

RAILWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF IRELAND
NEWS-SHEET - OCTOBER 1991

COUNCIL NEWS

Nearing the end of what has been, in many ways, a fairly hectic year things seem to have settled down a bit so there isn't too much news from this source. Those involved in the operation of the E.C. grant are being kept busy planning expenditure and getting all the bills in order.

On the subject of money, membership secretary Paul McCann would like members to consider paying their annual subscriptions early. For a third year running there has been no increase in the rate and prompt payment saves Paul a lot of bother. He'll also be glad to supply the necessary form to anyone wishing to covenant their sub - this costs you nothing extra and the Society can reclaim tax on the amount of the subscription.

Westrail, based at Tuam, Co. Galway, have expressed an interest in leasing our ex-SL&NCR No.27 "Lough Erne", which has lurked behind the shed at Whitehead for many years. Preliminary discussions have taken place with a view to working out an agreement which will be financially satisfactory and not in conflict with the RPSI's operational interests.

WHITEHEAD

Plans have been prepared showing various options for the siting of the carriage shed, workshop and turntable on the Whitehead site. A decision on this will be made in the very near future as it is hoped to invite tenders for the construction of the carriage shed in the next few weeks. The shed project is due for completion by March 1992.

The August Newsheet mentioned assembly of track panels on the platform. Dermot Mackie could be doing with more help on this job, especially to get track laid on the site of the carriage shed as it is much easier to do this on an open site than when steelwork is all around. So never mind the coughing wretches tottering around in the loco shed - here's a chance to enjoy some exercise in a healthy outdoor environment! Why not give it a try?

Members of the Whitehead Social Club are helping out by fitting secure storage areas in the shop on the platform.

The refurbishment of dining car No.87 should be completed in the next 3-4 weeks.

SOUTHERN NEWS

Negotiations with Irish Rail are continuing in order to resolve the question of our tenure of Mullingar loco shed. Until this is completed no major work on the structure or access road can be carried out. In the meantime repairs are being carried out on parts of the roof and rainwater drainage system. This is preventive work in anticipation of a satisfactory agreement being reached as there would be little point in becoming tenants of a crumbling pile. A sub-committee is being set up to finalise the agreement and thanks are due to Chas Meredith for his work to date in dealing with Irish Rail.

Meanwhile, work has proceeded on the renovation of the steam

heating equipment in the Mullingar carriage set and this is now almost complete.

No.461 is to run light engine from Whitehead to Dublin on 2 November. The loco is to be fitted with steam heating equipment prior to working the carriages to Mullingar in preparation for the Santa trains.

The working to Mullingar will leave Dublin (Connolly) at 1130 on Thursday 5 December. Although the train will not be advertised to the public, passengers may travel on payment of a nominal fare. Don't forget, though, that it's a one-way trip so you'll have to make your own arrangements to get back.

The Mullingar Santa trains will run on Saturday and Sunday, 7 & 8 December, from Mullingar to Killucan and back, a round trip of about 45 minutes. The fare will include a present and a glass of Christmas cheer and, although not yet finalised, should be in the region of IR£5.

Departures from Mullingar will be as follows:

Saturday 7 December 1100, 1230 and 1400

Sunday 8 December 1130, 1300 and 1500

Enquiries re above operations to David Humphries.

OPERATIONS

The last Newsheet ran into unforeseen snags and arrived too late to tell members about the Greystones Shuttles but the Dublin publicity machine did not fail and the result was three full trains. Regrettably, the afternoon was marred by a bomb hoax. This must one of the most cost-effective operations around as it can produce trouble and expense out of all proportion to the modest outlay on a phone call. This was proved on 8 September when the second return working from Greystones was delayed thus. Railway operations were disrupted, Gardai were diverted from other work, the third train ran late and without a lot of people, who had intended to travel on it. A few hundred people were messed about in one way or another - a job to be proud of, indeed!

No.4 which, you may recall, was to have been withdrawn for overhaul about a year ago continues to romp shamelessly around the country and returned from a summer in Dublin to work the North Atlantic Express to Derry on 21 September. The train was quite well filled and created much interest in the steam-starved Maiden City. NIR driver Bobby Quail was due to retire in mid-October so it was nice to see him rostered for this his last steam job, even if it wasn't over his favourite line. A man with clear views on the use of steam (and, indeed, on almost any subject!), a delay waiting for a diesel to cross at Ballymoney was just what he needed!

A certain NIR employee was recently seen to fall about laughing on hearing that yet another Hunslet last run was proposed. It's getting a bit like that with No.4, but at this stage it seems that her definite last run before overhaul will be to Moira on 3 November with a train organised by the Department of the Environment in connection with the restoration of Moira station. Assuming that No.461 has no problems, there are no more operations planned before No.171 returns to traffic. See enclosed sheet for details of the Moira excursion.

The Operations Committee obviously feels, that non-Gaels have been

having it too easy on recent Railtours so it's Grainne ni Mhaille for 1992! Never mind if you can't pronounce the name; the tour goes to Westport and by the time you get there you'll be an expert. Keep an eye open for further details soon.

THERE'LL ALWAYS BE AN ENGLAND

Possibly only those involved in organising tours realise how much we rely on support from England and, indeed, further afield in our major operations. On top of this, despite all the competing cross-Channel attractions, Leslie McAllister and his Syndicate are doing an excellent job in fund-raising on the Society's behalf in "foreign" territory. Just wait till we get two Great Northern engines on the road again! Tim Morton also keeps the RPSI flag flying in the London area and his firm is very much involved in NIR's cross-Harbour plans.

LOCO REPORT

4 At Whitehead. To be withdrawn for major overhaul after 3 November operation.

23 In traffic.

Carlow Diesel Work proceeding on stand-by basis. Recently compressed air receivers have been pressure-tested and some work on the transmission has been carried out.

85 One of the methods of firebox repair considered was the welding in of new copper sheets in the firebox sides. A sample of work of this type has been received from a potential contractor and is being evaluated.

171 The stage has now been reached where the locomotive looks almost complete, having recently having its chimney restored to it, but among its unseen parts one set of driving wheels is carried by coil springs and the other by leaf springs. The latter are being rebuilt and will then have to be refitted. Some boiler cladding sheets have still to be refitted as have a number of lubrication pipes. The cab foot-boarding has to be replaced and in connection with this the tender will have to be reclaimed from No.85 which has had the loan of it since 171 was withdrawn. It is hoped that repainting will be followed by a trouble-free return to traffic.

461 At Whitehead but scheduled to go to Dublin on 2 November for Santa trains (see above) and 1992 operations.

BELFAST AREA MEETINGS

These got off to a successful start with the film show on 9 October.

The next date is 13 November. Joe Curran, son of B.L. Curran, last Secretary and General Manager of the CDR, will be giving a talk on the County Donegal Railways. Illustrated by colour slides and a Fred Cooper cine, the presentation will cover almost all aspects of the CDR system which operated amidst some of Ireland's most impressive scenery. Definitely a night not to be missed!

On 11 December Dr. D.B. McNeill will tell us of the Sligo Leitrim

and Friends. This talk, again illustrated by colour slides, will deal with the history and development of the Sligo Leitrim & Northern Counties Railway and its relationship with neighbouring lines.

For those who don't already know, the meetings are at St. Jude's Hall, Ravenhill Road, Belfast, starting at 7.30 pm. The RPSI sales stand will be in operation and tea, etc., is provided during the interval. If you have any surplus items of railway interest these meetings are a good opportunity to pass them on to the sales staff who will, hopefully, convert them into money for the Society's benefit.

FIVE FOOT THREE

The next issue of the Society's magazine is due to appear early in 1992. As well as being supplied free to RPSI members the magazine is also sent on a complimentary basis to various bodies in the private and public sectors.

Have you a product or service which you would like advertise, at £30/half page or £50/ full page? Please drop a line as soon as possible to Nelson Poots, c/o RPSI, Whitehead. If you are in business and not in a position to assist physically, this would be an opportunity to boost Society funds indirectly by defraying the substantial production costs of the magazine.

WORK PROGRAMME 1991/2

The following work programme is part of the rolling programme in connection with the grant aid from the European Regional Development Fund, and volunteers to help with the work are urgently needed. If you can wield a paintbrush you too can be a part of this exciting project. Remember, the crack's good and you can have an enjoyable time, as well as helping the Society prepare for the next few years. So, in the words of the TV programme, "Come on down!"

SITE DEPARTMENT

WHITEHEAD

Lay track for Carriage Shed roads.

Install turnout for heavy lift area and lay track through sheer-legs.

Erect sheer-legs.

Reposition and realign turnouts and track for Locomotive Workshop and for turntable.

Install turntable.

Relay platform road.

MULLINGAR

Repair shed roof.

On completion of agreement with Irish Rail and CIÉ complete refurbishment of shed and construct new access road. Erect fencing.

LOCOMOTIVE DEPARTMENT

Complete No.171.

Commence dismantling of No.85 for firebox repairs.

Commence dismantling of No.4 for boiler rebuild.

Overhaul boiler for No.4.

Reassemble Nos. 4, 85 and LP&HC No.3 after boiler refurbishment.

Complete rebuild of CSÉ diesel No.4.

Continue refurbishment of No. 184 at Mullingar.

CARRIAGE AND WAGON DEPARTMENT

WHITEHEAD

Complete rebuild of Dining Cars, particularly internal finishing out.

Complete rebuild of No.1097 and installation of wheelchair facilities.

Complete rebuild of No.411.

Overhaul all running vehicles, especially running gear.

Clean and prepare all running-vehicles for 1992 season.

Reinstate toilets in Nos. 91 and 241.

Reinstate steam heating on all running vehicles.

Complete rebuild of No.861.

MULLINGAR

Continue with refurbishment and rebuilding of all running vehicles.