

THE RAILWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF IRELAND

NEWSLETTER

JUNE 1989

FIRM FOUNDATIONS ...

Plans are forging ahead for work to start in August on the planned £90,000 carriage storage shed at the RPSI headquarters in Whitehead. As members will now, the International Fund for Ireland has made a 50% grant available to the Society for the project, and at its May meeting the RPSI Council agreed that the scheme should go out to tender. It is proposed that work should be phased over three years to lessen the financial burden on the Society, in the event of funds being slower in coming in than we would expect, but ideally the project will be completed in two years. By 1992 at the latest we should have a basic storage shed which will keep 16 of our historic coaches safe and dry, protected from the elements, and where eventually we will be able to carry out minor running repairs and valeting on the train.

Thanks partly to donations from members, the Society currently has some £15,000 set aside in its capital projects fund, all of which will now go to the carriage shed project. But while this will get us off to a firm start, we now require a major effort by each and every one of you, the members, to see the project successfully concluded. So please have a think now about means of raising funds for this very worthy cause.

Remember that every little helps.

SETTING AN EXAMPLE ...

And thanks to two RPSI members for their very positive help for the Carriage Shed Appeal Fund. David Stirling, who won a free ticket for the Mount Brandon Railtour, immediately returned the cheque to the Society as a contribution to the fund. And Peter Bruce-Jones, who won raffle on the tour for a staff from the Mayo line, held an impromptu auction for his prize, raising the sum of £50 which he donated to the Appeal. So thanks to David and Peter - take a leaf out of their book and keep the money rolling in ... and remember that thanks to

the International fund every £1 you raise is worth £2 to the Society, as they are matching us pound for pound!

CROWNING SUCCESS ...

The RPSI's two day tour visit to the Kingdom of Kerry on the weekend of 13/14 May was a crowning success, and congratulations and thanks are due to all concerned. More than 300 passengers were on board for the historic trip down the Great Southern main line by No.85 "Merlin" - the first time a Great Northern Compound had ever been on Great Southern Railways metals.

It was also No.4's first visit to Killarney and Tralee and both locomotives put up excellent performances. Our passengers all enjoyed the weekend (in spite of one or two inevitable hitches) and many of them have written to express their thanks, Operations Officer Ernie Gilmore reports.

The Monday trip on Northern Ireland Railways was also a notable success with more than 150 of our visitors staying to join in the fun with a memorable false start in the sunshine at Bangor and a superb runpast at Ballinderry. All in all, a fitting way to mark the 21st anniversary of the RPSI's first two day tour to Athlone in 1968. And next year? ... well, the Southeast is a lovely part of the country ... but we'll let you know as soon as we've recovered enough to face the planning all over again!

SUMMER STEAM 89 ...

Previously we called it "Millennium Plus One" because we hadn't finalised the marketing plan, but this year the Dublin based operations are being marketed under the heading "Summer Steam 89". And No.85 was the star of the show for the first of the 1989 season of steam outings from Dublin, when she hauled "The Cooley" to Dundalk on 3 June. The train was well

loaded with over 300 passengers out of Dublin, and it augured well for the rest of the season. Just to remind you, the remaining excursions are:

15 July: The Shannon
Dublin - Carrick-on-Shannon-Sligo
12 August: The Sea Breeze
Dublin - Wexford - Rosslare
9 September: The Maynooth Shuttle
Dublin - Maynooth

Full details can be had from David Humphries or buy your ticket at your local branch Irish Life Building Society.

On Saturday 24 June No.4 is due to head the inaugural "Sea Breeze" excursion from Dublin to Wexford, which has been fully booked by enthusiasts coming for a day trip from Britain. A very few tickets may still be available from David, and tickets for the Wexford - Rosslare local trip may also be available. As a market tester this trip has been a great success with such an overwhelming response, and it seems likely that we will target selected trips at the British market in future. Members will, however, be given preferential booking facilities for a number of seats to avoid disappointment.

IT'S A MYSTERY ...

Members living in Northern Ireland were circulated about a mystery tour which is to take place on Sunday 18 June. The train leaves Whitehead at 10.00, and Belfast York Road at 10.50 - but from then on you will have to guess where it is going. Some clues are:

- * Two mainline steam locos to be used.
- * More than 200 miles of steam.
- * Travel through four counties.
- * Seven reversals and three watering stops all told.

The fare is £10 for adults and £6 for Under 16 or Over 65, so if this reaches you in time just turn up and take off. (The time problem is why everyone wasn't circulated originally.) The Dining Car with a full bar service will be attached, and sandwiches will be available. The train arrives back at York Road at 18.15 and at Whitehead at 19.15.

SILVER JUBILEE FLYER ...

The RPSI was formed in 1964 and is marking

its Silver Jubilee year in a number of ways, the first of which is the season of Portrush Flyer trains which starts on Saturday 8 July. Details are enclosed with this circular and with only three Flyers being run this year seats will be at a premium, so book early to avoid disappointment. The main Flyer train will be stabled at York Road station, and this is why only the York Road departure is being advertised to the public. But as you will see from the enclosed members' circular, No.85 will be bringing the Dining Car and workshop coach from Whitehead, so very limited accommodation may be available for members who wish to travel from there. Be prepared though, it will almost certainly be standing room only as far as York Road!

WHITEHEAD SHUTTLE ...

The Sunday afternoon train rides at Whitehead start on 2 July and run each weekend until the end of August. We plan to use locomotive No.3 "R.H. Smyth" once again, and the engine is currently being re-tubed for the summer season. Anyone who can help us to make sure that No.3 is ready for the summer duties should turn up at Whitehead any weekend and ask for Peter Scott, our Locomotive Maintenance Officer. Many hands make light work! And anyone who can help out at Whitehead for the train rides, manning the shop, or the diner, or selling tickets, is asked to contact Sam Somerville our Whitehead Operations Manager. And finally, please make a point of bringing your family and friends to Whitehead on at least one Sunday this summer for a relaxing afternoon.

STANDING ORDERS ...

A plea from RPSI Membership Secretary Paul McCann for members to check with their banks and make sure that their membership standing orders are up to date. The current subscription is £8 but some members have let their standing orders continue at the old £6 level, so don't be behind the times.

FACE LIFT ...

The former Comlucht Siúcre Éireann (Irish Sugar Co.) diesel shunter which was presented to the Society some years ago is being overhauled, and our thanks go to the Crumlin Road Youth Opportunities Scheme in Belfast, who are refurbishing the engine's cab.