCCESS If you missed the Lough Gill tour to Sligo, Belfast and Coleraine on the weekend of May 9/10/11 - eat your heart out. It was an outstanding success and all 320 passengers had an eminently memorable weekend. The weather was kind, the timekeeping good, the photographs fine and the crack superb. The tour was not without its moments of drama - No.4 had to be pulled out of the tour at the last minute (the Thursday beforehand) because of boiler trouble, now happily resolved. In her place went 171 "Slieve Gullion", still technically running in with two re-metalled axleboxes and one new big end. Fingers crossed - but 171 did us proud and ran like clockwork all weekend. The highlight of the whole weekend had to be that moment in Connolly Station, Dublin, when two GNR 4-4-0s were there at the same time for the first time since the early 1960s. No.85 "Merlin" gave us an excellent run north to Belfast and stole the show as far as many of our visitors were concerned. And what a cosmopolitan bunch we had - enthusiasts from Germany, Austria, Australia and the US were all on board, along with our main support group from Britain who come every year. Already operations officer Ernie Gilmore has received a number of letters of appreciation which we hope to publish in the next Five Foot Three, in the autumn. So, a heartfelt thankyou to all those who put so much effort into making the tour such a success.

ROLL ON MAY 1988 The operations committee announces that the weekend of May 14/15 has been selected for the 1988 two-day tour, with Limerick the main destination. The proposal is to go out from Dublin via Ballybrophy and Roscrea, and back via Athenry, Athlone and Mullingar. More details in due course.

DOWN SOUTH Unfortunately 184 was unable to take any part in the Lough Gill tour, as boiler work on the loco was still outstanding. As a result of the loco's non-availability (about which participants were advised when they received their tickets), 171 worked the Moate extension. Sadly the proposed Maynooth shuttle on the weekend of May 30 also had to go by the board. But the good news is that 184 was back in business at the start of June and at the time of writing was all geared up to work a series of shuttle trains between Ennis and Gort over the weekend of June 6 and 7 as part of a charter operation to mark the centenary of the West Clare Railway. There was not enough time to advise members of this working in advance - but we hope you managed to hear about it either through the grapevine or through the extensive local publicity. Plans are also in hand to operate shuttle trains from Dublin to Clonsilla at the end of August - more details next time round. Anyone interested in joining our work squad at Mullingar (it operates most weekends) should contact David.

NEW FACES Co-opted onto the Council since the AGM are:

Paul Newell, Belfast - Appeals & Sponsors.
David Humphries, Dublin - Southern publicity & marketing.
Rory McNamee, Dublin - Mullingar officer.

ANYONE FOR A CUPPA An appeal from Belfast area meetings organiser Charles Friel. Last year we were let down a couple of times by the non-appearance of our tea girls. Would any RPSI members like to take over this duty in the coming winter season - or does anyone know a local

charitable group which might like to use it as a fund-raising event? The dates are (all Tuesdays) October 20, November 17, December 15, January 19, February 16, March 15, and the venue St Jude's Church Hall, Sunnyside St. Contact Charles Friel for details.

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