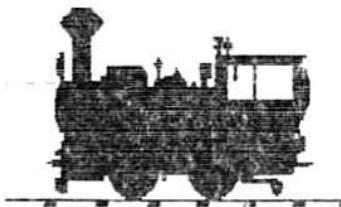


MAINTENANCE *NEWS*

FROM THE RAILWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF IRELAND

November 1989

Members are continually being bombarded with requests to come to Whitehead and Mullingar to help with the winter (and summer) work programmes. Many of you have asked for more details about the work which is continually going on, and this occasional newsletter is an attempt to explain more fully why we need your help this weekend.



LOCOMOTIVE DEPARTMENT

The winter maintenance season of 1989/90 heralds a major programme of work on our locomotives. To provide motive power for the 1990 season No.4 requires repair work on an outside rod bearing, which needs to be re-metalled, and repairs to the driving wheel springs. These were recently replaced but must have been badly tempered, as several leaves are broken and they need replacement. On top of this (literally), the tubes are reaching the end of their useful life, and some will probably have to be replaced before the spring when the engine returns to traffic. Autumn 1990 will see the boiler removed from the engine for inspection and repairs, a really major task.

No.85 will also require minor repairs this winter, so that both our main locomotives will be available for traffic next year.

More importantly, to bring our other engines back into traffic over the next couple of years, work will have to be carried out now over this winter. No.461's general overhaul is continuing, with the boiler having been removed from the frames. Work has been going on to build up wasting around the tubeplate, and cleaning scale from the firebox foundation ring. When all this is completed the boiler will be retubed. Meanwhile work has been continuing in the evening classes at Belfast College of Technology making parts for the engine, and further reassembly of the motion will continue in the near future. The drop grate is rapidly taking shape and the ashpan is nearly complete. There is a great deal still to be done if No.461 is going to emerge in the first half of 1990 to begin running-in trials. The existing squad of under a dozen regular workers require all the help they can get!

At the same time No.171 is being prepared for the boiler to be removed. This engine requires a complete retubing and some relatively minor mechanical work, and is required for traffic in early 1991.

The 'Derry Engine', No.3, will also have its boiler removed at the end of the 1990 summer season for new firebox patches, a new smokebox, and other (hopefully) minor repair work. We also have to repair the Planet diesel, No.23, which needs attention to the engine, and to complete restoration of the Carlow diesel, which is progressing well.

More manpower is needed, and you don't have to be a skilled engineer; a pair of hands is always welcome.



Although there is a little uncertainty about the future for running wooden bodied coaches on Irish Rail, we still require our own coaches for the Portrush Flyer, and some of the Dublin based trains will require the use of the Mullingar set. Indeed both sets will probably be required in 1991 as well. Work is being concentrated on maintaining the "running rakes", and some mechanical work will, as usual, be required. This should mainly consist of overhauling the brakes and some work on springs, couplings and gangways, two of the latter still requiring to be rebuilt.

88, the GNR diner, is virtually complete, and requires only reassembly of the brake gear and renewal of the axle bearings, but this work will require the efforts of several people for a few weeks. 87, the NCC diner, which has been in traffic for several years, now needs some essential repairs, but happily we appear to be going to get this covered by sponsorship from a well-known brewery. The work will involve repairs to the floor, modifications and alterations to the kitchen and bar areas, and improved security for the stock. Some of the work will be done professionally, but help will be required for many minor jobs, and especially for repainting. It is also planned to finally complete the refurbishment of 114, the GNR brake used as the service coach. This involves examination of, and repairs as necessary to, the axle bearings, repair and replacement of the bogie springs, and the completion of repairs to the bodywork.

On the remaining coaches at Whitehead internal work is required which includes some attention to the lighting systems, particularly in 1335, 1142 and 9, which have given some minor problems. All the coaches need their lighting systems checked out, batteries checked (and some replaced), and other simple, routine but time consuming tasks like re-lamping.

We have been dogged by several failures of the plumbing, and 68, 91 and 241 have leaking water tanks. These will have to be removed, and repaired or replaced, which requires basic joinery only, and the simplest of plumbing knowledge. We can all use a screwdriver, hammer or spanner, and most people can change a tap washer! Some internal repainting and refurbishing will also be necessary. All these jobs require manpower, and the two or three members who have been regularly working on maintaining the Whitehead set of coaches could use all the help they can get.

The Mullingar set also requires routine maintenance, and all the help that you can provide will be very welcome. It's all the routine checking and testing and cleaning that takes up the time. But it's that which keeps our trains safe and comfortable, and that's very important for us when we're selling our trips to the general public.



SITE DEPARTMENT

Mullingar site works are only on a "care and maintenance" level while we continue to try and negotiate a lease, but on the Whitehead front there is a lot going on. Apart from the work in connection with the Carriage Shed, there is a lot of track maintenance going on. Some tracklaying is also on the cards, with the extension, and repairing of No.1 carriage siding and, hopefully, the laying in of the heavy lift area siding. The turnout to the Whitehead Railway Project shed could also be installed if sufficient manpower is available. To save expense we may even try to do some of the foundation work for the Carriage Shed. Added to this, of course, there will be some electrical and plumbing work and all the usual maintenance necessary to keep our base operational and efficient.

All these various maintenance jobs require manpower, but in most cases there is no special skill required. We can all help at either Whitehead or Mullingar, and each department head will happily help you to learn the basic skills needed to take an active part in the work of the Society. And don't forget that our Sales Teams, our Catering Department, our Train Cleaning Squad, our Operations Department and Operating Staff all require assistance. It's true - many hands make light work!

And remember - there's a members' Open Day being held at Whitehead on 27 January. Why not come along and see how you can be an active member?