

Railway Preservation Society of Ireland

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Europa, Hotel, Belfast, Saturday 16th April 2005

Lord O'Neill presided and 45 members were present.

Apologies

Dr. G.FitzGerald, H.Beaumont, J.Beaumont, H.Boomer, B.Carse, M.Crozier, P.Emmett, M.Glending, R.Henderson, C.Holliday, D.Houston, B.Humphries, D.Humphries, D.McNamara, R.Morton, P.Newell, P.H.Newell, D.O'Murchú, A.Richardson, J.Richardson.

Minutes of the 2004 AGM

The minutes, previously circulated, were adopted on the proposal of B.Garrioch, seconded by B.Mullally.

Chairman's Report

N.Foster read his report:

You will be pleased, I'm sure, to know that this is my last report to you as, having served the full term of five years, I now retire to being an ordinary member. May I say that I have in fact enjoyed the experience of being the first Chairman from the Southern area of the Society.

I would like to thank all of the members of Council who have served with me during this period, without whom the task would have been so much more difficult.

During the past year we have made a lot of progress, from putting our new steel carriages into service, to launching our veteran locomotive No.186 back into traffic.

As some of you may already know from the website, we have now purchased locos No.131, No.184 and No.461 from Coras Iompair Éireann, which means now we own all our locomotives, and can apply for lottery funding which before was not possible.

We continue our final negotiations in regard to the purchase of the Whitehead site - these things take time - and Bill King-Wood is still working hard on the final details, so we can look forward to an early handover.

I had the honour to travel to Swindon in January to receive the HRA's Coiley Award for the restoration of No.186 to main line service, and our congratulations go to Peter Scott and his full team for their tremendous work in the overhaul of this great machine. To those of you who have not yet travelled with No.186, you will be in for a treat soon.

The RPSI 40 Committee was formed to organise our 40th year, and those of you who attended the Gala Dinner in the UFTM at Cultra will know how well they performed their task - all had a great night. They followed by organising a Celebratory Dinner to mark the presentation of the Coiley Award for No.186.

I would like to thank David Humphries for being my secretary in Dublin - unlike myself, David was able to type any correspondence I required.

To those on our catering teams, well done again. Their financial contribution is indeed very useful.

Our Honorary Secretary keeps on going and certainly kept me up to scratch - I have recently just come on to email, so it was a relief not to have had it before as already I have run out of printing paper. But well done Paul and may you long continue.

To our incoming Chairman, may I wish you every success in the coming years, and if I can be of any help in any way, I will be available.

And so to the back benches!

The report was adopted on the proposal of E.Gilmore, seconded by G.Mooney.

Secretary's Report

T.O'Shaughnessy asked if the attendance record of outgoing Council members could be recorded. C.Meredith noted that it had been requested at a previous AGM that this information should be presented annually. P.McCann read out the attendance figures, from the 6 meetings held during the year, for those members seeking re-election: P.Cox (1), M.Darragh (5), J.Glending (3), P.Lockett (4), P.McCann (2), G.Mooney (5), N.Poots (4), A.Richardson (4), P.Scott (6).

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

Treasurer's Report

J.Harcourt said he was extremely worried by the increased cost of insurance in the accounts. P.McCann replied that costs would be equally high in the current year as there was no competitive market for such cover, and we were extremely fortunate to have had insurance at all for the Christmas 2003 trains it was only obtained at the very last minute. The Society was classed as a railway company by the insurance market and the risks were perceived to be in that same class. Our brokers were in touch with specialists from other companies in this field and had sought advice from all possible sectors to get the best deal possible. J.Glending added that the Society was suffering from the results of the compensation culture as much as any other business, whereby the inclination is to claim for every minor incident.

N.Hamilton asked for a breakdown of the railtour income for north and south, and for a comment on the effect of running proving operations. N.Poots replied that he did not have north/south figures to hand. He stated that each proving run would be adding approximately £1,000 to costs. J.Glending said such costs had to be viewed in the light of 3 locomotives and 6 Mk2 coaches having been accepted for traffic across the NIR network, with the exception of the platforms at Waterside station and beyond Whitehead, such acceptance being part of a new procedure for all vehicles old and new.

The report, previously circulated, was adopted on the proposal of W.King-Wood, seconded by J.Harcourt.

Appointment Of Auditors

Dunne McNulty Nannery were re-appointed on the proposal of B.Garrioch, seconded by S.Boomer.

Reports Of Operations Officers

The reports of the Operations Officers, previously circulated, were adopted on the proposal of H.Ritchie, seconded by J.Cassells.

Reports Of Locomotive And Carriage Officers

P.Lockett noted that P.Newell was retiring as Carriage & Wagon Officer (Whitehead) due to health and personnel reasons, and the Society should be appreciative of the work he did in getting the Mk2 set into traffic in such fine style.

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

Election Of Council and Office Bearers For 2005

The Secretary reported that nominations had been received for all posts, excepting Carriage & Wagon North which had become vacant a few days before the meeting. A letter from D.Houston, supporting his candidature for Vice-Chairman, was read.

No nominations were received from the meeting for the Carriage & Wagon post so it remained vacant.

The following members were elected to serve on Council:

<i>Chairman:</i>	Johnny Glendinning
<i>Vice-Chairman:</i>	David Houston
<i>Secretary:</i>	Paul McCann
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Nelson Poots
<i>Locomotive Officer:</i>	Peter Scott
<i>Carriage & Wagon Officer (Southern):</i>	Alex Richardson
<i>Carriage & Wagon Officer (Whitehead):</i>	
<i>Belfast Area Operations Officer:</i>	Mervyn Darragh
<i>Dublin Area Operations Officer:</i>	Philip Cox
<i>Business Development Officer:</i>	Fergus McDonnell
<i>General Officer:</i>	Phil Lockett
<i>General Officer:</i>	Gerry Mooney

N.Foster then handed the Chain Of Office to J.Glendinning and wished him well in the post of Chairman.

J.Cassells congratulated N.Foster on being the first southerner, and the first timer, to hold the post of Chairman and stated that his had been a most distinguished Chairmanship.

Any Other Business

Sir Kenneth Bloomfield reported that a review of charitable status was currently being undertaken in Northern Ireland and the Society should be aware of possible changes when the process was completed.

B.Mullally asked that consideration be given to running trains in connection with the cruise ships which call at Cobh in increasing numbers. N.Foster replied that limited steam crews both north and south were a problem and would need to be addressed before such trains could be attempted. G.Mooney noted that all our Irish Rail and NIR steam drivers were very flexible

with regard to fitting holidays around Society trains and we could ask no more of them at present. T.O'Shaughnessy noted that on-train crews would be required in Cork as it would be unreasonable to crew such trains from Dublin.

B.Hill asked if the Whitehead sale negotiations would be completed before the reorganisation of local councils in Northern Ireland. C.McAteer replied that he very much expected that they would, as things were moving, however slowly.

P.Scott noted that in all the congratulations regarding No.186, the full-time staff tended to get overlooked. He wished to put on record his thanks to: John Ferguson, Roy Lee, William McConnell, James Small (Loco); Ernie Clarke, Mark McClements (Carriage); Wilma Cairns (Admin).

E.Gilmore asked if there was a policy on turntables. J.Glending said it was difficult to insist on the retention of major infrastructure items that the Society might only use once or twice in 10 years. N.Foster said he had been in talks with Irish Rail where payments in the region of €100,000 were requested for maintenance.

E.Gilmore suggested that the Society should be chasing new markets, and the recent charters to Cultra were an excellent example of what could be achieved.

Lord O'Neill closed the meeting by thanking the members for their attendance, and said he hoped that the continuing difficulties facing the Society could be overcome.

Signed: _____ *Chairman* *Date:* _____