

Railway Preservation Society of Ireland

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Irish Railway Record Society Premises, Dublin, Saturday 7th March 1998

Dr Garret FitzGerald presided and 82 members were present.

The meeting opened with members standing in silence for a short period in memory of recently deceased members: Sir Myles Humphreys (Vice-President), Geoffrey Wigham, Bob Collins, Robin Convery, Neil Pitts.

Apologies

H.Beaumont, M.Booth, C. Boomer (2), H. Boomer, D.Carse, J.Creaner, M.Harding, B.Humphries, L.Kitchen, A.Richardson, Lord O'Neill, T.O'Regan.

Minutes of the 1997 AGM

The minutes were adopted on the proposal of W.Coates, seconded by H.Ritchie.

Chairman's Report

The report was adopted on the proposal of P.Booth, seconded by J.Fitzpatrick.

Secretary's Report

The report was adopted on the proposal of J.Fitzpatrick, seconded by B.Mullally.

Treasurer's Report

J.Richardson asked why the missing £3,000 from the Whitehead bar account was so high given the small number of northern operations in 1997. The Treasurer replied that this included stock and a substantial cash float, and the figures had been verified by the auditors. He reported that he had discovered the discrepancy and had notified Council. Subsequently, the person concerned had admitted liability and had given an undertaking to the auditors to repay the amount in full. Council have since taken steps to address tightening of income control procedures. B.Gillen stated that the Treasurer was continually asking every department to ensure all money received was lodged and notified as soon as possible after being collected. He noted that some departments in the past had proved difficult to obtain records from. D.Humphries said that there were up to 20 different members handling income, hence the difficulty in obtaining efficient notification. Despite computerisation of accounts there was still a reliance on the honesty of these members. He said that the publishing of this loss showed that Council had nothing to hide. L.Gillen was told that 25% of the amount had been repaid. B.Gillen suggested that the amount should have been shown as a loss to the Society rather than to the northern bar.

The Treasurer told P.Rigney that preparations for the Euro would be addressed by the accounting software, a replacement for which was currently being researched.

Asked by P.Rigney to comment on the reduction in insurance costs, the Treasurer stated that this was due to the good work of the brokers and to the claims record of the Society.

P.Rigney noted the Health & Safety expenditure recorded for safety film for southern carriage windows, and suggested that some part of the settlement of the arson claim should be set aside to do likewise for the Whitehead set. The Treasurer said that members should not be spending this money until it arrives, and the amount, if any, is known.

J.Harcourt was told that the difference in the Sundry Debtors entries for 1996 (£4,322) and 1997 (£14,156) was due to an outstanding outside contract payment in 1997.

The report was adopted on the proposal of W.Coates, seconded by C.Meredith.

Appointment Of Auditors

J.Beaumont reported that he was entirely satisfied with the excellent work carried out by Dunne & Associates. He proposed, seconded by B.Brislane, that they be re-appointed. The proposal was agreed by the meeting.

Reports Of Operations Officers

When asked who had been identified as responsible for the derailment of No.85 in 1996, S.Boomer replied that the Society had been exonerated but that no other body had offered an explanation, nor accepted responsibility.

The reports were adopted on the proposal of E.Lewis, seconded by J.Fitzpatrick.

Reports Of Locomotive And Carriage Officers

B.Gillen stated that he wished to add to what had been reported in “Five Foot Three”:

1463 continues to take shape at the hands of Mullingar Carriage Group under the direction of the Carriage Foreman South. The roof was completed early in the year and work began in earnest on the interior (toilets, panels, varnishing, etc.). The onset of the running season in May saw work being scaled down until September. Activity was briefly suspended in November as the group’s efforts were needed on No.461’s boiler re-tubing at Inchicore. The work on 1463 is now almost complete and seats are being covered in new fabric, to be fitted in Heuston. It is hoped to return the carriage to traffic early in the season, and it should make a handsome addition to the set.

M.Kennedy reported that he wished to thank the Downpatrick & Ardglass Railway Company for passing on details of the Mowlem contract.

The reports were adopted on the proposal of H.Ritchie, seconded by J.Fitzpatrick.

Reports Of Mullingar And Whitehead Site Officers

C.Meredith said he had nothing to report from Mullingar, other than the site being in the same state at the end of the year as at the start. The only business being conducted there was the refurbishment of 1463.

The reports were adopted on the proposal of D.Houston, seconded by P.Booth.

Election Of Council and Office Bearers For 1998

The Secretary reported that, with the exception of Dublin Area Operations, nominations had been received for all posts, with a contest for the post of Chairman. Those present agreed that a secret ballot should be held and C.Meredith and E.Pamely were appointed as tellers. The result of the ballot was 30 votes for S.Boomer and 44 votes for J.Creaner.

J.O'Meara proposed, and P.Booth seconded, J.Fitzpatrick for the Dublin Area Operations post and, as there were no other nominations, he was deemed to be elected.

The list of those members elected to serve on Council:-

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|---|-----------------|
| <i>Chairman:</i> | John Creaner |
| <i>Vice-Chairman:</i> | Norman Foster |
| <i>Secretary:</i> | Paul McCann |
| <i>Treasurer:</i> | John Beaumont |
| <i>Business Development Officer:</i> | David Humphries |
| <i>Locomotive Officer:</i> | Peter Scott |
| <i>Carriage & Wagon Officer (Southern):</i> | Brian Gillen |
| <i>Carriage & Wagon Officer (Whitehead):</i> | Mark Kennedy |
| <i>Belfast Area Operations Officer:</i> | Heather Boomer |
| <i>Dublin Area Operations Officer:</i> | Joe Fitzpatrick |
| <i>General Officer:</i> | Chas Meredith |
| <i>General Officer:</i> | Evan Pamely |

C.Meredith paid tribute to the outgoing Chairman for all his work over the years, and a vote of thanks was passed on the proposal of C.Meredith, seconded by D.McNamara.

S.Boomer said he wished a speedy recovery to J.Creaner after a recent spell in hospital. He said he was prepared to carry on the current negotiations with Northern Ireland Railways and the Northern Ireland Office until his successor was able to take over.

Any Other Business

B.Gillen stated that it was current policy that all members working on the annual railtour should pay for their own accommodation and meals. Investigation showed that the policy was not always adhered to. It was his belief that some workers, e.g. catering, should not have to pay for the privilege of doing for the Society what they do all week at home. He proposed, seconded by L.Gillen, that: a committee, composed of four ordinary members and two members of Council, be formed to investigate the methods, if any, used to secure free travel by service train, accommodation and/or meals, by members working on the International Railtour, and make recommendations for future tours. The motion was carried

and J.Beaumont, B.Carse, L.Gillen, R.Henderson, D.Houston and D.Humphries were appointed.

It was agreed, on the proposal of B.Gillen, seconded by D.Humphries, that at future meetings an attempt should be made to ensure that all those gaining entrance to the meeting should be fully paid up members.

I.Pryce suggested that members should be made aware that insurance cover for those members working on Society trains and premises, and at Society events was their own responsibility. The Secretary undertook to do this in a forthcoming News-Letter.

The Secretary agreed to write to Iarnród Éireann regarding the possible preservation of some articles of historic interest from the buildings currently scheduled for demolition as part of the development of Barrow Street station in Dublin.

J.Richardson reported that he was confident that a grant would be forthcoming for the locomotive workshop from the Carrickfergus Literary & Science Trust.

A vote of condolence was made to members and Iarnród Éireann steam drivers D. & T. Renehan on the recent death of their father.

It was agreed on the proposal of D.Humphries, seconded by J.Fitzpatrick, that in the event of a settlement in excess of £10,000 being received from the arson claim, an EGM should be held to decide how to allocate the funds.

B.Gillen told C.McDonnell that there were plans to turn the carriages at Heuston which should help to ease the washing and heating facilities there.

S.Boomer told B.Mullally that the current overall speed limits on NIR are unlikely to change, although restrictions due to local track conditions could alter.

P.Scott paid tribute to C.Meredith and thanked him for his work as Dublin locomotive representative, a post from which he was retiring. He also thanked all those members who responded so generously to the workshop appeal, noting that not only locomotives but carriages would benefit from its facilities. He sounded a note of caution in that the appeal was only the start of the major spending required as there was now (1) an increasing age profile in the Society, (2) increasingly heavy expenditure on maintaining stock to the highest standards, and (3) the increasing requirement to deal with consultants. I.Pryce suggested that the increasing age (and girth) of working members would ultimately mean that a full-time paid engineer would be required.

C.Meredith said that the Society's locomotives and carriages in Dublin were very much guests of Iarnród Éireann and the Society had much reason to be grateful to the company and its staff for their great help and tolerance.

A.Wickham suggested that train fares were too high, especially in the north, and passengers were being depleted. The Treasurer replied that fares had to be realistic and northern railway company costs were higher than those in the south.

Signed: _____ *Chairman* _____ *Date:* _____