



March 2008

# NEWS LETTER

## HEALTH & SAFETY

**Requirements:** Members should by now be aware that Northern Ireland Railways have stated that, with effect from 1st January 2008:

- Our locomotives will not be certified to operate on NIR until such time as Train Protection & Warning System (TPWS) and On Train Monitoring & Recording (OTMR) are fitted.
- Our carriages will not be certified to operate on NIR until Central Door Locking (CDL) is fitted.

There may be a derogation to the former for locomotives which will not be operated over 45 mph, i.e. No.186 and No.461, but that has not yet been confirmed.

Work has been underway since Christmas on fitting the required equipment to the carriages and it is expected that the first two will be ready for audit by NIR in March. However, there is still a lot to be done as the work is being carried out in parallel with the fitting of a Train Line (TL) power supply to all the coaches.

The contract for the design and fitting of equipment to No.4 has just been initiated.

Before return to traffic there are a number of stages to be gone through:

- The work must be complete and tested.
- The results must be approved by an independent Vehicle Approval Body (VAB).
- The locomotives and coaches must be submitted to an NIR Approval Panel.
- The recommendations of the Approval Panel will be passed to an NIR Review Panel.

Only then, if all stages are successfully completed, will the train be allowed to operate.

As a consequence, the first northern train is not expected to operate before May.

Please note that all the above does not come cheap, and an appeal to members to help fund it will be issued shortly.

## OPERATIONS

**Driver Training (South):** As part of the ongoing steam driver training programme, no less than four extra public operations to Mullingar and Longford with No.186 had been arranged for the first two weekends in March. Unfortunately, industrial action by Irish Rail drivers led to these trains being cancelled.

**Driver Training (North):** Plans are

progressing encouragingly, with a view to training the current NIR firemen to pass them as drivers.

**Easter:** With the Mk2 set not yet certified for mainline use, the Easter operation will be train rides and site tours on Easter Monday, 24<sup>th</sup> March, between 2pm and 5:30pm.

**The Midlander:** The Dublin Area Operations Officer has not yet confirmed with Irish Rail, but it is hoped to operate a train to Mullingar, with a local trip back to Enfield, on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> April.

**Barrow Bridge:** The website has been updated with full details of the "Barrow Bridge" railtour to Waterford. Don't forget to submit your advance booking form to ensure you get a copy of the full prospectus and booking form.

**MRSI Charter:** The MRSI hope to run another GM-hauled trip on 24<sup>th</sup> May.

**Bray Shuttle:** Subject to confirmation, trains will be operating on 31<sup>st</sup> May.

**Steam & Jazz:** The dates are Fridays 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> June.

**Portrush Flyer:** As previously reported, NIR will not be permitting the Portrush trains to operate this year.

**Publicity:** On Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> February, No.3BG "Guinness" was steamed for a photographic session for a local charity. In return for our services the RPSI gained publicity photographs for the Easter and Steam & Jazz trains.

## CARRIAGE & WAGON

**Mk2:** It should be mentioned that Irish Rail kindly put the RPSI coaches through the carriage wash during the lay-over in Dublin on 30<sup>th</sup> December - much needed, and much appreciated.

**Central Door Locking:** The set has been broken up and the carriages are being cycled over the pits to get CDL

and TL installed. Fitting includes, wiring, mounting brackets and locks, mounting of indicator lamps and emergency access switches.

**Diner 547:** In early March 547 emerged fully fitted with CDL and TL. It was a slow turnaround due to decisions on the general layout design and fitting. It is hoped that the proven concept can be quickly rolled out on the other carriages.

Internal work remains to be done - vestibule ceilings, doors, etc., plus fitting of bar and kitchen equipment. Steam heating equipment fitted.

**462 (Dutch Van):** Mk2 adaptor corridor connector made, fitted and tested.

**B4 Bogies:** The overhaul programme continues with cleaning and painting. Bearings renewed, dashpot seals renewed.

**'Ivan':** Work continues on the GNR brake van. Brake pedestal screwed to floorboards and wheel installed - temporary fitting. Brakes move freely but need 'nipped up' as the brake blocks are not contacting the wheels too well.

Larne end veranda wall wood screws installed and holes filled with Isopon. Cabin roof timbers and roof bearers primed and undercoated.

Some thought is being given to placing a time capsule in the well of the van - to be opened in 50 years' time.

## BELFAST MEETINGS

**9<sup>th</sup> January:** Brian Mac Aongusa talked about Irish Railway accidents and incidents. Some of the photographs were fascinating showing the measures the railway companies took to recover derailed locomotives, i.e. laying temporary track along a mile of country road!

**13<sup>th</sup> February:** John Lennon, a

lifelong enthusiast for the Gobbin's Coastal Cliff Path, started the evening with a tour of the path, illustrated with period views. He followed with cine of more recent visits to the remains of the path.

**13<sup>th</sup> March:** End of season meeting when Fred Cooper presented his Irish Steam Cinema.

## LOCOMOTIVES

**No.1 (DCDR contract):** Re-metal and machine coupling rod bearings.

**No.3BG "Guinness":** Boiler washout and preparation for inspection. Annual boiler exam and steam test completed.

**No.4:** Steam wash wheels, frames, etc. Frost protection. Boiler washout, annual inspection and steam test completed. Cleaning and preparation of locomotive for fitting of warning equipment. AWS/TPWS layout design and new battery box layout being progressed.

**No.5 "Drumboe" (CDRRL contract):** Work underway or planned - Set up driving wheelset for machining and truing up of crank pins. Forge coupling rod. Machine spring buckles. Dismantle crossheads. Forge new pony spring hangers. Fit big end brasses.

**No.461:** Set up for reducing ends of new flue tubes. Firebox repairs. Bedding in big ends.

**Carlow Diesel:** Repairs to compressor necessitated machining liner for cylinder. Liner fitted and new piston obtained, rings awaited.

**Unilok:** Engine repairs.

**GM Diesels:** At a recent meeting of the Society's Council the topic of diesel preservation was aired. The Council has no position in relation to the acquisition and preservation of a mainline diesel. The first generation of GM diesel locomotives on Irish Rail

are being withdrawn from traffic and a sample from the 141/181 class may be a candidate.

The existing volunteer workforce is fully committed to keeping our steam locomotives and carriages in traffic. Before revisiting the topic Council wishes to know if there is interest from within the membership as to whether such a project would be worth pursuing and, **more importantly**, are there members (or potential members) willing to work on a diesel and become part of a maintenance team.

Should anything eventually come of this expression of interest we are looking at a locomotive to be kept in museum condition and to be maintained to a standard to operate within the Society's Whitehead site.

## GENERAL

**Model Mk2 Set:** See the separate order form for the Bachmann limited edition set of RPSI coaches.

**Membership:** If a renewal form was included with this News-Letter then your subscription has not been received in full. Please note the following:

- Ensure the form is filled in fully to avoid any confusion over names, addresses, etc.
- Clearly indicate on the form the membership category for which you are paying.
- Senior members are requested to notify us that they have reached the appropriate age, **especially** if they intend to pay the full rate. As VAT is charged on the membership amount (in the UK) but not on donations, the Society does not wish to be subsidising the government any more than absolutely necessary.
- Life members - as we don't have annual correspondence from you as

is usual for other membership categories, please ensure that your address and/or email details are up to date. The renewal form can be used for this, plus it allows you to send in a donation too.

- The preferred method of manual payment is by cheque, in pounds sterling or euros. While credit card payments are accepted, they are still processed on hand-written dockets and are a bit of an overhead to administer.
- Make all cheques payable to "The RPSI" or "Railway Preservation Society of Ireland". Nothing else is acceptable - owing to increasingly stringent banking regulations - and you could otherwise find your payment returned.
- All credit card payments will be processed in pounds sterling so, depending on the conversion rate, the amount charged for membership and donation rates in euros will be approximate.
- A £1 handling charge is levied on credit card payments.
- Don't include payment for anything other than membership and/or donations.
- If you are a UK member and don't have a Gift Aid in place you will receive a form with your membership card. Please return this as it can increase the value of your payments by 28%. If you do not wish to Gift Aid, or can't for some reason, please let us know so as to prevent further requests.
- For dispatch of your membership card, a small addressed envelope (with UK stamp if possible) would be appreciated.
- Finally, a donation is always welcome.

**Copying:** It has been reported that some members have been copying

and distributing Society News-Letters and email Bulletins to friends. While this is welcomed as an occasional 'one off' to potential members, please do not do so on an ongoing basis. It is preferable that the recipients be encouraged instead to join the Society.

**AGM:** All Council posts are open for nominations. Simply send in a note to the address below by 5<sup>th</sup> April, giving the post applied for and signed by yourself and two other current Society members.

## WHITEHEAD

**Happy Birthday:** To celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> birthday of our hard-working JCB mechanical digger, first registered January 1968, there was a celebratory work day at Whitehead on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> January.

A load of stone was delivered for filling the lane-way potholes. A birthday cake was supplied for the workers, while the JCB got its annual engine oil and filter change!

**Whitehead Development:** As part of the preparations for appointing consultants to help with the Whitehead Development Project announced in the January News-Letter, Ian Smith from the HRA visited in January to meet with Council members and to advise how the Middleton Railway in Leeds, with which he is associated, went about planning and spending a Heritage Lottery Fund grant a few years ago.

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