

The Bogie-man's Gazette

JUNE 1988

JUST when you thought it was safe to open your circular again, the Bogie men are back. Last time we left you with this thought, would the kits of parts in Whitehead and Mullingar be miraculously transformed into rakes of carriages fit for the Two Day Tour, or would there be 350 people sitting on the tender. So for all you unlucky people who were not able to travel the trains are out and running, but remember it takes a lot of work to keep them that way.

The Snail takes wing ...

Mullingar which now has a much larger carriage team than Whitehead (come on you Northerners, let's see you down some weekends) out-shopped five coaches for the tour; three 64 seat opens Nos. 1470, 1483, 1469, a brake 1916 and buffet car 2422. All these coaches were spray painted in the late 1950s / early 1960s bright green livery. One wit remarked on the appropriateness of painting coach 1916 green over Easter. All of these coaches required a substantial amount of work and we heard reports that some of the Mullingar team had become nocturnal. The results were there to be seen on the tour and many passengers commented favourably on the appearance of the set. No doubt we can look forward to the inside story in the next edition of "Five Foot Three". The main target of the Mullingar programme was not however the Two Day Tour but the Dublin Millennium trips which got off to an excellent start on 4th June, by which time the five coach set had become an eight coach set, with the addition of opens 1445, 1463 and brake 1915. Dare one suggest that this augmented set anticipates the allocation of 461 or another large engine to Mullingar?

Meanwhile, back at the "Boilersuit Arms" ...

The Whitehead set, as reported in the last "Gazette", required a substantial amount of work to bring it up to standard. We were pleased to see a couple of new faces coming down to assist us, but even so the Whitehead carriage team is about half the size of that at Mullingar. Nonetheless, the vast majority of the work we set out to do was completed - just. It was necessary to hold two coaches at Whitehead until after the "Bangor Belle" as the extra fortnight was required to complete them. Thus NCC Third 238 and Directors Saloon 50 found themselves included in the Bangor train. A substitution was effected before the empty stock working with Bredin 1327 and NCC Third 241 (the midweek squad's project) being worked from Whitehead by diesel.

Being a bit of a drip ...

An inspection of the plumbing on the Whitehead set led to many horrors being discovered. Over the Winter, frost had inflicted much damage to the pipework. To hopefully avoid this in future, all

coaches are now fitted with a drain valve so that no water is left lying in the pipes. A determined onslaught on the plumbing meant that all loos were working when the train went into traffic.

Or getting knotted ...

The North Atlantic Brake was rushed into traffic some years ago in a semi complete state internally. At last, she has been fitted with luggage racks - of the correct LMS pattern, salvaged from other coaches long since scrapped. One problem was to find a supplier of "fish net" mesh for these. After a long search, our friends in the Severn Valley Railway C&W advised us of a source - the Workshops for the Blind, Hull. B-Line Industries, to give them their correct commercial title, supplied us with mesh within two weeks of us ordering.

Tabled motion ...

We were approached by one John Richardson, wearing his Dining Car Steward's hat, with a problem. Could we fit tables into the GNR open 9 before the Two Day Tour, and thereby expedite the serving of 3 million meals to the passengers? Various options were discussed and then someone remembered seeing at the back of a store an old table out of a GNR K15. A search revealed that this was indeed the case, and Whitehead Railway Project rose to the occasion and used it as a pattern to make 18 like it in only three weeks. Whitehead Railway Project were also heavily involved in work on 1327 and 241.

S.O.S. ...

On a serious note, there is a lot of work involved just to keep the trains running, and clean. The list of little repairs is endless, but such repairs are well within the scope of anyone with basic DIY experience - and most of us have that. The Whitehead set will be based at Belfast Central Services Depot over the operating season and the Mullingar set at Dublin Heuston. Please come and help us! Just contact David Humphries in Dublin or Heather Boomer at Whitehead.

Coming soon spot ...

We started in the South and there we will return to finish with a most intriguing "watch this space". Most of us are familiar with the excellent results of the Whitehead Railway Project YTP scheme. In the South similar schemes are administered by AnCo, the government funded training body. Negotiations are currently in progress with a view to starting a project in Mullingar, restoring carriages there. Plans are not yet finalised, but it is hoped that their first project would be to restore open second 1434 as a spare coach for the Mullingar set.