

# **Railway Preservation Society of Ireland**

## **REPORT OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Ulidia Integrated School, Whitehead, Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> March 1999**

John Creaner presided and 59 members were present.

The meeting opened with J.Creaner welcoming the Society's new Vice-President Sir Kenneth Bloomfield. Sir Kenneth replied that he was flattered to be asked and made known his great affection for railways in general and the Irish Railway Collection at Cultra in particular.

### ***Apologies***

H.Beaumont, C.Boomer (2), P.Bowen-Walsh, W.Brazier, B.Carse, T.Casterton, F.Dempsey, Dr. G.FitzGerald, S.Forsythe, T.Forsythe, E.Gilmore, J.Hamilton, D.Humphries, M.O'Connell, Lord O'Neill, S.Spurle.

### ***Minutes of the 1998 AGM***

B.Gillen stated that a committee had been formed at the last meeting to investigate free travel and subsistence for members working on the International Railtour, but as the relevant documentation had not been made available no meetings had taken place. J.Creaner replied that anything said at the present meeting could prejudice the outcome of any proceedings taken to obtain the said documents.

The minutes were adopted on the proposal of P.Booth, seconded by D.Mackie.

### ***Chairman's Report***

J.Creaner reported that he had received a reply to his report stating that returning No.171 to blue livery would help the International Railtour patronage immensely. I.Pryce said that the proliferation of orange vests crawling over locomotives at stations was a factor in deterring photographers. P.Scott replied that vests were only for railway company officials, and for Society personnel only in certain circumstances. H.Mills thought the fare was too expensive as an English member. R.Rigney reported on the increased options available to English members and how they now sought better value from the Society. D.Henderson said all working members should pay at least a portion of the fare. P.Scott said that striving to achieve lower fares was admirable but the money had to come from somewhere. J.Beaumont replied that railtour costs have risen significantly but any marked reduction in the fare would result in a comparatively small reduction overall for the majority of participants. S.Boomer noted that the main tour fare had remained static for 3 years. D.Henderson believed high bar prices deterred significant numbers. L.Gillen replied that food and drink prices were very competitive. I.Pryce reminded the meeting that

short haul participation by local people was a feature of tours in the past. P.Rigney noted that there appeared to be an increased reliance on contract and film work to keep the Society in the black. B.Walters suggested liaising with the airlines now offering very low fares between England and Dublin.

The report was adopted on the proposal of R.Forsythe, seconded by H.Ritchie.

### ***Secretary's Report***

The report was adopted on the proposal of I.Gilmore, seconded by J.Mckeown.

### ***Treasurer's Report***

B.Gillen asked if all trains were run at a profit. J.Beaumont replied that there were individual instances of new operations making a loss, but there were occurrences of operations being cancelled when it was apparent that it wouldn't run successfully. P.Rigney congratulated the Treasurer on the figures presented. J.Richardson was informed that donations are not listed separately in the accounts unless expressly requested by the donor. P.Clarke was told that the expenses category had increased due to the tendency of members to claim now whereas they might not have before. N.Hamilton asked if income from covenants was being maximised. P.McCann replied that less than 50% of those eligible to covenant currently did so, but he planned to give covenants a push in the next circular.

The report was adopted on the proposal of J.Mckeown, seconded by D.Mackie.

### ***Appointment Of Auditors***

J.Beaumont reported that he was entirely satisfied with the excellent work carried out by Dunne & Associates. The auditors are now thoroughly familiar with how the Society works and this undoubtedly helps to keep down costs. J.Mckeown proposed re-appointment, seconded by P.Cox. The proposal was agreed by the meeting.

### ***Reports Of Operations Officers***

C.Meredith said it was extremely regrettable that the Dublin Operations Officer had not seen fit to produce a report for the meeting. The Belfast Operations Officer had, but it was a bit light in substance, particularly in presenting a record of schedules, running, and profitability. If the "Portrush Flyer" is failing, he recommended replacement by a more marketable product. On the matter of responsibility for the International Railtour, he believed, it was not for an outgoing Operations Officer to state that she would continue to organise it without Council approval. H.Boomer replied that the Portrush operations had always been marginally profitable without the added income from the local Castlerock trips. She said she had been reluctant to say too much about the coming season as there was a major question mark over it due to the imminent closure of the Belfast Central line for major relay work. It had been her intention to avoid depressing the members. I.Pryce stated that any

scheduling problems with Portrush operations had been totally outside the Society's control. R.Forsythe said that continuance of responsibility for the International Railtour was only common sense as a new officer could not be expected to organise the operation with less than 2 months notice whereas the outgoing officer would have been involved for at least 9 months. P.Scott recommended that cultivating high-level relationships with the railway companies was something that should be considered with a certain urgency.

The reports were adopted on the proposal of J.Mckeown, seconded by N.Foster.

### ***Reports Of Locomotive And Carriage Officers***

B.Gillen stated that as usual he had had excellent help and co-operation from Iarnród Éireann and his PSRs, P.Rigney and C.McDonnell.

P.Scott said he had received a lot of favourable comments regarding No.171 in both blue and black liveries. He reported that both No.171 and No.461 were due for major boiler work in the near future and he asked for any preferences for their replacements in traffic. J.Harcourt said that No.186 as one of the earliest Society locomotives should be considered. He said it was a pity that No.27 had not gone for use at Downpatrick, but perhaps she should be considered for the Museum at Cultra along with No.184. P.Rigney stated that it was now not outside the realms of possibility to consider building from scratch although a more feasible option would be to re-gauge an English Woolwich class. He said No.186 was not capable of operating one-day tours. No.131 from Iarnród Éireann was an option. Likewise No.74 from the UF&TM. It was possible that No.85's days are numbered as weight restrictions limit the route availability. C.Holliday said locomotives and rolling stock should be reviewed on an economic and not necessarily an engineering basis.

The reports were adopted on the proposal of P.Cox, seconded by D.Henderson.

### ***Reports Of Mullingar And Whitehead Site Officers***

The reports were adopted on the proposal of D.Houston, seconded by E.Lewis.

### ***Election Of Council and Office Bearers For 1999***

The Secretary reported that nominations had been received for all posts, with the exception of Dublin Operations and one of the General Officer posts. J.Creaner asked if the meeting would agree to accept nominations for the vacancies from the floor. Those present agreed on the proposal of B.Gillen, seconded by P.Cox.

P.Scott proposed, and S.Boomer seconded, B.King-Wood for the General Officer post. L.Gillen proposed, and P.Rigney seconded, C.McDonnell for Dublin Area Operations Officer. As there were no other nominations, they were deemed to be elected.

The list of those members elected to serve on Council:

<b><i>Chairman:</i></b>	John Creaner
<b><i>Vice-Chairman:</i></b>	Norman Foster
<b><i>Secretary:</i></b>	Paul McCann
<b><i>Treasurer:</i></b>	John Beaumont
<b><i>Locomotive Officer:</i></b>	Peter Scott
<b><i>Carriage &amp; Wagon Officer (Southern):</i></b>	Brian Gillen
<b><i>Carriage &amp; Wagon Officer (Whitehead):</i></b>	Mark Kennedy
<b><i>Belfast Area Operations Officer:</i></b>	Evan Pamely
<b><i>Dublin Area Operations Officer:</i></b>	Charles McDonnell
<b><i>Business Development Officer:</i></b>	David Humphries
<b><i>General Officer:</i></b>	David Houston
<b><i>General Officer:</i></b>	Bill King-Wood

E.Pamely said he was under no illusions as to the task in front of him. He paid tribute to his predecessor H.Boomer and her team for all their hard work.

### ***Any Other Business***

I.Pryce commented on the lack of adequate accommodation in the current premises for a meeting of the size of the AGM. P.McCann apologised as the normal venue had not been available on the appointed date. There was general agreement among those present that rotation of AGM venues should continue, with Dublin being the venue for 2000.

P.Clarke commented on the lack of catering facilities for those members working on the Christmas trains. C.McDonnell said if the work was better organised there would be adequate time to get food.

***Signed:*** \_\_\_\_\_ ***Chairman***    ***Date:*** \_\_\_\_\_