

Railway Preservation Society of Ireland

Invitation



*R.S.V.P.
no later than
6th October, 2000*

*Jennifer @
Dublin (01) 856 0045*

The Lord O'Neill

*President of the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland
requests the pleasure of the company of*

*on the occasion of the official launch of former
Irish State Coach 351*

on Wednesday 18th October at 2.15p.m.

Guest of Honour

Mary McAleese, President of Ireland

Programme of Events

- 2.15p.m. Registration at Pearse Station, Westland Row, The Army No. 1 Band will provide musical entertainment. Guests MUST be present before 2.25p.m.
- 2.45p.m. Official launch by President Mary McAleese
- 2.55p.m. Depart by RPSI vintage steam train to Dun Laoghaire.
- 3.15p.m. Reception at Brasserie na Mara
- 4.15p.m. Return by RPSI vintage steam train to Pearse Station, Westland Row.
- 4.40p.m. Arrival @ Pearse Station.

The Railway Preservation Society of Ireland acknowledge the kind sponsorship by Railtours Ireland of this event



Brief History of Irish State Coach 351

Irish State Coach No. 351 was built by the Great Southern & Western Railway @ Inchicore Works in 1903 for the State visit of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra to Ireland in July of that year. It was subsequently used by Royalty on several occasions but after 1921 it is reported to have been stored under dust sheets.

Fortunately republican zeal did not result in its immediate scrapping and it remained "in store" until, in 1961, Coras Iompair Eireann decided that it still needed a State Coach. Between its renovation in 1961 and its second withdrawal in 1972. No. 351 was used on many occasions both by Presidents of Ireland and visiting dignitaries including Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia and various Papal Nuncios. In late 1995 the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland completed negotiations with Iarnrod Eireann for the Society to take the coach in trust and oversee its full restoration with a completion date of 1999.

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