

RAILWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF IRELAND

NEWS-SHEET - JANUARY 1992

COUNCIL NEWS

Annual subscriptions are now due. We have kept the rates at the same level for a third year and the Secretary would be grateful if you would pay promptly, perhaps adding a small donation.

A close check is still being kept on the Society's expenditure, with non-essential items cut to a minimum. As has been said elsewhere, the ERDF grant is not a handout in advance but a rebate on actual expenditure so we still have to earn money in order to realise the total grant potential.

The AGM will be in Dublin this year, at the premises of the Irish Railway Record Society at Heuston station (Kingsbridge to traditionalists) on Saturday 22 February, starting time 2 p.m. The afternoon timing will allow members in Ireland to return home on the same day if they wish. A return fare of £11 from Belfast is available on production of a valid RPSI membership card to the NIR booking office. Special fares are similarly available on Irish Rail - an incentive to renew your sub in good time!

Members are invited to stand for any Council post but particularly in Carriage Running, where Thomas Charters has resigned, and Commercial where Henry Beaumont would welcome the appointment of a successor. In the meantime, however, it is business as usual with Henry and a list of sales items is included.

OPERATIONS

Anyone wishing to travel on the "Grainne Uaile" railtour in May is advised to send in an advance booking form immediately as it seems likely that the tour will soon be fully booked. We have been cleared for steam haulage into Ballina - the first for many years - and at present it seems likely that we will be allowed to operate our vintage coaches, instead of Irish Rail Cravens, over the whole route of the tour.

Santa did not appear at Whitehead this winter but he was to be found at Mullingar whence a very successful series of trips to Killucan was operated. Travellers were not totally dependent on Santa's liquid heating as, in the weeks before Christmas, our Dublin members had fitted steam heating to No.461 and overhauled the equipment in the Mullingar carriage set.

In November No.4 had a less happy outing when rostered to work a charter to Moira, the journey from Lisburn onwards being diesel-operated - see Five Foot Three.

CARRIAGE & WAGON

During November most of the operational stock at Whitehead was moved to Dublin for storage in order to clear the site for carriage shed construction. K15 No.9 developed a hot axlebox and was left off at Drogheda where repairs are currently under way. The remaining stock - or as much of it as was fit to be moved off site - was taken to Magheramorne sidings in December.

Brake/3rd No.114 and Diner No.87 can still be accommodated at Whitehead where they are under repair. An urgent task on 114 is the replacement of a damaged axlebox. Gas and electrical fittings on the diner are almost complete and some internal painting and reinstatement of furnishings will see the job finished.

SITE

The contract for construction of the abbreviated (12 coach) carriage shed will probably have been signed by the time you read this and assembly of the steelwork has already begun. Dermot Mackie and gang have laboured mightily on site clearance and on installation of track panels. Being a fairly simple structure, the shed should be completed by some time in March.

LOCOMOTIVES

Not a great deal to add to the report in Five Foot Three. A start has been made on the dismantling of No.4 in preparation for eventual boiler lifting. Work is progressing on the removal of the defective sections of No.85's firebox, with similar attention being given to "R.H. Smyth". No.171 has been satisfactorily steam tested and would probably have run main line trials by now but for the fact that due to the dispersal of carriage stock there is not enough left to make up a meaningful load! No.461 will be based in Dublin for most of 1992.

WANTED

No, it's not another harangue about volunteers - although they're always welcome! John Moore of the Ulster Folk & Transport Museum would like to acquire a cattle wagon of any Irish railway company. Does anybody know where there is one?

SALES ITEMS

Available from Henry Beaumont. All prices are in Sterling and include post & packing.

1. RPSI ties, navy with No.171 in light blue, lined and lettered in red and gold, gold "RPSI" beneath loco. £6.75
2. GNRB coat of arms, 8" diameter, full colour, choice of loco blue or teak panel. Unmounted transfers also available. £16.50 & £7.50
3. Steam's Silver Lining - Joe Cassells' definitive account of 25 years of RPSI main line operations, 76 pages, many photographs. £5.40
4. Five Foot Three hack numbers. Price depends on age, send a list of those you want.
5. RPSI colour posters, approximately 24" x 18"; (a) No.4 on RPSI train at Portrush; (b) No.85 at RPSI platform, Whitehead; (c) No.461 on RPSI train in Dublin, Westland Row; (d) 5 different views, on one sheet, of RPSI locos and trains at various locations.
£1.30 each, all four for £4.50
6. RPSI loco badges; coloured, with shaped outline, approx 12" long with pin clip. No.4, LMS(NCC) 2-6-4T; No.171 GNR(I) 4-4-0; No.186 GSWR 0-6-0; No.461 DSER 2-6-0 and GNR(I) VS class 4-4-0.
£1.30 each or all five for £5.30