

Railway Preservation Society of Ireland

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Whitehead Pavilion, Saturday 5th April 2003

Lord O'Neill presided. 45 members were present.

Lord O'Neill opened the meeting by asking J.Glendingning to say a few words about David Dillon. J.Glendingning reminded the meeting that David had died in the office of Society Vice-Chairman two years ago. His widow, Nina, was anxious that his memory be marked in some way. She has donated a gold chain of office, featuring No.171 on one side and an inscription in David's memory on the other. Lord O'Neill officially placed the chain around N.Foster's neck.

Apologies

Dr Garret FitzGerald, Sir Kenneth Bloomfield, H.Beaumont, C.Boomer, C.A.Boomer, H.Boomer, W.Brazier, D.Carse, T.Casterton, R.Cox, I.Gilmore, C.Holliday, J.Houston, D.Humphries, F.Lee, J.Lockett, P.Lockett, F.McAllister, F.McDonnell, C.Meredith, N.Poots, B.Quin, J.Richardson, P.Rigney, A.Thompson.

Minutes of the 2002 AGM

The minutes were adopted on the proposal of H.Ritchie, seconded by G.Mooney.

Minutes of the 2002 EGM

The minutes of the EGM on 28th September 2002 were adopted on the proposal of J.McBride, seconded by D.Mackie.

Chairman's Report

N.Foster read his report:

Last year I started on a sad note in that we had said farewell to 5 of our active members – and on the brighter side that our jeep No.4 was back in service. Other good news meant that we were able to go directly to Portrush over the Bleach Green viaduct. Our Secretary will give you the full report on our activities, and I always find it hard not to repeat or spoil his excellent report.

However, we did sign a new operating agreement with NIR – very many thanks to Ted Hesketh and his team. Also to our own team – led by Johnny Glendingning, our Vice-Chairman. We also had a new agreement signed with Irish Rail where we became the first guest operator in Ireland – very many thanks to Irish Rail's Safety Manager Ted Corcoran who stated: "let us create history!". To the sub-committees on both occasions – very well done!

We now come to our very important men – those who drive our trains. We are getting very small in this area. However, I am very pleased to announce that 4 Irish Rail drivers are now in training. A very big thanks to David Humphries and Tom Devoy of Irish Rail. This has been a long and hard battle.

Some very good friends of the Society are now in advanced stages of retiring and I wish them well in their senior years.

We have a very heavy programme of tours in the coming year and, as always, I hope to meet many of you on these trips. We have some very exciting trips planned and as our compound No.85 will come out of service there will be a few last opportunities to travel with engine between Belfast, Cork and Dublin.

I normally pay tribute to the catering staff – a sincere thanks to the teams, now growing and increasing our profits, and I welcome their new recruits.

This coming year will see the end of our wooden-bodied carriages in full operation on NIR, with we hope certain exceptions. In this regard our new steel Mk2s are now being prepared. Here we have to move with the times.

I finally would like to thank the Council members who have put in so much time and effort to keep the Society the way it is today. Also the sub-committees who have given even more of their time, and without these members our trains would never move. To the other volunteers – well done, and keep steam up!

The report was adopted on the proposal of A.Richardson, seconded by W.Coates.

Secretary's Report

The report, previously circulated, was adopted on the proposal of H.Ritchie, seconded by E.Gilmore.

Treasurer's Report

G.Mooney inquired about the viability of operations on the Belfast – Dublin line. J.Beaumont replied that on the basis of estimates only, as railway company bills can be up to a year in arriving, it was established that from about 50 operations during the year 3 at most suffered a loss. The Finance Committee will report to Council and the Operating Committees when the full details are available and will advise against running marginal or loss-making trips.

The report, previously circulated, was adopted on the proposal of P.Cox, seconded by D.Houston.

Appointment Of Auditors

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

Reports Of Operations Officers

I.Pryce noted the number of light engine movements, which the Operating Committees could do without and would do well to avoid. He also noted a forthcoming clash of dates in June and August, when trains from Dublin might well require the use of an NIR driver already committed to a northern operation. He could see unnecessary expense and confusion arising from such occurrences, and the need for mending of fences with IÉ and NIR. M.Darragh said he will pointing out the potential difficulties in a forthcoming meeting with NIR. G.Mooney said that IÉ had been in touch with NIR and had been promised the use of a diesel to haul steam locomotives for servicing if required.

H.Ritchie paid tribute to outgoing members of the catering and sales teams, D.Henderson and N.Walsh.

The reports from the Operations Committees, previously circulated, were adopted on the proposal of A.Richardson, seconded by E.Gilmore.

Reports Of Locomotive And Carriage Officers

P.Scott updated his previously circulated report by stating that the No.3 had now been officially withdrawn from traffic. As a result work was being speeded up on No.3BG – boiler work is well advanced and the engine should be available by the summer. Hopefully, the problems on No.4 which led to a number of the light engine movements have been sorted out, but never any guarantee. Her next operations will be on crew training over a period of 2 weeks before Easter. The overhaul of No.186 is progressing well. The tender bodywork has been overhauled in Dublin, the wheels are in Whitehead for turning on the lathe. Hope to have out by the summer. The Unilok has been used twice to shunt No.74 in the UFTM – thanks to P.Newell and Coastal Containers for having the vehicle returned to traffic.

P.Scott informed the meeting that the Society is willing to start its allocated portion of the No.131 project, as long as it involves minimal outlay. This would at least get the sundry bits of the locomotive gathered and under cover.

P.Scott repeated his annual appeal for volunteers, stating that none in the current workforce was getting any younger.

P.Scott told H.Ritchie that the cost of returning No.171 to traffic could not be estimated until its boiler is removed, likewise No.461, the boiler of which is currently ready for lifting.

P.Newell reported on the Mk2 progress since the EGM. The two coaches which came from England have been certified as fit to run and will be passed to NIR for running-in and acceptance as soon as possible. The Lancastrian Carriage & Wagon team is still at Whitehead. 934 has had vacuum brakes fitted, and body ends and floor repaired. As this coach was one of the worst, it was an ideal first candidate for overhaul as it soon became apparent what the problems were likely to be.

The wooden-bodied coaches are having running repairs only. Some eventually may be transferred to Dublin, if required.

J.Harcourt was worried about the lack of covered accommodation and suggested sending 50 to the UFTM and 861 to Downpatrick. P.Newell replied that the UFTM had been approached about 50, and 861 might go to Dublin to run with 351 and 1142, but at present there was no suitable FAS scheme to put the vehicle back in traffic. The DSR have stated that they do not require any extra coaches at present.

J.Glendinning stated that all coaches of Mk2 standard and better were classified as Mk2 in the railway safety legislation. Likewise, anything earlier is classified as Mk1, including all Society vehicles up to now. The status of Cravens is debateable but would require substantial costs to prove one way or the other.

W.Coates asked for a comment on the rumours that a number of wooden-bodied coaches were to be scrapped, and surely this was against museum policy. J.Glendinning confirmed that museum status conferred certain responsibilities on the Society and there were no plans to scrap any vehicles, indeed extra siding space was being investigated to store all vehicles. P.Newell said that an application has also been made to increase the amount of covered storage at Whitehead.

The reports were adopted on the proposal of D.Mackie, seconded by J.Harcourt.

Reports Of Other Society Officers

J.Glendinning reported that museum status had been gained. Subsequently, representatives from the Heritage Lottery Fund had visited Whitehead and were interested in helping with improved visitor

access and further covered storage for Society vehicles. A 2016 Committee had been set up to progress grant applications and to plan the develop of Whitehead as a museum. Its members are: J.Beaumont, E.Gilmore, J.Glendingning and M.Kennedy.

J.Glendingning told H.Ritchie that public toilets will be part of any improvements.

I.Pryce noted that 20 years from now most of those who currently get dirty and draw sweat for the Society will not be doing so – it needs to be borne in mind where their replacements will come from.

Election Of Council and Office Bearers For 2003

The Secretary declared that there were vacancies for the post of Northern Operations and one of the General Officer posts. P.Cox proposed, and J.Darling seconded, G.Mooney for the General Officer post. J.Saulters had decided not to run again for Carriage & Wagon (North) but P.Newell had agreed to stand. A.Richardson, co-opted to Business Development during the year, was standing for that post. There being no further nominations from the meeting, the following were elected to serve on Council:

<i>Chairman:</i>	Norman Foster
<i>Vice-Chairman:</i>	Johnny Glendingning
<i>Secretary:</i>	Paul McCann
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Nelson Poots
<i>Locomotive Officer:</i>	Peter Scott
<i>Carriage & Wagon Officer (Southern):</i>	Peter Emmett
<i>Carriage & Wagon Officer (Whitehead):</i>	Paul Newell
<i>Belfast Area Operations Officer:</i>	
<i>Dublin Area Operations Officer:</i>	Philip Cox
<i>Business Development Officer:</i>	Alex Richardson
<i>General Officer:</i>	Mervyn Darragh
<i>General Officer:</i>	Gerry Mooney

Any Other Business

G.Mooney stated that he wished to clarify the Dublin Operations position on the forthcoming trains to Belfast in June and August. He said it was the intention to maximise the income from No.85 while the locomotive was stationed in Dublin. The first trip was required anyway to swap locomotives and it was an attempt to defray costs by running a public train. Availability of Cravens meant that this was the only date available. The second was an attempt to give Dublin members an opportunity to take part in the northern trip to Bangor.

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