

# **Railway Preservation Society of Ireland**

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

**New Pavilion, Whitehead, Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2001**

Sir Kenneth Bloomfield presided and 46 members were present.

The meeting opened with Sir Kenneth paying tribute to the work of David Dillon, and a minute's silence was observed in his memory and that of John Creaner, Philip Booth and Patricia Walters.

### ***Apologies***

Lord O'Neill, Dr. G.FitzGerald, H.Beaumont, C.Boomer, P.Bowen-Walsh, D.Carse, T.Casterton, E.Gilmore, I.Gilmore, J.Glendinning, M.Harding, C.McDonnell, R.Morton, T.Mounstephen, D.Murphy, P.Rigney, H.Ritchie, I.Ritchie, B.Spurle, S.Spurle, P.Tyler-Sugden, L.Walters.

### ***Minutes of the 2000 AGM***

The minutes were adopted on the proposal of C.Meredith, seconded by B.Mullally.

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

The report, previously circulated, was adopted on the proposal of C.Holliday, seconded by B.Mullally.

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

The report, previously circulated, was adopted on the proposal of S.Boomer, seconded by D.Mackie.

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

J.Richardson noted that the NIO compensation fund would have yielded 7% had it been invested in suitable bonds and equities at the time of the previous AGM. N.Poots said that a suitable repository for the fund was still being investigated. J.Richardson suggested that grant income should appear separately in the accounts rather than under donations.

The report, previously circulated, was adopted on the proposal of J.Richardson, seconded by J.Beaumont.

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

Dunne & Associates were re-appointed on the proposal of J.Beaumont, seconded by S.Boomer.

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

Sir Kenneth paid tribute to all the Officers of the Society and the work they do.

The reports of the Operations Officers, previously circulated, were adopted on the proposal of D.Humphries, seconded by B.Mullally.

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

The reports, previously circulated, were adopted on the proposal of C.Holliday, seconded by G.Mooney.

## ***Reports Of Other Society Officers***

D.Humphries read his Business Development report to the meeting.

*In the period since last AGM (March 2000) the following matters have occupied my time:*

- *Representing the RPSI on the board of Mullingar Arts & Railway Group Ltd. This is the company charged with forming the Irish Transport Museum at Mullingar. Six meetings were attended and a feasibility report (still confidential) has been produced for the appropriate Government Departments and Local Government Agencies. The main hurdle to be overcome at present is that of funding the project - estimated to exceed £15 million.*
- *Co-ordinating matters in relation to rail safety as they apply to RPSI operations on both IÉ and NIR. The Dublin Government's Department of Public Enterprise has introduced draft legislation which is expected to become law in the first quarter of 2002. Its implementation has wide ranging implications for our continued operation and will require that we: (i) meet its stringent requirements effecting both our equipment and operating methods, and: (ii) develop and implement a 'safety case' with IÉ. In Northern Ireland NIR have initiated a revision of the 1989 Agreement and again there are far reaching implications for our running over NIR track. A sub-committee has been formed to address all of these matters and I have every confidence that their diligence will ensure the best possible outcome for the Society.*
- *Yet another sub-committee has been formed to work with both FAS and IÉ to explore the possibility of establishing a continuing maintenance scheme - hopefully at Inchicore - which would greatly enhance our capabilities in this area. Early days yet, but all three parties are keen to set up just such a scheme and so I am hopeful of a successful outcome. It is interesting to record that the seeds of this project arise directly from the very successful 'high profile' restoration of 351.*
- *During the year IÉ offered the Society the turntable at Drogheda which has to be removed to facilitate the construction by IÉ of a new DMU facility. The Society happily accepted and it would be our intention to relocate the table somewhere on the DSER - likely locations being either Gorey or Enniscorthy. Somewhere along the way matters got complicated by the realisation that the Drogheda Development Plan 1999/2004 requires that the turntable be retained at Drogheda. To accommodate this requirement the planning application included the relocation of the turntable to the station car-park! Following discussions with senior management in IÉ the Society appealed this one aspect of the application with, initially, Drogheda Corporation and subsequently on appeal to An Bord Pleanala. We await the outcome of this process.*
- *Resulting from matters arising from last year's AGM I convened, on Council's request, yet another sub-committee to review the following matters:*
  - *Employment Policies*
  - *AGM notification and nomination to Council*

- *Elections to Council on proposals from the floor*
- *Membership arrears / lapsing of members.*

*A report has now been submitted to Council for their consideration.*

- *Completion and launch of Irish State Coach 351. Last October saw the realisation of a five year project with the complete restoration and launch - by President Mary McAleese - of GS&WR Royal Saloon/State Coach 351. One of the biggest restoration projects undertaken by the RPSI - and certainly the most prestigious in my view. The vehicle is now under secure and covered accommodation at Inchicore Works and will be used - from time to time - for contract hire. In addition plans are presently being formulated to: (i) exhibit the coach in Dublin before year end, and: (ii) next year to exhibit it at the UFTM.*

*In all of the above I have been ably assisted by many people and I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all my fellow Society colleagues who have helped me on one or more of the aforementioned projects. I also would like to record the Society's appreciation to those outside bodies who have also supported our activities in one way or another. I am reluctant to name names only because I fear I would leave one or more out.*

*I should also like to pay tribute to the Northern and Southern Commercial and Catering teams who 'report' to me. My approach has been to let them 'get on with it' and not interfere but to give assistance when asked. They have all worked very hard and I know their efforts are much appreciated.*

*Many of the matters reported on above will continue into 2001/2002 and in addition I would like to give members an 'early notification' that we will shortly be launching an appeal for funding for the J15s restoration. We hope that members will match their earlier generosity when we mounted the Workshop Appeal.*

D.Humphries told E.Pamely that the matter of the Drogheda turntable is presently with An Bord Pleanala, the Society having been unaware of the need to appeal to Drogheda Council until 24 hours after the deadline. P.Newell suggested the turntable should remain on the Northern line for local operations but was told more operations run over the South-Eastern line to Rosslare.

The report was adopted on the proposal of B.Mullally, seconded by D.Houston.

### ***Election Of Council and Office Bearers For 2001***

The Secretary reported that nominations had been received for all posts, with the exception of Belfast Operations, Vice-Chairman and Carriage & Wagon North.

P.Scott proposed, and W.Coates seconded, J.Glendinning for Vice-Chairman. D.Humphries proposed, and A.McRoberts seconded, J.Saulters for Carriage & Wagon North. As there were no other nominations, they were deemed to be elected. The post of Northern Operations remained vacant.

The following members were elected to serve on Council:

<b><i>Chairman:</i></b>	Norman Foster
<b><i>Vice-Chairman:</i></b>	Johnny Glendinning
<b><i>Secretary:</i></b>	Paul McCann
<b><i>Treasurer:</i></b>	Nelson Poots
<b><i>Locomotive Officer:</i></b>	Peter Scott

<i>Carriage &amp; Wagon Officer (Southern):</i>	Peter Emmett
<i>Carriage &amp; Wagon Officer (Whitehead):</i>	Jeremy Saulters
<i>Belfast Area Operations Officer:</i>	
<i>Dublin Area Operations Officer:</i>	Philip Cox
<i>Business Development Officer:</i>	David Humphries
<i>General Officer:</i>	David Houston
<i>General Officer:</i>	Bill King-Wood

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

J.O'Meara noted that the title of the Society's journal was grammatically incorrect and it should be "Five Feet Three". J.Harcourt said the Officer in charge of the first issue was a classics teacher and was using a railway colloquialism.

P.McCann told J.Richardson that negotiations were underway with a view to the possible loan of the Society's ex-MGWR six wheel coach 62M to the Belturbet Railway Station project.

P.McCann told P.Newell that the Finance Committee had been tasked with providing a budget for the upgrading of facilities for members and stores at Whitehead.

P.McCann told N.Hamilton that none of the more recent subscription increases had been referred to an AGM, but that the reasons for those increases were usually detailed in either the magazine or the News-Letters.

N.Foster told B.Mullally that it was likely that Cravens coaches would be acquired, when available at scrap prices, for operating over high speed lines. C.Meredith expressed concern that the Society should ever dispose of vintage stock. He said such a decision should be put before the membership and not made by Council alone. D.Humphries hoped that the outcome of the discussions on the new safety legislation and operating agreements would allow the situation where the Society could still operate its vintage stock over the more traditional routes, but accepted that more modern stock would be required for the Dublin to Cork and Belfast lines.

P.Scott explained to B.Mullally that there were two options being considered for air-braking of coaching stock should that be the way forward: (1) air pumps on locomotives, and (2) air equipment on a brake coach, with control equipment only on the locomotive. The latter was preferable from an aesthetic point of view. P.Scott agreed that a suitable safety case under the proposed new legislation would be preferable to the uncertainty of continual questions being raised in this area. He said it was Society policy to operate vintage stock on whatever routes we can for as long as possible.

Sir Kenneth summarised by saying that the Council had a lot on its plate for the coming year in looking at how the Society will be operating in the future, and under what conditions. It was apparent that there were issues which would have to be referred to the membership in general and not be decided by Council in isolation.

The meeting closed with a hope for the speedy recovery of active member Arthur Wickham currently seriously ill in hospital.

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