

Railway Preservation Society of Ireland

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Belfast Boat Club, Friday 19th February 1988

Lord Dunleath presided, and 60 members were present. Apologies were received from Lord O'Neill, John Friel, Neil Hamilton, Julian Durore, and Mark Hodge.

The minutes of the 1987 AGM and of the EGM of April 24, 1987, were agreed and signed.

The Chairman read his report, and it was adopted on the proposal of Brian Hill, seconded by Sam Carse.

The Secretary read his report, and it was adopted on the proposal of David Humphries, seconded by Isabel Gilmore.

The Treasurer read his report and it was adopted on the proposal of Nevin Hamilton, seconded by Bob Hunter.

Bob Hunter then proposed a vote of thanks to the dining car staff, which was seconded by Peter Scott.

Coopers & Lybrand were re-appointed auditors, on the proposal of Johnny Glendinning, seconded by John Beaumont.

Mr Jim Parke of Muir & Addy Management Services then addressed the meeting, outlining the plans for an £80,000 carriage shed at Whitehead and for a feasibility study on the proposed interpretive centre. Dealing with the £40,000 which the Society required to raise for the carriage shed, Mr Parke said it was up to the membership to "come up with the goods". He suggested that as well as Council-organised fund-raising events, individual members could organise events such as bridge evenings or coffee mornings and should aim to raise up to £50 a time.

Mr Parke also raised the possibility of sponsorship, and pointed out that many members worked for companies or came into contact with firms which might act as possible sponsors. He said the carriage shed was an obvious investment for the Society, and said the RPSI was an excellent product to market.

The election of office-bearers and council for 1988 then took place. As there were no contests, it was proposed by John Taylor, seconded by John Beaumont, and agreed by the meeting that all those nominated should be deemed elected. There were no nominations for the posts of Coach Running Officer and Commercial Officer, and so it was agreed to leave these posts vacant in the hope that the Council might be able to co-opt people.

The 1988 Council is:

Chairman - Sullivan Boomer, 22 Town Lane, Islandmagee, Co. Antrim, BT40 3SZ.

Secretary - Robin Morton, 79 Sharman Road, Belfast, BT9 5HE.

Treasurer - John Richardson, 18 Downshire Gardens, Carrickfergus, BT38 7LW.

Operations - Ernie Gilmore, 20 Chichester Road, Belfast 15.
Loco. Maintenance - Peter Scott, 17 Finaghy Park Central, Belfast 10.
Loco. Running - Brian Hill, c/o 22 Town Lane, Islandmagee, Co. Antrim.
Coach Maintenance - Alan Edgar, c/o Whitehead Railway Project, Whitehead.
Coach Running - Vacant
Site - Johnny Glendinning, 23 Beechdene Gardens, Lisburn, Co. Antrim.
Publications - Nelson Poots, c/o Whitehead Railway Project, Whitehead.
Publicity - Michael McMahon, 40 Balmoral Court, Belfast 9.
Commercial - Vacant
Mullingar Site - Rory McNamee, 19 Thornhill Road, Mount Merrion, Dublin.
Mullingar Coach Maintenance - Mark Hodge, 83 Springhill Avenue, Blackrock, Dublin.
Mullingar Coach Running - Aidan McDonnell, 29 Bothar Bean Aoibhinn, Dublin 11.
Dublin Agent - Sam Carse, 38 Oakley Road, Ranelagh, Dublin 6.
Southern Marketing - David Humphries, 33 Torquay Wood, Dublin 18.
London Agent - Leslie McAllister, 22 Lansdowne Road, Frimley, Camberley, Surrey.

S.Boomer paid tribute to the four retiring council members, John Friel, Neil Hamilton, Jeremy Saulters and Henry Beaumont.

P.Scott presented his locomotive report and outlined the current position. He paid tribute to Paddy O'Brien, who was standing down as Mullingar Locomotive Maintenance PSR. P.Scott invited more members to participate in the work at Whitehead and also highlighted the Belfast Technical College metalwork class on Monday evenings.

Robert Edwards reported on the progress being made with the overhaul of 3BG Guinness, the locomotive made the subject of a loan agreement between the Society and the Downpatrick & Ardglass Railway Society.

A.Edgar presented his coach report and outlined the current position. He paid tribute to those members involved in the restoration of the coaches used for the filming of "Troubles" in September. A.Edgar reported that expenditure in the carriage department had risen to £13,000, a 54% increase, but said a comparison with similar societies in Britain showed the RPSI carriage department to be cost-effective.

J.Glendinning presented his site report and outlined the work schedule. He stressed the need for more volunteers to help the track squad, saying that progress could only be made if more members assisted.

R.McNamee presented his Mullingar report and recommended a mix of Mullingar and Whitehead based RPSI footplate staff on all occasions.

E.Gilmore then outlined the operations programme for 1988, and said that the RPSI proposed to operate a total of 3,300 miles by steam during the year. He said it would be a marvellous year.

Turning to the Shannon Railtour, E.Gilmore reported that already 269 people had submitted £10 deposits to reserve a place on the train. He appealed to members intending to travel to send in a deposit as soon as possible in order to avoid disappointment. E.Gilmore explained that difficulties had arisen over the proposal to cover the Foynes branch on the tour. The civil

engineer's department had decreed that the trees would need to be cut back to allow a passenger train to operate, and this would cost too much. Consideration was being given to running to Limerick Junction instead.

As well as four Portrush Flyers and three Steam Enterprises, it was proposed to operate a series of special trains from Dublin with No.4 to mark the Dublin Millennium.

E.Gilmore paid tribute to the work of retiring Locomotive Running Officer Jeremy Saulters.

Mark Fletcher suggested operating another non-stop Enterprise Express.

Malcolm Halliday praised the use of bands on board RPSI trains to provide extra atmosphere.

Derek Henderson praised the Society for the successful 1987 operating season, but appealed for an improvement in toilet facilities, pointing out that the Steam Enterprise had left Belfast with empty toilet water tanks. A.Edgar explained that there had been problems with coach watering facilities at Central Services Depot, but it was hoped to overcome these difficulties.

Heather Boomer said that members would, in the next circular, be receiving an appeal for more volunteers to help with train cleaning, and she said she hoped there would be a good response. Victor Corrie told of the problems of cleaning exteriors of carriage windows if the train was not at a platform.

John Parkinson asked for an update on the position on the wooden-bodied stock front. S.Boomer said that the ban applied only to the Dublin-Mallow section, and that there was no problem at present on the Belfast-Dublin line.

Colin Holliday reported problems he had encountered as a member of the operating staff over rosters, and urged that duties be specified on the roster forms. S.Boomer said it was hoped to eliminate such problems in the coming year.

Gavin Martin said that the "bottom line" was that the Society was short of members willing to volunteer to help the Society's activities.

There being no further business, Lord Dunleath declared the meeting closed and members watched a video recording of RPSI steam trains made by John Friel.

Signed: _____ *Chairman* _____ *Date:* _____